



NRC

NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

Somalia Country Office

Delivering aid, building resilience

August 2023



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Somalia's humanitarian crises

Somalia: one of the world's longest running crises.

Somalia is currently experiencing a tragic cycle of humanitarian crises caused by decades of a bloody civil war, continued insecurity and warfare, political unrest, floods, droughts, desert locust infestations, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and other disease outbreaks, and economic fragility. This has left communities ability to withstand the frequent shocks they are forced to endure.

8.25 million people in Somalia need humanitarian assistance. Conflict, insecurity, forced evictions, drought, and flood have displaced more than 3.8 million people (internally or across borders).

Somalia is highly vulnerable to natural hazards, such as drought and flood. Somalia is currently experiencing an extended drought (the most acute in 70 years), which began in late 2020 and has continued into 2023. In early 2023, the drought progressively worsened after a fifth consecutive below-average rainy season.

The drought has affected 7.8 million people while internally displacing 1.75 million people in the country.

More than 80% of the country is facing drought conditions, and weather forecasts highlight the possibility of a sixth below-average rainy season from March–May 2023, which would worsen acute food insecurity.

The situation is a crisis, one that requires **humanitarian support—and resilience building to reduce the severity of humanitarian needs,**



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed / NRC

Displaced girl carries water on her back in one of the IDP camps in Baidoa, southern Somalia.

NRC programmes

In Somalia, we are delivering aid in the hardest-to-reach areas.

The Norwegian Refugee Council delivers high-quality humanitarian programmes at scale, drawing on our expertise in 35 countries around the world.

Somalia is one of our longest-running, beginning in 2004, and provides humanitarian response and resilience building efforts across all of Somalia's regions—including Hard-to-Reach areas.

Drawing on our expertise and ties with local communities, we focus on helping Somalia's most vulnerable. This is largely but (not exclusively) those impacted by displacement—including internally displaced people, refugees and returnees—as well as vulnerable communities.

NRC is often one of the first organisations to respond after a crisis. In some particularly difficult areas, we are the only ones on the ground.

Our support includes both rapid response approaches, often in innovative ways, as well as longer-term comprehensive solutions to the problems facing communities. We deliver this through: WASH; Livelihoods and Food Security; Shelter; Education; Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance; Durable Solutions; and Resilience Building.

A first responder to emergency crises.

Our ability to respond rapidly to immediate and life-threatening needs is a distinguishing feature of our assistance in Somalia.

Through food and water vouchers or deliveries, multi-purpose cash, emergency shelter kits and hygiene materials, we help families to survive the critical first weeks. Our response time can be as rapid as seven days after receiving an alert, and reach across the country.

Mitigating displacement

Asli Abdulle a 48-year-old pastoralist, and her family walked for more than 15 days from Mudug region in north central Somalia in search of water during the worst drought in 40 years.

In Kalabayr village, Mudug region—a village that had previously been displaced by the 2017 drought—they discovered a borehole built by NRC.

Previously Kalabayr has received a huge number of displaced pastoralists like Asli. The borehole also serves people in neighboring communities thanks to the new water infrastructure. This project is one of more than 30 water-based drought response initiatives that NRC implemented.





Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Contributing to an evidence-based response.

NRC Somalia is a leader in collecting, monitoring and analysing data on internal displacement and related protection concerns. With valuable input from a broad coalition of national partners, the NRC-led Protection and Returns Monitoring Network (PRMN) tracks internal displacement, demographics, incidents and protection concerns. Similar efforts are undertaken regarding forced evictions. This data is analysed and published to enable informed humanitarian response efforts.

In the case of urgent displacement incidents, flash reports trigger a swift, evidence-based response. In the longer term, PRMN data influences durable solutions programming, including efforts by governments, NGOs, donors, and in some cases the private sector, to find safe, sustainable options for displaced populations.

Working with hard-to-reach populations.

In line with our global strategy, we work to provide and enable humanitarian assistance for hard-to-

reach populations in Somalia. We help communities prepare for and respond to shocks, and build networks and infrastructures that aids resilience and unlocks durable solutions.

Our hard-to-reach responses utilise a range of tools for remote management, including working with trusted local partners and staff, community elders, and mobile technology. We constantly work to expand our efforts, to ensure people can access humanitarian assistance in their home areas.

NRC office locations



Using market-based approaches.

Our market-based approaches utilise comprehensive analyses to assess household priorities, market functionality, accessibility and security, aiming to support and utilise existing markets rather than undermining them.

Wherever possible, our resilience programmes use multi-purpose cash transfers to support vulnerable households undergoing shocks to buy food, water and essential household items, boosting demand and stimulating local economies.

Similarly, we provide community vouchers for water delivery during times of crisis, reducing the risk of market price distortion that comes with the contracting of services by humanitarian agencies. Assistance through vouchers ensures that communities undertake direct negotiations with service providers -securing significant efficiencies - and maintain ownership of their own processes.

Our programmes seek to connect different market elements together to meet needs, minimise distortions and enable people to maintain control of their own livelihoods better.

Building private and public sector partnerships.

We leverage opportunities with Somalia's private sector to provide essential services for communities. Our resilience activities are co-

designed with communities, and include major infrastructure investments needed to sustain and build local economies.

Concerted engagement using mutually beneficial Private Public Partnerships (PPP) has –with regulation to safeguard rights –facilitated access to energy, livelihoods, and cheaper, clean water for thousands of households in vulnerable urban communities while expanding client bases for companies to increase their business.

By facilitating opportunities for micro-finance companies to expand their networks and provide services to rural farmer cooperatives, and engaging agro-dealerships and solar technology companies to sell appropriate technology to communities who can benefit from it, we encourage investments that will deliver improved livelihoods and sustainable change.

Applying inclusive approaches so that no-one is left behind.

To meaningfully impact community capacity to cope with shocks, we facilitate participation of individuals and groups that might otherwise be represented in all community leadership structures, with sensitivity to the tensions this can create.

Community action plans are developed with a representational cross-section -women, girls, men, boys, youth, people with disabilities and members of minority clans.

2023 stats

Food Security:	939,356 (50.7% female)
Shelter:	87,145 (64.6% female)
ICLA:	240,765 (52.8 female)
WASH:	191,926 (53.3% female)
Education:	5,892 (48.3% female)
Other:	727,478 (53.5% female)





Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)

In Somalia, access to safe water is life. It is essential for drinking, cooking, personal hygiene and livelihood activities like agriculture and livestock. None feel this more acutely than communities affected by displacement, particularly when impacted by conflict, drought or flooding, and the threat of a changing climate.

At present, about 8 million people lack access to safe water and sanitation facilities. Women, children, the elderly and displaced persons are disproportionately affected by the lack of service, particularly in the face of drought and Covid-19.

We save lives and prevent diseases by:

- Increasing access to safe water through construction and rehabilitation of sustainable boreholes, wells, dams, river intakes, rainwater harvesting and piped water networks, often with the private sector.
- Providing emergency water distribution via vouchers, water trucking and community water storage solutions.
- Providing improved standard of hygiene via low-cost emergency and permanent latrines (often in schools, clinics and settlements), and effective waste-removal systems.
- Deploying climate-adaptive strategies, including shock-proofing water systems, and encouraging natural resources management and water recharging.
- Providing sanitation and hygiene kits, and equipment/campaigns for settlement clean-ups.
- Encouraging positive behaviour via public health campaigns, and training healthcare workers and communities.



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Availability of sustainable water is more important than ever in light of the changing climate situations in Somalia.

Efforts are generally designed to build resilience in communities to future shocks. In Somalia, we focus on internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, returnees, and vulnerable host communities, working across 16 of 18 regions.

Throughout our work – particularly on ensuring lifesaving water access – we focus heavily on:

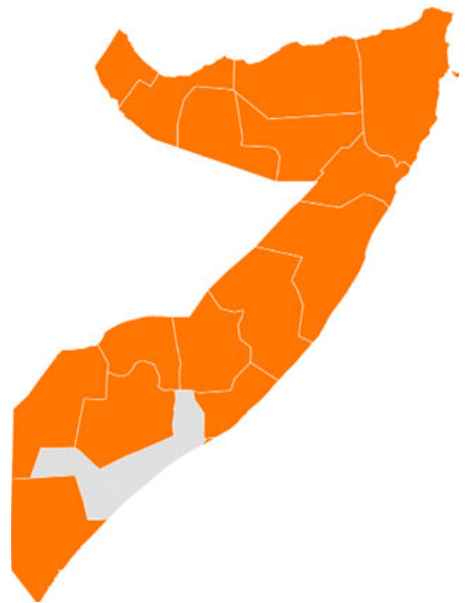
- Ensuring environmental sustainability via hydrogeological and hydrological surveys, salinity and environmental assessments, and projected water-use modelling.
- Deploying renewable or hybrid energy systems, primarily solar systems.
- Developing new approaches with the private sector to improve scale and efficiency of investments.

Our activities are generally carried out in a synergistic way alongside our other programmes – including shelter, education and food security – and cluster and sector partners.



Water trucking in a drought-stricken IDP camp in Baidoa. .

WASH areas of operation



In 2023 we supported 154,754 people via WASH activities including:

- Wells, dams and other key infrastructure, e.g. boreholes, built or rehabilitated.
- Hygiene promotion activities.





Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

CASE STUDY:

Increasing water access with Somalia's private sector

In Baidoa and Kismayo, piped clean water access in IDP settlements is often non-existent. Water is an everyday issue. Lack of access to water can be deadly during droughts.

In 2022/2023 via the BRCiS Consortium, NRC scaled up Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between State Ministries of Energy & Water Resources and local private water companies has extended main urban water connections to 15 settlements.

This ensures 335,292 people have access to clean, safe water at an affordable price, via a network of eight water kiosks, 12,380m of pipeline, rehabilitated boreholes, solar-pumping systems, storage tanks and other infrastructure.

Across both initiatives, **water prices have fallen 71 - 75%** to lower, fixed prices. In exchange, after deductions for costs and taxes, the companies receive 100% of profits.

In both locations, existing suppliers with local knowledge and infrastructure provided 30% of capital. NRC secured funding—via UKaid and USAID—for the remaining 70% and provided technical guidance and monitoring. Government officials pay a vital role assessing performance, water quality and availability, and prices to ensure fairness.

Broadly, the private-sector partner is responsible for construction, maintenance, operations and providing water to NRC-designated displaced or reintegrated communities.

The companies are also responsible for ongoing community consultations, and training to ensure sustainable water distribution and operations.

The results?

- 15 IDP settlements are now connected to water with Government oversight and regulated pricing.
- Private partners have been brought into new markets and have a commercially viable and scalable model.
- Resilience-orientated donor funds were used for impactful, cost efficient and effective interventions, resulting in more sustainable water systems.
- More people are now able to access the clean and safe water they urgently need.
- NRC is developing and expanding PPPs in water and other sectors.



Photo: Abdukkadir Mohamed/NRC

Food Security & Livelihoods

In Somalia, conflict, fragility and recurrent disasters have resulted in inadequate food access, limited livelihoods opportunities, and limited nutrition and market knowledge.

These factors are exacerbated by climate change, environmental degradation and limited capacity of local authorities.

Tragically, at the time of writing, 8.3 million people require food assistance,

Using both standalone and integrated activities, NRC improves access to food and other basic needs via short-term cash-based emergency support. Simultaneously, we support communities with small-scale food production and non-farm

income-generating initiatives. Our specific efforts include:

- Providing unconditional cash transfers to families in need and boosting local markets.
- Providing start-up capital and training for youth and women, specifically the next generation of artisans, agriculturalists and entrepreneurs in urban and rural areas.
- Providing training and support to small-scale farmers and pastoralists, often accompanied by resilience-building infrastructure at a community-level.
- Working with the private sector to establish needs and opportunities, and transition trainees into meaningful employment.

Right: Amid Somalia's drought, lack of water and pasture killed hundreds of thousands of livestock.

But, NRC supported cooperatives of 270 farmers produced 18 hectares of fodder via solar-powered irrigation and water infrastructure.

Within four months, farmers had produced enough to keep their animals healthy during drought and sell excess in local markets.



Photo: Ilyas Sheikh Ahmed/NRC

Resilience building: infrastructure and community networks

Resilience is crucial to building durable solutions and shock-resistant communities, and overcoming the underlying challenges that much of Somalia faces with food security.

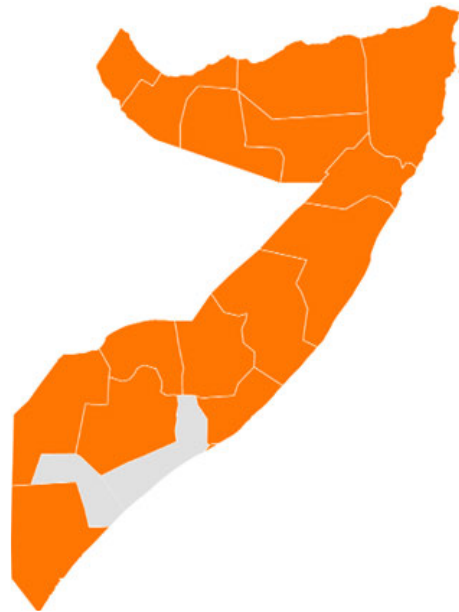
NRC supports a range of resilience-building tools for food security and livelihoods, including:

- Livelihood support packages to displaced people willing and able to return.
- Identifying and developing community-level infrastructure, such as markets and boreholes.
- Establishing collective savings and loans groups, integrating them with further NRC services and other resilience-building efforts.
- Market-building and awareness-raising activities related to legal rights and access to essential services.
- Establishing farming collectives and networks to boost productivity.

Reflecting Somalia's climate vulnerability, agriculture-based livelihoods approaches are designed sustainably, with climate and shock resilience front of mind.

Similarly, NRC emphasises women's engagement and incorporates participatory community practices and flexibility to ensure the most context-appropriate interventions.

LFS areas of operation



In 2023, 923, 608 people were supported to ensure food security and/or access to livelihoods.





Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed / NRC

Shelter

Shelter is a critical need in Somalia—a country with a population of 3.8m displaced people.

Shelter is more than just a roof over a family's head. It means physical safety, a sense of identity and a road to recovery. In Somalia we don't only provide emergency shelter or support building homes — we help build communities. We strive to ensure sustainable, resilient communities that can weather the shocks they face now, and those to come.

We create safe, appropriate living conditions by:

- Providing emergency support including emergency shelter and NFI kits.
- Providing socially acceptable, owner-driven transitional and/or permanent shelters—including supporting host communities.
- Where proper land tenure is available, settlement planning or re-planning, integrating WASH, health, legal aid and education support.
- Supplying basic household items, including blankets, mattresses, and cooking utensils.

In 2023 NRC supported **74,885 people** in Somalia to help them have somewhere they can call home – even if just temporarily.



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed / NRC



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed / NRC



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Information, Counselling & Legal Assistance

Somalia has one of the world's largest displaced populations, with 3.8m people. Many cannot exercise their legal rights and struggle to attain durable solutions to their displacement challenges.

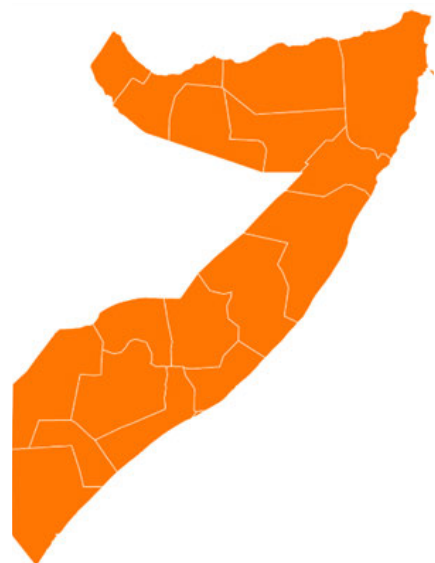
85% of IDP sites are informal settlements on private land, while 80% of IDP households lack formal land tenure. Tenure insecurity is widespread with 1.17m forceful evictions since 2018. Adding The majority of displaced communities lack legal identity documents, specifically civil and national documents, with limited awareness of, or access to, business registration, labour laws and procedures.

NRC's ICLA efforts in Somalia provide specialised support relating to these issues, combining work at national and state levels to ensure systemic policy change and legislative protection. This is supplemented with community-level assistance via paralegal teams.

To protect the enjoyment of rights, NRC provides:

- Capacity development, such as technical and material support, to enable institutions to better lead on resolving issues.
- Policy influence, research and coordination, including targeted advocacy to affect policy and systemic change. NRC lobbies stakeholders, develops research and policy briefs, and raises awareness on issues.
- Case management via tailored counselling and legal assistance—people in need are provided advice regarding procedures, legal options and courses of action, and referrals.
- Access to accurate, credible and timely information regarding rights, entitlements, remedies, available services, and legal or administrative requirements.

ICLA areas of operation



Ensuring accurate data is available to safeguard rights.

Underpinning our ICLA efforts is robust data collection to monitor displacement and legal rights infringements.

NRC's **Evictions Portal** provides a digital eviction monitoring platform in collaboration with the Government and the Protection Cluster.

Using a team of monitors across the country, the platform reports forced eviction cases to improve monitoring, analysis, advocacy, eviction prevention and response.

Similarly, the UNHCR-led, NRC-implemented **Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN)** provides nationwide tracking of displacements.

Established in 2006, a network of 33 national agencies monitor and report on displacements and protection incidents across all of Somalia's states. PRMN operates a digital dashboard, and provides regular and incident based reporting to inform / trigger humanitarian responses.



In 2023, we supported over 207, 857 people through ICLA activities. This included:

- People assisted to secure land tenure.
- Forceful evictions prevented.
- People provided with legal assistance, specialised counselling, and information to exercise their rights.
- People trained on collaborative dispute resolution and HLP.



Education

While government institutions and civil society work hard to improve education services and access, limited capacity remains a challenge to deliver education to displaced children, and children living in conflict areas and other complex contexts.

Just 30% of eligible children (1.8m of 6m) are enrolled in school, and 4.8m crisis-affected children require education assistance.

Our efforts support school-aged children (6-18) and youth (15-24) who have no access to school, have not been to school or have dropped out, and those in emergency contexts.

We work with ministries, authorities, and communities to support education via:

- Supporting basic formal education, through scholarships, learning materials, uniforms, emergency school feeding and protection.
- Classroom construction or rehabilitation, WASH facilities, teaching, learning and sanitary materials, and teacher training and incentives.
- During crises, establishing emergency classrooms, accelerated and remedial classes, and protection and psychosocial support.

About 40% of students, primarily girls, faced dropping out of school due to drought. Parents were unable to afford fees.

Cash support for families and schools has enabled children to remain in school, while emergency, short-term water deliveries and emergency school feeding prevented families sending kids to queue for water or find food.

"We couldn't let these children miss out on education,"

– Mohamud, primary school teacher.

In 2023, we improved education access for 5,889 people.



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Building resilient communities

The cycle of humanitarian crises in Somalia, and increasing climate vulnerability, will not end without dedicated efforts to strengthen the resilience of communities to shocks.

Three decades of development underinvestment, recurrent flooding, droughts and insecurity, have left communities with limited resilience and high fragility. We work to assist and empower them via tailored programmes.

Practically, this means improving irrigation, providing access to water, energy and animal feed, strengthening local markets, and improving livelihood opportunities and basic services. We often work with the private sector, focusing on agricultural resilience and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Community engagement, participation, and monitoring

Community engagement in planning and implementation drives our approach. Combining technical expertise and local perspectives, we focus on strengthening resilience in sectors prioritised by community members.

We ensure ownership while building capacities for local planning, operation and management, as well as providing mechanisms to address conflict.

Early Warning, Early Action

With all BRCiS members, our programmes incorporate continuous shock data collection, and Early Warning Early Action alert systems.

These systems allow for rapid identification and response from both humanitarian actors and communities to crises.

NRC leads the largest resilience-building consortium in Somalia.

As consortium manager for the Building Resilience Communities in Somalia (BRCiS) Consortium—a multi-programme, multi-donor partnership of nine NGOs delivering over \$260 million of activities since 2013—we implement programmes as part of the consortium and independently with partners.

Water systems, management.

Underdevelopment and poor water resource management is the leading cause of community vulnerability to drought and flooding, and one of the critical limitations to development.

We establish sustainable water systems, and the networks to manage them, and place access to water at the core of our resilience efforts. We establish water supply systems for domestic and productive use, including mega earth dams, boreholes, river water intakes and shallow wells.

Diversified and sustainable livelihood strategies.

An essential step towards resilience includes making livelihoods more profitable, and resilient to shocks, so that business holders can grow their entities and networks, and save to increase their ability to overcome stress periods.

Our activities include: major irrigation schemes, greenhouse farming, supporting displaced women with start-up business grants, developing market linkages for fodder production and sale, expansion of market infrastructure and agricultural inputs, and vector control.

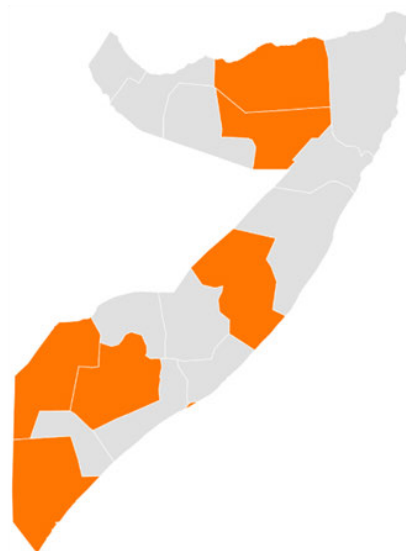


Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Laanle village in central Somalia hosts 2,000 people, almost all displaced in 2017's drought. Following solar-powered water system investment Laanle is hosting 3,000 drought displaced agro-pastoralists from Ethiopia, and providing low-cost water to 7,500 people in nearby villages.

Resilience areas of operation

(Note: Below locations are NRC only, resilience building by other NGOs as part of BRCIS is underway across 14 regions.



In 2023, we supported hundreds of thousands of people across Somalia with resilience activities.



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Durable solutions

Achieving durable solutions for the displaced, and affected communities means putting an end to any discrimination related to displacement status.

Unfortunately, internal displacement in Somalia remains one of the most complex, prolonged humanitarian and development challenges in the world.

3.8 million Somali people are internally displaced, alongside more than 137,051 returning refugees—both groups face discrimination, limited livelihood and relocation opportunities, and poor legal protections.

Reflecting needs, our approach focuses on bringing together truly integrated, multi-sectoral responses, specifically:

- Strengthening government capacity to lead on durable solutions, and improving land tenure security in urban/peri-urban areas.
- Increasing access to sustainable basic services including WASH, sanitation and housing via area-based programmes.
- Promoting self-reliance for displacement-affected communities.
- Investing in preparedness activities to reduce and prevent displacement caused by drought and floods.
- Supporting joint efforts towards new policies that ensure displacement affected communities can better enjoy legal protection. In Somalia, we have implemented durable solutions programmes in urban areas in Mogadishu, Baidoa, Garowe, Bossaso, Galkayo, Hargeisa and Burao.



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

132,334 people

Have benefited from our durable solutions support, and improved access to basic services in 2023.

This includes land tenure security, improved access to housing, livelihoods support, water, sanitation, education, and legal aid.



Advocacy

Our presence on the ground, local expertise and almost 20 years of in-country presence means we see first-hand the challenges facing the most vulnerable and displacement-afflicted communities – and the solutions that deliver lasting impact.

Based on what we witness, the evidence we collect and the research we undertake, we speak out at local, national, regional and global level to improve conditions for displaced people in Somalia.

This includes advocacy with authorities, international governments, international networks of partners, and the United Nations, to strengthen the humanitarian response, save lives, and address the root causes of the crisis. We coordinate united advocacy efforts among INGOs and play a leading role in advocacy to ensure people can access aid.

Given operational challenges in Somalia, we pioneer new ways of collecting data and connecting key stakeholders abroad with the realities on the ground.

We are regularly called upon to brief governments and international media outlets on the humanitarian situation in Somalia, as a go-to source for credible information. In all that we do, we amplify the lives, words and experiences of displaced people, and ensure they can speak with dignity and power.

About NRC worldwide

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent humanitarian organisation helping people forced to flee. We work in crises across 31 countries, providing emergency and long-term assistance to millions of people every year. We stand up for people forced to flee, advocating their rights. NORCAP, our expert deployment capacity, supports the UN and other authorities in crises. NRC also runs the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in Geneva, a global leader in reporting on and advocating for people displaced within their own country.



Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC

Ibrahim Ali, a small-scale farmer in Bonkai village, Baidoa - southern Somalia.

Through BRCiS, we're helping communities in Baidoa maintain their farms and grow various crops as drought rages on.

Our work is only possible with the generous support of our partners:



Norad



World Food Programme



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK
Danida



QATAR FUND
FOR DEVELOPMENT
صندوق قطر للتنمية

DANWADAAG
Towards Durable Solutions to Displacement



SHF

Somalia
Humanitarian
Fund



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL



Prepared by: Abdulkadir Mohamed,
Communications Coordinator

For more information, contact our Country Director, Mohamed Abdi:
mohamed.abdi@nrc.no