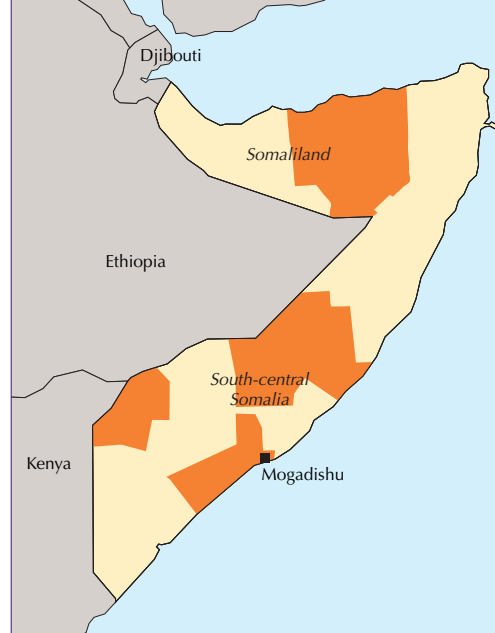


# Somalia

## Quick facts

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Number of IDPs                          | 1,300,000  |
| Percentage of total population          | 13%  |
| Start of current displacement situation | 2007   |
| New displacement in 2008                | 300,000  |
| Returns in 2008                         | Undetermined   |
| Causes of displacement                  | Internal and internationalised armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations |
| Human development index                 | –  |



In December 2006 Ethiopian forces joined those of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to defeat the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) which had taken control of much of South-Central Somalia including the capital Mogadishu. Two years later, fighting between those forces and insurgent groups has displaced 1.3 million people and left nearly half the population in need of urgent humanitarian support. Some 300,000 people were displaced in 2008 as a result of continued fighting.

IDPs in South-Central Somalia face a profound humanitarian crisis. Insurgent groups operating from IDP camps have led to TFG soldiers and their Ethiopian allies attacking and harassing IDPs. Humanitarian access is severely limited by insecurity which makes it difficult to provide food aid and other life saving assistance to IDPs. IDP camps lack basic facilities like schools, health care, and water and sanitation, leading to widespread acute malnutrition and diarrhoea. Poor shelter compromises the safety and integrity of IDP families.

The position of displaced women and girls has been extremely precarious. This has been accentuated as the armed conflict has gone hand-in-hand with strict enforcement of clan rules, and many displaced families are headed by women, the men either being casualties of war or migrating in search of work. Women are disadvantaged when it comes to property ownership and inheritance, and the risk of girls missing out on education is higher due to a bias towards the education of boys.

This situation of IDPs worsened in 2008 due to the continuing conflict, the lack of any national institutions providing services or security, and the difficulties international humanitarian agencies have had in getting support to IDPs. While some people staying in towns were able to maintain livelihoods, IDPs fleeing to rural areas generally looked to other members of their clan to provide a degree of community support. However the resilience of communities was increasingly strained by a rise in food prices, currency devaluation, and greater insecurity. In this context, IDPs from minority groups such as the Bantu, Bajuni, and the Bravanese were particularly vulnerable as they were unable to benefit from the protection of major clans.

The durable peace needed for IDPs' situations to improve may take some years to achieve. UN member states have

not shown great enthusiasm in the establishment of a widely accepted peacekeeping force to supplement the current AU mission, nor has the international community's support brought about a government acceptable to the majority of Somalis. The limited capacity of the TFG and its inability to provide security in most parts of the country has greatly undermined its credibility and compromised the delivery of aid to displaced people and the general population.

Some national NGOs have partnered UN and other international agencies in programme implementation and protection monitoring. However they have suffered not only from a lack of funds and human resources capacity, but also (in the case of human rights organisations) from attacks by both the insurgents and government forces. Their continued contribution depends firstly on greater security and space to operate, and also on continued capacity building and improved funding.

Coordination between UN and other international agencies follows the cluster approach. The UNHCR-led protection cluster has collected data remotely to analyse and disseminate information on population movements, protection concerns and coping strategies. The efforts of the WASH cluster under UNICEF coordination have also been affected by shrinking access. UNICEF reported in December 2008 that some 70 per cent of people in Somalia had no access to safe water.

The UN has been facilitating a peace-building process in Djibouti since May 2008. However, the deep division between groups and regional strategic interests still stand in the way of a durable peace.