



# OCHA SOMALIA

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Somalia

## OCHA

In a complex emergency, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator plays a critical role in mobilising and coordinating an effective and timely humanitarian response. OCHA facilitates the work of operational agencies that deliver humanitarian assistance to populations and communities in need through coordination, information for decision-making and advocacy. OCHA's mandate is to support this role. Humanitarian coordination is based on the premise that a coherent approach to emergency response will maximise benefits and minimise potential pitfalls, such as duplication or gaps. Through a coordinated response, maximised common strategies and joint responses, are developed. OCHA promotes the respect for, and compliance with humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence and "Do no Harm", in particular for the protection of vulnerable civilian populations. Advocacy is a key element to bringing international attention and support to crises but also engagement and commitment by national and local authorities. In this regard, OCHA is particularly vested in securing unimpeded and sustained humanitarian access to vulnerable populations in need of assistance.

Since 2007, Somalia has plunged deeper into humanitarian emergency due to three seasonal failed rains, exacerbated by conflict and continued insecurity especially in the South/Central regions, and in particular, Mogadishu. A widespread economic crisis, including the devaluation of the Somali shilling has also caused a sharp increase in food costs, and thousands of people are unable to afford food. OCHA Somalia has increased efforts to mobilise and coordinate an effective inter-agency humanitarian response. It also expanded its in-country presence, with a total of 12 sub-offices in the three zones of Somaliland, Puntland and South/Central (see map) supported by a central office in Nairobi.

### **OCHA's Mission Statement:**

*To mobilise and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors in order to:*

- *Alleviate human suffering in natural disasters and complex emergencies;*
- *Promote preparedness and prevention efforts to reduce future vulnerability;*
- *Facilitate sustainable solutions by addressing root causes;*
- *Advocate for the rights of people in need.*

## OCHA Somalia in 2008

The number of people in urgent need of food and other humanitarian assistance is (as of October, 2008) a staggering 3.2 million people. This is an increase of 77% since the beginning of 2008, representing approximately 43% of the total population. OCHA's primary focus is to continue facilitating the efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable. OCHA supports the development of local capacity for emergency preparedness and response, and sustaining transitional and early recovery activities where appropriate. OCHA continues to advocate with donors and the international community to support NGOs with start-up funding and capacity building, ensuring that the required expertise and experience are present on the ground in Somalia.

OCHA continues to strengthen its field presence in terms of seniority and breadth of coverage, and reinforce the cluster approach as well as supporting inter-cluster coordination. It works with donors to ensure flexible, reliable funding for NGOs, aiming at building local capacity and increasing operations in underserved areas. More broadly, OCHA advocates for the application of the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality in day-to-day humanitarian operations in order to improve conditions of the provision of assistance and protection.

## OCHA Somalia Coordination Mechanisms

**Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP)** - Coordinated by OCHA, the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is an inclusive annual programme cycle that analyzes the humanitarian context, assesses needs, identifies strategic priorities and plans programmes for humanitarian response. The CAP as a coordinating, planning, advocacy and fund-raising tool is at the disposal of the humanitarian aid community. By end of September, the 2008 CAP was 65% funded with \$423 million out of the \$660 million requested.

CAP projects fall within nine clusters: 1) Access and Security; 2) Agriculture and Livelihoods; 3) Education; 4) Food Security; 5) Health and Nutrition; 6) Protection; 7) Shelter; and 8) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and 8) Logistics and Coordination. The CAP also supports Emergency Preparedness and Multi-sector for refugees and returnees. Cross-cutting issues of gender and HIV/AIDS have been integrated into sectoral strategies where appropriate. The need for balanced sectoral funding is more relevant than ever to enable greater integration of response in 2008 to address chronic humanitarian crisis. Long-term funding commitments are also needed if partners are to address underlying causes of such crisis as well as emergency needs.

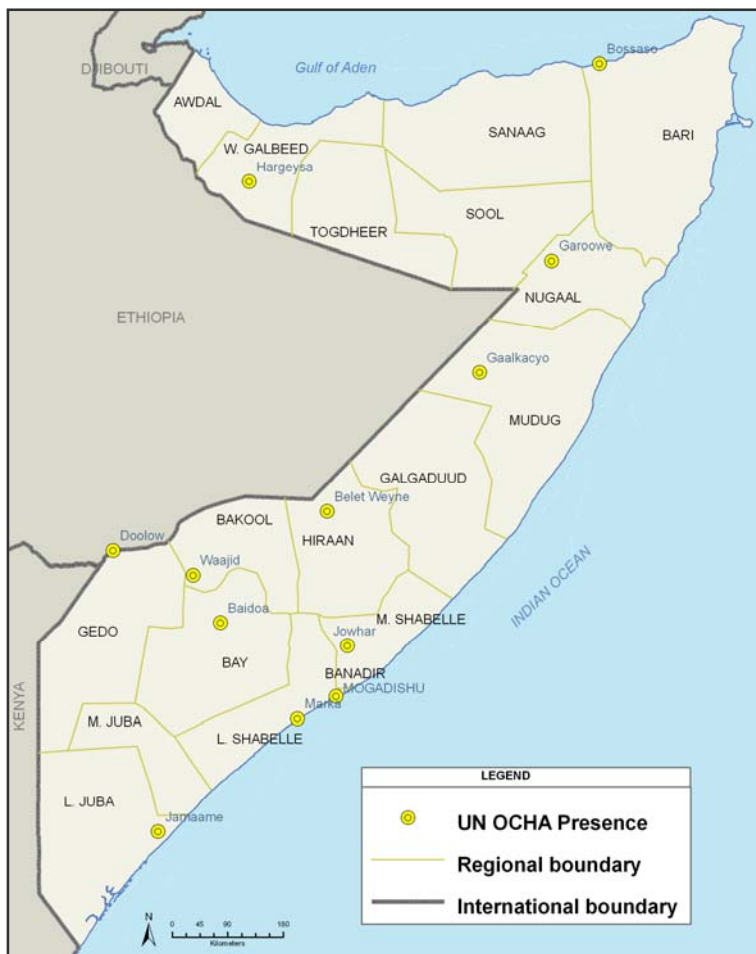
**Humanitarian Response Fund for Somalia (HRF)** - Administered by OCHA Somalia, and in place since 2004, the HRF is a pooled fund of un-marked donor contributions, at the disposal of the humanitarian community in Somalia, including UN Agencies, local and

international NGOs and the Red Cross/Crescent. Working through an Advisory Board, the HRF supports rapid response projects developed in the first phase of an emergency before mainstream responses come into play in addition to filling gaps at later stages of an emergency. As of September 2008, HRF allocated \$11.4 million to 43 projects benefiting an estimated 2.5 million people in all regions of Somalia. (See HRF fact sheet).

**Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)** - Managed by OCHA at the global level, the CERF aims to promote early action and response, enhance response to time-critical requirements, and strengthen core elements of humanitarian response in under-funded crises. The UN in Somalia has received a total of \$8.7 million from the CERF rapid response window. OCHA Somalia administers the disbursement of CERF grants, and so far, two agricultural programmes, a health programme that is managing acute malnutrition in children under-five years amongst IDPS and the humanitarian air operations have been funded.

**Access and Protection** - Given the complexity and volatility of the operational environment in Somalia, OCHA Somalia takes the lead and supports the IASC to maximise access opportunities to reach vulnerable. Unhindered and sustained humanitarian access remains paramount to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations. Years of lack of access and restricted humanitarian space, particularly in South/Central, has complicated response. OCHA participates in the IASC Advocacy Working Group and the Protection Cluster, advising on priorities regarding access to populations in need of aid makes recommendation on UN support to, and involvement in local reconciliation initiatives; and rethinks ways of providing assistance and protection in light of hostile conditions.

Protection of civilians is high on OCHA's agenda. In collaboration with other UN agencies, international and local NGOs, OCHA has provided policy guidance on the protection of more than 880,000 IDPs displaced since the beginning of 2007, minority groups, women, returnees, and urban poor. Since the collapse of the government in 1991, civilian populations have become the target of serious violations of International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law. Extortion, looting of property, physical attacks, rape and exploitation have become rampant causing many Somalis to flee the country or their area of origin within the country. The protective environment in Somalia has not improved over time with many abuses going unrecorded, unchecked and perpetrated with impunity. A UN Joint Strategy on Internally Displaced finalised in 2005 guides programming and aid responses related to IDPs, while a protection cluster established in early 2006 outlines priority interventions to meet protection needs throughout Somalia. In the field, IDP/Protection clusters exist in Somaliland while cluster and working group exist in Baidoa, South/Central Somalia.



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