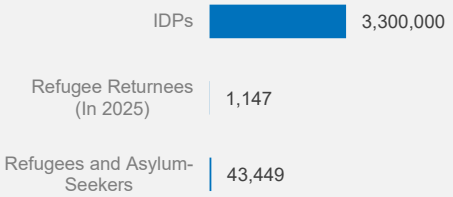
UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Somalia

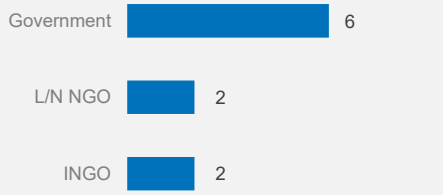
POPULATION

3.35M # of people with and for whom UNHCR works



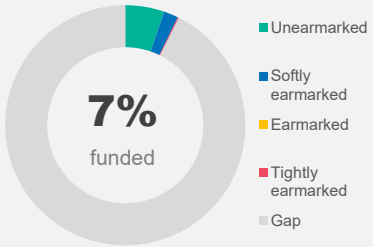
PARTNERS

10 # of partners implementing key UNHCR activities in 2026



FUNDING

110M Funding required for 2026 *(as of 31 March 2026)*



IMPACT STATEMENTS

1. PROTECT
Forcibly displaced, stateless and other affected persons enjoy living in a safe and secure environment in line with national and international protection frameworks.

2. RESPOND
Affected populations and most vulnerable persons strengthen their resilience, proactively mitigate the effects of climate change and their essential needs are met.

3. EMPOWER
Forcibly displaced, stateless and other affected persons improve their self-reliance with better access to socio-economic opportunities and engagement with development partners.

4. SOLVE
Refugees, IDPs and returnees have improved access to alternative pathways and a range of durable solutions.

OPERATIONAL UPDATE
MARCH 2026

Life in a displaced population settlement in Galkayo, Somalia. © UNHCR/Ngari

OVERVIEW

The **humanitarian situation** in Somalia remained fragile amid a constrained funding environment globally in 2026.

According to the new IPC Report, Somalia's hunger crisis is rapidly deteriorating. By March, one-third of the population—about **6.5 million people**—faced "crisis" levels of hunger or worse, representing a jump of 1.7 million people in just two months (January 2026). By March, 2 million people were in the "emergency" phase (IPC 4), the level just before famine, over 1.8 million children under age 5 were projected to suffer from acute malnutrition cutting across 2026, with nearly 500,000 of them in critical condition and in need urgent treatment. The extreme dry weather has killed off crops and livestock, forcing families to leave their homes in search of food and water. Elsewhere, education has been hit hard, with 796 schools affected. Currently, 344 schools have closed their doors, and more than 121,000 children have been forced to drop out.

Security Situation: In March 2026, Somalia's security environment grew increasingly precarious. In Southwest State, political standoffs escalated into a federal takeover of Baidoa on 30 March, leading to significant civilian displacement and President Laftagareen's resignation. Parliamentarians subsequently condemned the alleged diversion of elite Turkish-trained units and drones from counterterrorism to internal political conflicts, citing risks to sovereignty and international legal compliance. Nationwide, security incidents surged from 49 to 74 weekly. This volatility included persistent Al-Shabaab insurgency in southern and central regions, localized clan conflicts, and rising urban criminality. Notable weekly data includes 10 terrorism-related incidents, a sharp rise in armed clashes (from 8 to 21), and 23 crime-related incidents. Despite northern regions remaining relatively stable, the overall landscape faces heightened fragility and displacement.

Access Status: In quarter 1 2026 (January-March), conflict and election-related tensions in Southwest State caused high access constraints, mimicking 2024 disruptions in Lower Juba. Operational impacts included program delays, restricted staff movement, and a shift toward costly air transport. These security challenges necessitated staff withdrawals from conflict zones and heightened management requirements. Maintaining operations now requires navigating volatile environments where political friction directly hampers vital humanitarian delivery.

The outlook for quarter 2 predicts persistent challenges from conflict, electoral transitions, and flooding. Al-Shabaab has consolidated control in Middle and Lower Shabelle following government withdrawals, imposing checkpoints and heavy taxation. These trends necessitate early engagement and conflict-sensitive planning. Partners should anticipate prolonged negotiations and restricted movement as Al-Shabaab maintains territorial dominance. Strengthening contingency measures is vital as administrative interference and climatic shocks further complicate the operating environment.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Protection

- In Hargeisa, UNHCR provided legal aid to 102 individuals through counseling, mediation, and court follow-ups. Emergency protection cash was delivered to five households facing eviction. Monitoring of detention facilities across Maroodi-Jeeh and Sahil identified 19 displaced persons; legal intervention secured the release of 13, with six cases ongoing. Simultaneously, a child protection mapping exercise strengthened referral pathways for vulnerable and undocumented children. Following home visits and Best Interest Assessments for five high-risk children, case management was initiated. These efforts, coordinated with government ministries and partners, continue to address critical legal, education, and health vulnerabilities among displaced populations.
- In Bossaso, UNHCR and KAALO provided comprehensive support to eight female GBV survivors in Puntland, delivering medical care, legal aid, and psychosocial support tailored to cases of assault and abuse. To mark International Women's Day, an awareness session reached 50 participants, promoting zero tolerance and service visibility. In child protection, a young survivor of physical assault received integrated medical and legal assistance. Furthermore, Individual Protection Assistance (IPA) supported 18 vulnerable Ethiopian refugees and asylum seekers, including 14 women. This targeted aid addressed food insecurity, health challenges, and housing instability, specifically helping single mothers mitigate risks of exploitation. All cases remain under active monitoring to ensure long-term stability and effective recovery for survivors and vulnerable households.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- In Hargeisa, the Joint Counselling Desk assisted 135 individuals, including 54 refugees and 81 asylum seekers, addressing critical concerns regarding livelihoods, financial aid, documentation, education, and healthcare. At the multi-Purpose Hub, 50 participants (44 women, 6 men) attended an awareness session on 2026 protection services and the risks of irregular movement amidst budget constraints. Additionally, outreach in Hargeisa's Statehouse and Cakaara neighborhoods reached 126 refugees and asylum seekers, focusing on legal rights, psychosocial support, and the Somaliland National Refugee Act. A coordination meeting with refugee committees further addressed urgent issues, including arrests, documentation challenges, and the impact of funding reductions on livelihoods. These integrated efforts ensure continued protection and legal guidance for forcibly displaced populations despite the current challenging financial landscape.
- In Bossaso, MOIFAD and UNHCR held a coordination meeting in Bosaso with 15 organizations, 10 officials, and 25 community representatives. Key outcomes include relocating RAS services to MOIFAD's One Stop Center, expanding legal support for 50 cases via KAALO and Amard, and vocational training for 30 youth. UNHCR further committed to mobilizing funds for critical service gaps. Additionally, KAALO conducted five engagement sessions for 200 participants, focusing on GBV prevention and the urgency of early reporting for rape cases. These sessions empowered communities with knowledge of protection services and reporting mechanisms, leveraging Community-Based Protection Networks (CBPN) to strengthen local resilience and ensure proactive protection for vulnerable groups.

Shelter and NFIs

- In Galkayo, UNHCR and KAALO distributed essential non-food items and shelter materials to 800 vulnerable households. This included 250 refugees, asylum-seekers, and IDP families who received solar panels, mosquito nets, and hygiene kits. Additionally, 550 IDP households received plastic sheeting to reinforce makeshift shelters. These vulnerability-led interventions targeted the most at-risk individuals, significantly improving living conditions and physical protection for women and children.

Climate and Other Emergency Responses

- As Co-Chair of the Protection and Shelter/CCCM clusters, UNHCR in Hargeisa coordinated responses to dual climate shocks, planning in-kind assistance for vulnerable populations in Hargeisa and Berbera affected by heavy rains and worsening drought. Humanitarian briefings highlighted that escalating food insecurity and rising livestock prices—up 21% in some areas—are driving distress sales among pastoralists. Child Protection partners prioritized addressing displacement-linked risks and trained members on emergency reporting. High-level engagement continued with a briefing to Finnish Embassy on the Somaliland–Djibouti Roadmap and the transition of services to national institutions. While Finland reaffirmed a USD 3 million regional contribution, UNHCR highlighted critical gaps in asylum infrastructure and durable solutions amidst the complex, drought-driven humanitarian landscape.
- In Galkayo, MOIFAD and UNHCR assessed six IDP camps, identifying severe humanitarian gaps for over 2,400 households. Findings revealed a total lack of water and sanitation in multiple sites, 550 families without adequate shelter, and over 600 children deprived of education. In response, teams issued urgent recommendations for water restoration, established formal service agreements, and created IDP complaint mechanisms. These assessments have informed critical action plans to restore essential services, strengthen protection, and mitigate forced eviction risks for the most vulnerable displaced populations.

Education

- In Hargeisa, the Ministry of Education cleared and agreed to sign the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR to facilitate the transition of refugee education programming to the national system and strengthen the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers within Somaliland's education framework. It was further proposed that UNICEF co-sign the MoU as part of a tripartite arrangement with the Ministry and UNHCR. The MoU is currently pending UNICEF's review and clearance before next steps can proceed.
- **Mixed Movement**
  Movement into Puntland surged in March 2026, with 27,000 arrivals in Bosaso, they are predominantly Ethiopian nationals (95%) driven by conflict and economic pressure. In response, the Mixed Movements Working Group reconvened under UNHCR and IOM co-leadership. Capacity-building initiatives are expanding through partnerships with EUCAP Somalia, focusing on CID training, community policing, and maritime security. Upcoming efforts include specialized human rights workshops for women and a Training of Trainers program in May. Furthermore, UNHCR is advocating for climate-related funding by highlighting environmental stress as a primary displacement driver, ensuring protection-sensitive responses within regional law enforcement frameworks.

CLUSTER RESPONSE

protectioncluster SOMALIA

110,662

# of beneficiaries reached by the Protection Cluster and the AoRs

Reached 1.4% | Gap 98.6%

3.1 M	People in need
1.9 M	People targeted
93 M	Funding required

Funded 8.8% | Gap 91.2%

SOMALIA SHELTER CLUSTER

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements

7,179

# of beneficiaries reached by the Shelter Cluster

Reached 0.4% | Gap 99.6%

2.63 M	People in need
1.63 M	People targeted
27.3 M	Funding required

Funded 0% | Gap 100%

CCCM Cluster SOMALIA

CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT

68,149

# of beneficiaries reached by the CCCM Cluster

Reached 7% | Gap 93%

2.0 M	People in need
1.0 M	People targeted
17 M	Funding required

Funded 0% | Gap 100%

Protection Cluster

In March, Protection Cluster partners delivered specialized services to 73,388 individuals, including 40,754 women, 17,290 men, 6,361 girls, 6,366 boys, and 2,617 elderly persons, with a specific focus on reaching 8,004 persons with disabilities. Assistance focused on community-led protection, psychosocial support, and case management, alongside critical mine action efforts such as explosive ordnance risk education and the verification of safe areas for settlement. Significant efforts were also dedicated to securing housing, land, and property (HLP) rights for displaced persons, providing them with legal tenure documentation and essential training to mitigate the risk of forced evictions and ensure long-term stability.

Shelter Cluster

In March, persistent drought forced 77 households (1,038 individuals) to flee to the Afdadow Jimo settlement in Dhobley. To address their immediate vulnerability, emergency shelter assistance was provided - plastic sheeting. This critical intervention allowed families to reinforce damaged roofs and stabilize makeshift structures against harsh weather conditions. By improving the physical integrity of these temporary dwellings, the support enhanced security, provided essential privacy, and mitigated health risks for vulnerable women and children during their displacement.

CCCM Cluster

CCCM partners recorded 1,177 new households (3,976 individuals) across 195 sites, primarily driven by drought (55.1%) and conflict (32.2%). Arrivals were highest in Kahda (32.1%) and Baidoa (20.5%), yet only 6% received humanitarian assistance. In response to fire incidents, partners prioritized decongestion and awareness campaigns. Strategically, the Cluster is managing the CCCM-Shelter merger and co-leading the R2T2 Workstream, developing vital SOPs to address gatekeeper issues and aid diversion to ensure more transparent, effective service delivery.

Government Partners

1. Jubbaland Commission for Refugees and IDPs (JUCRI)
2. Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs & Democratization (MoIFAD)
3. National Commission for Refugees and IDPs (NCRI)
4. Ministry of Resettlement and Humanitarian Affairs (MoRHA)

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Fadumo Mohamud Abdile: Overcoming double displacement to achieve multi-generational stability

The challenge: Fadumo Mohamud Abdille, a mother of eleven, has endured more than a decade of hardship and displacement. Over 10 years ago, when conflict erupted in Qoryooley (Lower Shabelle), Fadumo and her family were forced to flee and ended up in Mogadishu. “The journey was not easy she recalls. “I lost so much during the conflict, accompanied by my family of eleven children, we fled to Mogadishu. The road was long and uncertain.

Fadumo’s family. @Solomon Ngari/UNHCR

In Mogadishu Fadumo’s family faced forced eviction, “I received several eviction notices because I could not afford to pay rent, life was full of hopelessness.” After a few months, the family decided to move further north in search of safety and opportunities – settling in Galkacyo’s Taalacad IDP Camp, life was extremely difficult, as the family struggled to find work, she remembers the despair.

Durable solutions: Fadumo's family was later successfully relocated to the Jeehdin IDP camp where she received an emergency shelter. Everything changed when UNHCR, in collaboration with the government, registered Fadumo in the Durable Solutions Programme. She was allocated a permanent plot of land with secure tenure. With technical support and designs from UNHCR and NRC, she built a two-room shelter along with a VIP latrine. In early 2022, she secured a USD 1,000 business grant from UNHCR through the Zakat Fund from Eid Charity and accompanying business skills training.

The impact: The impact was life-changing. Fadumo opted for a direct asset investment, purchasing 20 goats. This initial investment has yielded a significant return, with the herd multiplying to over 36 goats. This livestock asset has been crucial for meeting non-food needs: "We have sold some of the goats to meet the pressing basic needs, especially medical care and school fees for the children," demonstrating the success of the grant in securing family well-being and future human capital investment.

Today, Fadumo’s children attend school, and she proudly supports her household through her small business. “I now live in dignity. I have my own home, privacy, and a source of income. My children are in school, and I feel secure for the first time in many years. I am deeply grateful to UNHCR and the government for giving me this opportunity.” Fadumo’s story demonstrates the transformative power of durable solutions. With land, shelter, and support to rebuild livelihoods, displaced families like hers can move from dependency to self-reliance, living dignified lives with hope for the future.

DONORS AND PARTNERS

Total recorded contributions for the Somalia Operation in 2026 amount to **USD 8.12 million** as of 31 March 2026. 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.

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

Internal Displacement Solutions Fund

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- **UNHCR Somalia**
- UNHCR Somalia: **Global Focus**
- UNHCR Somalia: **Operational Data Portal**
- Protection and Solutions Monitoring Network dashboard (**PSMN**)
- **Protection Cluster**
- **Shelter Cluster**
- **CCCM Cluster**

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