

SOMALIA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

May 2024



UNHCR Representative, Mr. Charles Mballa, delivers a speech during the handover of 78 permanent shelters to forcibly displaced persons at the Shabelle Durable Solutions Site in Gardo, Puntland. © UNHCR

OVERVIEW

Somalia continues to face a severe humanitarian crisis, with **over six million** Somalis reported to be in need of humanitarian assistance. This is primarily due to a cycle of escalating climate shocks, mainly droughts and floods, ongoing conflicts, outbreaks of diseases, and economic disruption. The **Protection and Returns Monitoring Network (PRMN)**, which has been tracking internal displacement trends for the past 17 years, recorded 74,000 internal displacements in May, primarily due to flooding. Climate change is expected to impact Somalia for the foreseeable future.

The security situation in Somalia remained unpredictable. Al-Shabaab, hereafter referred to as the non-state armed group (NSAG), remained the main security threat, and it targeted government security forces, government workers, and African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) personnel and facilities. Both the Somaliland authorities and the Sool, Sanaag, and Cayn (SSC)-Khatumo administration mobilized troops to the frontlines, thereby escalating tensions.

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. Finding durable solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in collaboration with the FGS, Federal Member States (FMS), and development and humanitarian partners remains one of UNHCR's top priorities in Somalia. In Somalia, UNHCR leads/co-leads the Protection, Shelter, and CCCM clusters for the IDP response.

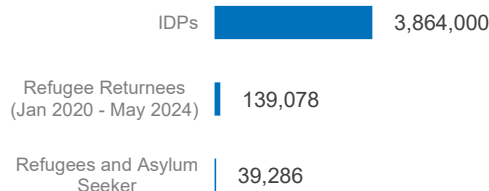
UNHCR's key achievements for the month of May are listed below:

- As part of its flood response, UNHCR supported the IDP enrollment and distribution of non-food items (NFIs) using the UNHCR Global Distribution Tool (GDT) in Beletweyne, Hiran region, for 4,000 vulnerable households.
- At the Shabelle Durable Solutions site in Gardo, Puntland, UNHCR, together with the partners and authorities, handed over 78 permanent shelters and land title deeds to vulnerable IDPs, refugees, and asylum-seekers.
- UNHCR launched the Inter-Agency Community Feedback Mechanism (ICFM), which issued 546 referrals by the end of May.
- UNHCR, through its partner, conducted Business Management Training for 291 refugee and asylum-seekers, who will receive small business grants, in Bossaso, Gardo, Garowe, and Galkayo.

KEY FIGURES

DISPLACEMENT AFFECTED POPULATIONS

3.9M # of people with and for whom UNHCR works



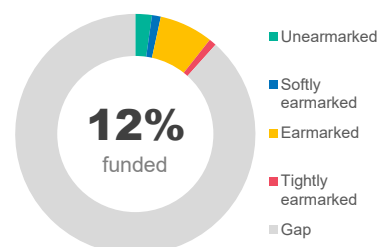
PARTNERS

29 # of partners implementing key UNHCR activities in 2024



FUNDING

177 M Funding required for 2024 (as of 31 May)



POPULATION DATA

39,286

Refugees and asylum-seekers

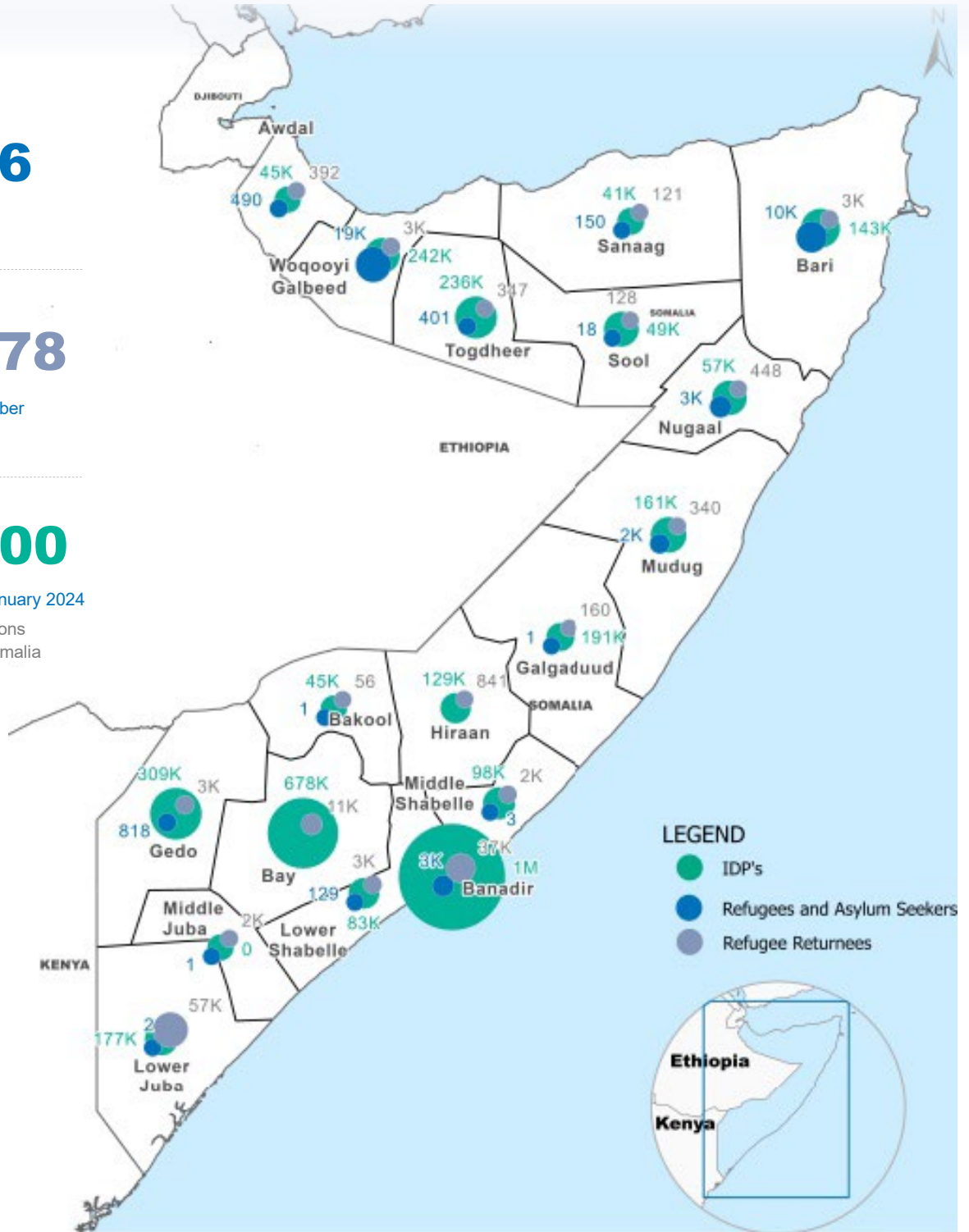
139,078

Refugee returnees from December 2014

215,000

Internal displacements since January 2024

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



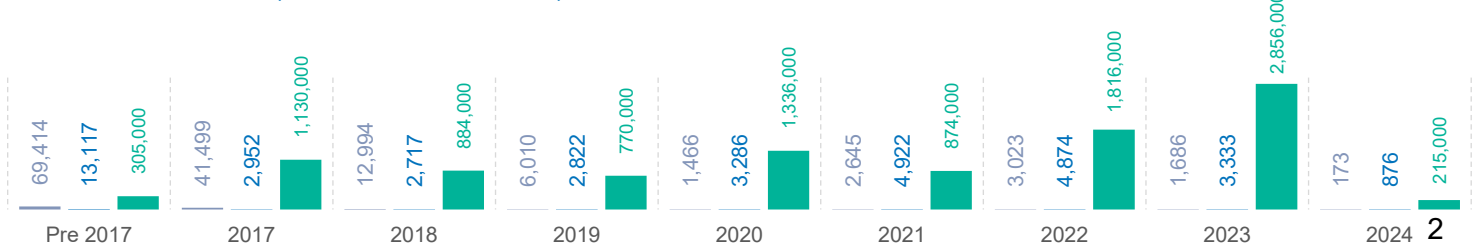
Sources of Data: UNHCR, UN IDP-WG, HDX

Feedback: sommopmn@unhcr.org

Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

POPULATION TREND (ARRIVALS PER YEAR)

Refugee Returnees | Refugees and Asylum-Seekers | Internal Displacements (PRMN)



Operational Context

UNHCR in Somalia continued to operate in a highly complex environment characterized by insecurity, political tension, and climate change. The humanitarian crisis in Somalia is severe. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 6.9 million people in Somalia will need humanitarian assistance in 2024. Recurrent shocks, including climatic events, conflict, insecurity, and disease outbreaks, continue to exacerbate needs. About 4.3 million people remain acutely food insecure, and malnutrition rates among children under five remain high.¹

Rates of internal displacement owing to climate change and insecurity remained high. The UNHCR-led [Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), recorded 215,000 displacements within Somalia in 2024, with the Hiran, Lower Juba, and Bay regions recording the highest number of displaced population inflows. In May alone, 74,000 internal displacements were recorded, primarily because of floods (86%), insecurity (11%), and other reasons (3%). Food, shelter, and water were the top needs of the newly displaced families. Hiran was the most affected region, accounting for 68% of the total displacements. Women and children, who face heightened protection risk, make up 80% of the displaced population.² The new PRMN online interactive dashboard at <http://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/> provides more up-to-date information about displacement and the protection needs of IDPs.

The rains triggered by the El-Nino phenomenon caused localized flooding and affected 268,000 people, although some of the displaced people have returned home due to prevailing dry conditions.³ There has been a surge in acute watery diarrhea (AWD)/cholera cases, largely due to contaminated water sources, malnutrition in children, inadequate sanitation, and challenges in accessing healthcare. The Federal Ministry of Health reports that since January, there have been 12,327 cases and 114 deaths, indicating a case fatality rate of 1.0%. Most of these cases are in the Afgooye district, followed by Banadir. Furthermore, heavy rains have severely affected the water, sanitation, and hygiene sectors, leading to the destruction of 644 latrines and significant damage to 124 water points, thereby increasing the risk of waterborne diseases.⁴

Ongoing insecurity and conflict contributed to a volatile operating environment for humanitarian actors and resulted in the displacement, injuries, and deaths of many ordinary Somalis. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)-led military operations against the non-state armed group (NASG) continued but slowed down a notch with the ongoing rains. The NASG conducted reprisal attacks and continued to engage in asymmetrical attacks against civilians and government institutions, mostly from the Galmudug region in central Somalia all the way to Lower Juba in the south of the country. Similarly, the situation in and around Laascaanood continues to be tense, with reports of mobilization of troops by both the Somaliland authorities and the Sool, Sanaag, and Cyan (SCC)-Khatumo in Buqdharkayn, Oog, and other nearby areas in the Sool region.

On the political front, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland on 1 January continued to be a major source of political tension. The agreement grants Ethiopia, a landlocked country, access to the sea in exchange for Somaliland's recognition as an independent country. Additionally, Federal President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud presided over the National Consultative Council (NCC) meeting, leading to significant resolutions on national security and constitutional revision; however, Puntland State's refusal to participate in the meeting highlighted ongoing tensions between the FGS and Puntland.

Somalia also hosts 39,286 refugees and asylum-seekers, of whom 66% are women and children; 30% 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 (65%) are from Ethiopia, followed by Yemen (29%), Syria (4%), and other countries (1%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers (74%) 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. Furthermore, since December 2014, 139,078 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Kenya, followed by Yemen. From the total number of refugee returnees, 95,181 individuals have been directly assisted by UNHCR, mainly through the Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and the Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) Programme from Yemen.

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-2024-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-hnrrp-summary>

² [Somalia Factsheet - Key Figures \(As of 29 Feb 2024\) - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#)

³ <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-4-june-2024>

⁴ <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/somalia-2024-gu-april-june-season-floods-bi-weekly-situation-report-no-3-30-may-2024>

Update on Achievements



Protection

Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)

- UNHCR, through its partners, identified and supported at least 118 new and existing GBV cases via protection desks, hotlines, one stop GBV centers, individual case management, and a safehouse. The survivors received safe shelter and meal support, psychosocial counseling, medical and legal referrals, and cash assistance, among others.
- UNHCR, through its partner, identified and supported 62 forcibly displaced persons in Baidoa, Dhobley, Dollow, Kismayo, and Mogadishu with Individual Protection Assistance (IPA), addressing their physical safety to protect them against violence, exploitation, and harassment, as well as providing them with protection and assistance such as emergency shelter, psychosocial counseling, and livelihood initiatives to empower them economically.
- In Kismayo, UNHCR, through its partner, organized a comprehensive training session for Community-Based Committees (CBC) at the New Luglow IDP site, aiming to bolster GBV prevention and response efforts within the community. A diverse cross-section of the community committed to combating GBV attended the training, comprising 21 males and 19 females. Participants underwent extensive sessions equipping them with essential knowledge and skills, ranging from understanding their roles and responsibilities within the community to learning effective GBV prevention strategies and response mechanisms. Special emphasis was placed on raising awareness about the root causes and far-reaching consequences of GBV, empowering participants to address GBV-related issues sensitively and effectively within their community.
- UNHCR, in coordination with UNICEF and UNFPA, facilitated Primero/GBVIMS+ training for 32 participants from six data gathering organizations in South-Central Somalia. The design of Primero/GBVIMS+ integrates international best practices and standards in GBV case management and information management.
- In Baidoa, UNHCR, through its partner, distributed sanitary kits as an emergency response to 13 women and girls of reproductive age, including newly arrived IDPs. These kits help maintain personal hygiene and dignity.

Community engagement and awareness raising

- UNHCR launched the Inter-Agency Community Feedback Mechanism (ICFM) on 8 May. In preparation for the rollout, Hormud Telecom conducted a training session for the helpline agents, covering system use and effective call handling. Additionally, agents received instruction on recording and categorizing calls within the system, as well as training on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). The ICFM issued 546 referrals for service assistance.
- UNHCR conducted the mapping of the Protection Desks, identifying 75 active desks in Dollow, Bossaso, Garowe, Gardo, North and South Galkayo, Guriel, Dhusamareeb, Abudwaq, and Adado. The mapping exercise will guide the reprogramming of the desks, with a specific focus on the ten prioritized districts endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team: Beletweyne, Garowe, Luuq, Kismayo, Afmadow, Bardheere, Galkayo, Baidoa, Banadir, and Jamaame.
- UNHCR-supported Roving Protection Help Desks operated across 54 sites in Bossaso, Garowe, Gardo, North and South Galkayo, Guriel, Dhusamareeb, Abudwaq, and Adado with the aim of enhancing access to information and referral services for persons at risk. The desks conducted focus group discussions, engaged with community leaders and stakeholders on protection issues, and made home visits to individuals with protection concerns. The desks reached over 1,539 people across all locations, providing specialized services and referrals to more than 60 people.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, conducted two awareness sessions. The first session, entitled “Child Rights and Child Abuse,” educated 20 school-going children at Sheikh Madar Elementary School in Hargeisa about their rights, self-protection, and reporting abuse. The children expressed difficulty accessing education due to discrimination and financial burdens. The second session engaged 25 women and girls from the refugee communities, focusing on positive parenting for healthier relationships with children.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner at the joint counseling desk of the Peaceful Co-existence Center (PCC) and hotline in Hargeisa, supported 170 refugees and asylum-seekers with counseling, information dissemination,



UNHCR's partner conducting focus group discussion with forcibly displaced women in Hargeisa. © Diversity Action Network (DAN)

and referral services. Furthermore, UNHCR also supported 400 individuals directly through hotlines and a protection mailbox.

Legal assistance

- In Somaliland and Puntland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided legal assistance and support to 345 individuals, mainly refugees and asylum-seekers, along with a handful of IDPs and host community members. Services included legal counseling, mediation, legal advocacy for release from custody, legal representation before the court, emergency shelter assistance to cushion against eviction, and referral to other service providers, among others. Furthermore, UNHCR, through its partners, conducted 67 monitoring visits to police stations and detention centers in Maroodi-Jeeh and Sahil regions in Somaliland, as well as Bari and Nugal regions in Puntland, ensuring the release of 25 refugees and asylum-seekers from custody.

Registration, reception, and reintegration support

- In Somaliland, the National Refugee and Displacement Agency (NRDA) registered and biometrically enrolled 336 new arrivals, comprising 62 asylum-seekers (36 females and 26 males), 234 refugees (58 females and 176 males), and 40 returnees (26 females and 14 males). The majority of the newly registered asylum seekers and refugees were Syrians and Yemenis, followed by individuals from Ethiopia and Sudan.
- The NDRA in Somaliland renewed 305 refugee ID cards and 176 certificates for asylum-seekers in May, resulting in a cumulative issuance of 8,272 refugee and asylum-seeker identity documents, out of the estimated 12,000 documents scheduled for renewal in 2024.
- In Berbera, Somaliland, UNHCR and partners received 135 refugee new arrivals (30 females and 105 males). The main flight reasons highlighted were protection risks associated with insecurity in the countries of origin. Additionally, 38 unassisted Somali refugee returnees (24 females and 14 males) were also received. They were transferred to the UNHCR Reception Center, where they received temporary accommodation, internet, registration, food, health screening, and counseling support.
- UNHCR and partners received 14 refugees and 16 Somali refugee returnees at the reception center in Bossaso, Puntland, where they received accommodation.
- In Hargeisa, UNHCR facilitated a one-day training session for NDRA registration personnel on proGres data entry and biometrics with a focus on recording and updating specific needs with the goal of enhancing data quality and improving the utility of proGres for profiling for protection assistance.

Durable solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers:

- UNHCR, with partners and authorities, facilitated the resettlement of a refugee family of three refugees (one female and two children) to Canada.



Shelter NFI

- With the overall aim of local integration of forcibly displaced persons, at the Shabelle Durable Solutions site in Gardo, Puntland, UNHCR, together with the partners and authorities, handed over 78 permanent shelters and land title deeds to vulnerable IDPs, refugees, and asylum-seekers.
- UNHCR, through its partner, successfully completed the construction of 30 out of the planned 120 transitional shelters at the Midnimo IDP site in Dhobley, Lower Juba region. The shelters will serve as temporary housing and will provide basic living conditions for individuals and communities who have been displaced due to conflicts and natural disasters, such as drought and flooding. The construction work is progressing smoothly, and it is expected to be completed by early next month.
- At the Hadhwanaag Durable Solutions site in Adado, UNHCR and partners invited the Galmudug State President to inaugurate the construction of 117 permanent shelters, each featuring two rooms and a latrine. The shelters will help to locally integrate 117 IDP families, finding a durable solution to their displacement predicament.



Completed emergency shelters in Bardheere. © AVORD



Flood Response

- UNHCR supported IDP enrollment and distribution of non-food items (NFIs) in Beletweyne using the UNHCR Global Distribution Tool (GDT) for 4,000 vulnerable households. The distribution process was executed efficiently and promptly, ensuring that assistance reached the flood-affected IDPs. The NFIs distributed included 3 blankets, 1 mosquito net, 1 sleeping mat, 1 kitchen set, and 1 plastic sheet, among other essential items necessary for shelter and daily living.
- The construction of emergency shelters in Bardheere commenced in the reporting month, with 1,080 out of 1,167 units completed so far. UNHCR has also completed the vulnerability assessment to identify the flood-affected IDPs who will receive shelter assistance.



Community Empowerment and Self Reliance

- In Mogadishu, UNHCR, through its partner, provided vocational skills training to 35 individuals, including refugees and asylum-seekers, refugee returnees, IDPs, and members of the host community. The beneficiaries actively engaged in training sessions focused on tie-dye, tailoring, and beauty salon skills. The participants learned different dyeing techniques, including tie-dye patterns and fabric manipulation; in beauty salon training, the participants learned about makeup application and overall salon management, whereas in the tailoring course, the participants learned to transform pieces of fabric into beautiful dresses.
- UNHCR, through its partner, conducted Business Management Training for 291 refugee and asylum-seekers, who will receive small business grants, in Bossaso, Gardo, Garowe, and Galkayo. The training imparted knowledge to the participants on business management, planning, marketing, and recordkeeping, all of which are crucial for the success of their businesses. Likewise, six-month-long Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) classes for 50 refugees and asylum-seekers started in Bossaso, Gardo, and Galkayo. These comprehensive programs aim to equip beneficiaries with the necessary tools for sustainable livelihoods and long-term economic stability.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, facilitated three focus group discussions (FGDs) on livelihoods and self-reliance for refugees and asylum-seekers. The first FGD involved 20 participants with disabilities who reported significant challenges in accessing livelihood opportunities, with women facing even greater disadvantages due to intersecting factors. They urged for a disability-inclusive, gender-sensitive approach to support their basic survival needs and livelihoods. The second FGD involved 13 youths who cited language barriers, limited integration, and a lack of start-up capital as key challenges. The third FGD involved 17 women and girls who emphasized the need for improved sensitization on UNHCR livelihood projects, promotion of peaceful co-existence with the host community, and inclusive livelihood programs that cater to the elderly and differently abled refugees.



Women participating in a tailoring training course in Somaliland. © NRC



Education

- In Mogadishu, UNHCR, through its partner, supported the provision of access to education for 777 primary and secondary school refugee and asylum-seeker students (382 girls and 395 boys).
- In Bossaso, Gardo, Garowe, and Galkayo of Puntland State, UNHCR, through its partner, provided education support in the form of tuition fee payments to 4,234 refugee and asylum-seeker students (2,076 girls and 2,158 boys).
- UNHCR, through its partner in Somaliland, closely monitored the registration of students for the grade 8 and grade 12 national examinations. 162 refugee and asylum-seeker students (84 females and 78 males) confirmed their registration for the exams at the close of the registration exercise. UNHCR will cover the examination fees for all candidates in order to relieve parents of the financial burden and ensure that students achieve the key milestone.
- Under the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, also known as DAFI, UNHCR, through its partner, paid the tuition fee of 64 refugee and asylum-seeker students who are pursuing tertiary education in Somaliland, Puntland, and South-Central Somalia.



Health

- In Mogadishu, Puntland, and Somaliland, UNHCR's partners delivered primary, secondary, tertiary, or maternal and child health care services to 1,400 refugees, asylum-seekers, refugee-returnees, IDPs, and host community members. Services included consultations and medical screening, laboratory investigations, medical treatments, emergency inpatient services, obstetric services for women during normal births, dietary advice to people with chronic diseases, ambulance services, and referrals to specialized hospitals.



Cluster Coordination and Leadership



488K⁵

of beneficiaries reached by the Protection Cluster and the AoRs

■ Reached ■ Gap



3.8 M People in need

2.7 M People targeted

173 M Funding required

■ Funded ■ Gap



641K

of beneficiaries reached by the Shelter Cluster

■ Reached ■ Gap



4.6 M People in need

1.4 M People targeted

80 M Funding required

■ Funded ■ Gap



1.4M

of beneficiaries reached by the CCCM Cluster

■ Reached ■ Gap

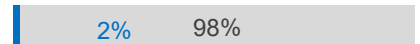


3.3 M People in need

2.7 M People targeted

61 M Funding required

■ Funded ■ Gap



Protection Cluster

- Following the Humanitarian Coordinator's (HC) request, the Protection Cluster is mapping the current coverage of Protection Desks across the 10 priority districts. This mapping analysis will allow the HC, the Area-Based Coordination model, and the Protection Cluster to prioritize the Protection Desks response, needs, and gaps, as well as standard operational procedures (SOP) across partners.
- The Protection Cluster has trained 15 enumerators from Minority Rights Organizations (MROs) on the questionnaire and data collection techniques for carrying out key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions across 21 districts. The data collection process has started, and initial findings and community recommendations on Post-Distribution Aid Diversion (PDAD) will be available during the month of June.

Shelter Cluster

- In May, the Shelter Cluster partners reached 46,473 individuals, out of which 41,587 received non-food item (NFI) kits and 4,886 received shelter support. Shelter and NFI assistance continue to be one of the top unmet needs for the IDPs.

⁵ Does not include beneficiaries reached by GBV and Child Protection AoRs.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster

- The CCCM Cluster partners held two site-specific coordination meetings. During the monthly CCCM coordination meeting in North Kismayo, stakeholders such as partners, local authorities, and IDP community representatives convened to address pressing gaps, most notably a lack of clean water, shallow wells to extract water, a lack of quality latrines and toilets, inadequate shelter and a shortage of quality tarpaulin sheets in most camps, a lack of adequate schools and education facilities, a lack of health care and child services, and an inadequate level of GBV counseling services. It was noted that emergency shelter tarpaulins distributed to affected communities did not withstand the harsh weather conditions. It was recommended that the humanitarian actors immediately carry out comprehensive post-distribution monitoring to improve the quality of programming and interventions to uphold displaced populations' fundamental right to dignity.
- Cash for Work interventions in Danyiile, Banadir, empowered 3,600 people to regain their sense of self-value and strengthen their capacity to meet basic needs.
- The CCCM Cluster partners, jointly with local authorities, conducted three site verification assessments across three districts in Somaliland. A total of 9,012 HHs (54,072 individuals) were verified to be living at the assessed sites.
- In May, the number of issues raised through the CCCM-managed complaint and feedback mechanism (CFM) system called Zite Manager stood at 4,307. Food security accounted for the majority of the complaints raised, followed by Shelter/NFI and WASH. The agencies and clusters addressed and resolved 41% of the issues raised after referral.
- The CCCM Cluster partners conducted service monitoring activities across 1,583 IDP sites, covering 25 districts, under the administration of 11 partners. This included UNHCR's partner in Galmudug State, who monitored 20 sites across Adado, Dhusamareeb, and South Galkayo. Overall, 72% of sites had water access for IDPs. 51% of sites had primary education facilities within a short walking distance, while 37% of IDP sites had primary education facilities within a 20-minute walk. 67% of sites had access to health facilities within walking distance, and 80% of sites also had access to nutrition facilities. 92% of the residents in the monitored sites live in makeshift emergency shelters, and only 8% of IDP households reported receiving cash or food assistance in the last 6 months.
- The CCCM Cluster partners conducted orientation sessions on available humanitarian services at the IDP sites, including malnutrition screening.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2024 amount to **USD 20.6 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.

Thanks to the donors of earmarked contributions to Somalia Operation in 2024 | USD

United States of America 7.6 million | **Japan** 6.6 million

Switzerland | Leaving No One Behind – The Internal Displacement Solutions Fund | USA for UNHCR | Other private donors

Thanks to softly earmarked contributions to UNHCR in 2024 | USD

Finland 6.6 million | **Australia for UNHCR** 3.8 million | **UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe** 2.9 million | **Norway** 2.8 million

New Zealand | Private donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked funds to UNHCR in 2024 | USD

Sweden 90.6 million | **Norway** 58.9 million | **Netherlands** 36.3 million | **Denmark** 35.6 million | **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** 28.5 million | **Switzerland** 19.2 million | **España con ACNUR** 19 million | **Republic of Korea** 17.9 million | **Ireland** 13.6 million | **Belgium** 11 million | **Australia** 10.7 million | **Japan for UNHCR** 10 million

Algeria | Angola | Armenia | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Luxembourg | Malta | Mexico | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Private donors

CONTACTS

Phoebe Mukunga, Associate External Relations Officer, UNHCR Somalia
mukungap@unhcr.org, Cell: +252 770 663 189 (Somalia)

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