

SOMALIA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

February 2024



UNHCR head of office in Baidoa helps a woman collect her share of plastic sheet and mosquito net. © UNHCR

OVERVIEW

In February, the humanitarian crisis in Somalia continued, with millions of Somalis in need of humanitarian assistance. The [Protection and Returns Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), which has been tracking internal displacement trends for the past 17 years, more than 17,000 internal displacements in February, primarily due to insecurity and enduring effects of floodings that occurred during the *Deyr* season, in October to December, last year. The security situation in the country remained tense, with ongoing military operations to reclaim territory from the Al-Shabaab, hereafter referred to as the non-state armed group (NSAG), which was responsible for multiple indiscriminate attacks, often causing harm to ordinary Somalis. Climate change is expected to impact Somalia for the foreseeable future.

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.

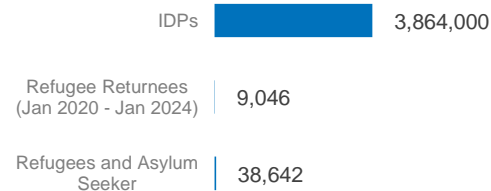
UNHCR's key achievements for the month of February are listed below:

- The Somalia Protection Cluster is working closely together with the protection actors and the Explosive Hazards Area of Responsibility (EH AoR) for the operationalization of a frontline protection response in Hobyo district, a newly accessible area in the Mudug region of Galmudug State where 8,730 individuals were displaced from their homes due to ongoing armed conflict.
- The biometric IDP enrolment in Baidoa was completed in February for 2,000 flood-affected HHs. After the enrolment, plastic tarpaulins and mosquito nets were provided to 1,900 HHs out of the 2,000 HHs using the Global Distribution Tool (GDT), which was rolled out for the first time in Somalia. Enrollment and GDT ensure accountability using biometric authentication, making sure that assistance reaches the right people.
- In Puntland, UNHCR concluded the biometric verification of 3,427 students (1,707 girls and 1,720 boys) at the primary level and 807 students (369 girls and 438 boys) at the secondary level. The verified data will ensure an efficient allocation of resources.

KEY FIGURES

PERSONS OF CONCERN

3.9M # of persons of concern to UNHCR Somalia



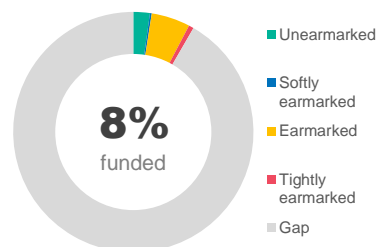
PARTNERS

29 # of partners implementing key UNHCR activities in 2024



FUNDING

177 M Funding required for 2024 (as of 29 February)



POPULATION DATA

38,642

Refugees and asylum-seekers

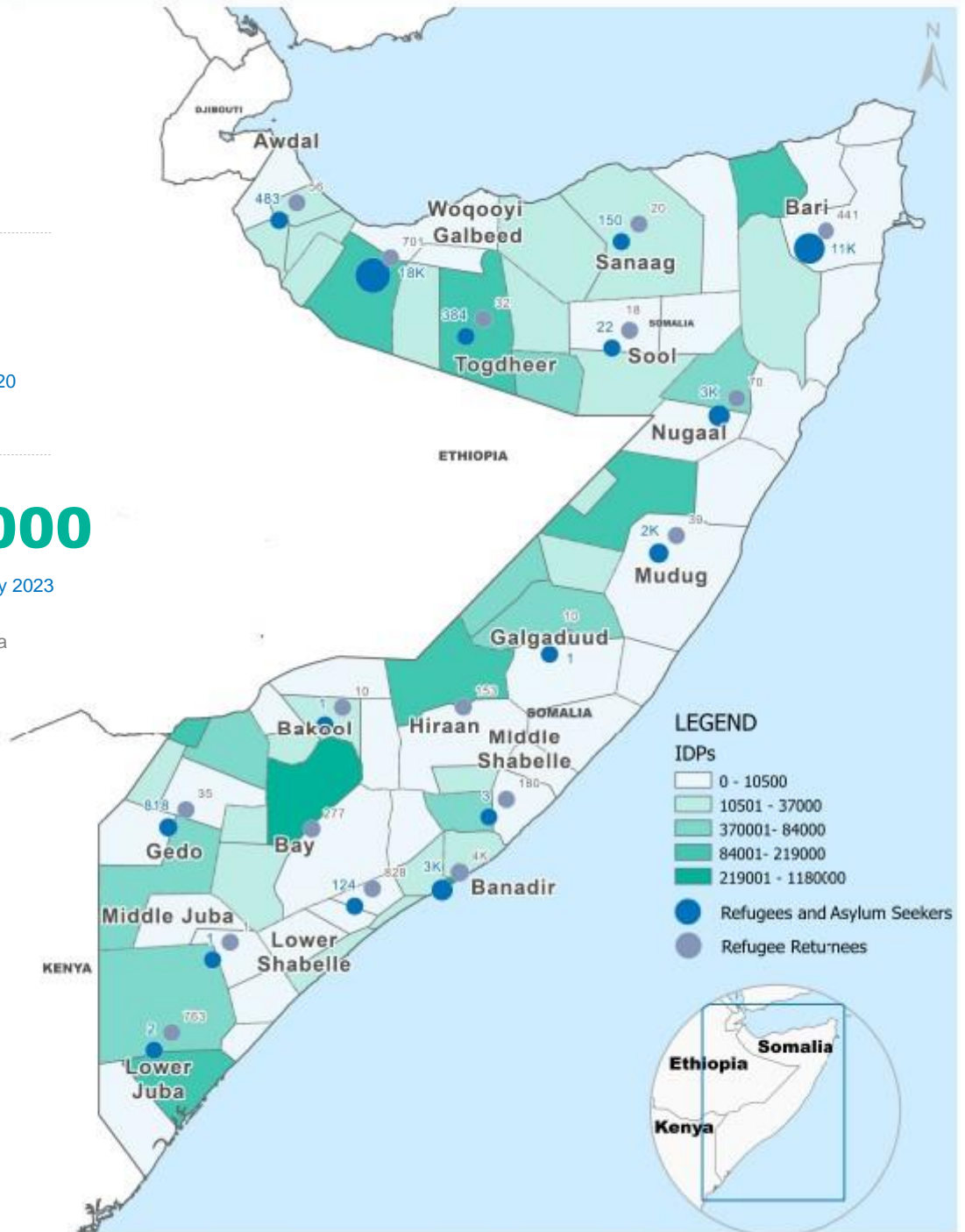
9,046

Refugee returnees from January 2020

2,974,000

Internal displacements since January 2023

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



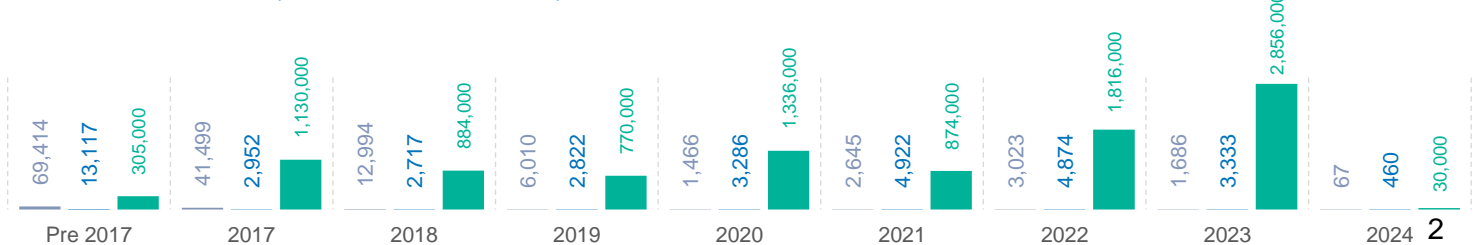
Sources of Data: UNHCR, HDX

Feedback: sommoprtn@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, largely 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. Above-average rainfall is forecasted for the next rainy season, posing a risk to agro-pastoral livelihood. Moreover, the impact of the 2023 floods continues to be felt. 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 remain high. According to the UNHCR-led [Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), more than 17,000 displacements within Somalia were recorded in February, primarily because of conflict/insecurity and climate change. Food, shelter, and livelihood support were the top needs of the newly displaced families. The top three regions that received the greatest number of new displacements in February were Gedo, followed by Middle Juba and Banadir. 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/>. Women and children, who face heightened protection risk, make up 80% of the displaced population.²

Ongoing insecurity and conflict contributed to a volatile operating environment for humanitarians and resulted in displacement, injuries, and deaths of many ordinary Somalis. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)-led military operations against the non-state armed group (NASG) intensified in February, particularly in Galmudug State. The NASG responded with reprisal attacks and continued to engage in asymmetrical attacks against the civilians and government institutions across multiple locations in central and south-central Somalia.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland on 1 January continued to cause political tension. This agreement grants Ethiopia, a landlocked country, access to the sea in return for its recognition of Somaliland as an independent country. Despite the majority of international responses supporting Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, there is a looming risk of this situation escalating into a regional conflict in the Horn of Africa.

Somalia also hosts some 38,642 refugees and asylum-seekers, of whom 67% 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 (66%) 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 January 2020, 9,046 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Yemen, followed by Kenya. From the total number of refugee returnees, 3,652 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](#)

Update on Achievements



Protection

Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)

- In Dhobley, Jubaland, and Baidoa, South West State, UNHCR, through its partner, established IDP community-based protection committees (CBPCs), who will work to identify protection risks, participate in GBV prevention and response activities, and facilitate referrals. In Dhobley the committee consists of 40 members, 25 of whom are women and 15 men. Meanwhile, in Baidoa, 30 females are part of the committee that will cover 10 IDP sites.
- In Dollow, Jubaland, UNHCR, through its partner, established a 20-member community-based protection committee, primarily from the refugee and asylum seekers community. The committee, with a majority of female members, will engage with the community to raise awareness, facilitate discussions, and implement initiatives to combat GBV and promote a culture of respect and safety. Training sessions on protection risks, aiming to equip members with skills to effectively identify, prevent, and respond to GBV have been planned.
- UNHCR, through its partner, identified and/or supported at least 68 new and existing GBV cases in February. Services to the survivors included case management support, safe house and meal support, psychosocial counseling, medical and legal referrals, the provision of hygiene and dignity kits, shelter support, transportation reimbursement, and cash assistance, among others.
- In Garowe, the UNHCR took part in the observance of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The gathering, which was organized under the leadership of the Puntland Ministry of Women, drew in 100 attendees, encompassing protection-engaged stakeholders, women leaders, religious figures, elders, and university students. The primary focus was to champion the cause of young girls vulnerable to FGM and to advocate for the passage of a GBV bill in parliament that would outlaw FGM.
- In Dhobley, UNHCR, through its partner, raised awareness about the prevention of GBV, including FGM, early marriages, and other harmful traditional practices. These sessions were conducted at two internally displaced persons (IDP) sites: Danwadag and Qorax. A total of 58 individuals, comprising 36 females and 22 males, benefited from these awareness sessions.

Community engagement and awareness raising

- In line with the Somalia Humanitarian Country Team-led post distribution aid diversion (PDAD) action plan to improve accountability towards the affected population, UNHCR continued to engage with relevant stakeholders on the singular inter-agency complaint and feedback mechanism (ICFM) and its interoperable-aggregator variation. UNHCR has shared a preliminary logbook and datasets, as guided by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), for review and approval by the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) task force members. This logbook and the endorsed datasets will guarantee that partners collect essential information necessary for an effective complaint and feedback mechanism.
- At the Bardale IDP site in South Galkayo, a 15-member Camp Management Committee (CMC) was formed, consisting of 12 women and 3 men. The CMC members have signed a code of conduct, and an orientation session was organized to help them understand their roles and responsibilities.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR provided 227 forcibly displaced people, including those with special needs, with a variety of services, including mental health and psychosocial counseling (MHPSS), case management and referral support, physiotherapy support, and general counseling, through the protection desk, joint counseling desk, and hotlines run by partners. At the joint counseling desk at the Peaceful Co-existence Center (PCC), most of the advice sought was for concerns about financial insecurity, followed by queries about refugee status determination (RSD).
- In Garowe and Gardo, Puntland, UNHCR, through the protection desks, reached 137 IDPs and 32 refugees and asylum seekers and provided protection and assistance to them. In Garowe alone, the protection desk provided psychosocial support to 38 individuals, cash assistance to six GBV survivors, and health referrals to eight individuals.



A case worker conducting one of the 12 household level vulnerability assessments in Hargeisa, Somaliland. © Diversity Action Network (DAN)

- In Garowe, UNHCR, in collaboration with its partner, actively promoted initiatives led by children in schools located within the IDP sites, reaching 172 students, 91 of whom were boys and 81 were girls. The main goal of the activity was to mobilize students and set up clubs for both genders within the school. These clubs provided a platform for students to showcase and develop their talents through a variety of creative activities, including arts, writing, drawing, poetry, music, sports, and more.

Legal assistance

- In Somaliland and Puntland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided legal assistance and support to 254 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, and referral to other service providers, among others.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR's legal partner monitored 37 police stations and temporary detention centers in Maroodi-Jeeh and Sahil regions and facilitated the release of four asylum-seekers through mediation. They also identified five additional asylum-seekers who will appear before the court, with UNHCR providing support through lawyers from its partner.

Registration, reception, and reintegration support

- In Puntland and Galmudug, UNHCR distributed three months of subsistence allowance of USD 200 per household per month to meet their basic needs and one-time reintegration cash assistance of USD 200 per person to help them reintegrate into their place of return, benefiting 42 Somali refugee returnees. Likewise, in Somaliland, 47 Somali refugee-returnees also received one-time cash reintegration support of USD 200.
- In Somaliland, UNHCR's government counterpart registered 82 HHs (194 individuals), which included 64 refugee and asylum-seeker HHs (154 individuals) and 18 Somali refugee returnee HHs (40 individuals). As a part of the identity document renewal exercise targeting around 12,000 documents, the government counterpart has issued 6,229 documents, including 2,484 asylum seeker certificates and 3,745 refugee identity cards.
- In Puntland, UNHCR, in coordination with the government counterpart, registered 17 refugee and asylum-seeker HHs (28 individuals).
- In Berbera, Somaliland, UNHCR and its partners received and provided basic services, including counseling on services available in Somaliland, to 63 newly arrived refugees and (unassisted) Somali refugee returnees.



Flood Response

- The biometric IDP enrolment in Baidoa was completed in February for 2,000 flood-affected HHs. After the enrolment, plastic tarpaulins and mosquito nets were provided to 1,900 HHs out of the 2,000 HHs using the Global Distribution Tool (GDT), which was rolled out for the first time in Somalia. This enrolment ensures accountability through biometric authentication at the point of service acquisition and mitigates the risk of aid diversion. GDT allows users to extract assistance distribution lists, authenticates the identity of beneficiaries through biometric verification, and tracks the admission, verification, and collection of assistance by beneficiaries.
- In Jowhar, Hirshabelle, UNHCR's partner and government counterpart handed over a boat and fifty life jackets to the Deputy Governor and Mayor of Jowhar. The boat is expected to be a crucial resource in tackling the immediate needs and challenges brought about by the severe floods that plague Jowhar, which lies on the banks of the Shabelle River, during the rainy seasons. The deputy governor emphasized that the boat would facilitate access to remote and hard-to-reach areas, ensuring the provision of necessary supplies, emergency aid, and evacuation support to those affected.



Handover of a rescue boat and life jackets local authorities in Jowhar to conduct search and rescue during floods. © HCRI



Education

- In Puntland, UNHCR and partners completed the verification of refugee and asylum-seeker students using ProGres V4. A total of 3,427 students (1,707 girls and 1,720 boys) at the primary level and 807 students (369 girls and 438 boys) at the secondary level were accounted for. The verified data will be utilized to determine payments for refugee

and asylum seeker students, ensuring efficient allocation of resources. Data from the exercise suggests that there is a noteworthy achievement in gender equality, indicating progress in closing the gender gap in education.

- In Somaliland, rapid needs assessments were conducted in 15 schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) to identify institutions and areas in need of support from UNHCR to enhance educational infrastructure and resources for refugee and host community children. The assessments revealed priority areas with significant refugee populations and inadequate educational facilities to accommodate increased enrolment. School buildings, classrooms, and sanitation facilities were assessed, identifying areas requiring construction, renovation, or furnishing. Stakeholder engagement highlighted specific needs, such as shortages of teaching/learning materials.
- In Mogadishu, UNHCR, through its partner, paid school fees for 799 primary and secondary school refugee and asylum-seeker students (387 girls and 412 boys).
- In Somaliland, UNHCR, through its partner, provided financial support to 84 refugee secondary school students (51 girls and 33 boys), ensuring their continued access to education without any financial constraints.



Health

- In Mogadishu and Somaliland, UNHCR's partners delivered primary, secondary, tertiary, or maternal and child health care services to 1,312 refugees, asylum-seekers, refugee-returnees, IDPs, and host community members. Services included consultations and medical screening, laboratory investigations, medical treatments, ambulance services, and referrals to specialized hospitals.



Community Empowerment and Self Reliance

- UNHCR and its livelihood partner met and visited microfinance institutions to discuss a revolving fund grant intervention that aims to target 70 refugees and asylum-seekers. Those selected for the scheme will receive USD 1,100 to start a business and will have to repay the amount to be eligible for another loan. A microfinance institution will work together with UNHCR and its partner on the grants given to the communities.



Monitoring of livelihood activity (tailor shop) located in Beletweyne and supported by UNHCR in 2023. © UNHCR



Cluster Coordination and Leadership

Protection Cluster

- In February, the Protection Cluster held a three-day workshop involving our State and Regional Protection Cluster Coordinators from key operational partners. The workshop's agenda centered around the Cluster's frontline protection response, Area-Based Coordination led by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), and analysis on the protection of civilians in view of the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) drawdown.
- The Somalia Protection Cluster is coordinating with the protection actors and the Explosive Hazards Area of Responsibility (EH AoR) to operationalize a frontline protection response in Hobyo district, a newly accessible area in the Mudug region of Galmudug State where 8,730 individuals were displaced from their homes due to ongoing armed conflict. UNHCR, through its partner, is setting up protection desks in Xinlabi town and nearby areas within the district. The desks have identified 301 protection cases (64% female and 36% male) among the displaced population. In addition, the EH AoR is conducting awareness campaigns in Xinlabi town, Laas Gacameey, and Baraag Ciise villages and distributing 200 risk education talking devices in the Hobyo district.

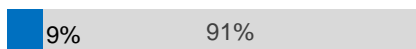
Shelter Cluster

- In February, the Shelter Cluster partners reached 189,844 individuals, out of which 167,181 individuals received shelter assistance and 22,663 individuals received non food item (NFI) kits, ensuring access to essential household items.
- The cluster, with support from the technical working group, is revising the contents of the NFI and emergency shelter (ES) kits. The working group has circulated a short survey to all cluster partners to review the contents and quantities of the NFI and ES kits, which have not been revised since 2022.

- Under the cluster common pipeline, over 110,000 plastic sheets have been prepositioned in 10 field hubs. There is also a plan to pre-position an additional 86,000 ES materials in the existing hubs.
- Shelter and NFI continue to be among the top needs of the forcefully displaced population.


232K
 # 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


278K
 # 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


1.7M
 # 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



Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster

- Site verification assessments, in coordination with partners, local authorities, and other stakeholders, were conducted at 195 IDP sites in nine locations, namely Baidoa, Berdale, Buurhakaba, Dinsoor, Dollow, El Berde, Hudur, Kismayo, and Waajid. A total of 31,650 HHs (187,479 individuals) were verified to be living at the assessed sites.
- Service monitoring activities were conducted across 1,845 IDP sites, covering 33 districts, under the administration of 15 partners. Overall, 66% of sites had water access for IDPs. 39% of sites have primary education facilities, while 23% of sites can access primary education facilities within a 20-minute walk. 53% of sites have access to health facilities within walking distance, and 74% of sites also have access to nutrition facilities. Affected populations at 91% of monitored sites live in makeshift emergency shelters. Only 5% of sites have permanent shelters, while 4% of sites have transitional shelters. During the reported period, 8% of IDP households reported receiving cash or food assistance in the last 6 months.
- In February, the number of issues raised through the CCCM-managed complaint and feedback mechanism (CFM) stood at 3,746. Most of the complaints raised were attributed to food security, shelter/NFI, and WASH. After referral and response from the agencies and clusters, 75.19% of the raised issues were addressed and resolved.
- The CCCM partners conducted 11 site-level coordination meetings and coordination meetings with the local authorities and service providers. In Deynille, authorities and camp committees/representatives expressed major concern that new arrivals have not been supported with any humanitarian assistance. In Khada, during coordination meetings between CCCM partners and IDPs, participants raised critical gaps in service delivery, particularly in WASH, such as a lack of water services and latrines.
- CCCM partners conducted orientation sessions for new arrivals at the IDP sites in Khada and Dayniile about services available during the screening of malnourished children. As part of preparedness activities ahead of the “Gu” rainy season that lasts from April to June, CCCM sensitized displaced populations in Khada on flood prevention measures to prevent loss of lives and property.
- The CCCM partners conducted site improvement activities, including the rehabilitation of drainage systems and camp cleaning events at 30 IDP sites, using disaster risk reduction (DRR) tools in an incentivized cash-for-work approach, whereby 1,758 individuals received an average monthly stipend of USD 67.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2024 amount to **USD 14.8 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 2024 | USD

Japan 6.6 million

Leaving No One Behind – The Internal Displacement Solutions Fund | Other private donors

Thanks to softly earmarked contributions to UNHCR in 2024 | USD

Norway 2.8 million

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted 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 | **Republic of Korea** 17.9 million | **Ireland** 13.6 million | **España con ACNUR** 12.4 million | **Belgium** 11 million | **Australia** 10.7 million

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

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LINKS

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