

SOMALIA

IN SHORT



Main Objectives

- Facilitate the lasting return to relatively safe areas of 71,000 Somali refugees (from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Yemen and other countries) and help reintegrate them by providing infrastructure and basic services.
- Consolidate the reintegration of returnees from previous years by implementing community-based Quick Impact Projects with an emphasis on long-term sustainability and self-reliance.
- Monitor the safety of all returnees through frequent visits to those areas to which refugees have returned.
- Report back, in detail, to other UNHCR offices, UN agencies, NGOs, donors and individuals involved with Somali refugees still living in exile.
- Whenever possible, ensure the protection and well-being of refugees of all nationalities (e.g. Ethiopians) and seek durable solutions for them.



Planning Figures		
Population	Jan. 2000	Dec. 2000
Returnees in the North-West	73,100	134,100
Returnees in North-East Somalia	2,000	12,000
Returnees in Central and Southern Somalia	150,000	153,000
Refugees	275	150
Total	225,375	299,250
Total Requirements		
USD 10,592,219		



WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Recent Developments

Since the collapse of the central government in Somalia in 1991, the country has progressively fragmented into regional administrations, each claiming legitimacy over the territory under its control. The authorities in north-west Somalia declared the region an independent state of Somaliland in 1991. In 1998, the north-east of Somalia declared itself the independent republic of Puntland. A year later, the Benadir Administration claimed authority over Mogadishu and the central region, while in the southern region the Jubaland Administration was established in Kismayo. Disputes over control of land and resources often lead to conflict. Initiatives to reconcile warring clans, and indeed forge unity among Somalis, are often stymied.

This complex situation renders humanitarian access and the protection of returnees extremely difficult, particularly in relatively dangerous areas. Under these circumstances, the organised and spontaneous voluntary repatriation of more than a quarter of a million Somali refugees during the early 1990's (more than half the total) is a great source of hope and betokens relative stability in most returnee areas. UNHCR has promoted organised voluntary repatriation of refugees to regions considered relatively safe and ensured that all returnees have had access to protection and reintegration assistance. This has largely been possible through the good offices of well-informed regional authorities in the relevant areas of operation. Return to other, less stable regions has been facilitated only on an ad hoc basis following individual requests for repatriation.

Constraints

Localised fighting in southern Somalia during 1999 put a temporary halt to rehabilitation activities and protection monitoring in the area. New population displacement and severe food shortages were reported, particularly in and around Kismayo. The limited access of UNHCR staff to this region may continue to curtail reintegration operations.

The local administrations have limited resources, as illustrated in November 1998 when the authorities in Hargeisa suspended the repatriation from Ethiopia of Somali refugees. This was precipitated by a ban on the export of livestock from Somalia imposed by the Government of Saudi Arabia. The

ban hamstrung the region's attempts to raise revenue for even the most essential services.

The general lack of basic services such as water, primary health care, and education, as well as opportunities to generate income, have deterred the return of some educated Somalis, whose role in the reconstruction process is seen as indispensable.



STRATEGY

Protection and Solutions

To achieve an effective common approach to Somalia, UN agencies, NGOs and donors have reached a broad consensus that Somalia is composed of different operating environments. Geographically, a distinction can be made between the northern regions on the one hand, consisting of the north-west and the north-east, and the central and southern regions on the other hand. Cutting across this broad north-south division, parts of Somalia can be further categorised as areas of recovery, areas of transition and areas of crisis.

Areas of recovery include those with functioning government structures, such as the north-west (Somaliland) and north-east (Puntland). They enjoy relative stability, sufficient for economic activity to thrive, and can therefore receive returnees from abroad. Their capacity is however very limited and massive investment is needed after years of warfare and instability. UNHCR's protection strategy in these areas involves monitoring the returnee population through frequent field missions and addressing their protection needs (according to international legal norms as well as conditions agreed upon with the authorities). UNHCR will also continue to raise awareness among returnees and their communities of the harmful effects of female genital mutilation.

Areas of transition are those evolving towards a more stable environment but in which peace remains fragile and easily undone. These include Hiran, Mudug, Galgadud, the Middle Shabelle, and parts of Gedo. Here the strategy is to support the process of transition by working closely with the emerging authorities as they develop relatively stable structures of governance conducive to an eventual larger scale return of refugees. From a protection standpoint, refugee return and





reintegration in such areas cannot be promoted yet, but will be facilitated when individuals request it.

Areas of crisis are those characterised by ongoing fighting, unrelenting emergencies and population displacements. Such are Mogadishu, the Lower Shabelle Valley, Bay, Bakool, the Juba Valley and Kismayo. The main protection concern here is to prevent and respond to emergencies, thus averting wide-scale suffering among a population constantly in search of relief assistance. Even here, pockets of recovery can be identified, where clan structures offer some degree of security. Individuals who want to return to such areas are also given support.

If UNHCR can reach them, it will provide international protection to refugees in Somalia, most of whom are from Ethiopia. Refugees in north-west Somalia who cannot return to their homeland will receive humanitarian assistance while alternative solutions are sought.

Assistance

Large numbers of Somalis in neighbouring countries are willing to return home. Their repatriation is currently hampered by the limited ability of areas of return to cope: a consequence of the destruction of vital infrastructure and other facilities. The lack of essential services, particularly in health and education, as well as the perennial shortage of water, often makes them hesitate to return. UNHCR must therefore help rehabilitate such services and establish adequate community-based social support structures.

In 2000, the main focus will be on Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in areas receiving large numbers of returnees. They include the rehabilitation of water systems through the construction and cleaning of wells and water catchment areas as well as the installation of hand pumps and pipelines. Other projects will focus on improving sanitary and health conditions by repairing and constructing latrines and health facilities and by offering training courses for local health workers. Productive sectors like agriculture, livestock and fishing will receive special support to boost the income of returnees. These projects will also benefit the local communities to which refugees are returning. Given that many refugees choose to return to urban areas, QIPs will also emphasise income-generating schemes, vocational training and support for workshops, mainly in Hargeisa. Assistance with shelter will be provided for returnees with-

out appropriate accommodation as well as IDPs living in very poor conditions.

UNHCR in Somalia places great importance on assisting women and children. Past experience has shown that a family will reintegrate more successfully if women are given an active role in promoting the well-being of their families and communities. UNHCR's income-generating projects therefore target returnee women. These projects focus on agriculture (providing seeds, tools and irrigation equipment) and animal husbandry (providing animals and veterinary support), which are the traditional economic activities in most returnee communities. Other income-generating activities, and skills-training, will be organised whenever feasible. The re-building of schools, and the provision of teaching materials and qualified teachers, in collaboration with UNESCO, will hopefully allow an increasing number of returnee and local children to attend primary school.

Desired Impact

UNHCR is in Somalia to successfully reintegrate returnees into their communities, and to minimise new population movements to countries of asylum. UNHCR works to ensure that voluntary repatriation is a truly lasting solution for the returnees. This does however depend on the assistance of other international agencies and is predicated on the ability of regional authorities and private sector organisations to improve living conditions.

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Management Structure

UNHCR has an established office with international staff in Hargeisa, north-west Somalia. This office mainly supports the return of Somali refugees from eastern Ethiopia and Djibouti. Regular field visits are arranged to monitor the living conditions of returnees and progress with reintegration projects. In addition, ancillary field offices are run by national staff in Bossaso, Galkayo, Mogadishu, and Kismayo under the responsibility of the UNHCR Cross-Border Operation (CBO) based in Nairobi, Kenya. Eight international and 58 national UNHCR staff will work in Somalia in 2000. This includes four international and one national staff based at the CBO office in Nairobi.

Coordination

Coordination with other humanitarian organisations in Somalia remains a challenge in view of the many agencies involved, and the geographical distances, let alone security and political considerations. In north-west Somalia, UNHCR coordinates closely with the local authorities through the Ministry of Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction and other ministries, the UNDP and NGOs to create a framework for coordinated action to bridge the gap between reintegration and rehabilitation on the one hand, and longer-term development on the other. An important step in this direction was the action plan formulated during the reintegration workshop held in July 1999.

Many of the humanitarian agencies operating in Somalia are based in Nairobi, Kenya. The UNHCR CBO unit there ensures that the Office is well represented in the various coordinating bodies. Of these, the main body is the United Nations Country Team for Somalia, which provides a forum for information-sharing. It is the driving force behind the Common Humanitarian Action Plan and UN Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeals. Monthly coordination meetings are also held under the aegis of the Somalia Aid Coordination Body, comprising UN agencies, international NGOs and donors. UNHCR's aim here is to increase the involvement of other, more development-oriented agencies in areas of refugee return in Somalia as part of its strategy for durable solutions and withdrawal in 2001.



Offices

Hargeisa	Galkayo
CBO in Nairobi (Kenya)	Kismayo
Afmadow	Mogadishu
Bossaso	

Partners

Government Agencies

Ministry of Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (north-west Somalia)

NGOs

Coordination Committee of Organisation of Voluntary Service
Handicap International
International Rescue Committee
Médecins Sans Frontières/Belgium
OXFAM
Save the Children Fund/USA
Swiss Group

(Indicative list of NGOs)

Agriculture and Water Development Association
Agricultural Development Organisation
Awdal Rehabilitation and Development Association
Committee of Concerned Somalis
Dal dhis Rehabilitation and Development Association
Hargeisa Voluntary Youth Committee
Health Education and Agro-Pastoralist Liaison
Islamic Relief Committee
Kalmo Somaliland Voluntary Organisation
Somaliland Cultural Technology Rehabilitation Organisation
Somaliland Rehabilitation and Development Organisation
Somaliland Relief and Rehabilitation Association
Somaliland Social Voluntary Organisation

Budget (USD)

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	2,531,783
Community Services	460,840
Crop Production	460,000
Domestic Needs/ Household Support	20,000
Education	843,000
Fisheries	150,000
Forestry	170,000
Health/Nutrition	530,000
Income Generation	580,000
Legal Assistance	10,000
Livestock	490,000
Operational Support (to Agencies)	515,160
Sanitation	143,300
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	557,400
Transport/Logistics	934,100
Water (non-agricultural)	707,000
Total Operations	9,102,583
Programme Support	1,489,636
Total	10,592,219