

# SOMALIA POST REFUGEE RETURN MONITORING SNAPSHOT

September 2022



UNHCR and partners receiving new arrivals from Yemen in Berbera. © UNHCR

This post-return monitoring (PRM) snapshot presents selected and cumulative findings of data obtained from eight rounds of interviews conducted with Somali refugee returnees in Somalia. The PRM data collection exercise commenced in November 2017 and the latest round of interviews was undertaken between July and August 2022. The cumulative data presented in this snapshot is based on eight rounds of interviews conducted with 3,251 returnee households across different return locations in Somalia. This PRM exercise follows the previous PRM snapshot issued by UNHCR in February 2022. Unless otherwise specified, the results outlined in this snapshot are cumulative.

The Somalia situation features as one of the world's largest forcibly displaced populations with an estimated 3.8 million displaced Somalis, including 800,000 Somali refugees outside the country, and the remainder as internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Somalia. Most Somali refugees are hosted in Kenya (287,931) and Ethiopia (250,097), Yemen (69,940), followed by Uganda (61,853), and Djibouti (14,404) (Source of data: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/95863>).

UNHCR Somalia resumed repatriation from Kenya since December 2020, with fit-for-travel COVID-19 measures agreed on and put in place by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and World Health Organization (WHO). In September 2022, the Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) program for returnees from Yemen, which had been discontinued owing to COVID-19 limitations, was reinstated in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

## Contextualizing the findings

- Between July and August 2022, a total of 382 interviews in PRM round 8 were carried out by telephone (99%) and face-to-face (1%). The telephone numbers of respondents were randomly selected from lists of assisted (HHs who have been assisted to return by UNHCR and partners) and unassisted returnees to Somalia.
- The respondents comprised of returnees from Kenya (374), Yemen (23), and Ethiopia (1). There were challenges during the survey where many respondents were unavailable/unreachable, especially the spontaneous/unassisted returnees. This affected the analysis and comparison between assisted and unassisted returnees.
- Overall, approximately 62 per cent of the respondents were female, among whom 59 per cent were reported as heads of HH. The total number of individuals in the surveyed as of August 2022 was 19,506, representing approximately 19 per cent of all 91,828 returnees who have returned to Somalia.

## KEY STATISTICS

### INTERVIEW DETAILS



Household interviews between 2018 – 2022, comprised of 19,506 individuals.

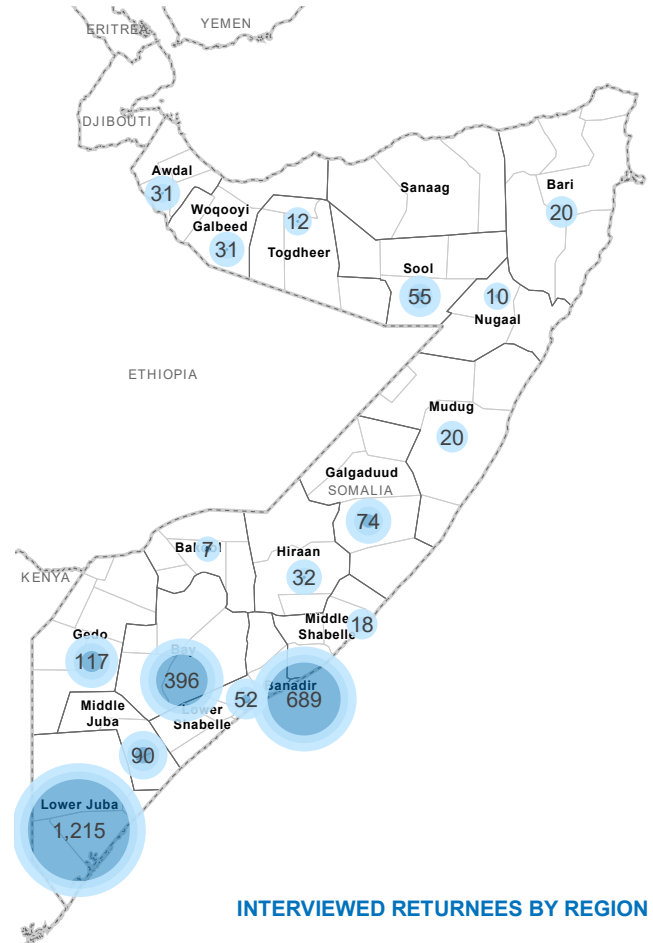
### RESPONDENTS' GENDER



### INTERVIEW TYPE

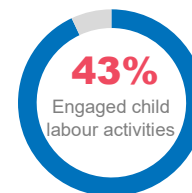
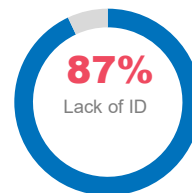
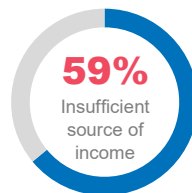
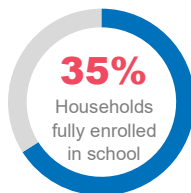


### RETURN TYPE



### PRM ROUNDS BY COUNTRY OF ASYLUM

PRM ROUNDS	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Libya	Other	Yemen	Total
2018 - Round 1 (Q1)	1	2	758			3	765
2019 - Round 2 (Q1)	4		294			11	310
2019 - Round 3 (Q4)			198			3	201
2020 - Round 4 (Q2)	5	1	296		9	87	398
2020 - Round 5 (Q4)		47	285	2		38	372
2021 - Round 6 (Q3)	10	94	71	31	3	216	425
2021 - Round 7 (Q4)		1	374			23	398
2022 - Round 8 (Q3)		10	280		2	90	382
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>2,556</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>3,251</b>



## 1. RETURN DECISIONS

The PRM round 8 survey indicates **87 per cent** of respondents are satisfied with their decision to return. The satisfaction level has decreased slightly since the first PRM survey was conducted in 2018, at which time **94 per cent** of the respondents were satisfied with their decision to return. Overall, **90 per cent** (Fig.1) of respondents were satisfied with their decision to return. The most frequently cited reasons throughout the PRM between 2018 and 2022 have consistently been as follows: family reunification (59%), and the ability to return and live in their places of origin (19%).



Fig.1: N=3,251

The most frequently cited reasons for not being satisfied with the decision to return were separation from family (35%), limited livelihoods opportunities (17%), and lack of assistance and support from authorities (13%).

### Satisfaction level by Region

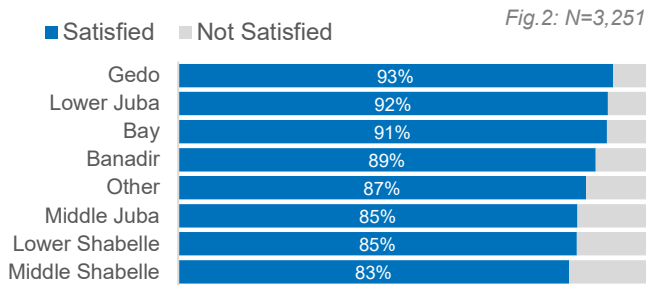


Fig.2: N=3,251

A total of **48 per cent** of respondents reported they decided to return to Somalia due to improved security condition in their places of origin, followed by livelihood opportunities (14%), and fear of closure of Dadaab camp in Kenya (7%).

Overall, **85 per cent** of respondents stated they intend to permanently remain in their current location. The top three reasons given by those who did not intend to stay in their current locations were: desire to be closer to family (37%), limited livelihoods opportunities (19%), and limited access to basic services (15%).

Of the **15 per cent** of respondents who did not intend to stay in their current location, more than half (54%) expressed an intention to move to other locations in Somalia, while **36 per cent** were considering returning to their previous country of asylum, and **11 per cent** were considering moving to a new country of asylum.

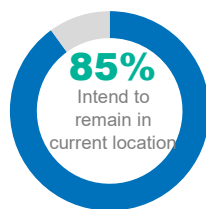


Fig.3: N=3,251

Among households interviewed since 2018, **26 per cent** stated they reside in what is informally referred to as an "IDP settlement". The regional distribution of the **74 per cent** of households who reside in host community settlements is as follows: Lower Juba (53%), Banadir (25%), Bay (9%), Middle Juba (5%), Gedo (4%), and other regions (4%).

## 2. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Overall, **95 per cent** (Fig.4) of respondents reported that no member of the household had been threatened, intimidated, or experienced violence since returning to Somalia.



Fig.4: N=3,251

While **91 per cent** of respondents stated they could move freely in their community and surrounding district, the survey result indicates respondents who had returned from Ethiopia (Fig.5) had relatively less freedom of movement (25%) and those who returned from other countries of asylum (40%). The most cited reasons for limited movement were roadblocks (25%), gatekeepers (21%), explosive remnants of war (18%), presence of armed actors (18%), as well as fear of gender-based violence (15%). While most of the reasons are associated with security issues across Somalia, "gatekeepers" as one of the most cited reasons may imply potential issues of human rights abuses, accountability, as well as possible diversion of humanitarian aid.

### Freedom of movement by country of asylum

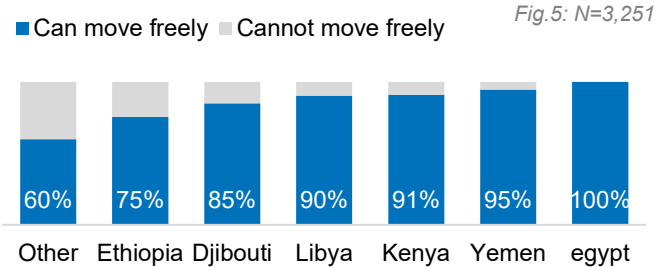


Fig.5: N=3,251

## 3. DISCRIMINATION AND RELATIONSHIP WITH HOST COMMUNITIES

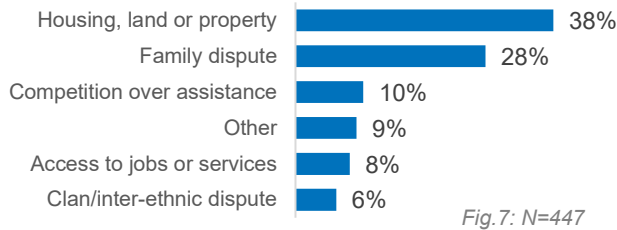
Most respondents (90%) (Fig.6) indicated that they had not faced discrimination based on being a returnee. Most respondents (88%) also reported not having been subject to clan/ethnicity-based discrimination.



Fig.6: N=3,251

Many respondents (68%) feel accepted by the host community (non-returnee). Most (88%) stated that they had not experienced disputes with other (non-returnee) members of the community, while the remaining **12 per cent** reported disputes with others (non-returnees), with the main traditional causes relating to housing, land, or property issues (38%), followed by family disputes (28%) and competition over jobs and humanitarian services (18%). (Fig.7)

## Reasons for disputes



Almost two thirds (63%) of the returnees believe that they have influence over decision making within their community.

## 4. SHELTER AND HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

Overall, **81 per cent** (Fig. 8) of respondents have not been evicted since returning to Somalia. Additionally, **70 per cent** of respondents did not express risk of being evicted.

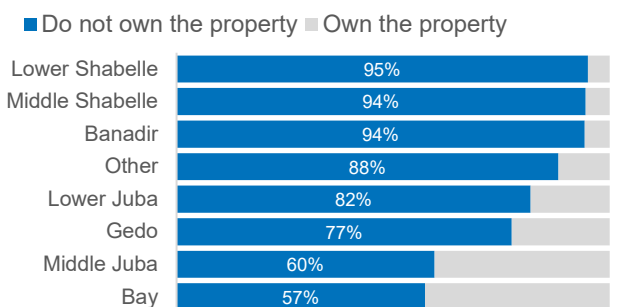


Overall, **82 per cent** of respondents live in housing that they do not own and **33 per cent** are living in makeshift shelters of corrugated galvanized iron (CGI) sheeting, **24 per cent** live in makeshift shelters without CGI (*Buul*), another **24 per cent** live in other temporary shelter. In addition, **69 per cent** of households reported lacking proof of occupancy of the place they currently live in. **79 per cent** of the households reported that they are still living in makeshift shelters (CGI sheeting, *Buul*, and temporary shelter) more than 2 years after return and have been exposed to harsh weather condition, lack of privacy, risks of gender-based violence and child protection concerns including child labour, abuse, and exploitation.

With more than **82 per cent** not owning their shelter and almost **69 per cent** lacking written proof establishing right to their home such as a rental agreement, instead reliant on verbal agreements with their landlords, there is a high degree of informal arrangements – including living with relatives or squatting – leading to possible protection concerns, including housing insecurity and risk of eviction.

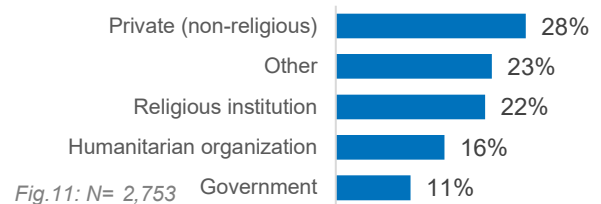
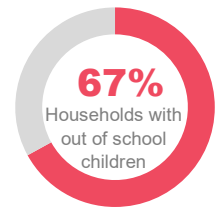
The lack of home and property ownership is greatest in Lower Shabelle, Banadir and Middle Shabelle regions, where over **90 per cent** of respondents do not own property. (Fig. 9)

### Property ownership by region



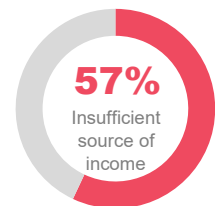
## 5. EDUCATION

Overall, only **33 per cent** (Fig.10) of respondents indicated that all children in their household attend school regularly. Overwhelmingly, households in which not all children attend school regularly cite cost (**68%**) as the primary obstacle, followed by distance and quality of schools (**13%**). The highest enrollment of children is with private schools (**28%**) and the lowest is with Government schools (**11%**). (Fig. 11)



## 6. HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND LIVELIHOODS

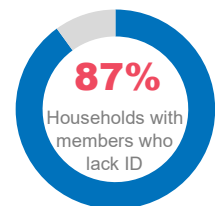
Overall, **57 per cent** (Fig.12) of returnee households reported insufficient sources of income to meet the needs of the households, which often rely on casual day labour, business/self-employment, and humanitarian assistance. The various reasons cited for lack of livelihoods include unavailability of jobs (**45%**), lack of equipment needed for running a business (**14%**), and the long distance to employment opportunities (**12%**). Furthermore, **64 per cent** of respondents indicated that remittances or support from family members were reduced after the COVID-19 pandemic broke out\*.



\*This only applies from round 4 to 7 figures

## 7. DOCUMENTATION

Overall, **87 per cent** (Fig.13) of households reported that all or some members do not have government-issued ID. However, **86 per cent** of these households also reported that lack of ID has not resulted in any issues since their return. Out of the **350 households** (**14%**) who reported challenges due to the lack of documents, **54 per cent** indicated trouble accessing services while **28 per cent** reported challenges at checkpoints.



## 8. CHILD LABOUR\*

In round 8, new questions about child labour were included. **43 per cent** of respondents indicated that at least one of their children in their household engaged child labour activities in the last seven days. The highest figures cited by were farming (23%), street work (including shining shoes and transporting) (16%), construction, (10%) and domestic work (5%).

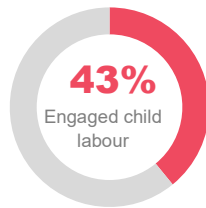


Fig.15: N=382

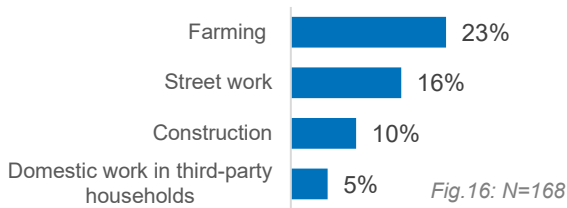


Fig.16: N=168

\*This only applies data collected in round 8.

## 9. COMPARISON BETWEEN ASSISTED AND UNASSISTED RETURNEES

Since 2020, UNHCR has included unassisted returnees into the PRM sample to determine whether the support provided by UNHCR had better outcomes on returnees' lives. Recent results from PRM (data as of September 2022) reveal that returnees who were aided by UNHCR expressed a higher level of satisfaction (92%) than those who were not assisted (83%). IDP sites are presently home to about **42 per cent** of unaided returns and **23 per cent** of supported returnees respectively. Assisted returnees also expressed somewhat greater intentions (86%) to stay permanently in the regions in which they now reside compared to those who were not assisted (79%). Those who received assistance (84%) had a higher likelihood of gaining access to markets than those who did not get assistance (55%). However, assisted returnees are less likely (27%) to have all their children enrolled in school compared to those who were not assisted (45%).

	Assisted	Unassisted
Satisfied upon Return	92%	83%
Reside in IDP sites	22%	42%
Remain in current Location	86%	79%
Children attending school	27%	44%
Access to market	84%	55%

## METHODOLOGY

Since December 2014, UNHCR has assisted approximately 16,000 households to voluntarily return to Somalia. In the current PRM system, using telephone and face-to-face questionnaire surveys, **2,736** household-level interviews with assisted households (84% of the total) have been carried out from 2018 to date and **515** household-level interviews with unassisted households (16% of the total) have been carried out by from 2021 to date. Households sampled for telephone interviews were randomly selected from the lists of telephone numbers provided to returnee households on arrival with the goal to ensure representation by year of arrival and region of return. Once interviewed, households are not re-interviewed. Face-to-face interviews were carried out following COVID-19 protocols and targeting returnee households residing in communities known to UNHCR and partners, The National Commission for Refugees and IDPs (NCR) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The NRC took part in data collection for Banadir region, while NRC collected data for remaining regions.

The findings presented in this snapshot represent selected findings from UNHCR's post-return monitoring exercise, round 8. More comprehensive data is available and will be used in discussion with partners and stakeholders as well as for planning purposes.

Although further exploration and analysis at the field level are needed, the findings suggest that more investment is required to strengthen provision of basic services and infrastructure in priority return areas. There is an urgent need to invest in sustainable livelihoods opportunities, and scale-up access to micro-finance and inclusion of returnees into social safety nets / social protection mechanisms of the Government for returns to remain sustainable. Emphasis must be placed on:

- addressing housing, land, and property concerns in collaboration with the relevant authorities.
- addressing legal documentation related protection concerns to mitigate the risk of exclusion to services.
- safe identification, referrals and provision of tailored support to persons with specific needs and at risk groups.
- area-based/ whole-of-society and community-based protection approaches.
- transition into longer-term development programming.

Post-return monitoring is an ongoing activity of UNHCR that will continue in future years.

## JOINT ANALYSIS

The PRM findings provide insights to the current situation of returnees in Somalia, as well as guide the formulation of recommendations on how to address identified issues. Together with the national durable solutions secretariat of the Government and other durable solutions partners, detailed joint analysis sessions will be conducted as new findings arise with the following objectives:

- a rigorous approach to ensure that each result is given due consideration.
- findings/conclusions may be validated through consensus of actors or partners with different viewpoints (or where consensus not reached, formally documented with rationale).
- external information and expertise maybe used to triangulate findings.

## NEXT STEPS IN 2023

The purpose of post-return monitoring is to support key areas within UNHCR's protection and solutions mandate:

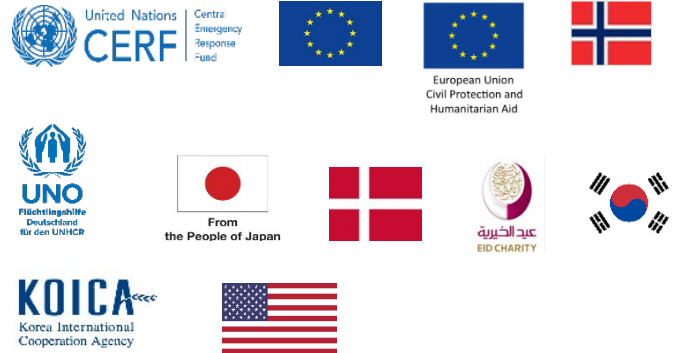
- to ensure return is informed, voluntary, and conducted in a safe and dignified manner.
- to support the sustainability of returns and reintegration.
- to feed into continuously adjusted evidence-based programming.
- to monitor and follow up on protection issues.
- to provide area-based information to prospective Somali refugee returnees in countries of asylum.

Existing needs assessment activities such as the country-wide Joint Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment (JMCNA) also inform facets of post-return monitoring. In 2023, UNHCR will continue working with existing partners including OCHA and REACH to ensure adequate representation of refugee returnees in national needs assessment to harmonize indicators within the agreed frameworks and strategies.

The NRCI will continue to jointly implement the PRM Round 9 data collection activity in collaboration with the NRC as part of NRCI's primary role in facilitating voluntary repatriation and post return monitoring. This initiative will not only enhance coordination but also contribute to conducive protection environment and promote sustainable return and reintegration through a whole-of-government approach.

## DONORS

UNHCR is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have directly contributed to the UNHCR Somalia operation in 2022



## CONTACT

**Magatte Guisse**, Representative, UNHCR Somalia  
[guisse@unhcr.org](mailto:guisse@unhcr.org) | +252 611634665 | +90252012100

**Marco Lembo**, External Relations Officer, UNHCR Somalia  
[lembo@unhcr.org](mailto:lembo@unhcr.org) | +254 714 524 339 | +254 736 999 782

**Katie Ogwang**, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR Somalia  
[ogwangk@unhcr.org](mailto:ogwangk@unhcr.org) | +252 619 505 084

