

SOMALIA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1-31 July 2023



Conflict and drought continue to affect millions of ordinary Somalis. The Kaharey IDP site in Dollow, Somalia, is hosting many thousands who flee their homes in search of food, shelter, and safe drinking water. © UNHCR / Nabil Narch

OVERVIEW

In July, conflict and insecurity were the main driver of humanitarian needs in Somalia. The security situation in the country remained tense, with Al-Shabab, referred to as the non-state armed group (NSAG), frequently conducting indiscriminate attacks where civilians became innocent victims. In a bid to reclaim territory from the NSAG, Somali security forces and their allies continued military operations, primarily in Hirshabelle and Galmudug states. Although the recent rainfall, efforts of local communities and authorities, and sustained humanitarian assistance have prevented famine for the time being, thousands of Somalis remain vulnerable to climatic shocks. According to the [Protection and Returns Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), which has been tracking internal displacement trends for the past 17 years, 70,000 internal displacements were recorded in July, primarily due to conflict/insecurity and drought, bringing the total number of internal displacements in 2023 to more than 1.4 million.

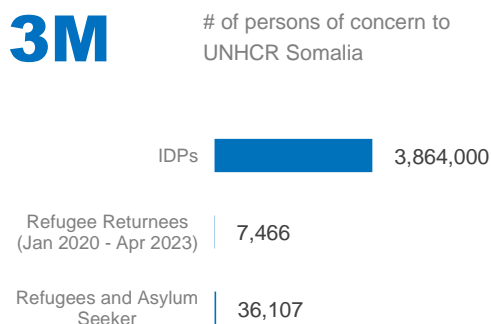
Finding durable solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in collaboration with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Federal Member States (FMS), and development and humanitarian partners remains one of UNHCR's top priorities in Somalia. Moreover, UNHCR, in collaboration with authorities and partners, continued to provide vital protection assistance to vulnerable IDPs and host communities affected by conflict, flooding, and drought. In Somalia, UNHCR leads/co-leads the Protection, Shelter, and CCCM clusters for the IDP response.

UNHCR's key achievements for the month of July are listed below:

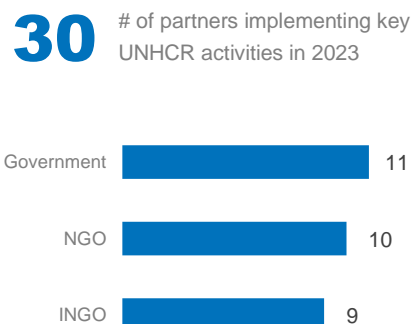
- The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) has agreed to implement Inter-Agency Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (ICFM), which was developed by UNHCR. The aim of the ICFM is to enhance accountability, participation, and transparency; provide feedback and responses on the quality of assistance and gaps; and allow agencies to programmatically adapt assistance to meet identified needs.
- The Protection Cluster's Working Group on the Protection of Civilians has submitted its first analyses related to the handover and closure of the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) to Somali Security Forces (SSF) as a part of the ATMIS draw-down plan.
- In pursuit of durable solutions for IDPs in Bossaso, Puntland, UNHCR and its partner are nearing completion of 150 permanent shelters at Gribile 2. 100 HHs have been transported to the project site, with over 50% of shelters and latrines completed and occupied.

KEY FIGURES

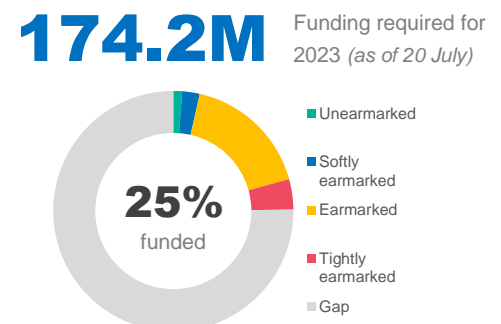
PERSONS OF CONCERN



PARTNERS



FUNDING



POPULATION DATA

36,107

Refugees and asylum seekers
as of July 2023

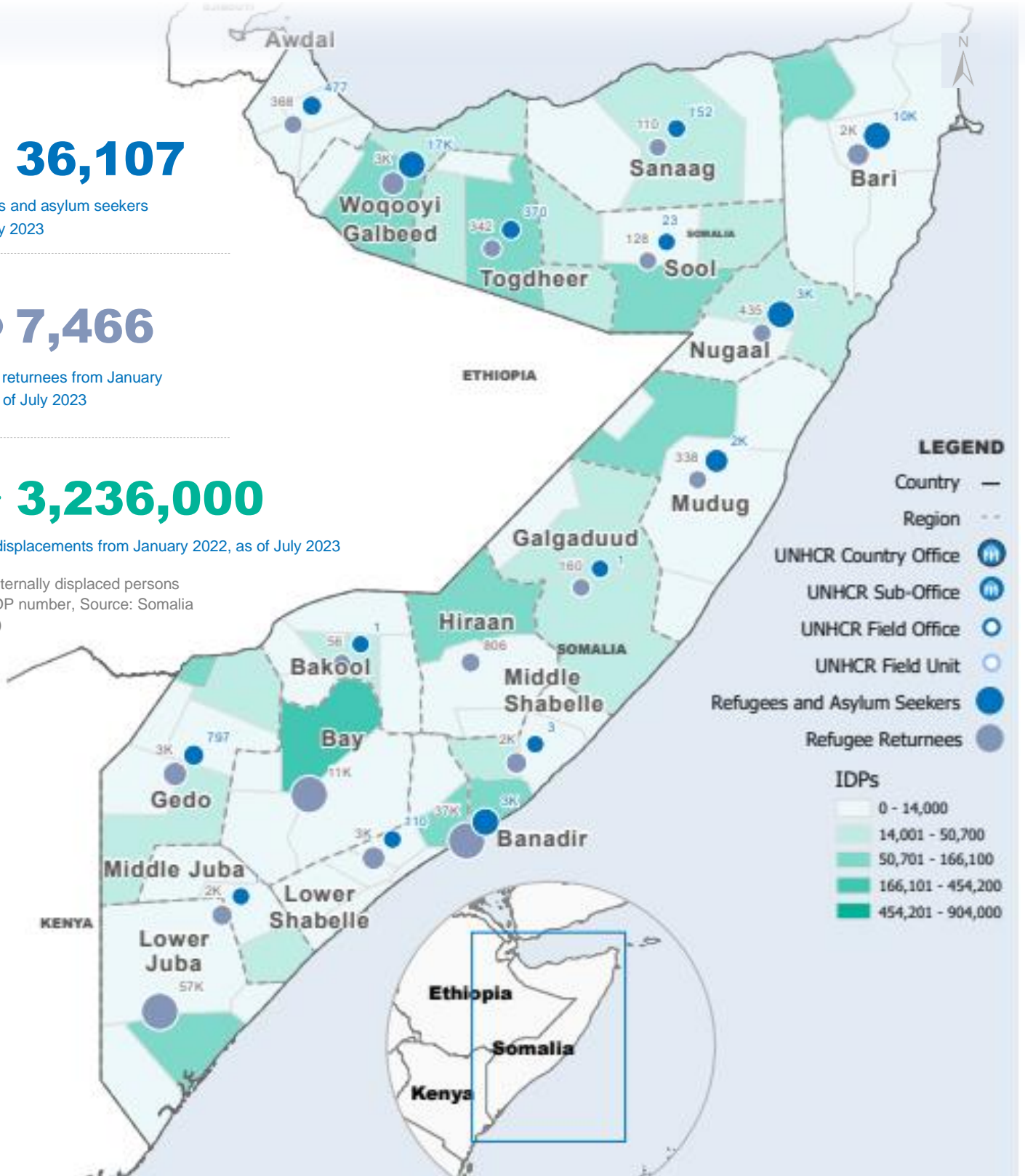
7,466

Refugee returnees from January
2020, as of July 2023

3,236,000

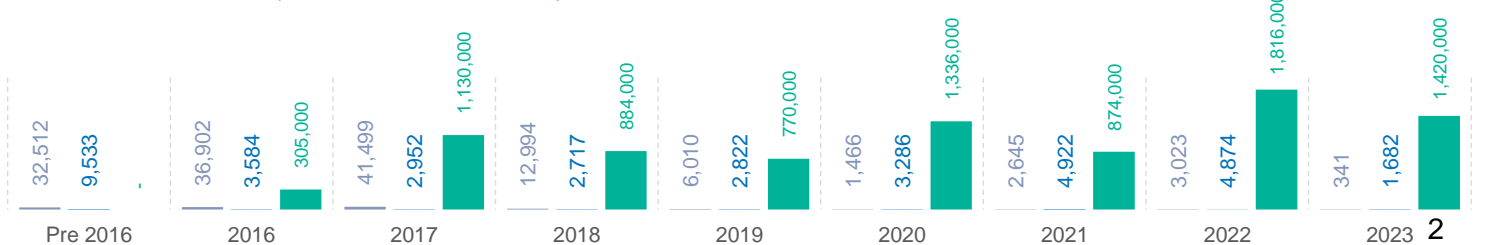
Internal displacements from January 2022, as of July 2023

3.86M Internally displaced persons
(Stock IDP number, Source: Somalia
IDP WG)



POPULATION TREND (ARRIVALS PER YEAR)

Refugee Returnees | Refugees and Asylum-Seekers | IDPs (PRMN)



Operational Context

UNHCR continued to operate in an extremely challenging environment in Somalia. Armed conflict, natural disasters, and climate shocks such as droughts and flash floods have uprooted thousands of Somalis from their homes. Better than expected rainfall and responses from the local population, authorities, and the humanitarian community have averted the worst outcomes of the drought, yet the situation is still worrisome. Rates of internal displacement owing to insecurity and climate change remain high. 8.25 million people require humanitarian assistance; 6.6 million are facing acute food insecurity; and 1.8 million children are anticipated to be acutely malnourished in 2023.¹

The armed conflict between the NSAG and Somali security forces and reprisal attacks by the former continued in July. The Somali security forces, in their effort to regain territory from non-state armed groups (NSAG), have mostly been focused in Galgaduud, Hiran, Middle Shabelle, and Mudug regions, with plans to expand to South West and Jubaland states in southern Somalia in the second phase, which is yet to start. The drawdown and handover of forward-operating bases under the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) have coincided with an increase in Al-Shabaab attacks in Somalia, including on a base in the Gedo region captured by Al-Shabaab in early July. Despite the recent gains made by the Somali security forces, large swaths of land continue to be inaccessible to humanitarian actors due to insecurity and armed conflict. Sporadic incidents of shelling and armed conflict also continued in the restive Laascaanood and surrounding areas.

According to the UNHCR-led [Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), 70,000 displacements within Somalia were recorded in July. Out of the total displacements during the reporting month, 37,000, or 53%, were attributed to conflict or insecurity, 30,000, or 43%, to drought, 2,500, or 4%, to floods and other reasons. Food, Protection, livelihood support, and shelter were the top needs of the newly displaced families. The top three regions that received the greatest number of new displacements in July were Middle Shabelle, followed by Gedo and Lower Juba. More up-to-date information about displacement and the protection needs of the IDPs can be found at the new PRMN online interactive dashboard: <http://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/>.

Somalia hosts some 36,107 refugees and asylum-seekers, of whom 69% are women and children; 31% are school-age children (6-17 years); and 26% are women and girls of reproductive age (13-49 years). The majority of refugees and asylum-seekers (67%) are from Ethiopia, followed by Yemen (29%), Syria (4%), and other countries (1%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers (75%) reside in urban or peri-urban settings across the Woqooyi Galbeed and Bari regions, both of which are in the northern part of the country. Authorities in Somaliland issued a decree to grant prima facie refugee status to Syrians, Iraqis, Yemenis, and Sudanese seeking international protection in accordance with the recently adopted Somaliland Refugee and Asylum Seeker Act. Furthermore, since January 2020, 7,444 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Yemen, followed by Kenya. From the total number of refugee returnees, 2,206 individuals have been directly assisted by UNHCR, mainly through the Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and the Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) Programme from Yemen.

Update on Achievements



Protection

Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)

- UNHCR, through its partner, identified and/or supported more than 43 new and existing GBV cases in July. Services to the survivors included safe house and meal support, psychosocial counseling, medical and legal referrals, and the provision of one-time protection cash support and dignity kits, among others.
- UNHCR, through its partners' outreach teams, conducted awareness and protection monitoring in 11 sites to reach IDPs, refugees, asylum-seekers, and host community members in Garowe and Gardo in Puntland, sharing

¹ Somalia: The Cost of Inaction, July 2023 - Somalia | ReliefWeb

information about GBV risks, such as female genital mutilation (FGM), as well as GBV referral mechanisms and pathways to access available services with more than 546 individuals.

- Across four IDP sites in Dhobley, UNHCR, through its partner, conducted community awareness sessions on the prevention of gender-based violence, including FGM, early marriage, and other traditional harmful practices, reaching 250 individuals.

Child Protection

- Through its partner, UNHCR concluded a mapping exercise of at-risk children in Somaliland. During the first six months of 2023, 132 refugee and asylum-seeking children (62 girls and 70 boys) were identified as being at risk due to serious medical conditions, child labor, school dropouts, or unaccompanied and separated minors (UASC). Various protection concerns were identified, including a lack of or limited medical support for children with specific needs such as physical disabilities or cognitive and mental disorders; a high rate of children not attending school due to language, cultural, or economic barriers; and in some cases, a lack of special education for children with specific needs; and child labor in informal sectors such as domestic housework and menial jobs such as washing cars or shining shoes.

Community engagement and awareness raising

- The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) has agreed to implement the Inter-Agency Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (ICFM) under the auspices of the Community Engagement and Accountability Working Group. The ICFM, which was developed by UNHCR, is a safe, confidential, and unified communication channel for the forcefully displaced community to share their grievances and feedback with the humanitarian community. The aim of the ICFM is to enhance accountability, participation, and transparency; provide feedback and responses on the quality of assistance and gaps; and allow agencies to programmatically adapt assistance to meet identified needs. Furthermore, the ICFM features a calling and call-back service, providing the humanitarian response with a post-distribution monitoring service through phone calls. Partners who provide cash assistance, for example, can rely on the service for a post-distribution survey among the beneficiaries to monitor whether the targeted beneficiary received the amount, the use of it, and any other related feedback required.



Residents of Gargaar IDP site in Kismayo, Jubaland, electing their community representative.
 © Jubaland Commissioner for Refugees and IDPs (JUCRI)

- UNHCR, through its partner, held an election at the Gargaar IDP site in Dalxiiska, Kismayo, where IDPs chose their community leaders. The election, which saw participation from both male and female populations, was democratically held, and IDPs chose their representatives by a show of hands.
- In Baidoa, South West State, UNHCR, in collaboration with partners, participated in the launch of a Community Centre at the Eddaying IDP site. The center will promote social cohesion and facilitate protection activities in 40 IDP sites with a combined population of 5,492 HHs (32,952 individuals).
- UNHCR, through its partner, conducted 82 interviews on the reasons for mixed movements with those who were transiting through Puntland. Of the migrants profiled, 78% aimed to continue their journey, while 16% expressed a willingness to return home, and the remaining 6% reported being undecided. The primary reasons for leaving their place of origin were economic hardship (70%), a lack of educational opportunities (7%), and insecurity (3%). Those who were willing to return home can be attributed to the information about the dangers of irregular movements that was shared with them during different awareness-raising sessions and information campaigns. Furthermore, 14% of the respondents reported experiencing physical violence and 2% reported sexual violence, expressing a need for protection services. As a result, 13 cases were referred to different protection services.
- In Dhobley, UNHCR, through its partner, conducted mixed migration data collection using two focus group discussions with a male and a female group and 20 key informant interviews.
- At the Peaceful Coexistence Center (PCC), supported through UNHCR in Hargeisa, 336 individuals received counseling and case referral support. Most of the advice sought was for concerns about financial insecurity, followed by queries about refugee status determination (RSD) and health concerns. Where appropriate, cases were referred to relevant partners for further assistance.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, supported 12 individuals with psychosocial counseling, out of which six cases were referred to Hargeisa Group Hospital. Additionally, through the protection desks and hotline managed by its partner, UNHCR reached 70 individuals with psychosocial counseling and therapy, case referral and

management, as well as information about available humanitarian services. The majority of the concerns were about GBV, child protection, financial insecurity, and health.

Registration, reception, and reintegration support

- In Berbera, Somaliland, UNHCR and partners received three commercial boats from Yemen carrying six refugees. They were transferred to the UNHCR-managed Reception Center for registration, food, accommodation, health screening, and counseling support. Likewise, in Mogadishu, UNHCR and its partner received three Somali refugee-returnee HHs (7 individuals) from India, China, and Mauritania.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR distributed subsistence allowance to 892 refugee HHs (4,315 individuals), covering expenses to meet their basic needs from June to August. The assistance was based on needs and informed by a rigorous vulnerability assessment. The refugees collected their cash through Amal Bank in Hargeisa, Berbera, Burao, and Borama. Apart from UNHCR, its partners and community representatives were present to monitor the distribution and provide counseling and support.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR distributed subsistence allowance to 20 Somali refugee-returnee HHs (34 individuals). Likewise, in Kismayo, Jubaland, five Somali refugee-returnee HHs (8 individuals) also received subsistence allowance. This form of cash assistance helped refugee-returnees meet their basic needs, aiding in their reintegration.



A UNHCR staff conducts biometric verification during subsistence allowance cash distribution in Hargeisa. © UNHCR

Legal assistance

- In Somaliland and Puntland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided legal assistance to 343 individuals, mainly refugees, asylum-seekers, a handful of IDPs, and the host community. Services included legal counseling, mediation, legal advocacy for release from custody, legal representation and other court-related services, marriage certificate issuance, emergency shelter support, and referral to other service providers.

Health

- In line with the Djibouti Road Map, in Somaliland, the implementation of health programme was handed over to the Somaliland authorities. The move is also in accordance with UNHCR's Health Transition Strategy, which aims to enhance the hosting authority's capacity and infrastructure for improved access to health services for refugees and asylum-seekers.
- In Puntland and Somaliland, UNHCR's partners delivered primary and secondary health care services to 1,749 refugees and asylum-seekers. Services included consultations and medical screening, laboratory investigations, medical treatments, and referrals to specialized hospitals.

Education

- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided financial support to 1,754 refugee and asylum-seeker students studying in public elementary schools. Furthermore, 139 secondary school students also benefited from cash-based interventions for scholastic materials. UNHCR aims to improve school retention and completion rates, as well as academic performance, as they will be able to purchase school supplies such as textbooks, school uniforms, and other learning tools with the assistance provided.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, conducted back-to-school awareness-raising campaign for refugees and asylum-seekers parents and children to share information about school reopening dates and the education support that students enjoy in public schools from the host government and UNHCR, aiming to ensure that children return to school and improve the enrollment rate for refugees and asylum-seekers, which stands at 25%.
- UNHCR, through its partner, provided allowances to 77 DAFI students, including 80 female students, all of whom are attending different colleges and universities.



Drought and Flood Response

- In the Togdheer region of Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided one-time cash for NFI support to 320 of the most vulnerable IDP HHs (2,236 individuals) to meet their basic needs.
- The UNHCR-supported protection desks at 17 IDP sites in Bossaso, Badan, Garowe, Gardo, and North Galkayo in Puntland continued to serve as communication hubs, information centers, and referral points for the affected communities. More than 200 individuals visited the help desks to seek assistance or information, as well as raise protection concerns or complaints. Food, shelter, and medical assistance were identified as some of the top needs of the communities. The protection desk teams also conducted focus group discussions and household visits to identify new arrivals to share information about available services as well as protection concerns and needs.
- In Beletweyne, the mobile protection desk visited eight IDP sites and identified 30 vulnerable households that needed services such as shelter, NFIs, water, and health.
- In the Sool and Togdheer regions in Somaliland, through the UNHCR-supported protection desks in Widhwidh, Yagoori, and 18 May IDP sites, 14 individuals were referred to different service providers for support, and 5 cases received one-time emergency cash assistance for protection.
- Through its partner, UNHCR did rapid protection and shelter assessments in Hargeisa for IDPs who had moved to Nasahablood B and Daami IDP settlements. 534 HHs (3,194 people) were found to be most in need of an NFI response. The families were relocated from prior settlements to avert potential harm from floods and other hazards.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR participated in the monthly Protection Cluster meeting, where key protection issues including CP, GBV, and housing, land, and property (HLP) were discussed. Besides the drought, the meeting also covered the inter-clan fighting in Horufadhi and Dhaalmayagag villages in Buhoodle district, Togdheer region, that broke out on 18 July, following a land dispute and in which at least one person was reportedly killed, several others injured, and over 1,900 individuals were displaced. Furthermore, within the Protection Cluster, sub-regional coordination meetings were held in Togdheer and Sool regions, where an observation was made about increasing CP and GBV cases amid unrelenting internal displacement and funding gaps. Emphasis was placed on urgent needs/gaps, including livelihoods, shelter, and WASH.



UNHCR's partner installing an information board to share hotline numbers and to explain that all services provided by UNHCR are for free. © JUCRI



Capacity building

- In Hargeisa, UNHCR conducted a training session for Hargeisa Group Hospital staff on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). Hargeisa Group Hospital is UNHCR's health project implementing partner following the transition of health programme to Somaliland authorities pursuant to the Djibouti Roadmap. Furthermore, training for implementing partners on protection mainstreaming was also organized to strengthen the partners' understanding of and application of protection mainstreaming in humanitarian responses.
- UNHCR held a proGres and registration procedure refresher training for the National Commission for Refugees and IDPs (NCRI) and UNHCR colleagues in the South-Central region. Following the completion of the training, NCRI commenced the registration of new arrivals. On-the-job training at the NCRI Registration Center was also held, which enabled NCRI to conduct registration effectively and independently.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, trained 20 enumerators on New Arrival Tracking (NAT 2.0), which captures new arrival data at the IDP sites. Furthermore, seven Camp Management Committee (CMC) members were trained about safety audits and the basics of camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) in Gambadhe and Qabribayah IDP sites in Laascaanood district, Sool region, Somaliland. The CMC members learned about the roles and responsibilities of CMCs, accountability, protection mainstreaming, GBV, community participation, information management, leadership and conflict resolution, fire prevention, complaints and feedback mechanisms, and referral pathways.
- In Dhobley, UNHCR, through its partner, conducted protection training with 20 participants drawn from IDP site leaders and local administration representatives, covering topics such as GBV, child protection risk prevention, and the safe referral approach, among others.



Community Empowerment and Self Reliance

- In Somaliland, UNHCR and its partner monitored various technical and vocational education training (TVET) centers providing skills training to forcefully displaced persons and refugee-returnees to assess the progress of the project and found out that some trainees for hospitality training were unable to report due to their inability to raise fees for medical check-ups, an enrollment prerequisite. UNHCR covered the costs of the medical checkups of nine candidates.



Shelter and NFI

- In pursuit of durable solutions for IDPs in Bossaso, Puntland, UNHCR, through its partner, has neared completion of the construction of 150 permanent shelters at the Grible 2 site. 100 HHs have been successfully relocated to the project site, with more than 50% of shelters and latrines being completed and fully occupied. The construction approach is based on the owner-driver model, in which beneficiaries actively participate in the construction process and UNHCR's partner's technical team provides ongoing advice to ensure quality requirements are met.
- At the Hayayaeb IDP settlement in Burao, Togdheer region, Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, has completed seven additional shelters and latrines, bringing the total number of hybrid shelters and latrines constructed to 37. A community-driven approach whereby beneficiaries are engaged in the construction has been adopted for the project to promote community ownership and empowerment.



Completed permanent shelters and in Grible-2 Durable Solutions Site in Bossaso. © NRC



Cluster Coordination and Leadership



1.7M

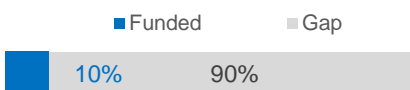
of beneficiaries reached by the Protection Cluster



5 M People in need

3.2 M People targeted

211 M Funding required



581K²

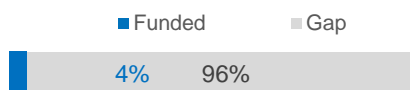
of beneficiaries reached by the Shelter Cluster



4.9 M People in need

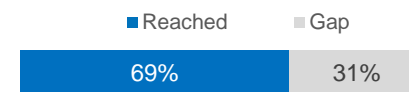
1.4 M People targeted

85 M Funding required



1.7M

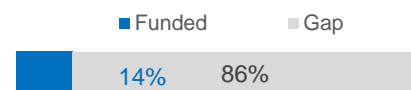
of beneficiaries reached by the CCCM Cluster



2.8 M People in need

2.45 M People targeted

66 M Funding required



² Shelter cluster data is as of 31 June, 2023.

Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster's Working Group on the Protection of Civilians has submitted its first analyses related to the handover and closure of the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) to Somali Security Forces (SSF) as a part of the ATMIS draw-down plan. These studies focus on how the handover/closure of FOBs might impact and increase the protection risks of the civilian population living in their proximities, and they support this transition process by taking measures to reduce those risks.
- The Protection Cluster has submitted its Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) prioritization for the July – December 2023 period. Protection response aims to reach 269,681 targeted population, who face specific protection needs and/or are at heightened protection risks in 29 conflict-affected districts across 12 regions in Somalia. With a funding request of USD 8,304,550 and through 30 partners (70% national), the cluster prioritizes protection of civilians, identification of people with special needs, community self-protection, and feedback mechanisms.
- The Protection Cluster's Working Group on Disability Inclusion, which is led by Humanity & Inclusion, is planning a series of capacity-building activities for the disability inclusion working group (DIWG) to transfer technical skills and knowledge about disability inclusion to the working group members in line with Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster

- CCCM partners in Dayniile conducted awareness campaigns on aid diversion and extortion. IDPs were informed about their right to receive humanitarian aid for free and services that help prevent exploitation. Communities were encouraged to report instances of aid diversion or extortion using various available reporting channels.
- Service monitoring activities were conducted across 1,655 IDP sites covering 33 districts under the administration of 21 partners. Overall, 65% of the sites had access to water; 40% of the sites had primary education facilities within them; 51% had access to health facilities within walking distance; and 65% had nutrition facilities. Moreover, 85% of the sites were made up of emergency shelters, and only 11% of households claimed to have received cash or food assistance within the last 6 months.
- In July, the number of issues raised through the CCCM-managed complaint and feedback mechanism (CFM) stood at 2,955, which represented a decrease of 33% compared to the previous month, when 4,443 cases were recorded with the CFM. Most of the complaints raised in July were attributed to food and livelihood needs (1,652), which made up 56% of the total issues recorded, followed by shelter (626) and WASH (488), which made up 21% and 17% of the total issues recorded, respectively.
- The CCCM Cluster partners conducted 16 coordination meetings with local authorities in Dayniile, Khada, Gaalkayo South, and Cadaado to discuss challenges, service gaps, and damages to shelters due to bad weather, among others.
- To enhance communication with communities, CCCM partners conducted orientation, awareness-raising sessions, and information sharing with the use of posters and billboards on available humanitarian services in Dayniile, Khada, and Baidoa. A total of 26,214 individuals were reached with information and awareness-raising sessions.
- CCCM partners conducted decongestion activities in 150 sites to improve access and mitigate the risk of fire in congested sites; they also cleaned the drainage system and managed waste disposal. Partners carried out 59 site improvement activities, including the improvement of 15 communal infrastructures and regular site cleanup campaigns using cash-for-work approach by engaging site maintenance committees and community volunteers.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2023 amount to **USD 43.58 million**. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have already contributed to the Somalia Operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

External / Donors Relations

Thanks to the donors of earmarked contributions to Somalia Operation in 2023 | USD

United States of America 22.6 million | **CERF** 6.2 million | **Japan** 3.1 million | **Germany** 1.1 million | **World Food Programme** 0.5 million

Denmark | Other private donors

Thanks to the donors of softly earmarked contributions to UNHCR in 2023 | USD

United States of America 35.6 million | **Private donors Australia** 5.3 million | **Australia** 3.9 million | **Canada** 5.3 million | **Finland** 3.1 million | **Private donors Germany** 3.1 million | **Private donors USA** 2.7 million

France | Isle of Man | Luxembourg | Private donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted funds to UNHCR in 2023 | USD

Sweden 69 million | **Norway** 63.1 million | **Private donors Spain** 36.9 million | **Netherlands** 36.3 million | **Denmark** 35.6 million | **United Kingdom** 28.9 million | **France** 26.7 million | **Germany** 23.1 million | **Private donors Japan** 21.2 million | **Switzerland** 18.9 million | **Private donors Republic to Korea** 18.6 million | **Belgium** 11.9 million | **Ireland** 11.9 million | **Private donors Italy** 10.3 million

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Kuwait | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Portugal | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

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From
the People of Japan