

COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN

Country: SOMALIA

Planning Year: 2002

Executive Committee Summary

(a) Executive Summary

UNHCR's overall objective in Somalia is to seek durable solutions to the Somali refugee problem by encouraging voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Somali refugees from Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Yemen and elsewhere. During the course of the year 2002, some 45,000 Somali refugees are expected to repatriate to Somalia, most of them to the northern part of the country. They comprise 35,000 from Ethiopia, 5,000 from Yemen, and from 5,000 Kenya. In order to achieve this, UNHCR, in co-operation with other agencies, both UN and NGOs, will have to enhance the absorptive capacity of the areas of return in the north (especially in the north-west) and, should the security situation become favourable, in the south (especially in Lower and Middle Juba regions). UNHCR will prioritise its interventions in water, health, education, income generation, livestock/animal husbandry and crop production. The objective of this initial intervention in the reintegration process is to help anchor the returning populations in their communities and prevent further movements in search of basic services. UNHCR will also continue to render international protection and assistance to some 200 urban refugees in NW Somalia.

Context and Beneficiary Population(s)

Political Context

The civil war, which began in 1988, culminated in the overthrow of Siad Barre in 1991 and the displacement of Somalis both internally and externally. It is estimated that over 600,000 persons fled mostly to the neighbouring countries. Since then, Somalia has been without a central government. However, in 1991, following peace and reconciliation conference in Burao, northwest Somalia declared independence from the rest of Somalia and proclaimed itself the "Republic of Somaliland". In 1998, although not declaring itself independent, N.E.Somalia declared itself the self-governing "Puntland" State of Somalia. These self-administering regions have not been recognised by the international community as independent political entities.

The quest for a national reconciliation continued. The Arta peace conference that was held in Djibouti resulted in the establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG). A President was elected and he appointed his Prime Minister at the head of TNG cabinet. A Transitional National Assembly composed of clan representatives was established in Mogadishu in August 2000. These developments brought a glimmer of hope for peace and enhanced voluntary repatriation and reintegration activities.

Security Situation

The security situation is relatively stable in "Somaliland" and "Puntland", which is conducive for UNHCR operations. In the south of Somalia, however, the security

situation is unpredictable. UNHCR operations in the south have been limited to facilitation of voluntary repatriation for Individual Cases (ICs) from various countries. Given the unpredictable security situation in most of Somalia, UNHCR together with the government authorities and other UN Agencies will take steps to ensure the safety of returnees as well as that of the entire staff. UNHCR will continue to facilitate voluntary repatriation to southern Somalia.

Protection Issues

Somali refugees have been returning spontaneously to areas considered relatively safe and secure in northern Somalia, and to urban areas in the south such as Mogadishu. With the establishment of regional administrations in “Somaliland” and “Puntland”, these returns have been sustainable with no recorded back-flows into exile. These regional authorities have assumed the protection of the returnees and continue to ensure that returnees are integrated into the mainstream society. In order to assist those who may wish to repatriate but have no means of doing so on their own, UNHCR started assisted voluntary repatriation operation mainly to northern Somalia.

The situation is different in southern Somalia. Although a Transitional National Government was established in 2000, it has not yet delivered the expected results – peace and security. The security situation in southern Somalia remains volatile making voluntary repatriation of most of the refugees from Kenya unfeasible. UNHCR will continue to monitor the developments in Somalia, collect and disseminate information to countries hosting Somali refugees in order to update the refugees of the developments inside Somalia as well as on the prospects for voluntary repatriation.

UNHCR’s role in Somalia: (protection, assistance, monitoring and co-ordination)

UNHCR’s role in Somalia in 2002 will focus on continued intensification of voluntary repatriation from Ethiopia, Djibouti (political developments permitting), Yemen, and Kenya. UNHCR will ensure safe return of refugees and monitor their reintegration. UNHCR’s initial reintegration assistance will focus on extension of essential services in water, health, education etc., to enhance the absorptive capacity. The main goal here is to ensure that the returnees are anchored and fully integrated into the communities and to prevent back-flow in search of services. UNHCR will co-ordinate its repatriation and reintegration activities with the government authorities, NGOs and other UN Agencies to ensure that linkages with long-term activities are established early in the reintegration process. In the communities, UNHCR will advocate for the inclusion of returnees in the leadership structures as well as committees that may be set up at the community level as part of the implementation of the reintegration activities.

Overview of beneficiary population

The main beneficiary population in the Somalia programme will be the refugees who are expected to repatriate to Somalia in 2002. Most of the refugees are living in

camps in neighbouring countries. The majority of the refugees expected to return to the North ("Somaliland" and "Puntland") are nomads and a few are agro-pastoralists. In the south, those returning to the Juba and Shabelle river basins are traditionally agriculturist while the rest are nomads and agro-pastoralists.

The effects of the protracted civil war have meant that a large number of refugees, who were traditionally nomads, lost their livestock. Many of these refugees who have stayed in refugee camps for over 10 years, have learnt new trades in the camps and have got used to a more urbanised lifestyle are bound to return to urban centres as has already been noticed in Hargeisa, "Somaliland". The needs of special groups such as women, children, adolescents and the elderly will be addressed in the returnee areas. With the increasing deforestation due to soil erosion and cutting of trees for firewood and charcoal making, UNHCR will participate fully in addressing environmental issues.

Policy Issues

UNHCR policy on voluntary repatriation to Somalia, as established at the policy-setting meeting on the Somali refugee situation in October 1999, is that voluntary repatriation will be *promoted* to those areas exhibiting signs of stability in relation to security conditions. These are what the UN Country Team (UNCT) has termed *zones of recovery*. Basically, this means the area north of the city of Galkayo. This area incorporates "Somaliland" and "Puntland". The policy-setting meeting also concluded that voluntary repatriation to all other parts of Somalia would be *facilitated* at the specific request of a refugee. This policy will continue to be followed until a significant change in the security conditions in the areas south of Galkayo takes place. UNHCR actively participates in the Somalia Aid Co-ordination Body (SACB) with UN Agencies, donors and non-governmental organisations. The SACB developed a policy framework for continuing co-operation in Somalia, which was endorsed as an instrument for dialogue by the SACB Executive Committee in December 2000.

UN Security Council invited the Secretary-General to prepare a proposal for a peace building mission for Somalia. The proposal is expected to pay special attention to security and to outline the possible ways to advance the peace process. It is envisaged that a proposal will be submitted to the Security Council in April 2001.

UNHCR and UNDP have, in close co-operation with IGAD, developed a programme framework and a project document for the reintegration of returnees and internally displaced persons. Other UN Agencies, donors and NGOs are expected to be fully involved in the implementation of this reintegration project. The draft framework and project document will be discussed with all actors and, once adopted, these documents are expected to guide future planning and implementation of reintegration activities in Somalia. The successful implementation of this programme will also help UNHCR do disengage itself eventually from reintegration activities in northwest Somalia and is thus part of UNHCR's exit-strategy in Somalia.

Linkage to other countries

Under the overall co-ordination of the Regional Director's Office, UNHCR Somalia will co-ordinate its activities with UNHCR Offices in countries hosting Somali refugees through inter-office/cross border meetings. The objective of these meetings

will be to share information and to plan the voluntary repatriation of those Somali refugees who wish to return home. These efforts should also help the uniform application of UNHCR's policies concerning Somali refugees in the countries concerned.

Capacity and presence of implementing partners

Since 1993 when UNHCR first re-established its presence in N.W.Somalia the number of both local and international NGOs has continued to grow, not only in the N.W.Somalia but also in the N.E.Somalia. In the rest of Somalia the local administrations are the main partners. UNHCR will continue to foster collaboration/co-operation with its implementing partners. These will include MRRR in "Somaliland" and the Directorate of International Co-operation (DIC) in "Puntland" as well as line ministries. In the case of "Somaliland", the NGOs have elected a ParinAc Focal point that is responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating meetings between UNHCR and the local NGOs.

Presence and role of other UN agencies and international organisations

Most UN Agencies and a number of international organisations are operating in Somalia. There are mechanisms in place for organising co-ordination and fostering of co-operation among the agencies.

Among UN Agencies: The heads of UN Agencies for Somalia will, during regular meetings of the UN Country Team (UNCT) for Somalia, set policy directions, including collaboration in the implementation of UN projects in Somalia. Until the security situation in Mogadishu improves, these meetings will be held in Nairobi where the offices of UN agency Representatives are located. The UNDP Resident Representative and Humanitarian Co-ordinator for Somalia chairs the meetings. In "Somaliland" where there is a sizeable UN international presence, including that of UNHCR, the same structure is replicated and the UN Focal Point in Hargeisa chairs monthly meetings. The same structure is being developed for "Puntland".

Among UN and other Agencies: Inter-agency co-operation will continue to be organised through the Somalia Aid Co-ordination Body (SACB), which comprises UN agencies, Donors and NGOs. This body operates through sectoral committees, which seek to rationalise the interventions being made in each sector by various actors inside Somalia.

(b) Selected programme goals and objectives

Name of beneficiary population/Theme: Somali Returnees

Main Goal:

Attainment of durable solutions through voluntary repatriation and effective reintegration for Somali refugees in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Yemen, Kenya and elsewhere.

Principal objectives:

The voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees to northern Somalia is promoted and their reintegration process is assisted;

The voluntary repatriation of individuals wishing to return to southern Somalia is facilitated based on an informed decision about conditions in areas of return.

Related Outputs:

45,000 Somali refugees repatriated from Ethiopia, Kenya Yemen and other countries;

45,000 returnees well received and reintegrated in their communities in Somalia;

Initial reintegration activities carried out through community-based Quick Impact Projects;

The capacity of social services in areas of return increased to levels sufficient to cater for returnees in addition to the residual population.

Name of Beneficiary Population/Theme: Urban Refugees**Main goal:**

To provide international protection and life-sustaining assistance to urban refugees and asylum seekers, while pursuing durable solutions for them.

Principal Objective:

Refugees in Somalia, most of whom live in urban areas, enjoy international protection and receive assistance to sustain themselves, while durable solutions for them are sought and implemented as opportunities to do so arise.

Related Outputs

Refugee status determination undertaken in line with international standards.

Well being and respect for rights of refugees ensured.

Eligible refugees resettled to third countries.