

SOMALIA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1-31 January 2023

Women and children at the Juba 2 IDP site for in Baidoa, Somalia, are among many thousands who have been forced to flee their homes in search of food, shelter, and safe drinking water. Pregnant and lactating women and children under the age of five are among the most vulnerable and require urgent assistance to survive.

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OVERVIEW

In January, conflict and insecurity made the operational environment extremely challenging across Somalia. Conflict between Al-Shabab, hereafter referred to as non-state armed group (NSAG) and the alliance of Somali security forces, local militias, and international security partners continued in multiple fronts. The situation in Laascaanood remained tense with reports of sporadic confrontation between the authorities and protestors. Furthermore, the prolonged drought continued to impact the lives and livelihoods of ordinary Somalis. UNHCR, in the first month of 2023, recorded 288,000 new internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to conflict, insecurity, and drought in Somalia.

Finding durable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers, refugee returnees, and IDPs, in collaboration with Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), Federal Member States (FMS), and development as well as humanitarian partners, remains one of the top priorities for UNHCR in Somalia. Furthermore, in January, working together with authorities and partners, UNHCR continued delivering lifesaving protection assistance to the vulnerable IDPs and host communities affected by the conflict and drought. For the IDP response, UNHCR leads/ co-leads Protection, Shelter, and CCCM clusters in Somalia.

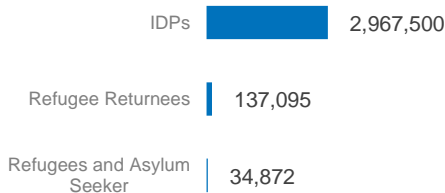
UNHCR's key achievements for the month of January are listed below:

- In Beletweyne and Hargeisa, UNHCR conducted protection mainstreaming trainings for Protection Cluster, partners, and government focal points to strengthen subnational protection coordination and bolster protection interventions.
- UNHCR distributed multi-purpose cash to 1,000 vulnerable HHs in Beletweyne to help the drought affected IDPs and host community members meet their basic needs.
- In Luglow durable solutions site in Kismayo, UNHCR through its partner completed the construction of the planned 88 permanent shelters and latrines, which will be used to locally integrate protracted IDP families in order to find durable solutions for them.

KEY FIGURES

PERSONS OF CONCERN

3.1M # of persons of concern to UNHCR Somalia



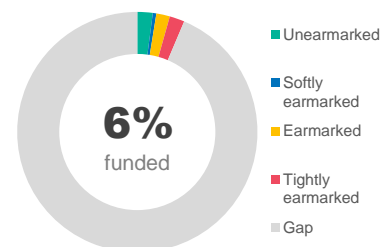
PARTNERS

30 # of partners implementing key UNHCR activities in 2023



DONORS

174.2M Funding required for 2023 (as of 7 Feb)



POPULATION DATA

34,872

Refugees and asylum seekers as of January 2023

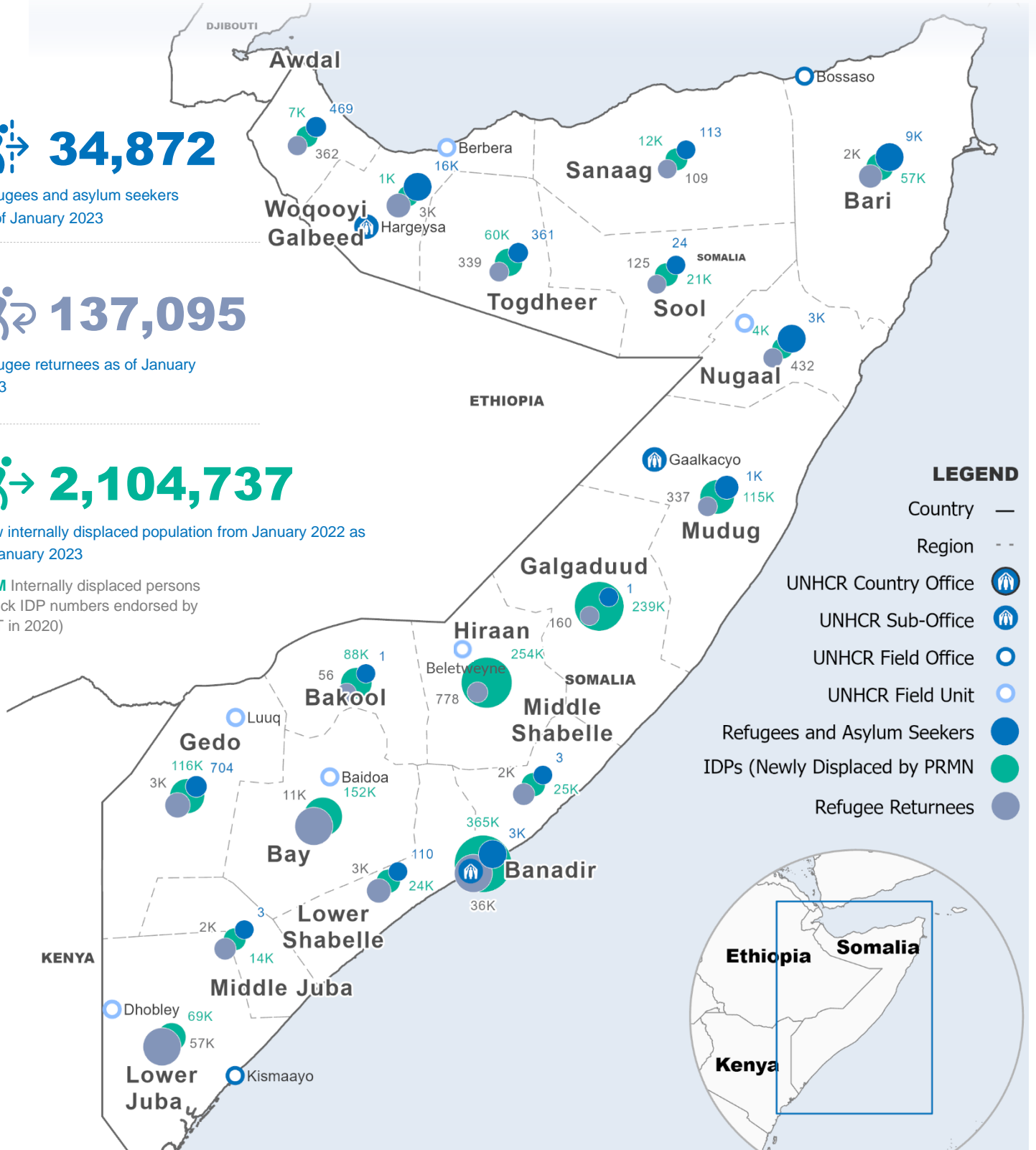
137,095

Refugee returnees as of January 2023

2,104,737

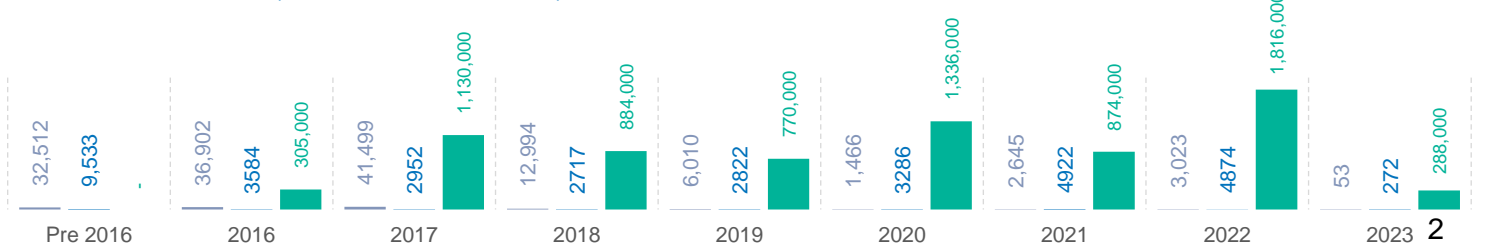
New internally displaced population from January 2022 as of January 2023

2.9M Internally displaced persons (Stock IDP numbers endorsed by HCT in 2020)



POPULATION TREND (ARRIVALS PER YEAR)

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



Operational Context

UNHCR in Somalia continued to operate in a highly complex environment, largely characterized by insecurity, political tension, and the ongoing drought.

According to the UNHCR-led [Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#), 288,000 million individuals were newly displaced within Somalia in January 2023. Out of the total new IDPs in January, the vast majority, some 79% were displaced due to conflict/insecurity and 20% were displaced because of the drought. The priority needs of newly displaced families were food (45%), followed by shelter (42%) and livelihoods (8%). The top three regions that received the greatest number of new arrivals in January were Galgadud region followed by Mudug, and Nugal regions. More information about displacement and protection needs of the IDPs can be found at the new PRMN online interactive dashboard- <http://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/>.

In January, the security situation in Somalia remained volatile, with numerous clashes reported between the NSAG and the alliance of Somali security forces, local militias, and international security partners, primarily in Hirshabelle and Galmudug, and South-West states. On the political front, there were violent confrontations between the protestors and security forces in Laascaanood town, Somaliland continued. Although the security forces withdrew from the town later in the month, the fighting and tense situation made many residents flee to towns and neighborhoods in Puntland. Conflict/insecurity not only resulted in an unknown number of civilian deaths and injuries, but they also induced 227,000 new IDPs in January. This is the highest number of monthly internal displacement recorded by PRMN since April 2021. Insecurity also continued to be one of the biggest hinderances in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. According to [a report](#) by UN OCHA, lack of humanitarian access in seven districts under the control of NSAG is delaying life-saving food and cash assistance to approximately 346,000 vulnerable people.

Entering the new year, Somalia is staring at the prospect of sixth consecutive failed or below average rainy season in April-June. As a result, the climate crisis is likely to be prolonged. Shortfalls in humanitarian assistance will likely push 8.3 million people to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse levels of food insecurity between April and June, including more than 700,000 people facing famine conditions or Catastrophe level (IPC Phase 5). The extreme conditions have resulted in higher-than normal deaths, and excess mortality will continue to accumulate unless assistance is further scaled up and sustained.¹ More than 1.2 million Somalis have been displaced internally due to drought since 2022.

Somalia hosts some 34,872 refugees and asylum-seekers, among which 70% 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%) and Syria (4%). Most of the refugees and asylum-seekers reside in urban or peri-urban settings across Woqooyi Galbeed and Bari regions, in the northern part of the country. Furthermore, 137,095 former refugees have returned to Somalia from their countries of asylum, mostly from Kenya followed by Yemen. From the total refugee returnees, 93,706 individuals have been assisted by UNHCR through Voluntary Repatriation Programme from Kenya and Assisted Spontaneous Returns (ASR) movements from Yemen.

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/humanitarian-situation-somalia-remains-extremely-serious-assistance-must-be-sustained-and-improved-continue-prevent-famine>

Update on Achievements



Protection

Statelessness

- In January, UNHCR met with the Director of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) department under Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR) to discuss the statelessness study funded by UNHCR, which recently culminated. While the full report will be shared in February, initial results of the study point towards legislative gaps such as lack of regulations or procedures; lack of legal assistance and solutions; administrative barriers including discretionary powers of authority in granting identity cards, discrimination against certain groups and involuntary withdrawal of passports; and contextual challenges such as invisible or unknown statelessness communities and limited data on Statelessness. One of the major recommendations from the study is for the accession by the Federal Republic of Somalia to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions, to which the government has pledged to accede at the High Level Segment (HLS) on Statelessness. The FGS reiterated this pledge most recently at the 2022 ExCom meeting, with 31 December 2023 as the revised target date.

Prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV)

- UNHCR shared its feedback for the country-level prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) Network mapping exercise, which will, among others, facilitate the establishment of benchmarks to measure progress, identify areas that require additional support or capacity building, and inform the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), donors, and global stakeholders on overall progress towards PSEA commitments and priorities.
- UNHCR through its partner identified and/or supported 44 new and existing GBV cases in January. Services to the survivors included safe house support, psychosocial counselling, medical and legal referrals, and provision of dignity kits, among others. Lack of medical assistance to GBV survivors was reported as one of the main gaps in Beletweyne.
- UNHCR and partners continued to raise awareness against GBV across the country. In more than 25 IDP sites in Hirshabelle, Galmudug and Puntland, UNHCR through its partners conducted protection monitoring, community outreach, and awareness campaigns on GBV prevention and response, reaching some 3,000 individuals. During the awareness sessions, GBV and female genital mutilation (FGM) referral pathways were shared with the communities, urging them to report on the violations in a timely manner.

Capacity building, community engagement, and awareness raising

- To increase public awareness on the dangers of irregular movements or *tahriib*, UNHCR through its partner conducted awareness activities in Bossaso, Garowe, and Galkayo, all in Puntland State, reaching 121 individuals, including youths who are more at risk of undertaking the irregular movement. The activities included different types of community outreach programmes, awareness raising sessions, and a sports event.
- At the Peaceful Coexistence Center (PCC) in Hargeisa, a total of 395 individuals received counselling and case referral support. Most of the advice sought was for financial insecurity followed by concerns on refugee status determination (RSD) and issues related to subsistence allowance. Where appropriate, cases were referred to relevant partner for further assistance. Moreover, UNHCR and partners held consultation and information sharing sessions at the PCC with some 215 refugees and asylum seekers. During the interaction, UNHCR and partners explained about their support and services to the refugees and asylum seekers, who in turn raised some of the challenges, such as recurrent arrests by immigration and police, insufficient medication for persons suffering from chronic diseases, and lack of access to public schools due to language barrier.



Youths participating in a football match that was used as a platform for raising awareness on the dangers of irregular movements in Galkayo. © CIAUD

Registration, reception, and reintegration support

- In Bossaso, Puntland, UNHCR and partners received a self-managed boat from Yemen carrying a total of 63 individuals including 52 spontaneous Somali refugee returnees and 11 Yemeni refugees, who cited general insecurity, family reunion, and lack of livelihood opportunities and protection as reasons for their flight. Likewise in Berbera, Somaliland, UNHCR and partners received two commercial boats with eight Yemeni refugees, who were transferred to a UNHCR managed Reception Center for registration, food, accommodation, and health screening.
- The situation in Somalia remains precarious as a result of insecurity and recurrent droughts. The returning refugees face multitude of challenges, while they try to reintegrate. They sometimes live within congested settlements with IDPs or within host community areas. This has increased pressure on the already limited and overstretched basic services infrastructure and livelihoods opportunities available. In order to mitigate against this limited absorption capacity that slows the pace of return and reintegration, UNHCR has been distributing one time reinstallation grant to the returnees. In January, some 346 returnee individuals received USD 200 each in reinstallation grant in South-Central Somalia and Galkayo.
- Based on vulnerable assessment, multipurpose subsistence allowance was distributed to 305 HHs to help returnees, refugees, and asylum seekers meet their basic needs. Transfer amount for subsistence allowance ranged from USD 200-440 per HH and depended on the family size as well as the location of the HH receiving the assistance.

Legal assistance

- UNHCR through its partner provided legal assistance to 330 refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and host community members. Assistance included legal counselling, mediation, advocacy to release from police custody, legal representation before a court, birth certificate and national ID issuance, provision of emergency shelter, and referral to other service providers.

Refugee Status Determination (RSD)

- In January 2023, UNHCR conducted eight RSD interviews with 23 individuals; submitted 16 RSD assessments for 34 individuals; and reviewed and/or finalized 12 cases consisting of 30 individuals.

Resettlement

- UNHCR in Somalia continued to process emergency resettlement cases. In January, an individual was resettled in Finland. Similarly, in pursuant of complementary pathways, which are safe and regulated avenues for persons in need of international protection for a lawful stay in a third country, an individual was referred for settlement in New Zealand.

Health

- UNHCR's partners delivered primary and secondary health care services, to 1,733 individuals. Services included consultations and medical screening for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, laboratory investigations, medical treatments, and referrals to specialized hospitals. The health services primarily benefited refugees and asylum seekers in Mogadishu and Puntland, although some IDPs and host communities were also reached in Mogadishu.
- In response to the recent cholera outbreak in Dhobley, Jubaland, UNHCR delivered sanitation/health items, including 1,000 mosquito nets, 20 kg of soap bars, and two tents that were used as triage room.



A refugee seeking medical consultation at UNHCR supported Gambol Health Clinic in Garowe, Puntland. © UNHCR

Education

- In Mogadishu and Puntland, UNHCR supported 5,332 refugees and asylum-seekers children enrolled in primary and secondary schools with their tuition fee. In Mogadishu, 790 school going children also received school meal allowance. The recently concluded verification exercise in Bossaso suggested that the number of school going children that require education support will increase in 2023.



Drought Response

- In Beletweyne, Hirshabelle, UNHCR conducted a protection mainstreaming training across four days for Protection Cluster partners, Somali Women Development Center (SWDC), and CCCM and NFI/Shelter partners. The training focused on key protection concepts, including Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) mainstreaming, rights-based approach, Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (PSEA), protection monitoring, and referral pathways as part of the scale-up of protection activities under the emergency drought response. A joint action plan on protection mainstreaming was developed during the training.
- In Hargeisa, in an effort to strengthen subnational protection coordination, UNHCR organized a protection mainstreaming capacity building session, targeting INGOs, NGOs, and government focal points. Topics covered during the training included definition and key elements such as participatory needs assessment, meaningful access, provision of goods and services with safety and dignity, participation, accountability, and empowerment that underpin the protection mainstreaming concept. Around 30 participants from 25 organizations attended the session.
- UNHCR distributed multi-purpose cash to 1,000 vulnerable HHs in Beletweyne to help the drought affected IDPs and host community members meet their basic needs. The distribution was monitored by UNHCR staff on ground and the beneficiaries were sensitized on the channels at their disposal to report about gatekeepers and other influential parties who may ask for a share of their assistance.
- In Baidoa, UNHCR and partners coordinated with WFP to help with the registration of minority groups, who otherwise were deprived of assistance. Through their joint work, more than 1,700 minority HHs were registered with WFP to receive food and cash assistance.
- Across IDP sites in Baidoa, UNHCR through its partner identified and resolved 30 housing, land, and property (HLP) disputes, which included 18 disputes over land encroachments, seven over limited resources, especially water, and five over land ownership between spouses.
- In Baidoa, protection desk monitors conducted community awareness raising in many locations, reaching 832 individuals. The protection desk monitors also received 320 complaints with concerns about lack of food, shelter, NFI, education, livelihood, donkey carts, WASH, and cash assistance.



Shelter and CCCM partners attending Protection training in Beletweyne. © UNHCR



Shelter and NFI

- In Luglow durable solutions site in Kismayo, UNHCR through its partner completed the construction of the planned 88 permanent shelters and latrines, which will be used to locally integrate protracted IDP families in order to find durable solutions for them. UNHCR is working with the authorities to finalize the list of IDPs who will move into the completed shelters and complete the handover process.
- UNHCR in Hargeisa, within its tri-cluster leadership in Protection, Shelter, and CCCM, participated in an emergency inter-sector coordination forum in Somaliland. UNHCR shared updates on planned responses to both, the drought and the Laascaanood situation. For the latter, UNHCR will distribute 800 core-relief item kits consisting of basic household items such as blankets, mats, kitchen set, and jerry cans, scale up its Protection and CCCM activities, as well as contribute to the drafting of the ongoing contingency plan.



Community Empowerment and Self Reliance

Community Empowerment

- UNHCR through its partner conducted a mapping exercises of four IDP sites in Hargeisa, Nasahablod A, Nasahablod B, Nasahablod C, and Mooge A, to map and evaluate existing formal and informal community governance structures. It was agreed that the existing Community Management Committees (CMC) in Nasahablod A, Nasahablod B, and Mooge A will be revitalized and in Nasahablod C a new CMC will be elected.

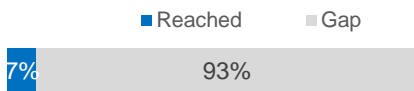


Cluster Coordination and Leadership



222.5K

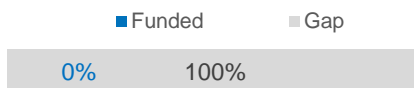
of beneficiaries reached by the Protection Cluster



5 M People in need

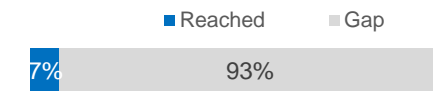
3.2 M People targeted

211 M Funding required



96.5K

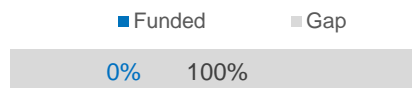
of beneficiaries reached by the Shelter Cluster



4.9 M People in need

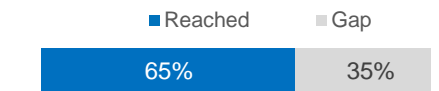
1.4 M People targeted

85 M Funding required



1.6M

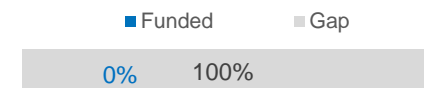
of beneficiaries reached by the CCCM Cluster



2.8 M People in need

2.45 M People targeted

66 M Funding required



Protection Cluster

- Protection Cluster issued its response strategy, which was incorporated in the 2023 HRP. The strategy focuses on five main pillars: strengthened service delivery, revamped protection monitoring system, enhanced sub-national capacity for protection programming and coordination, protection of civilians at the center, and inclusion of minority and marginalized groups, and persons with disabilities.
- Protection Cluster response objectives, which are aligned with the strategic HRP and Areas of Responsibility (AOR) objectives and activities to achieve them, response modalities indicators supplemented with a technical guidance, and reporting framework were agreed with the partners.
- Protection Cluster participated in a planning meeting on the re-design of the CCCM-managed safety audits, with support of Child Protection (CP) and GBV AORs. Safety tool was revised to better incorporate protection and inclusion elements, and it was agreed that safety audits will be jointly implemented by CCCM, Protection, CP and GBV actors, while ensuring its outcomes are tabled at sub-national ICCGs to mobilize partners' response to issues identified.
- Protection and CCCM clusters launched a Disability Inclusion Technical Working Group under the ICCG and called a roundtable to discuss its main objectives and tasks. The Working Group will support the humanitarian system in advancing disability inclusion issues in Somalia and work closely with the specialized agencies and organizations for persons with disabilities (OPDs) to offer them a platform to actively portray the work that they are engaged in. One of the first tasks of the WG is to improv data collection on disabilities during the upcoming Multi-sectorial Needs Assessment.

- Protection Cluster and HLP AOR developed a Guidance Note for Humanitarian-Supported Relocations in Somalia and tabled it at ICCG for endorsement, with a plan to inform HCT decisions.

Shelter Cluster

- The Shelter Cluster partners reached 21,426 individuals with NFI kits and 76,440 individuals with shelter assistance. Cumulatively, 96,627 individuals or 7% of the targeted population have thus far received Shelter or NFI assistance from the cluster partners.
- Shelter remains one of the top priority needs of the displaced population. Around 4.9 million people are in need of shelter and NFI assistance in Somalia.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster

- CCCM Cluster improved its New Arrival Tracker (NAT) tool to include registration of household-level information for new arrival families entering IDP sites managed by CCCM partners. The collection of household data will start when the family establishes temporary shelters to cap families moving from one site to another. After the registration, the CCCM cluster will share such data with cluster coordinators to enable service providers to respond quicker to new arrivals with registered needs.
- In the CCCM managed complaint and feedback mechanism, 9,387 complaints were lodged in January compared to 8,952 complaints reported a month ago in December, which is an increase of 5%. Food Security and Livelihood, Shelter, and WASH issues constituted of 79% of recorded complaints.
- CCCM partners conducted 245 site-level stakeholder coordination meetings in Dhusamareb, Hudur, Luuq, Baardhere, Afgoye, and Berdale IDP sites, where local authorities, service providers, and members of IDP communities attended the meetings to discuss drought-affected households entering IDPs sites and suggested ways to improve service delivery, evictions, while advocating for additional land to accommodate newly displaced persons. In addition, partners discussed strengthening referral pathways and improving information sharing among the IDP communities to strengthen site-level community participation and convey the message that services provided are free of charge.
- To enhance communication with communities, CCCM partner carried out community engagement and accountability sessions with new arrivals, and members of the community from minorities, reaching a total of 568 individuals. Moreover, 730 individuals participated in informal sessions on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities, raising awareness on hazards such as fire, flood, cholera, and COVID-19.
- CCCM partners carried out site improvement activities including site cleaning campaigns, waste management, bush clearance, and site decongestion in Afgoye, Abudwak, Adado, and Dhusamareb. Partners distributed 250 cash for work toolkits, including wheelbarrows, gumboots, gloves, pickaxes, rakes, and shovels in 200 IDP sites in Baidoa, Afgoye, and Adado to support site improvement activities.
- Monitoring of available humanitarian services was conducted in 1,539 IDP sites covering 39 districts to coordinate humanitarian services, avoid overlap, and address identified sectoral gaps by referring them to relevant service providers.
- CCCM partners provided capacity building training to over 768 community members selected from 360 IDP sites in Afgoye, Kahda, Daynile, and Baidoa on topics such as site planning, roles and responsibilities of CMCs, code of conduct, and eviction and HLP. Furthermore, partners conducted special training sessions on the referral pathways for 32 community members from minority groups and people with disabilities living in IDP sites in Kahda district.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2023 amount to **US\$ 11.12 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

CERF 3.2 million | **Japan** 3.1 million | **World Food Programme** 0.5 million

Denmark | Other private donors

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

Canada 3.9 million

Norway | Private donors

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

Sweden 77.6 million | **Norway** 63.1 million | **Denmark** 35.6 million | **Netherlands** 34.1 million | **Germany** 23.1 million | **Switzerland** 18.9 million | **Belgium** 11.9 million | **Ireland** 11.9 million

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

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