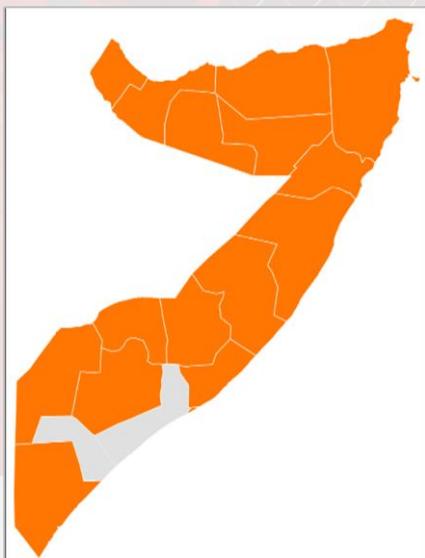




NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

SOMALIA AREAS OF OPERATION: WASH



CONTEXT

The huge need for improved water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services in Somalia is critical, with 8 million people in urgent need of life-saving support. Women, children, the elderly, and displaced communities bear the greatest burden due to the severe lack of essential services.

- Only 52% of the Somali population has access to basic water.
- 7.8 million people to be without access to safe water disproportionately affecting women, children, the elderly, and displaced persons.

OUTCOMES/IMPACT

In 2024, NRC supported 200,776 people (52% female) with better access to water, sanitation, and hygiene. This included:

- Wells, dams and other infrastructure, boreholes, built or rehabilitated.
- People assisted with better access to clean water.
- Households or communal latrines installed.
- People provided hygiene NFI kits.
- People provided hygiene promotion training.
- People receive cash/voucher for water needs

For the latest updates, please visit:

nrc.no/somalia

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Photo: Abdulkadir Monameh / NRC

HOW WE SUPPORT: WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

NRC Somalia provides comprehensive WASH solutions integrated with other essential services. Our work focuses on safe drinking water, sanitation, and sustainable hygiene systems, along with awareness programmes that support both life-saving interventions and long-term resilience building.

NRC's WASH approach

In Somalia, access to safe water is essential for survival, supporting drinking, cooking, hygiene, and livelihoods such as agriculture and livestock. Displaced communities, especially those affected by conflict, drought, and floods, face the greatest challenges, compounded by the impacts of climate change.

NRC Somalia ensures sustainable access to safe water by developing wells, dams, and boreholes, with a focus on solar-powered water pumping systems for efficient distribution. Our approach emphasizes environmental sustainability, conflict sensitivity, and community resilience, fostering long-term solutions through private sector partnerships.

At the same time, we work to improve hygiene and sanitation for displaced and vulnerable communities by providing temporary and permanent sanitation facilities in IDP settlements, schools, and health centers. Through equipment provision and training, we promote hygiene-conscious behaviors, ensuring better public health outcomes.

Who we help

In Somalia, we focus on internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, returnees, and vulnerable host communities, working across 16 of 18 regions.

NRC programmes and activities

Limited access to WASH facilities prevents displaced families from transforming shelters into homes and settlements into communities. By providing adequate WASH systems and promoting hygiene education, we support dignified living conditions, reduce conflict risks, and enhance livelihoods.

Our WASH interventions are integrated with shelter, education, and food security programmes, working in collaboration with cluster and sector partners to ensure a comprehensive response.

Water supply

We improve safe water access by constructing and rehabilitating boreholes, wells, dams, river intakes, rainwater harvesting systems, and piped-water networks. Our systems include distribution infrastructure, tanker points, and solar- or hybrid-energy solutions to enhance community resilience.

To ensure sustainability, NRC collaborates with the private sector and public-private partnerships, establishing community-led water committees for resource management. We integrate environmental sustainability through hydrogeological surveys, salinity testing, and water-use modeling.

In emergencies, we provide water distribution through community vouchers, trucking, and storage solutions to meet urgent needs.

Sanitation

We strive to enhance hygiene standards and reduce disease risks for displaced communities. Our support includes low-cost emergency latrines, permanent facilities in schools, health centers, and settlements, and efficient waste-removal systems.

Where possible, we implement community-driven, cash-based solutions and ensure latrines are accessible for Persons with Special Needs (PSN). These efforts are reinforced with sanitation NFI kits and clean-up campaigns to promote healthier living conditions.

Hygiene promotion

Our efforts aim to promote positive public health behaviors by addressing waterborne diseases, sanitation, and environmental hygiene. Through awareness campaigns and hands-on activities, especially during high-risk periods, we engage communities using various platforms. Additionally, we provide training for healthcare workers and community members and distribute hygiene kits as needed to reinforce safe hygiene practices.

Our partners



Norad  Norway



ENSURING THE AVAILABILITY OF SUSTAINABLE WATER IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

With climate change worsening water scarcity in Somalia, ensuring sustainable water access is more crucial than ever.

Our efforts are designed to strengthen community resilience against future shocks, with a primary focus on internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, returnees, and vulnerable host communities across 16 of Somalia's 18 regions.

A key component of our work is ensuring lifesaving and long-term water access, with a strong emphasis on:

Environmental sustainability, through hydrogeological and hydrological surveys, salinity testing, and long-term water-use assessments.

Harnessing renewable energy by deploying solar-powered and hybrid water systems to enhance efficiency and sustainability.

Collaborating with the private sector to develop innovative, scalable, and cost-effective water solutions.

Our water activities are integrated with our other programmes—including shelter, education, food security, and other humanitarian programmes, ensuring a comprehensive response in coordination with cluster and sector partners.