# Somalia

March 2023

Somalia's operational context is complex and challenging due to increasing insecurity, deep-rooted political tensions, and an unabated climate crisis. Since 2022, more than 2.6 million Somalis have been internally displaced, primarily due to drought, insecurity, and flooding.

Since September 2022, coalition of Somali National Army (SNA), local clan militias, and international security partners have escalated their fighting against the non-state armed group (NSAG), which in retaliation has launched indiscriminate attacks that have resulted in loss of lives and displacement of ordinary Somalis.

Conflict arising from political tensions in Laascaanood, Sool region has caused loss of unknown number of lives and internally displaced an estimated 163,000 individuals.

Although Baidoa and Buur Hakaba districts did not experience famines, the climate crisis continues. Despite the recent heavy rains and flooding, shortfalls in humanitarian funding and forecasts of high ground temperature and below-average rainfall suggest drought's consequences will persist.

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

**2.97** million IDPs

**35,381** refugees and asylum-seekers

**7,382** refugee returnees

## UNHCR PRESENCE

**Staff:**

117 National Staff

46 International Staff

32 Affiliated Workforce

**Offices:**

1 Country Office

3 Sub Offices

1 Field Office

7 Field Units

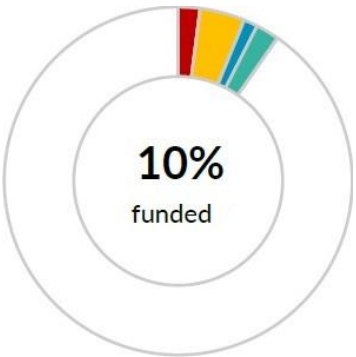
1 Support Office in Nairobi

## FUNDING UPDATE

**(AS OF 5 APRIL 2023)**

**USD 174.2 M**

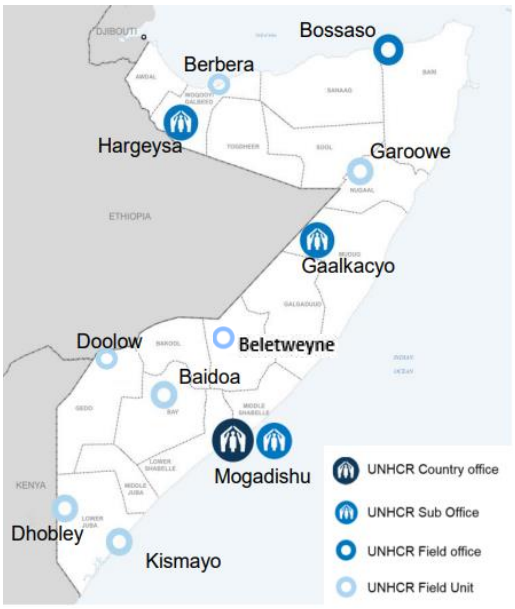
Requested for the Somalia Operation




**10%** funded

**16.8 M**

Tightly earmarked
Earmarked
Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
Funding gap (indicative)



# 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 prioratized.

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 (67%) 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 passing of the **draft Refugee Act**, which has been circulated with the cabinet of ministers and will thereafter be shared with the parliament for further deliberations.
- The Somaliland House of Representatives (Upper Chamber House of Elders) has approved the **Somaliland Refugees and Asylum Seekers Act**, which was drafted with inputs and technical guidance from UNHCR. The next step will be for the President's to sign the Bill into 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.
- 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.

- 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.

### Somali refugee returnees

- UNHCR facilitates **voluntary, safe, and dignified returns** of Somali refugees. Since January 2020, UNHCR has assisted 2,221 Somali refugee returnees, primarily through the **Voluntary Repatriation** and **Assisted Spontaneous Returnees (ASR)** programmes from Kenya and Yemen respectively and also continues to monitor and support additional 5,161 returnees, who came back to Somalia on their own.
- After being on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ASR programme from Yemen to Somalia resumed from late September 2022. Likewise, the Voluntary Repatriation programme from Kenya is set to restart in 2023.
- UNHCR provides refugees 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.

### IDPs

- 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.
- 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.

A UNHCR staff helps an elderly woman to carry NFI assistance she received in Dollow. © UNHCR

- Within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) framework, UNHCR contributes to the implementation of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) **Centrality of Protection** strategy.
- 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'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.

## Working with Partners

In Somalia, UNHCR is delivering protection and assistance services through 30 partners that include 11 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 16.8 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 2023 | USD**

**United States of America** 4.4 million | **CERF** 3.2 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** 7.2 million | **Canada** 3.9 million | **Private donors Australia** 2.1 million

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

**Sweden** 69 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 | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

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**LINKS**

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