SOMALIA PARTICIPATORY ASSESSMENT

NATIONAL REPORT - APRIL 2022

EXTERNAL

Acknowledgement

UNHCR Somalia operation appreciates all partners, Government Officials and UNHCR staff for their support and commitment towards the facilitation of the annual 2022 participatory assessment exercise.

The completion of this exercise would not have been possible without the participation and support of key stakeholders including refugees and asylum seekers, returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs), who took part in various focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) across the country.

A special thank you to the Multi-functional teams across UNHCR's offices in Somalia that led in the planning, designing, and implementation of the assessment in line with the UNHCR's Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) to ensure Accountability to Affected Population (AAP). This helped to gather accurate information on specific protection risks, challenges, and priorities identified by Persons of Concern, including the mapping of communities' capacities, assets/resources and proposed recommendations and solutions.

Mindful of the centrality of protection in humanitarian response and action, the outcome of this exercise will be instrumental in facilitating planning, designing and implementation of protection, assistance, and solutions programmes under UNHCR's multi-year strategy for 2023-2025, which aims to improve the well-being of communities in Somalia.

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[COVER PHOTOGRAPH:]
[HPS Ifrah Ahmed at a Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) awareness raising event in an IDP site in Mogadishu.
The Ifrah Foundation / GMC / 1/8/2018]

Executive Summary

UNHCR's vision is to remain agile and action-oriented, able to deliver quality people-centered solutions to address protection needs and concerns for all its persons of concern in Somalia.

The annual 2022 Participatory Assessment was carried out with four key objectives:

(i)   To identify problems and risks facing Persons of Concern
(ii)   To better understand strategies and coping mechanisms employed by the Persons of Concern in their daily lives
(iii)   To identify local capacities that can be supported by the operation to mitigate protection risks and increase prospects for durable solutions
(iv)   To inform the planning of activities for 2022

The assessment was conducted between March and April 2022 by UNHCR staff and partners, with support from local authorities, in locations across the country covered by Sub–Office (SO) Galkayo, SO Hargeisa and SO Mogadishu. There were **220** focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted with women, men, girls and boys of different nationalities and backgrounds, including persons with specific needs (PSNs) with an average of **10** participants per discussion. In addition, **115** key informant interviews (KIIs) took place with community leaders, Government officials and partner staff among others.

Related to specific thematic areas, findings of the assessment indicate overarching concerns of the persons of concern relate to:
- Limited access to basic services (food, health, education, core relief items (CRIs) & WASH)
- Limited access to livelihood and socio-economic empowerment opportunities
- Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) concerns (evictions and insecure tenure arrangements)
- Access to justice and effective remedies (detention, gender-based violence (GBV), child protection (CP) concerns)
- Addressing protection concerns of women, children, elderly and other PSNs
- Addressing discrimination and exclusion of ethnic and religious minority groups

Key Recommendations

The following are the key recommendations deduced from the exercise:

1. Enhance collaboration between UNHCR and its partners in service delivery, such as health and education.
2. Improve timely delivery of services to PSNs including children, elderly and persons with disabilities or a medical condition.
3. Mitigate and respond to CP/GBV through the establishment of socio-economic activities and facilitate access to livelihood to support women's protection and empowerment, particularly female-headed households and out-of-school girl children.
4. Ensure the integration of referral pathways that are sustainable and implementable to improve GBV survivors' access to services.
5. Expedite Refugee Status Determination (RSD) processing.
6. Scale up livelihood programs, vocational skills training, self-reliance programs, and protection-focused cash-based interventions.
7. Enhance inter-agency coordination and collaboration in responding to prioritized protection risks, including through cluster approach for IDPs and host communities.
8. Develop and implement programs that ensure non-discrimination by adopting the inclusion of women, girls, and other PSNs including persons with disabilities and clan/ethnic minorities.

Introduction

As of 30 April 2022, there are 32,961 refugees and asylum seekers, 134,947 returnees and 2,967,500 IDPs in Somalia. Refugees and asylum-seekers are mainly from Ethiopia (68%), Yemen (27%) and Syria (3%). Most reside in urban or peri-urban settings across Woqooyi Galbeed (49%) and Bari (32%) regions in the northern part of the country. Most Somali refugee returnees come from Kenya (63%) and Yemen (35%).

Somalia has a large forcibly displaced population with estimates of 3.6 million, of whom close to 1 million are refugees and the remainder IDPs. In the East and Horn of Africa Region, around 660,000 Somali refugees are hosted mostly in Kenya (43%), Ethiopia (38%), and Uganda (9%). High numbers of Somali refugees are also hosted in Yemen (11%).

The causes of displacement are multifaceted, embedded in a protracted humanitarian crisis characterized by ongoing conflict, climate-related shocks, communicable disease outbreaks, and underdeveloped social protection mechanisms. The adverse consequences of the crises affect protection responses and understanding and analyzing the impact of intersecting protection risks on lived experience in forced displacement is necessary for an effective response.

Annual participatory assessments promote meaningful participation and inclusion[1] of persons of concern in shaping UNHCR and partners' interventions. This ensures that programs are informed by the perspectives of persons of concern and that communities' capacities are mobilized in pursuing solutions to the issues faced.

Participatory assessments use participatory methods to promote the role of women, men, girls, and boys of all ages and backgrounds as agents of change in their families and communities. Gender inclusion and capturing diverse views in UNHCR's multiyear programmatic planning is critical to attain protection and solutions for its persons of concern. The recommendations of this assessment were made to UNHCR in coordination and collaboration with its partners and the Federal Government of Somalia and its member states.

This report contributes to the situational analysis of the Multi-Year Strategy covering 2023-2025.

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[1] https://www.unhcr.org/publications/legal/450e920e2/unhcr-tool-participatory-assessment-operations-part-introduction.html

Demographic[2] distribution of persons of concern (PoC)[3] in Somalia
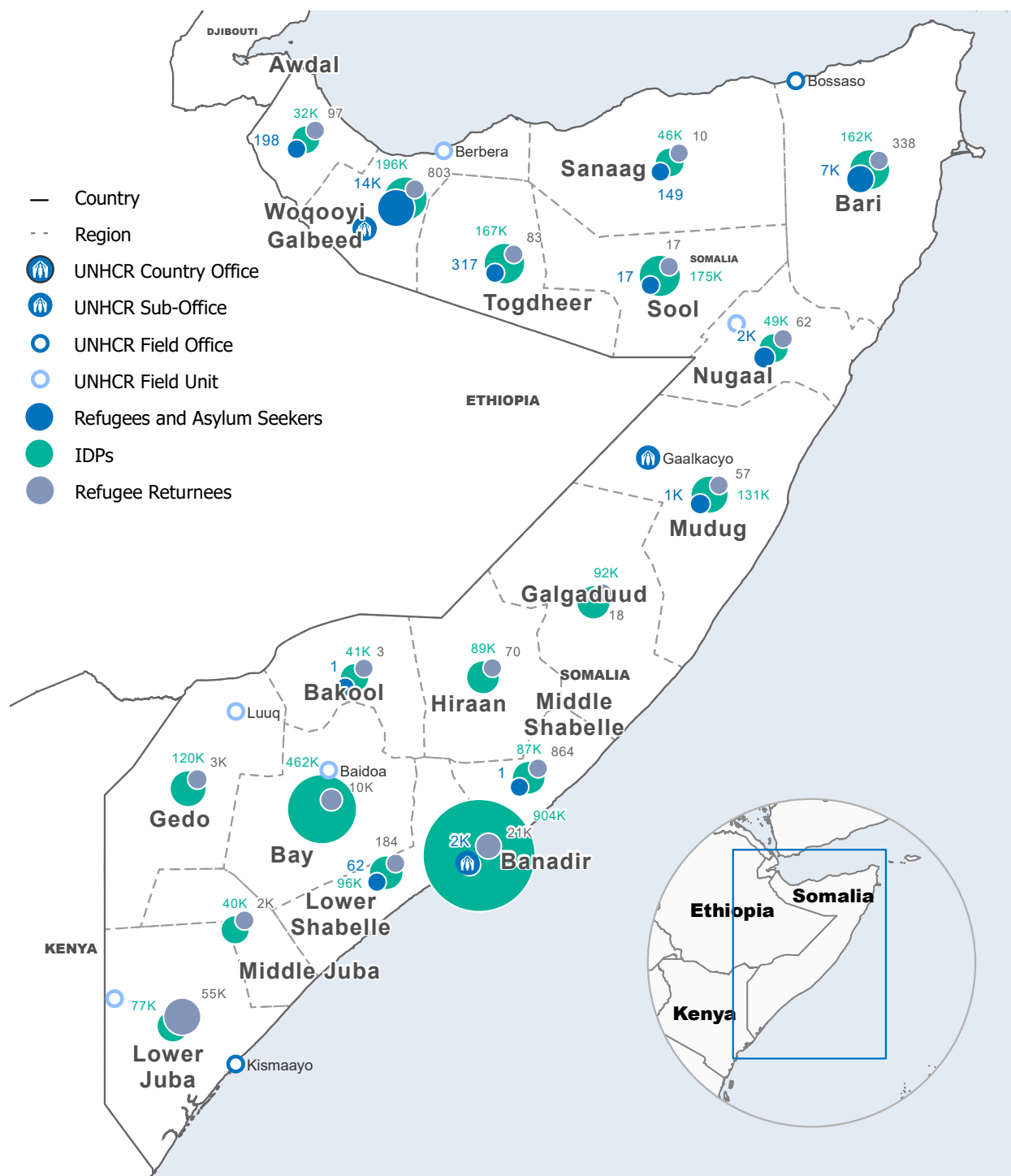
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

2,967,500

ASSISTED REFUGEE RETURNEES

92,698

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

32,961

Legend:
- — Country
- --- Region
- UNHCR Country Office
- UNHCR Sub-Office
- UNHCR Field Office
- UNHCR Field Unit
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- IDPs
- Refugee Returnees

DJIBOUTI

Awdal

Bossaso

32K 97
198
196K 803
14K
Berbera
Sanaag 46K 10
149
Bari 162K 338
7K

Woqooyi Galbeed

167K 83
317
Togdheer
Sool 17
17 175K SOMALIA
Nugaal 49K 62
2K

ETHIOPIA

Gaalkacyo
Mudug 1K 131K 57

Galgaduud 92K 18

Bakool 41K 3
1
Luuq
Hiraan 89K 70
Middle Shabelle SOMALIA
87K 864
1

Gedo 120K 3K
Baidoa 10K
Bay 462K
184
62
96K
Lower Shabelle
Banadir 904K
2K 21K

Middle Juba 40K 2K

KENYA

Lower Juba 77K 55K
Kismaayo

Ethiopia Somalia

Kenya

[2] Population figures as of 30 April 2022
[3] Persons of Concern refer to Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced Persons, Stateless Persons and Persons at risk of statelessness

Methodology

In 2022, COVID-19 prevention measures were gradually eased and UNHCR was able to conduct in-person discussions with appropriate COVID-19 prevention measures in place. Data collection took place between March and April 2022 with refugees and asylum seekers, returnees and IDPs as the targeted population. The Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) approach was mainstreamed in the methodology by consulting children (12-13 years), adolescents (14-17), youths (18 – 24 years), adults (25-59 years), and older persons (60+ years) of all genders.

UNHCR conducted 220 focus group discussions (FGDs) with an average of 10 participants per discussion as well as 115 key informant interviews (KIIs). Where appropriate and safe, UNHCR, partners and Government's local authorities, conducted FGDs and KIIs either in person or via phones with refugee, returnee and IDP communities. The assessment was conducted following a qualitative methodology including a desk review of existing documents and assessments.

KoBo toolbox, a web-based and mobile platform for data collection, was the main tool used by SO Galkayo and Mogadishu, while SO Hargeisa used systemization forms. Prior to data collection, UNHCR conducted training for partners under SO Galkayo and SO Mogadishu on the use of the KoBo toolbox for data collection and communicating with communities (CoC), including on ethical standards, confidentiality and consent. The data collectors were also briefed on common protection issues. FGD and KII guidelines with instructions regarding the selection of participants and composition of FGDs was developed and shared with partners to guide the process.

Sampling

Purposive sampling and representative group composition were used to select participants for both FGDs and KIIs to ensure adequate representation in terms of age, gender, nationality, religious/ethnic background, and involvement of persons with specific needs (PSNs).

The assessment targeted persons aged 12 years and above. Sub-Offices were given the option to increase the number of FGDs and KIIs based on available resources, diversity of the population, and number of settlements covered by the office.

Data Analysis

An analytical framework was developed to show the links between the sectors, themes, research questions, indicators, and questions. The main tool used for analysis of the data is Microsoft Excel pivot tables.

Limitations

Geographical limitations were tacitly imposed by security challenges. This restricted movements for enumerators, persons of concern, and UNHCR staff. Restricted movement of UNHCR staff resulted in significant reliance on partners for data collection.

The views expressed by the participants in the FGDs and KII may not be statistically representative as they may not represent the views of the entire PoC community.

Multi-Functional Teams

UNHCR uses a multi-functional team (MFT) approach, which combines different professional skills and functions to strengthen the community-based approach. Each area-based MFT included UNHCR staff from community-based protection, registration, programme, and protection units, along with partner staff.

SO Mogadishu:
National Commission for Refugees and IDPs (NCRI), South-West State Commission for Refugees and IDPs (SWSCRI), Hirshabelle Commission for Refugees and IDPs (HCRI), Jubaland Commission for Refugees and IDPs (JUCRI), and International and National Partners including Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Mercy Corps and Hanano, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and African Volunteers for Relief and Development (AVORD)

SO Galkayo:
Galmudug Commissionaire for Refugee and IDPs (GCRI), Ministry of Interior and Federalization and Democratization (MOIFAD), Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development (GECPD), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Tadamun Social Society (TASS), KAALO Aid and Development Organization, Puntland Youth and Social Association (PSA), Northern Frontier Youth League (NoFYL), Save the Children International (SCI)

SO Hargeisa:
National Displacement and Refugee Agency (NDRA), ACTED, Development Action Network (DAN), Women's Action Advocacy Progress Organization (WAAPO), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Legal Clinic, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

Ongoing orientation and training for some of the enumerators under SO Mogadishu, for the 2022 Participatory Assessment, © UNHCR

Priority needs for assistance

1. Access to basic services (Food, Health, Education, CRIs & WASH)

Food: Food was ranked highest among the basic needs and services that require intervention across all persons of concern, most of whom face challenges to make ends meet. As an effect, malnutrition is a health issue highlighted across all locations.

Health: Access to medical services and medication was noted as a challenge, particularly in **Hargeisa**. Many communities reported to lack medical facilities within reasonable distance, discrimination of refugees and asylum seekers at health centers, poor sanitation in the facilities, and lack of medication and absence of specialized treatments and emergency services for medical cases that require urgent intervention.

Education: Both boys and girls of school-going age skip school to work at home or elsewhere to supplement family income. Other leading challenges that hamper school attendance include insufficient income to cover the fees and scholastic materials, poor and inadequate school infrastructures, lack of hygiene kits for girls, dilapidated and overcrowded classrooms with untrained teaching personnel. Girls also reported the lack of gender-segregated sanitation facilities as a challenge. There is a lack of facilities for children with disabilities or special needs, which often leads to discrimination and drop-out.

WASH: Lack of clean water sources and safe drinking water is a leading cause of various ailments, including cholera and watery diarrhea. Inadequate sanitation facilities results in open defecation in some settlements, with overall detrimental impact on the environment and the health of residents in and around the settlements.

2. Access to livelihood and socio-economic empowerment opportunities

Livelihood: Limited livelihood opportunities were worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the country's economy through loss of livelihood opportunities, acutely impacting persons of concern. The most vulnerable groups facing employment discrimination opportunities are women and persons with disabilities. Refugees and asylum seekers face language barriers and behold skills that are not sought after in the country of asylum, making it difficult to find gainful employment.

3. Housing, Land, Property & Shelter and Core Relief Items (CRIs)

Housing: Many persons of concern lack legal property related documentation, exposing them to risks of evictions, swindling, and loss of rightful title.

Recommendations

This participatory assessment achieved its aim to facilitate meaningful inclusion and participation of persons of concern: to identify problems, challenges and probable solutions that can be employed in partnership with humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors and the Federal Government of Somalia and its member states to improve the well-being of UNHCR's persons of concern and host communities. The engagement of women, men, girls and boys of different ages and backgrounds as equal partners increases community ownership of programs for sustainable future for all people in Somalia.

Recommendations

Key recommendations identified within each "thematic analysis" of the participatory assessment are summarized as follows:

Cross Cutting

- Promote gender equality on access to services by assessing the needs of women, men, girls and boys and addressing barriers to access.
- Increase community participation in service delivery.
- Sensitize and raise awareness on the importance of ensuring access to services for marginalized and minority groups.
- As part of Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), strengthen community-based approaches and feedback and response mechanisms known and utilized by communities.

Registration

- Advocate for extension of the refugee certificates to more than two years.
- Advocate through MOIFAD (Puntland) to expedite registration, renewal process and timely issuance of identity cards.
- Advocate with the government for equal access to justice for all refugees and asylum seekers.
- Inform communities about the importance of registration for marginalized and minority groups.

Refugee Status Determination (RSD) and Access to Territory

- Ensure timely notification of RSD decisions and reduce RSD backlog.
- Advocate for increased RSD processing capacity.
- Increase information sharing on RSD processes in accessible formats.

Legal and Physical Protection

- Raise awareness in the community on how and where to access legal and protection services and strengthen its legal aid provision.
- Strengthen the capacity of community-based structures to respond to minor incidents in settlements.
- Raise awareness on refugee rights through panel discussions to sensitize relevant institutions about the refugee rights and the importance of the refugee documentation to host community, law enforcement agencies.
- UNHCR and government should take measures to tackle discrimination and ensure protection conducive environment for all persons of concern.

Community Participation

- Strengthen the capacity of existing community structures through trainings and material support.
- Increase the accessibility of UNHCR offices and increase the number of face-to-face meetings.
- Raise awareness on the presence of existing community structures and communication channels and promote their accessibility by establishing physical offices and providing interpretation services.

Gender Based Violence, PSEA, AAP and Gender Main Streaming

- Sensitize the community on gender equality, especially the importance of equal distribution of roles and responsibilities and access to education for girls and boys.
- Ensure all GBV survivors have adequate and timely access to quality health, legal and psychosocial services as well as material assistance.
- UNHCR and partners to create awareness on available GBV services and channels of communication for reporting.

Child Protection

- Strengthen child protection structures, such as the child protection committees, in settlements.
- Strengthen the capacity of community structures to report and follow up on violations against children.
- Support the community to accompany children to school and other social places.
- Advocate for a foster care system for UASC and abandoned children within communities.
- Enhance the provision of psychosocial support to children with traumatic experiences.
- Provide hygiene kits to girls of reproductive age in a timely manner.

Education

- Strengthen the capacity of teachers and train them on positive behavioural methods.
- Ensure that all schools have necessary facilities, including separate toilets for girls, and conducive environment and facilities to support learning of PSNs.
- Provide girls of reproductive age with sanitary materials and sensitize the youth on hygiene practices, including provision of hygiene kits.
- Raise awareness on the available education opportunities to students such as the DAFI scholarship.

Health

- Advocate for emergency and ambulance service in the communities to respond to urgent medical needs.
- Scale up the intercity referrals for communities by improving the existing referral mechanisms.
- Provide access to clean water in primary health care centers.
- Increase the number of health care facilities, treating doctors, health care workers and ensure quality health care system.

Livelihoods

- Provide market-based vocational training and skills development.
- Increase access to capital for business start-ups and growing businesses.
- Scale up livelihood programs, vocational skills training, self-reliance programs and protection focused cash-based interventions.
- Expand and scale up financial assistance, skills training, livelihoods training and programs to all PoCs.

- Extend the distribution of monthly multipurpose cash grants to cover more PoCs, not only refugees. Furthermore, ensure timely RSD processing to enable newly recognized refugees to receive their monthly cash grants.
- Develop and scale up reintegration programs.

WASH

- Sensitize the community on proper hygiene practices, use of latrines and waste disposal.
- Increase the number of boreholes and repair existing water sources and sanitation facilities to ensure their functionality.

Environment and Energy

- Raise continuous awareness on the importance of environmental conservation, climate adaptation, and resilience.
- Implement tree planting projects as a means of livelihoods and afforestation.

Housing, Land, Property & Shelter and Core Relief Items (CRIS)

- Strengthen the capacity of community members to construct and to maintain their own homes.
- Create income generating activities to improve livelihoods of refugees, IDPs and returnees, and empower them to purchase the CRIs they need.
- Construct more durable and permanent structures.
- Increase the frequency of the distribution of CRIs.

As highlighted throughout the report, diverse capacities exist within the community to address the identified challenges. It is important for all actors to work closely with refugees, returnees and IDP communities in finding solutions, building on existing capacities of women, men, girls and boys, and for the community to take ownership and the leading role in achieving their own protection outcomes.

PARTICIPATORY ASSESSMENT

SOMALIA

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April 2022

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency