

SOMALIA NEWSLETTER

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

From livelihood interventions to self-reliance

As of 30 November 2017, UNHCR has assisted 8,306 persons through livelihood activities to attain self-reliance



Somali returnees, members of host community and IDPs in class on tailoring. © UNHCR/Kismayo, 2017

UNHCR livelihood programme supports refugees and asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, IDPs and host community to build their capabilities, facilitates access to productive assets (including social resources), and promotes access to employment.

As of 30 November, UNHCR has provided livelihood opportunity to 8,306 persons to meet their basic needs and enjoy their social and economic rights.

Attaining self-reliance for persons of concern is an important milestone. The sooner this is reached the faster the re-integration is attained.

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Returnees, members of host community and IDP in vocational skills training on carpentry. © UNHCR/Baidoa, September 2017

Achievements in 2017

As of 30 November, UNHCR has provided livelihood opportunities to around 8,306¹ persons in various livelihood programmes.

2,327 persons have been engaged in improvement of public infrastructure through **cash-for-work** (CfW) programme in beautifying a total of 18 districts, rehabilitating 13 schools, five community centres, three football stadiums, two health centres, two markets, an access road and a boat centre. The CfW programme provides short term employment (three to nine months) in addition to creating or rehabilitating public assets

Through **technical and education vocation training** (TEVT) 2,017 persons have been engaged in various classes: IT, tailoring, beauty salon, catering, mobile repair, handcrafting, mechanics, construction, fabric dying, bakery, air conditioner and refrigerator repair, fish preservation and fish drying, poultry production, agricultural production, solar power system, electrics and carpentry. TVST last from three to nine months during which person enhances his own capital, gained new skills and knowledge.

After graduation each beneficiary receives a start-up kit to start their own business.

2,174 beneficiaries were part of **small-business programmes** and have established their own business, such as: kiosks, grocery stores and butchers, retail shops, transport services, vegetable shops, restaurants and small trade companies.

Another 1,788 persons were assisted with linkages to **self-employment opportunities** through various online platforms aimed at matching skills to needs.

This edition brings close stories of three Somali refugee returnees and a refugee who have re-established their lives in Somalia. They have been part of TVET, obtained new skills, received start-up kits and opened their own businesses.

These stories also show the bridge between the livelihood interventions and self-reliance of persons of concern.

But first, here is a summary of the livelihood strategy for Somalia 2017-2020.

¹ The number is provisional and is subject to the data verification.

Livelihood strategy: 2017-2020

UNHCR is providing guidance and direction for livelihood programmes in Somalia



Community-based coexistence project through rehabilitation of a perimeter wall of the Halwadaag health centre perimeter wall rehabilitation. © UNHCR/Baidoa, 2017

Objectives of the Strategy

UNHCR Somalia Livelihood Strategy, 2017-2020 strategically sets out to i) promote the right to work and the right to social and economic development; ii) reduce dependency and increase self-reliance; iii) provide minimum livelihood programme and activity standards; and iv) contribute to durable solutions (of re-integration) by building self-reliance through sustainable livelihood programme initiatives.

Strategy guided by the NDP

The Strategy is guided by the Somali National Development Plan (NDP) 2017-2019: Chapter 5: Economic Development (agriculture, livestock, and fisheries); Chapter 7: Social and Human Development (labour, employment, youth and gender); Chapter 8: Infrastructure; and Chapter 9: Building Resilience (self-reliance).

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

The Strategy also emphasises partnerships, coordination and networking with the private sector as well as expanding opportunities for joint projects with government line ministries and UN development agencies. This is intended to contribute to enhanced sustainability of re-integration of Somali returnees. There are increasing prospects for returns, which will need livelihood support, and UNHCR is doubling its

efforts towards working with line ministries and local authorities to strengthen and support local coordination and enhance community projects ownership, with the private sector to explore opportunities for wage employment, social and economic development.

Promotion of peaceful co-existence

In order to promote peaceful co-existence, and reintegration as a durable solution for returnees, a 50-40-10 targeting approach is incorporated in the strategy. Targeting 50 per cent returnees, 40 per cent IDPs and 10 per cent host community helps to reduce potential for conflict and contributes to creating acceptance, peaceful coexistence while sharing community resources.

Regional approach

Building meaningful local, national, and regional networks and partnerships (including joint cross-border programmes) are embodied in the strategy to enhance sustainability of the return process through a holistic approach – proactively building skills both during displacement and on return. Regional and cross-border programming will contribute to sustaining the demands of the return process through sharing of knowledge, skills and expertise – a crucial requirement in addressing the return process in the Horn of Africa and Yemen region.

A returnee family continues a family tradition



Hassan with his family showing a UNHCR partner harvested crops produced under a UNHCR project. © UNHCR/Baidoa, September 2017

In 2010, Hassan (*not his real name*), a 42-year-old father of seven, was forced with his family to flee Somalia to Kenya due to insecurity and violence, and settled in the Dadaab refugee camp.

In August 2016, Hassan and his family decided to return home to Baidoa with assistance from UNHCR. Hassan's family received an enhanced package and was later chosen to benefit from the agriculture project supported by UNHCR partner African Volunteers for Relief and Development (AVORD) in Baidoa.

"I have no words to describe how I felt encouraged and happy when I heard about the agriculture project. I was out of the farming business for six years while in exile and didn't have the financial means to restart my livelihood (farming)" said Hassan.

Hassan, along with other project participants, attended training on basic crops, animal husbandry, and natural resource management, which was aimed at equipping farmers with the skills to manage and correctly carry out agronomic practices and maintain the resources that they received.

As part of the programme, Hassan received an agriculture production input kit consisting of farm tools (two hoes, one axe, one rake, one shovel, one machete, one traditional small blade hand hoe and a knife). He also received an assorted seed input – sorghum (15 kg) cowpea (5 kg) and sesame (15 kg) – enough for one hectare of land earmarked for each beneficiary.

"From sale of part of my initial harvests, I have saved some money to spend on other food supplies. This means I am now able to better prepare for the next season and grow crops as I deem ideal for the local markets. Thanks to AVORD and UNHCR, I can now independently support my family." Hassan concludes.

Hassan's family have harvested around 200 kg of sorghum, 30 kg of sesame, 10 kg of beans and bunches of animal fodder. They sold most of the sesame and fodder in order to get money to meet other basic needs, meanwhile sorghum and beans (staples) have been stocked for family consumption. This will help the family remain food secure during the lean season until the next harvest after the *Deyr* 2017 rainy season ends in January 2018.

Unique combination of carpentry skills and design art craft in diversifying livelihood opportunity



Mohamed displays his art pieces © UNHCR/Kismayo, September 2017

Mohamed (*not his real name*), 27-years-old, fled Somalia to the Dadaab Refugee Camp at the height of the 2011 drought alongside with his newly wed bride, his deceased elder brother's widow and her four children.

He returned home with UNHCR assistance in December 2016 and settled in Kismayo. As part of livelihood support to complement the enhanced return package, Mohamed was engaged in a livelihood training programme.

"I feel welcome back in Somalia again and with my new skill, I can now make living at the same time. Getting career advice was the best thing that happened to me", said Mohammed.

In March 2017, Mohamed was enrolled in technical and vocational education training (TVET) by UNHCR partner American Refugee Committee (ARC) in carpentry and joinery skills programme at the Return Support Centre (RSC). The TVET programme offers three-to-nine month intensive, practical, context specific, vocational training on marketable employable skills in a given location.

Upon completion of his course in June 2017, Mohamed received a start-up kit and opened his own art craft business. Like every well-wisher, Mohamed is excited about his newly established, fast-growing business.

"Enrolling for the technical and vocational education training programme, receiving training subsistence allowance while attending the training programme, and regular visits to the RSC to talk to and share experiences with new and old friends, were eye openers as well as reasons to now have hope for the future", Mohamed recalls on his initial time after return.

Mohamed uses his carpentry skills to make wooden frames for different art pieces that he sells to hotels, business premises, offices and homes – a really unique combination. He also does part-time work at Wamo Stadium construction site in Kismayo as a carpenter technician. Carpentry skills are among the most marketable skills feeding the construction industry in Somalia. Mohamed earns enough money to sustain his family needs and is self-reliant.

Tie-and-dye skill training creates an opportunity for a better life for a young returnee mother



Fadumo displays one of her products which can now be found in the market in Kismayo. © UNHCR/Kismayo, October 2017

Fadumo (*not her real name*), a 24-year-old mother of three, was born and raised in the Dadaab refugee camp. Like many Somalis, Fadumo's parents fled the country during the height of the Somali civil war in 1991.

Fadumo, with her children, siblings, and parents, arrived back in Kismayo in November of 2016, after deciding to voluntarily return to Somalia after relative peace. This was an opportunity to see a homeland she left as a toddler.

Fadumo was assisted by UNHCR and received an enhanced return package. Shortly after return she was selected in a technical and vocational education training (TVET) programme that American Refugee Committee (ARC) implements on behalf of UNHCR at the Return Support Centre (RSC).

Fadumo enrolled for computer, literacy and the TVET classes. Fadumo excelled in the tie-and-dye skills training programme that she took part in from March to June of 2017.

Upon graduation, Fadumo obtained a start-up grant of US\$ 500 by UNHCR, which she used to start up her own tie-and-dye business.

She has her own workshop where she is able to produce beautiful garments to sell in the local market. In just four months, Fadumo was able to turn the skills she learned through TVET programme into a thriving business.

“The life here is much better than the one at the refugee camp. Food here is affordable, I am able to pay rent and send my eldest son to school.” Fadumo proudly says.

She has great confidence in what she can do in her chosen career. Through her initiative, Fadumo was able to diversify her business portfolio to set up a small fruit and vegetable table stall which generates daily cash income for her family.

Livelihood diversification contributes to building a resilient community by way of offering an alternative livelihood option. In the event that shock/disaster affected one livelihood stream of activities, the alternative provides a fallback option – a cushioning effect.

A refugee strengthens his livelihood by partnering with the host community

Partnership with local businesses for better integration, acceptance and peaceful co-existence



A refugee from Yemen continued with his profession in Somalia. © UNHCR/October 2017

Khadar (*not his real name*), 55-years old, is Yemeni refugee in Garowe who fled from the conflict in Sanna, Yemen in January 2017. He has five children and seven other family members. He was working as a manager in a store in Sanna for ten years.

“I left the country with my entire family, and moved to Bossaso, with the future looking completely uncertain,” Khadar recalled.

They travelled in a small boat across the Gulf of Aden to Somalia where they were received and supported by UNHCR.

In January 2017, Khadar was selected to join a project on small-business in Garowe. After attending the training on small-business

management, Khadar received a start-up grant, as start-up capital, to aid in business establishment.

“Before being enrolled, I could not afford basic needs. This shop now covers my basic needs such as food, house rent, utilities, school fees, and other necessities. The day we received voucher start-up grant support brought hope and optimism for the future of our children and self” said Khadar.

Soon after he established his business with support of UNHCR, Khadar’s wife, Habiba (*not her real name*), teamed up with a member of the host community in Garowe and opened another shop, named Kismaayo, by their own, to supplement their incomes.

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