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Somalia: Massive new displacements as power struggle in Mogadishu flares up again

Since the rout of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) by Somalia's transitional government and its Ethiopian allies during the last days of 2006, southern Somalia and the capital Mogadishu have slipped gradually back towards the violence and anarchy of recent years. Over 320,000 people have fled Mogadishu between 1 February and 20 April, and at the time of writing, there were no signs of the violence abating. Many of the displaced live in extremely difficult conditions, lacking shelter, food and water. The official number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the country remains at 400,000. But as there is no safe way for aid organisations to gain access to large areas of the country, no proper count has been made in years. Numbers must now be adjusted to over half a million. A recent UN report speaks of almost one million displaced people in Somalia, following 16 years of chaos and violence.

Occasional cease-fire agreements, bringing respite – and allowing the warring parties to regroup and rearm – remained short-lived, and the fighting continued in Mogadishu. Ethiopian and Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces are pitted against returning ICU fighters, other Islamist insurgent groups and clan warlords. International diplomatic efforts towards inclusive talks between the antagonists have been unsuccessful so far and the TFG's plans for reconciliation appear fatally flawed, as they do not currently include the Islamist groups. The international aid community's room for action is extremely limited, and while access is being continuously negotiated at the highest levels, it is highly insufficient given the enormous immediate needs of the conflict-affected displaced.

The conflict has resurged in an extremely precarious environment, with hundreds of thousands still directly affected by the consequences of floods, which swept over the riverine areas of south Somalia in November and December 2006 following months of drought. Humanitarian access had already been extremely difficult then, in an atmosphere of mounting tensions. An estimated one million people, almost half of them IDPs, are currently in need of humanitarian assistance, most of them in south and central Somalia. The self-declared Republic of Somaliland has so far remained stable. However, tensions between Somaliland and Puntland regarding the control over parts of Sanaag region have flared up again.

Map of Somalia



Source: United Nations Cartographic Section, July 2004

More maps are available on <http://www.internal-displacement.org/>

Background and political developments

The roots of Somalia's political troubles lie in the implosion of General Mohamed Siad Barre's 21-year dictatorship in 1991, which resulted in the collapse of virtually all state structures. An ill-judged UN peacekeeping mission from 1993 to 1995 (UNOSOM II) ended in fiasco, contributing to the segmentation of the Somali population and lasting discrediting of the UN system. From June 2006 the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) militia brought some stability to parts of south and central Somalia under its control, including the capital Mogadishu. But six months later, the ICU was defeated by Ethiopian-backed transitional government forces. Shortly after that change in power, checkpoints, banditry and growing insecurity have reappeared. Government and Ethiopian troops felt the public resentment at their presence and suffered increasingly from targeted attacks, before stepping up their military attacks on insurgents. The violence peaked in the second half of March and in April, with a number of ceasefire agreements between the warring parties collapsing only days after their conclusion. US air raids on an alleged Islamist and al-Qaeda stronghold in the south in January had contributed to raising tensions (BBC, 9 January 2007).

As the Ethiopian troops started to withdraw, and with African Union peacekeepers (AMISOM) not fully installed yet, nor willing to engage in battle, warlords have re-emerged, and clan fighting has intensified in Mogadishu and in Gedo and Bakool regions (UNSC, 28 February 2007, p.3). Factions of the ICU have returned to the capital and are fighting Transitional Government, Ethiopian and

AU (Ugandan) troops. The Transitional Government has so far not been able to fully re-install itself in Mogadishu and was under attack for the better part of the first quarter of 2007 (ISN, 29 March 2007).

The heavy fighting has led, according to Hawiye clan leaders and media reports, to over 1,000 casualties, with more than 4,000 wounded and well over 320,000 displaced, while access has been extremely limited (BBC, 22 April 2007; Somalia Situation Report, 20 April 2007; Mail and Guardian, 10 April 2007). After allegations of war crimes against civilians, the European Union began to distance itself from supporting Ethiopia and called for investigations into the way the troops have led their warfare in Mogadishu (Hiiran Online, 11 April 2007). Eritrea, Ethiopia's regional rival, has now admitted support for the ICU, which it had so far denied (BBC, 10 April 2007).

High-level international diplomacy to achieve inclusive political dialogue between the TFG and ICU has been intense during the past six months (UNSC, 28 February 2007, p.5ff). The international community is now calling on the TFG to hold talks with opposition groups, so as to move ahead towards national reconciliation (ICG, 27 January 2007, p.2). Several attempts have been made to that effect, including a re-shuffling on 7 February 2007 of the TFG cabinet to include members of all five major clans (UNSC, 28 February 2007, p.4). Security Council Resolution 1744, passed on 20 February 2007, stresses the Security Council's support for creating all-inclusive institutions. It reiterates the need of AMISOM troops deployment, in support of the Transitional Federal Institutions and their

reconciliation efforts. The document partially replaces resolution 1725 (UNSC, 21 February 2007).

The TFG itself has called for a national reconciliation conference in mid-April 2007, which has been postponed to at least May. However, some opposition groups question the sincerity of the TFG's call for reconciliation. There are indications that the reconciliation conference may not include even moderate ICU members (FAST Update, April 2007, p.2). The impeachment of Parliamentary Speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden, who was consulting with the ICU in late 2006, is another sign of the TFG's limited willingness to be inclusive of Islamic movements. In the eyes of the Hawiye, these developments, together with the sacking on 17 April of 31 parliamentarians, also changes the clan constellation of the Transitional Federal Institutions, making them less legitimate (Hassan and Barnes, 27 March 2007, p.3, Shabelle News, 17 April 2007). Therefore, the long-term effect of any reconciliation efforts remains to be seen (UNSC, 28 February 2007; Security Council Report, 28 March, p.15ff). The upsurge in fighting at the end of March, with continuous international involvement, adds another question mark as to whether the conference is likely to succeed in integrating all relevant political forces (ISN, 29 March 2007).

The 2007 Minority Right Report cited Somalia as the world's most dangerous place for minority communities, arguing that there is a real threat of armed clan conflict between the Hawiye (southern clan from which the ICU mostly emerged) and the Darood (President Yusuf's clan, based in Puntland). The report

emphasises the danger of renewed atrocities against civilians in both Somalia and Ethiopia (MRGI, March 2007, p.12).

In April 2007, armed clashes between Somaliland and Puntland were reported to have erupted over the control of the Dahar settlement in the Sanaag region. Both the north-western self-declared Republic of Somaliland and Puntland, the self-declared autonomous region to its east, appeared to be collecting weapons for a future armed encounter (Shabelle News, 9 April 2007)

New displacement in 2007

The UN estimated that a total of over 321,000 people fled Mogadishu between 1 February and 20 April (Somalia Situation Report, 20 April 2007). Most of the recently displaced settled down the coast in Lower Shabelle, in the hope of returning soon. Others moved inland to Baidoa or Bardera, or to Merka on the coast, or undertook the perilous trip north to Gal-kayo. Many are being harassed for imposing additional strain on already food-insecure communities (IRIN, 29 March 2007).

According to a local civil society task force, tens of thousands of people who have fled outside the city limits live without food, water and shelter and need immediate assistance (IRIN, 28 March 2007). Reasons for flight were generalised violence against civilians and fear of attacks. Those who cannot afford to leave stay behind, moving within the city in search of relative security, while humanitarian access to Mogadishu remains extremely restricted. Mogadishu residents also need to grapple with rising food

prices, as insecurity prevents ships from reaching the port (IRIN, 29 March 2007).

In the second half of 2006, refugee movements into camps in Kenya's Dadaab region took on dimensions unseen over the past 10 years (Reuters, 29 October 2006). In 2007, that trend might have continued, had not the Kenyan government closed the border in early January. As a result, almost 5,000 Somali IDPs got stranded along the border. After they had to survive without humanitarian aid for weeks, humanitarian relief was eventually distributed to some of them through a local NGO, and the Kenyan government opened the border for humanitarian convoys on 7 February. The difficulty with providing aid is that the IDPs have by now spread along the entire border between the frontier town of Doble and the sea some 250 km away (OCHA monthly analysis Dec/Jan, January 2007; OCHA, 19 January 2007). At the beginning of April, up to 4,000 people had joined those who had already camped at the border since December 2006 (IRIN, 3 April 2007). The Kenyan government came under increasing pressure for allegedly having detained and forcibly returned Somalis across the border without UNHCR having had the chance of determining whether they qualified for refugee status (Human Rights Watch, 30 March 2007).

New arrivals had been noted in Somaliland throughout 2006, and about 1,000 people in need of assistance arrived in Hargeisa between December 2006 and January 2007 (UNICEF Monthly Review for February 2007, p.2). An unspecified number of IDPs have made their way to Bossaso (Puntland). Somaliland already hosted an estimated 40,000 IDPs and

Puntland up to 70,000, with over 28,000 in Bossaso, and important numbers in Garowe and Galkayo (OCHA, 23 August and 29 August 2006). In late 2006, the Puntland authorities started stemming the high number of people arriving on its territory. In March, some 300 people from south and central Somalia were taken into custody for "security reasons". Not all have been released since, and UN agencies are consulting with local authorities to assure access to the detained and to guarantee their legal rights (OCHA, March Humanitarian Monthly Update, April 2007, p.4). Puntland authorities also attempt to crack down on human smuggling to Yemen (IRIN, 14 September 2006; Shabelle News, 24 September 2006). Nevertheless, human smuggling continues unabated, as illustrated by the recent violent death of dozens of migrants at the hand of smugglers (UNHCR, 26 March 2007).

Serious flooding hit southern Somalia in the last two months of 2006, uprooting another estimated 454,000 people in the riverine areas, with the Shabelle and Juba rivers having risen so high that their floods merged in the downstream areas. In a context of already heightened political and military tensions, relief delivery was extremely difficult and in vast areas inadequate. The flooding devastated a large part of the livelihood that had survived the previous drought, although it has also allowed for some off-season crop cultivation where the floods had receded. Combined with favourable weather in the first few months of 2007, this resulted in relative food stability in many parts of Somalia, though not including the immediate riverine areas (OCHA, 30 November 2006; UNSC, 28 February 2007, p.7; FSAU, 16 March

2007). If the long rainy season, starting in April, causes flooding again, tens of thousands of recently displaced, who now live along the lower reaches of the Shabelle river, may be endangered (OCHA, March Humanitarian Monthly Update, April 2007, p.5).

Within the capital, evictions from public buildings have occurred, as the TFG claimed them back. IDPs were also threatened with forced eviction in other Somali cities, notably the southern port of Kismayo, where the district commissioner announced that all IDPs were required to leave government buildings within 30 days from 18 March, or “face consequences before the law” (Somalia Situation Report, 13 April, p.3).

The total number of displaced persons in need of assistance continues to be estimated at 400,000, due to lack of more accurate figures. The most recent displacement needs to be added to this figure. The most recent report of the UN Secretary-General to the UN Security Council speaks of almost one million IDPs, which includes the flood-displaced (UNSC, 28 February 2007). A current IDP profiling project, carried out by UN and NGO partners in Bossaso, Galkayo, Burao and Mogadishu, should shed more light on actual numbers and on IDPs’ protection needs. The profiling results are expected in May or June 2007.

Protection issues

Upon taking over Mogadishu and south and central Somalia, the Ethiopian and TFG troops spread fear among the population, harassing alleged sympathisers of

the ICU, minority groups and Ethiopian Oromo refugees. There were indications that most of the people displaced at the very outset of the recent fighting were seen as supporters of the ICU and have been seriously threatened by Ethiopian and TFG troops. They are the ones being stranded at the Somali-Kenyan border near the town of Doble. The humanitarian situation of these IDPs is extremely bad, with diseases spreading (IRIN, 3 April 2007).

The most recent displacement from Mogadishu occurred in a climate of indiscriminate violence against civilians. Many of them have to endure extortion and harassment, especially when they cannot enjoy clan-based protection (OCHA March Humanitarian Update, April 2007). Towards the end of April, UNHCR was able to resume the delivery of some limited humanitarian aid to the recently displaced, partially through local NGOs (UNHCR, 20 April 2007).

Generally, with very limited humanitarian access, most IDPs have largely been left to their own devices, and information on living conditions and protection issues remains scarce. Real improvement has not happened, due to growing numbers of IDPs in settlements, persisting insecurity, an insufficient international presence and chronic under-funding of humanitarian and long-term recovery and reconstruction programmes.

IDP protection continues to be a major gap in the operational response, despite well-functioning inter-agency protection coordination mechanisms at Nairobi level. Problems of implementation are mostly due to the enormous needs of basic services, the extremely difficult oper-

ating environment and the continuing lack of experienced professionals on the ground (IDD, 16 June 2006).

In the absence of a functioning national judicial system, human rights abuses, in particular against displaced members of minority clans like the Bantu, as well as women and children, are rampant and often not accounted for. Traditional justice systems (*xeer*) and sharia law are recognised as legitimate and as mostly well-functioning. But while they may work well in the traditional context of a clan society, there is a risk that they become flawed where people cannot count on the traditional justice of their own clans or where minority clans are too weak to provide protection to their clan members (DRC, 21 August 2004).

A recent IDP profiling exercise in Galkayo, carried out by local NGOs in collaboration with UNHCR and the Danish Refugee Council, exemplifies this protection problem: IDPs of a Galkayo majority clan experience much less protection-related problems than IDPs of minority clans or without clan protection. Main protection concerns are related to safety and security (in particular to gender-based violence against women) and to extortion by land owners. When asked how the international community could help them, the IDPs said they needed security, education and jobs. Direct aid distribution was not mentioned as an immediate concern (OCHA, March Monthly Humanitarian Update, April 2007, p.4). An inter-agency IDP profiling carried out in both north and south Galkayo in February 2007 found that both “old” IDPs and new arrivals are in great need of basic services such as water, food, health, sanitation and education.

Furthermore, minority clans are particularly vulnerable to physical violence and abuses. Fire hazards in the overcrowded settlements add to the daily insecurity (IASC Somalia, March 2007).

Humanitarian access

Due to widespread insecurity, the international presence in south and central Somalia remains weak and inconsistent, and highly insufficient considering the enormous needs of the population, especially in and around Mogadishu and other southern towns. Access to the displaced populations and to relief stocks in Mogadishu is extremely limited due to the recent outbreak of fighting. Other towns and regions in south and central Somalia are accessible to various degrees. Especially renewed UN engagement in Galkayo is promising, according to UN sources (OCHA, March Monthly Humanitarian Update, April 2007, p.3). Generally, in the absence of a functioning government, the UN and national and international NGOs are often the only service providers and interact directly with clan leaders and local authorities. Especially in the south, in a context of ever-changing local power structures and clan affiliations, negotiating access is difficult. Another obstacle to a more concerted humanitarian response is general donor reluctance to engage in Somalia, mostly related to previous failure to achieve tangible improvement.

Nevertheless, international humanitarian activities in south and central Somalia have somewhat increased during the first half of 2006, due to the urgent need to bring assistance to the drought-affected populations, and efforts were made to

convince local leaders to allow humanitarian access (UNSC, 20 June 2006, p.7). Later in the year, the UN and a number of international NGOs started negotiating humanitarian access to Mogadishu with the ICU, to provide aid in Mogadishu and in the by then heavily flood-affected areas along the Shabelle and Juba rivers. After fighting broke out on 24 December 2006, all ground-based relief efforts to the flood-affected populations had to be stopped. Air operations were suspended as well, after Somalia announced the closure of its borders and Kenya followed suit for security reasons, until the partial re-opening for humanitarian goods on 7 February 2007.

In early 2007, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) called on the international aid community to re-engage in Mogadishu, taking advantage of the fact that the TFG was moving back to the capital, and to meet the high expectations of the population for reconciliation, security and resumption of basic services such as health care and education. The UN was also to engage in police training, demobilisation and reintegration of militias, trying to avoid a power vacuum. Re-engagement was to be carried out along the lines of a jointly spelled-out Code of Conduct for agencies and NGOs. This call for immediate re-engagement was met with scepticism by some humanitarian actors. In an open letter to the HC, Action Contre la Faim pointed out that impartial and independent humanitarian aid is extremely difficult to provide in the current politicised environment (ACF, 21 January 2007). At the end of March 2007, the security situation in Mogadishu had degenerated so far as to make humanitarian access virtually impossible, even for local NGOs.

Access to IDP populations in Somaliland and Puntland is relatively safe. Despite a long-standing international presence, however, the humanitarian situation of IDPs in cities like Bossaso has hardly progressed over the past 16 years. The disputed areas of Sool and Sanaag regions constitute an exception to safe access, in that both parties insist on being the sole access point to those areas; operational delays and increased expenses have occurred in the past (UNSC, 20 June 2006, p.6). At the time of writing, it was unclear how the recent outbreak of armed violence would affect access to the two regions and to Puntland and Somaliland.

For 2007, UN agencies and INGOs intend to develop a joint response to IDP needs in Galkayo (OCHA, January 2007). The town is host to some 5,000 IDP families from southern Somalia and the Somali-Ethiopian border, who have been left without assistance for many years. Galkayo has been inaccessible to the international community for most of 2006, a hospital run by Médecins Sans Frontières being one of the very few regular aid activities. Relief items have been distributed to several thousand IDP families (UNICEF, February 2007).

Nutrition, health and shelter

The massive displacement from Mogadishu in 2007 has left tens of thousands of people in very precarious situations, lacking water and shelter, food and health care. By April, local civil society groups, including the business community, have started to organise water distribution to the displaced in and around the capital.

Eyewitnesses say the living conditions of the displaced continued to deteriorate daily. They fear that the approaching rainy season will further deteriorate the situation (IRIN, 5 April 2007).

The 2006 drought has left large parts of Somalia in an extremely precarious humanitarian situation. The ensuing devastating floods further depleted food reserves and livelihoods but also allowed for some post-flood planting. It is now estimated that the number of people in need of assistance and protection during the first half of 2007 (which includes the 400,000 IDPs) is now 1 million, as compared to 1.8 million identified in August 2006. The situation has improved in all regions except the riverine areas, which remain in a state of humanitarian emergency. Agro-pastoral and pastoral areas of Hiran, Bay, Bakool and the north of Somalia are no longer in a state of acute food and livelihood crisis (FSAU, 14 February 2007). However, Somalia remains chronically food-insecure and malnutrition remains a serious problem, particularly in Gedo, Middle and Lower Juba, and parts of Bay, Bakool and Hiran regions. The riverine areas continue to be extremely food-insecure due to the aftermath of the floods and insecurity. IDPs are generally particularly vulnerable to malnutrition, as they have fewer possibilities to support themselves (OCHA, monthly analysis Dec/Jan, January 2007).

Most IDPs face extremely poor and crowded living conditions in slum settlements, often paying rent or occupying public buildings, facing the threat of eviction. Humanitarian help in those settlements remains, at best, rudimentary, and many slum dwellers rely exclusively on their own survival skills. Fires regu-

larly leave thousands of IDPs homeless (OCHA, March Humanitarian Monthly Update, April 2007, p.3; IRIN, 10 May 2006).

Morbidity, mainly from diarrhoeal diseases (due to consumption of unsafe water) and malaria, increased in many places in south and central Somalia, and particularly in Bay region. A marked increase in Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) and cholera has been reported, mostly linked to post-flood conditions, and to lack of safe drinking water and sanitation among the newly displaced (IRIN, 15 March 2007, UNICEF Monthly February 2007). The areas with the highest AWD prevalence (Mogadishu and surrounding areas) are also the areas most difficult to access for treatment (OCHA, March Humanitarian Monthly Update, April 2007, p.5). IDP camps in Bossaso were also afflicted by AWD (UNICEF Monthly review, February 2007, p.2). Cases of measles were identified in several sites. The large majority of IDPs in Somalia do not have access to safe water and sanitation (OCHA, August 2006).

Since land tends to belong to specific clans, it is almost impossible for displaced people – especially those without clan backing – to own land. This puts great restrictions on their possibility of creating a livelihood. Renting a plot is expensive and insecure. IDPs, at the whim of landowners or “gatekeepers”, often face eviction from rented plots or from public (and increasingly private) buildings, especially in southern Somalia. Many IDPs moving to urban centres tend to spend years or decades in displacement and returns are very rare because of the continuing difficult humanitarian and se-

curity situation in their places of origin. For those long-term IDPs, the issue of land tenure is largely related to urban planning and local integration.

National and international response

Since 1991, there has been no national entity responsible for IDP response. The gradual attempt of the TFG to re-install itself in Mogadishu has unleashed considerable effort on several sides to take ownership of the IDP issue. Currently, the newly-established National Refugee Commission has declared that IDPs fall under its mandate (Internal UN Report, 26 February 2007). The longevity of this entity remained questionable at the time of writing, as the TFG itself had not regained control of Mogadishu, let alone the whole of Somalia. Therefore, the duty to provide protection and assistance to the Somali population remains with the international community and Somali NGOs, often supported financially by local businessmen.

International engagement in Somalia has been difficult. Since the withdrawal of UNOSOM in 1995, the international aid community responsible for Somalia has been based in Nairobi. The UN's operational presence has been fairly consistent in Somaliland and Puntland, but has remained sparse in south and central Somalia, ensured largely through Somali national staff. ICRC has maintained access to most of the southern regions, through continued negotiations with local leaders (ICRC, 12 July 2006). Other NGOs operational in south and central Somalia include Action Contre la Faim, Concern Worldwide, which has its head-

quarters in Mogadishu, CARE International, the Danish Refugee Council, Médecins sans Frontières, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Save the Children.

Somalia is one of the four countries where the new cluster approach – a key element of the UN's humanitarian reform process – is formally being rolled out. The Nairobi-based Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) comprises seven UN agencies and seven NGOs and focuses on humanitarian aid. A parallel coordination structure exists within the Somalia Agencies Coordination Body (SACB), focusing on development aid. The streamlining of the two coordination bodies is ongoing.

Seven IASC clusters have been established – Protection, Health and Nutrition, Water and Sanitation, Agriculture and Livelihood, Food, Education, and Shelter. As stated in the October 2006 self-assessment, the cluster approach has helped agencies recognise response gaps but has not consistently led to filling them successfully (IASC, November 2006, annex 4). Collaboration between UN agencies and NGOs, both local and international, is not fully in place yet, which also impacts on funding patterns: these often keep following bilateral patterns instead of being channelled through clusters. The humanitarian response could profit from better collaboration with local actors, who often work in areas considered inaccessible by the international community.

An operational gap between Nairobi and the field level remains. But it is positive that protection is now visible on the agenda. Projects of the Protection cluster

include a population movement tracking system, coordinated by UNHCR and engaging some 35 local NGOs. It continuously monitors natural disaster- and conflict-related movements, producing monthly updates, which now also include findings of the Protection Monitoring Network. NRC, in cooperation with UNHCR, is providing protection training to local NGOs. IDP profiling was carried out successfully in Bossaso at the end of 2006, and in Burao, Galkayo and Mogadishu in February and March 2007. IDP Working Groups exist in Nairobi, Puntland (Bossaso and Garowe) and Somaliland (Hargeisa), but not yet in south and central Somalia. As lead agency for the protection cluster, UNHCR has taken on a coordination and gaps analysis role with regard to the response to the internal displacement situation. Its operational presence in Somalia is limited.

The 2007 Coordinated Humanitarian Appeal (CAP) identifies one million people in need of assistance, which includes 400,000 IDPs (OCHA, December 2006). In April 2007, the CAP was covered for 33 per cent, with most funds going to the food sector. Less than 10 per cent of the health, protection, shelter and agriculture sectors were covered, while education and recovery programmes have received no funding at all (OCHA, March Monthly Humanitarian Update, April 2007, p.8). Along with the extremely complex political context, chronic underfunding of the CAP is a serious obstacle to a successful reconciliation and reconstruction process in Somalia (JNA, June 2006, p.27). The two problems clearly go hand in hand, as donors' confidence in the country's potential for recovery is consistently being punctured by continued instability and violence. For the in-

ternational aid community, this creates a delicate operational environment. A telling example, mentioned above, was the Humanitarian Coordinator's recent call for re-engagement in Mogadishu and the criticism it provoked among parts of the humanitarian community.

While political diplomacy is working towards national reconciliation, recent UN advocacy for Somalia called on donors to consider long-term funding, which would demonstrate real international commitment to the many aspects of Somalia's recovery, particularly in relatively stable Puntland and Somaliland. If provided in full awareness of the negative past and potential future impact on Somalia, and mindful of the Somali culture's specificities, international assistance can help the country emerge from its current state of instability and violence, and assist the Somali population in rebuilding their lives.

Note: This is a summary of the IDMC's country profile of the situation of internal displacement in Somalia. The full country profile is available online [here](#).

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Note: All documents used in this overview are directly accessible on the Somalia [List of Sources](#) page of our website.

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at www.internal-displacement.org

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