

Somalia

Main objectives

- Attain durable solutions for Somali refugees, through voluntary repatriation (mainly from Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya) and subsequent reintegration.
- Provide international protection and humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers to whom UNHCR has access, whilst simultaneously pursuing durable solutions.



Planning figures		
Population	Jan 2005	Dec 2005
Returnees	34,000	17,000
Ethiopia (refugees)	450	450
Asylum-seekers	300	250
Other refugees	50	50
Total¹	34,800	17,750

¹ In addition, UNHCR will provide assistance to 100,000 IDPs and 320,000 persons who returned before 2004, as well as to some 100,000 beneficiaries in host communities.

Total requirements: USD 6,584,554

Working environment

Recent developments

The Somali National Reconciliation Conference has made concerted efforts to bring an end to the political crisis in Somalia. The Reconciliation Conference was hosted by the Government of Kenya under the auspices of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD), and was keenly supported by the international community. After protracted negotiations, a clan-based 275-member parliament was selected which, in turn, elected a speaker in September 2004. In

mid-October 2004, the Parliament then elected a President. The final stages of the process will lead to the formation of a five-year Transitional Federal Government, which will inevitably face formidable challenges to establish effective legitimacy and authority throughout Somalia.

Despite the emergence, in principle, of a new government for the whole country, there remains a proliferation of competing administrations, factions and militias as separate administrations have continued to assert their own authority. Two examples are: the self-declared state of 'Somaliland' in the northwest, and the self-declared autonomous region of 'Puntland' in the northeast. Apart from the authorities in 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland' most of the other regional and local authorities have not been able to contain the ongoing fighting or other manifestations of lawlessness in, and between, the areas they seek to control.

During 2004, peaceful multi-party elections in 'Somaliland' and the mature handling of a constitutional crisis in 'Puntland' demonstrated the determination of these administrations and the people to preserve hard-won peace and stability. In the south, there was a proliferation of conflict between rival clan factions, particularly in Bula Hawa in Gedo region, which displaced an estimated 2,500 families in and around the town, whilst forcing another 2,000 people to flee into Mandera in neighbouring Kenya. Humanitarian agencies mediated in the conflict, in collaboration with the Government of Kenya, and provided urgent relief aid.

The situation of the estimated 370,000 IDPs remains a serious humanitarian concern. The inadequate protective environment and meagre humanitarian assistance (due to funding constraints) place a severe strain on the coping mechanisms of the IDPs, the hosting communities and the authorities. Some 40,000 and 60,000 IDPs, mainly from the South, live in squalid conditions in 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland' respectively.

There are widespread food and water shortages in the northern pastoral and southern agricultural areas of Somalia resulting from the prolonged

drought. By September 2004 it was estimated that the drought had affected about 600,000 people across the country, causing a total collapse of their livelihoods.

Against this backdrop, UNHCR continued to assist the voluntary repatriation of refugees in 2004: nearly 10,000 during the first half of the year, bringing to some 476,000 the total number of returnees assisted by the Office. The refugees are returning to one of the poorest countries in the world, where civil strife and years of neglect render reintegration an extremely daunting prospect, despite the best efforts of the people themselves, the authorities, the diaspora and the international aid community.

Constraints

Violence and armed conflict in southern and central Somalia continue to impede humanitarian access to the vulnerable, and hold back humanitarian and reconstruction activity. Even though 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland', are relatively stable, an emerging extremist threat has led to the introduction of more stringent security regulations for UN workers. This considerably increases the costs of compulsory security measures. At the same time, major longer-term development challenges such as the threat of HIV/AIDS, lack of education programmes and the destruction of the environment, are particularly difficult to address.

Unless the new government structures significantly improve the general situation, no large-scale voluntary repatriation to the southern parts of the country can be envisaged. Nevertheless, UNHCR will continue to receive individual returnees in Mogadishu and undertake reintegration projects where access is possible. The majority of returnees will arrive in 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland'. In 'Somaliland', the speed and spatial distribution of return will be determined by the absorptive capacity of communities, particularly the resilience and adaptability of basic service provision. Large-scale return could be a destabilizing force, rather than an element of peace building, unless supported within a community-based framework to alleviate poverty.

Strategy

UNHCR will continue to promote return to 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland', as these areas are at peace and enjoy governance. Barring unforeseen constraints, the voluntary repatriation to 'Somaliland' from Ethiopia and Djibouti should be completed in 2005. To enable individuals in the remaining camps in Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia to make an informed decision on their prospective return, information campaigns and confidence-building visits will be undertaken jointly with the authorities from the areas of return and the respective host governments.

UNHCR will actively contribute to the work of the UN Country Team (UNCT) for Somalia, the IGAD Partners Forum and the Somalia Aid Coordination Body on rehabilitation and reconstruction processes under the new Government. Geographically, the Office will focus its interventions in 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland' plus Mogadishu and its environs. UNHCR will continue to base its actions on the "4Rs" strategy (Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction) in order to bridge gaps in the transition process from initial reintegration and humanitarian assistance to longer-term and sustainable development programmes. For 2005 and beyond, the focus will be on access (in line with the priorities of the UNCT) to basic services in water, health, education, sanitation, human rights and protection, humanitarian response and combating HIV/AIDS, along with local economic development through community development, empowering youth and women, income generation and employment and intensive infrastructure projects. The majority of interventions will be joint initiatives of UNHCR, UNDP, ILO and other partners, as part of an integrated and coherent approach, with a specific focus on the social and economic empowerment of women.

In 2005, it is envisaged that the elaboration of a regional Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) for Somali refugees will be completed and then endorsed by a high level international conference to be convened in Geneva towards mid-2005. It is anticipated that the CPA will then be adequately supported and resourced by all stakeholders.

UNHCR's activities in Somalia – aiming to make refugee return more attractive and sustainable – will be an important element of the country component of the CPA.

Through this approach, the Office will seek to prepare for an eventual phase-down of reintegration interventions in 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland', involving an increasing role for UNDP, other UN agencies and NGOs under the umbrella of the Reintegration of Returnees and IDPs programme (RRIDP). The success of this strategy will largely depend on sufficient donor support for recovery and long-term development.

Protection and solutions

If the security situation is favourable, UNHCR envisages that its two-pronged approach of promotion and facilitation of voluntary repatriation to 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland' from Ethiopia and Djibouti will be complete in 2005. The number of returnees in 2005 could reach 17,000. Movements from Kenya and possibly Yemen to the southern parts of the country will take place, but only on a small-scale until the new Government is firmly established and running smoothly. Large-scale repatriation to the southern parts of the country in 2005 – upon a successful conclusion and rapid implementation of the peace process – is a scenario which cannot be discounted, but it would require substantial additional resources, and it is not addressed in the current 2005 programme.

The Office will provide international protection and life-sustaining assistance to urban refugees and asylum-seekers, both in 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland', whilst pursuing durable solutions for them. These will include local integration, where possible, third country resettlement, and voluntary repatriation. In 'Puntland', UNHCR will establish an international presence (for the first time) in order to enhance protection of refugees. It will monitor the physical, legal and material safety of returnees through contacts with local authorities, communities and NGOs as well as direct interviews with returnees.

Assistance

UNHCR is to phase down its programme, especially in 'Somaliland', through efforts to bridge the gap between relief and development. This will be achieved by actively collaborating with development actors.

The Office will extend its assistance to those who repatriated in 2003 and 2004, as well as to the refugees who return in 2005. The reintegration programme will enhance the availability of, and access to, basic services for all needy segments of society, including vulnerable groups such as IDPs and marginalized minority populations, by promoting their economic self-reliance. Working jointly with other UN agencies, UNHCR will also address the consequences of environmental degradation and drought in the form of emergency relief and rehabilitation projects.

Desired impact

The desired impact for refugees in Somalia will be the enjoyment of international protection and access to basic services such that they can plan their futures in a sustainable manner. UNHCR will promote durable solutions for different groups of refugees, tailored to their particular needs.

Somali refugees will voluntarily return in assisted and promoted movements to 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland', whilst individual Somalis may return in facilitated movements to areas of southern Somalia deemed less safe and stable. There will be no discrimination against returnees and they will benefit from national protection, including through the promotion of the adoption of national legislation conforming to international standards.



Somalia

A returnee receiving lessons at Dr. Annalena Tonelli's Tuberculosis Hospital in Boroma.
UNHCR / E. Parsons

Authorities will increasingly engage other development-oriented actors in a sustainable reintegration process, including economic recovery and income-generating activities.

UNHCR and other agencies' community-based reintegration projects will aim at ensuring the enjoyment of rights and the sustainability of return.

All vulnerable groups will be better protected (especially female returnees) with the focus being directed to greater respect for human rights.

Organization and implementation

Management structure

UNHCR's operations in Somalia and in countries hosting Somali refugees will be coordinated amongst the relevant UNHCR country offices. The country office for Somalia, based in Nairobi, Kenya will coordinate and oversee all operations in Somalia. The office in Hargeisa will support the repatriation and reintegration programme. UNHCR will also maintain field offices in Bosasso, Galkayo, Garowe and Mogadishu. In 2005, the Somalia operation will be staffed by ten international staff (including one JPO) and 40 national staff. As and when the results of the IGAD-led peace process take hold in Somalia, UNHCR will have to strengthen its presence as well as enhance activities in areas not covered by the current programme and consequently launch a separate appeal for funding.

Coordination

UNHCR is a member of the SACB (Somalia Aid Coordination Body) which comprises UN agencies, donors and NGOs. While maintaining its active involvement in deliberations of the UNCT, UNHCR envisages stronger cooperation with UNDP and ILO under the umbrella of the Reintegration of Returnees and IDPs programme (RRIDP). In striving to meet its objectives in the field, UNHCR will work closely with relevant authorities, national and international NGOs, as well as with local contractors and the beneficiary population. UNHCR participates in the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP).

Offices

Nairobi (Kenya)
 Bossasso (subject to review)
 Galkayo (subject to review)
 Garoowe
 Hargeisa
 Mogadishu

Partners

Government agencies

Ministry of Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction ('Somaliland')
 Ministry for Diaspora and Refugees (Mogadishu)
 Ministry of Interior, State Security and Demobilization Disarmament and Reconciliation ('Puntland')
 Ministry of International Cooperation and Planning

NGOs

Agricultural Development Organization
Bani'Adam
 Community Concerned Somalis
 Galkayo Education Centre for Peace and Development
 Hargeisa Voluntary Youth Committee
 HIGSAD
 Save Somalia Women and Children
 Shafi'I Social Development Organization
 Somali Development and Rehabilitation Organization
 Somali Reunification Women's Union
 Somali Women Concern
 United Somali People's Organization

Budget (USD)

Activities and services	Annual Programme
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,698,919
Community services	223,730
Crop production	180,000
Domestic needs	163,500
Education	865,400
Fisheries	110,000
Forestry	40,000
Health	557,600
Income generation	415,000
Legal assistance	257,600
Livestock	140,000
Operational support (to agencies)	184,800
Sanitation	80,000
Transport/logistics	270,000
Water (non-agricultural)	790,000
Total operations	5,976,549
Programme support	608,005
Total	6,584,554