

SOMALIA

INITIAL OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from various countries of asylum and help them reintegrate by providing basic infrastructure and services.
- Continue to implement community-based Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) conducive to self-reliance, particularly in returnee areas, in close collaboration with governments, other UN agencies and local NGOs.
- Collect and disseminate detailed information about the situation in Somalia in order to assist UNHCR offices, humanitarian agencies, donors, governments hosting Somali refugees, and refugees themselves to make informed choices on issues of repatriation and asylum.
- Ensure the protection and well-being of Ethiopian and other refugees and seek durable solutions for them.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

Voluntary Repatriation

UNHCR continued to promote voluntary repatriation to northern Somalia and accordingly stepped up the repatriation information campaign in Ethiopia. Information meetings involving the Ministry of Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (MRRR) of Somaliland (north-west Somalia), elders from Somaliland, the Ethiopian Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and the relevant Ethiopian regional authorities were organised in Darwanaji and Teferiber refugee camps. The main objective was to re-emphasise the impending closure of the two camps and to provide further information to refugees on the situation in Somaliland, where most of them are expected to return to.

In addition, UNHCR organised a confidence-building visit of refugee elders from the Aisha camp in eastern Ethiopia to areas of return in the Awdal region of Somaliland to pave the way for their eventual return. The delegation made a number of recommendations including the de-mining of the Gurgur-Harrirad road, the most direct route between the Aisha refugee camp and the Awdal region, the need to ensure reconciliation and peace-building between the Issa and Gadabursi clans as well as the need for the rehabilitation of vital social service structures.

Voluntary repatriation movements from Ethiopia did not begin until April 2001 due to logistical constraints and the need to pre-position the food package. A total of 22,516 persons had travelled in organised convoys from Ethiopia to their areas of origin in Somaliland by the end of June. Before their departure, returnees received travel grants and reintegration packages consisting of a nine-month food ration (cereals, pulses and oil) and non-food items (plastic sheeting, blankets and jerrycans). Some 54 per cent of returnees were women and 28 per cent were children.

The establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG) of Somalia in 2000 raised hopes for the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees, who have been in Kenya for over a decade. However, progress in the peace process has been slow, as the TNG has lacked support from the authorities in Puntland (the north-east) and Somaliland and faced opposition from some Mogadishu-based factions. The security situation in southern Somalia, therefore, remained volatile, although there has recently been a softening of positions. The residents welcomed the TNG's deployment of a police force in Mogadishu.

While there were no voluntary repatriation movements from Kenya to Somalia during

the first half of the year, UNHCR registered 6,820 refugees wishing to return to Puntland and Somaliland. Puntland has cleared 3,145 of these individuals for return and Somaliland 300. The prospective repatriates are now awaiting transport to return home.

As another significant number of refugees expressed their desire to return to southern Somalia, UNHCR, in collaboration with UN agencies and other actors, is reviewing the situation in southern Somalia, in order to advise the refugees.

Kenya experienced an influx of 17,000 Somali refugees (estimate by Government of Kenya) in the north-eastern Kenyan district of Mandera. They had fled clashes in Bulla Hawa in southern Somalia. When a peace agreement was signed between the antagonists, and a new administrator was installed in the principal town of Bulla Hawa, the new refugees started going back on their own initiative.

The Office also facilitated the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Eritrea (57), India (4) and Yemen (117) by air through Mogadishu. UNHCR had provided detailed information to the prospective repatriates enabling them to make informed decisions about their return. All returnees received cash grants to cover their food needs en-route as well as costs for onward transportation from Mogadishu to their final destinations. In addition, UNHCR secured clearances from the authorities in Mogadishu and met returnees at the airport where further information was provided on how they could get to their final destinations. However, due to security constraints no assistance could be provided to returnees in areas of return.

Efforts to start voluntary repatriation from Djibouti have been forestalled by political constraints, while the recent closure of the border between Djibouti and Somaliland has been preventing spontaneous returns. UNHCR continues to monitor the situation and to follow-up with the authorities in search of a window of opportunity to start

the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Djibouti.

The start of direct commercial flights from Addis Abeba and Nairobi to Hargeisa was welcomed by many agencies as it reduced the difficulties agencies faced when travelling to Somalia from Nairobi and Ethiopia. As a result of this development, UNCAS (United Nations Common Air Service) flights to and from Djibouti were reduced significantly. UNHCR will, however, continue to be in need of the services of UNCAS for the rest of the country.

Reintegration of Somali Returnees

The QIPs committee in Somaliland, comprising UNHCR, MRRR and the respective line ministries, has selected projects based on priority needs assessments involving the community at the grassroots level. During the first half of 2001, arrangements for 43 projects in the sectors of water, sanitation, health, shelter/infrastructure, community services, education, crop production, animal husbandry and forestry were concluded. However, implementation has been hampered by delays, which were partly associated with UNHCR's ongoing review and prioritisation process. This situation will be rectified during the second half of the year.

The embargo early this year on the importation of livestock from the Horn of Africa by some Arab states has had grave implications for the economy and household food security in Somalia. As a result, UNHCR has come under pressure to consider more QIPs to ensure sustained return.

The impact of UNHCR's programme in Somalia has three principal sources. Firstly, it stems from the confidence gained by returnees from the presence of UNHCR staff in returnee areas aimed at ensuring their protection and wellbeing. Secondly, the QIPs have increased the level of services in the communities to the benefit of those who

have already returned and the future arrivals. Thirdly, the community-based approach to the implementation of QIPs has fostered peaceful co-existence between returnees and receiving communities.

Actions 1 and 2 have affected the delivery of assistance both through the level of uncertainty created and the reduction of funds available to the programme.

UNHCR was not able to carry out QIPs in the Sool and Sanaag regions, which are contested by the authorities of Puntland and Somaliland.

In June, the population of Somaliland voted for a new constitution. Since this referendum, the security situation in the two regions has improved significantly, and UNHCR and other agencies will soon resume their activities.

Progress as measured against selected indicators

INDICATORS	PROGRESS
Improved repatriation routes in place.	3 kilometres of Salahley-Hargeisa road rehabilitated to facilitate convoy movements.
Number of new latrines made available in returnee villages.	2 latrines and one bathroom completed; construction of 15 latrines in progress.
Per capita potable water consumption increased.	4 cemented water reservoirs (<i>berkads</i>) rehabilitated and 1 shallow well and 5 dams constructed.
Measures taken to decrease incidence of health epidemics and sanitary emergencies.	Access to sanitation facilities for returnee households enhanced; environmental sanitation in returnee areas improved.
Maternal and infant mortality rate reduced.	Arrangements made for the construction of 3 Maternal Child Healthcare and Out-Patient centres; extension of Boroma hospital and construction of Boroma TB ward completed; upgrading of Hargeisa hospital commenced.
Greater economic and social independence of women supported.	Classroom and office furniture provided for 3 women life education centres.
Provision of basic education and skills training.	Percentage of students increased from 20% to 28%; 16 primary schools and 1 secondary school under construction/rehabilitation; 1,045 items of school furniture provided to primary and secondary schools; 300 students trained in metalwork, carpentry, masonry, electrical engineering, office management, sewing and soap-making; 'training of trainers' held for 11 teachers; 2 volleyball courts established.
Activities implemented to increase self-sufficiency through crop production.	258 oxen, 70 ploughs and 1,800 kg of seeds provided to 1,140 farmers; 34 water pumps/accessories, 1,700 metres of hose pipes and 34-foot valves provided to farmers; 2 irrigation canals are under rehabilitation.
Activities implemented to increase self-sufficiency through animal production.	10 'kick-start' kits procured for distribution; Berbera Port marshalling yard rehabilitated; main livestock quarantine and animal shelters in Berbera are under construction; 3 workshops for 36 community animal health workers held; training course provided for 10 laboratory technicians.
Increased income levels and self-sufficiency of households receiving loans.	133 loans granted for the establishment of small businesses.

Urban Refugees

During the first half of the year, UNHCR Somalia received applications for refugee status from 162 asylum-seekers of mainly Ethiopian but also Sudanese, Congolese, Yemeni, Chadian, Iraqi, Eritrean and Burundese origin. By June, 74 applications had been rejected and 37 accepted. The

applications of recent arrivals are still under review. The total number of refugees receiving material assistance has risen to 72 families comprising 205 individuals (177 Ethiopians, 11 Eritreans, four Congolese, four Sudanese, three Angolans, three Burundese, two Yemenis and one Iraqi).

Thanks to UNHCR's sensitisation initiatives on refugee law and human rights, there has been a remarkable improvement in the way security organs and other government agents handle asylum-seekers and refugees. No arbitrary arrests and detentions have been reported this year. A training of trainers' workshop was conducted covering the Action for the Rights of the Child and Peace Education. Participants from Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan attended the inter-agency workshop. A pool of trainers has

been identified to facilitate the continuation of the ARC/Peace Education initiatives.

A total of 73 individuals (18 applications) of Ethiopian nationality were interviewed for possible resettlement to a third country. Of these 31 individuals (9 applications) have been conditionally accepted for resettlement pending the final medical examinations, while 42 individuals (9 applications) have been rejected.

Progress as measured against selected indicators

INDICATORS	PROGRESS
Refugees resettled and durable solution attained	Two families comprising eight individuals have been resettled; more applications are being processed
Refugee protection and rights ensured and essential assistance rendered.	Status determination conducted for most new-arrivals; no arbitrary arrests and detentions reported; 205 individuals assisted with subsistence allowances.

REVISED OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR JULY-DECEMBER

Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees

The Office will continue to discuss with the authorities in Somaliland the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Djibouti. UNHCR intends to propose a fact-finding mission together with the Somaliland authorities to refugee camps in Djibouti, in order to ascertain the origin of the Somali refugees.

Reintegration of Somali Returnees

UNHCR will prioritise urgently-needed assistance in the sectors of water, health, shelter/infrastructure, education and mine clearance in the Zeila and Lughaya districts of Awdal region, in order to prepare for voluntary repatriation of refugees from Aisha camp in Ethiopia.

Given the improved security situation in Sool, the Office will intensify reintegration activities for returnees from Kenya and from the Aware camps in Ethiopia. UNHCR will consolidate its offices in Puntland into one office in Garowe, where the government offices are located. Furthermore, it will accelerate the implementation of projects in Puntland and strengthen co-operation with other actors.

UNHCR plans to intensify discussions with development-oriented international NGOs and UN agencies with a view to finding competent international organisations that are willing to take over, consolidate and complement UNHCR's past and ongoing interventions in Somalia. UNHCR also plans to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs to ensure the sustainability of the established programmes.

FINANCIAL DATA (USD)

	Initial Budget	Revised Budget	Total Funds Available ¹	Total Funds Obligated
APB	11,117,133	5,987,204	5,064,127	3,482,220

¹Includes income from unrestricted contributions, income from contributions restricted to the regional, sub-regional and/or country level, opening balance and adjustments.