

Somalia

September 2023

The operating environment in Somalia is complex. Decades of conflict and insecurity, political tensions, clan dynamics, and climate change have resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. In 2023 alone, there have been almost 1.5 million internal displacements, primarily due to conflict or insecurity (40%), drought (29%), and flooding (28%).

Many parts of the country remain inaccessible because of conflict and insecurity. The National Army (SNA) and its security partners have started

military campaigns against the non-state armed group (NSAG) to regain and stabilize previously inaccessible areas. The indiscriminate reprisal attacks by the NSAG resulted in the deaths and displacement of innocent bystanders. Political tensions and armed confrontations also continued in Laascaanood, Sool region.


The damage from the longest drought on record may take years to recover from. In April-June, flash floods displaced thousands of Somalis, and *El Nino* in October-December is predicted to bring extreme flooding.

UNHCR's footprint in Somalia dates back thirty years; and today, it is present in 11 countrywide locations.

UNHCR provides protection and assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, IDPs, and vulnerable host communities. The operation works closely with the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and partners to support durable solutions for all displaced persons. Emergency response to conflict and climatic events are also pivotal to UNHCR's mandate.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

 **3.86 million** IDPs

 **36,903** refugees and asylum-seekers

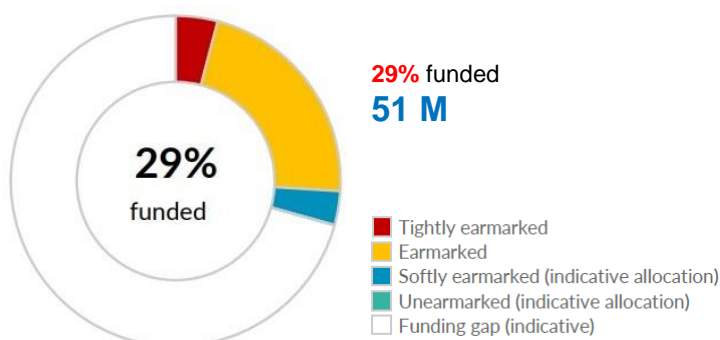
 **7,583** refugee returnees

FUNDING UPDATE

(AS OF 18 SEPTEMBER 2023)

USD 174.2 M

Requested for the Somalia Operation



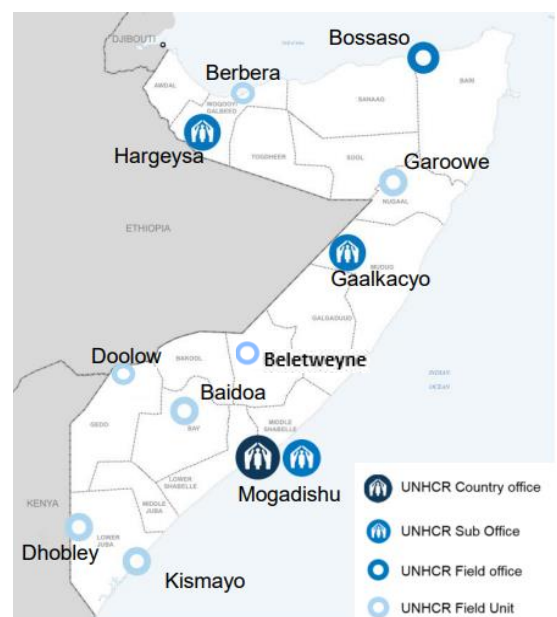
UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 116 National Staff
- 48 International Staff
- 27 Affiliated Workforce

Offices:

- 1 Country Office
- 3 Sub Offices
- 1 Field Office
- 7 Field Units
- 1 Support Office in Nairobi



Strategic Priorities

The creation of favorable protection environment to attain durable solutions for refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, and IDPs is the cornerstone for UNHCR's work in Somalia. The operation strives to improve the legal and regulatory frameworks for citizenship rights, enhance absorption capacity in return areas, and advocate for the inclusion of UNHCR's persons of concern in social protection systems, through the relevant line ministries. With strong collaborations with the FGS, the Federal Member States (FMS), and other stakeholders, the operation aspires to strengthen its catalytic role in implementing UNHCR's IDP Policy (2019) and UN Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement. Access to durable housing and safe settlements keeping with local practices and environmental considerations is prioritized.

UNHCR continues to deliver timely emergency response in the face of conflict and climate induced displacements by ensuring access to life-saving basic services. Within the framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), UNHCR leads/co-leads the Protection, Shelter/NFI, and CCCM clusters. Through the application of area-based and the whole-of-society approaches, UNHCR advocates for the inclusion of all displaced persons in a timely emergency response. Use of cash-based interventions is the preferred modality of assistance. Furthermore, UNHCR ensures Centrality of Protection in all humanitarian response.

In alignment with UNHCR's mandate and global strategic priorities, the operation continues to prioritize the delivery of protection for refugees and asylum-seekers in line with national and international frameworks.

In 2023, UNHCR programmes are guided by the age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach, which inter alia, aims at promoting gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable groups in the response. Furthermore, the operation continues to ensure that all of its programmes are designed to promote protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

Main Activities and Achievements

Refugees and Asylum-seekers

- Under its core mandate, UNHCR monitors the situation of all refugees and asylum-seekers to ensure their adequate protection and well-being. Majority of refugees and asylum-seekers are from Ethiopia (66%) followed by Yemen and Syria (29%) and the remaining population are from other countries such as Syria and Tanzania.
- UNHCR continues to advocate with the FGS for the endorsement of the **Refugee bill**, which was passed by the lower house of the Somali parliament in September 2023.
- The **Somaliland Refugees and Asylum Seekers Law**, which was drafted with inputs and technical guidance from UNHCR, was launched June 2023. UNHCR is supporting the Somaliland authorities to transition into the new law.
- UNHCR undertakes **Refugee Status Determination (RSD)** and facilitates **access to documentation and legal assistance**, including counselling, representation before the court, mediation, and advocacy for release from custody. This year, UNHCR has provided legal assistance to 2,363 refugees and asylum-seekers.
- UNHCR assists and advocates to build resilience through linkages with development actors and government institutions or with **sustainable livelihood projects** that include skills training, distribution of start-up capital, and material support. This year, UNHCR has supported 102 refugees and asylum-seekers with livelihood support.

- UNHCR supports with and advocates for the provision of **essential services**, including education and healthcare. **Material and financial assistance** are also distributed to the most vulnerable. In 2023, UNHCR has provided 4,645 refugees and asylum-seekers with primary health care services, 2,389 individuals with secondary or tertiary health care, 7,332 refugee and asylum-seeker children with primary education, 1,239 children with secondary education, and 4,315 individuals with multipurpose cash assistance.

Somali refugee returnees

- UNHCR facilitates the **voluntary, safe, and dignified returns** of Somali refugees. Since January 2020, UNHCR has assisted 2,351 Somali refugee returnees, primarily through the **Voluntary Repatriation** and **Assisted Spontaneous Returnees (ASR)** programmes from Kenya and Yemen, respectively, and continues to monitor and support an additional 5,232 returnees who came back to Somalia on their own.
- In 2023, the ASR programme from Yemen to Somalia resumed in August. Likewise, the Voluntary Repatriation programme from Kenya is set to restart in 2023. In 2023, out of the planned 1,500 individuals, 255 Somalis have returned to Somalia under the ASR.
- UNHCR provides refugee returnees with a **support package** to facilitate their **reintegration** into the community. This includes reintegration and subsistence cash allowance, vocational training and business start-up grants, legal assistance, education, and health, among others. This year, 534 returnees have received multipurpose cash assistance, 108 have received return assistance packages, 38 have received livelihood training, and 47 have received transitional shelters to help them with reintegration.

IDPs

- UNHCR leads the **PRMN (Protection and Return Monitoring Network)** project that reports on internal displacements, protection risks, and the triggers for such movements. The data is widely shared with other humanitarian partners for the drought response and is also used for IDP programming, advocacy, and [external publication](#).
- UNHCR works with federal and local authorities as well as development and humanitarian partners, to secure **land tenure rights**, champion sound **settlement planning**, construct **durable shelters** and **climate-friendly infrastructure**, and deliver **sustainable livelihood** projects to promote durable solutions/local integration. In 2023, UNHCR has provided 754 individuals with transitional shelters, and 538 individuals received durable shelters.
- UNHCR provides **emergency response** and contributes to the overall inter-agency efforts to respond to conflicts and climate change-accelerated droughts and floodings through **shelter, NFI, protection, and CCCM** support. This year, UNHCR has supported 20,913 IDPs with core relief items, 15,113 individuals with multipurpose cash assistance, and 1,566 individuals with emergency shelter kits.
- UNHCR's response for IDPs also include capacity building and **awareness raising** on prevention and response to **gender-based violence (GBV)**, prevention of protection violations, and services available. This year, 6,857 GBV survivors were identified. They received case management and psychosocial support.



A UNHCR verifying eligible drought affected vulnerable IDPs receive core relief items in North Kismayo. © UNHCR

Working with Partners

In Somalia, UNHCR is delivering protection and assistance services through 31 partners that include 12 from the government, 10 national and local NGOs, and 9 INGOs. Furthermore, UNHCR also leads/co-lead the Protection, Shelter Clusters and the CCCM clusters.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2023 amount to **USD 51 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 32.3 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 51 million | **Italy** 8.8 million | **Private donors Australia** 6.9 million | **Australia** 3.9 million | **Canada** 3.9 million | **Private donors USA** 3.2 million | **Finland** 3.1 million | **Private donors Germany** 3.1 million | **Private donors United Kingdom** 2.4 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** 49.7 million | **Netherlands** 36.3 million | **Denmark** 35.6 million | **Private donors Japan** 30 million | **United Kingdom** 28.9 million | **France** 26.7 million | **Private donors Republic to Korea** 23.5 million | **Germany** 23.1 million | **Switzerland** 18.9 million | **Private donors Italy** 13.7 million | **Belgium** 11.9 million | **Ireland** 11.9 million

Algeria | Australia | Austria | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | 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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LINKS

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