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### REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

#### Assistance to refugees in Somalia

#### Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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\* A/40/150.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 39/104 of 14 December 1984 on "Assistance to refugees in Somalia", the General Assembly appealed to Member States, international organizations and voluntary agencies to render maximum material, financial and technical assistance to the Government of Somalia in its efforts to provide all necessary assistance to the refugees. It also requested the High Commissioner, in consultation with the Secretary-General, to apprise the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session of 1985, of the refugee situation in Somalia and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session on the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolution.
2. In compliance with the resolution, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has consulted the Government of Somalia and representatives of a number of the donor countries, United Nations organizations and voluntary agencies involved. On the basis of the consultations, UNHCR has identified assistance requirements for 1985 and 1986.

## II. GENERAL SITUATION

3. During the consultations, it was observed that Somalia faces critical economic and social problems arising from a weak economic infrastructure, limited natural resources and a difficult international economic environment. The sharp decline in agriculture and animal husbandry - the economic mainstays of the country - coupled with deteriorating terms of trade have severely curtailed export earnings and imposed severe constraints on Somalia's development programmes. While making efforts to cope with this critical situation, Somalia has also had to contend with the burden of large numbers of refugees, who have had a major socio-economic impact. Because of its inadequate resources, lack of infrastructure and facilities, and pressure on the land, Somalia has not been in a position to absorb the refugees as fully productive members of the community.
4. The background to the influx of refugees into Somalia, their characteristics and the arrangements made to assist them are detailed in the previous reports of the Secretary-General and of the High Commissioner (A/36/136, A/38/400 and Corr.1; A/39/402 and Add.1 and 2; A/39/443, E/1980/44, E/1982/40).
5. The agreed planning figure of 700,000 refugees in camps has been maintained. The 36 refugee camps accommodating the refugees are located in the Hiran, Gedo, the North West and Lower Shebelle regions.
6. In general, the camps are open, with few restrictions on travel, and movement in and out of them takes place frequently. In view of population changes and movements since 1982, the Government now proposes a comprehensive review of the planning figure and fully recognizes the need for an accurate assessment of the refugee population in the camps. It has now been agreed by all concerned that a reassessment of the population in the camps should take place as soon as possible and steps are being undertaken to establish an appropriate methodology.

7. During the last months of 1984, about 50,000 persons of concern to UNHCR arrived in the North West and Gedo regions from Ethiopia. The number of new arrivals increased during the first five months of the current year to a total of some 150,000 persons, according to Government sources. Assistance has been provided for the new arrivals under a special programme of emergency relief assistance launched by UNHCR at the end of 1984. A cholera outbreak occurred in late March 1985 in Gannet, a suburb of Hargeisa in the North West region, where over 40,000 new arrivals were residing temporarily. At the time of writing, the situation is under control and measures are being taken to transfer the population of Gannet to other centres as soon as possible.

8. The pace of implementation of the local settlement programme for refugees continued to be slow throughout 1984, partially as a result of the lead-time necessary to identify and design viable projects and to agree on implementation procedures, but also due to the priority that had to be given to the emergency relief assistance programme for new arrivals. The programme is being continued with the development of a settlement site at Furjano in Lower Shebelle and the investigation of other potential rural settlement sites.

### III. IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSISTANCE

9. Details of UNHCR assistance activities in Somalia in 1984 can be found in the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/40/12).

10. Food aid is being channelled through the World Food Programme (WFP), which is responsible for the co-ordination of international food assistance and assumes responsibility for soliciting food aid. As in previous years, UNHCR programmes have benefited from the active support of several United Nations agencies. Contributions from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) were applied towards the various activities within their respective competence. United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) are involved in agriculture and self-reliance activities.

11. At present, some 20 voluntary agencies are participating in the programmes; most of them are operating in the camps. The Emergency Logistics Unit (ELU) managed by the CARE organization has continued to be responsible for the delivery of food and other relief commodities from the ports of entry to the camps and for the fuelling and maintenance of vehicles assigned to various refugee programmes. CARE has assigned a full-time training officer to prepare nationals for the future take-over of key positions still occupied by expatriates. The refugee programme depends heavily on the contributions made by this agency.

12. The search for durable solutions remains an important priority. The Government of Somalia has reaffirmed its position that voluntary repatriation remains the most appropriate long-term solution for the refugees in the country and has again stated its readiness to co-operate fully in any organized programme of voluntary repatriation.

13. A Steering Committee for the local settlement programme composed of representatives of the Ministry of Planning, the National Refugee Commission, UNHCR and the United Nations Development Programme has met several times. A project for the local settlement of 3,000 families in Furjano in the Lower Shebelle region was specifically proposed to the Committee for implementation and two other projects have been submitted to the Committee for examination:

(a) Development of a 5,000 hectare Dry-Land Pilot Project Area at Qorioley District, Lower Shebelle region, and

(b) An agricultural refugee settlement scheme at Luug District, Gedo region, including housing, community services, delineation of potential settlement areas and rehabilitation of roads.

14. Following preliminary examination of the draft project proposals by the UNHCR Specialist Support Unit, a mission visited Somalia in December 1984 to discuss with the UNHCR staff in Mogadishu and the competent Somali authorities, the technical guidelines for the preparation of the final project proposals.

15. Further detailed surveys were deemed necessary before implementing the local settlement projects. A hydrological investigation of the Furjano settlement site in lower Shebelle as well as the construction of a 12-kilometre access road to the site are being undertaken. Farm machinery and equipment are being procured for land clearance and site preparation, and 2,520 hectares are being ploughed and planted. Assistance is also being extended to spontaneous refugee settlers in Furjano, in order to strengthen the economic base of their community. These activities are being implemented under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and with the participation of several voluntary agencies. The necessary surveys are now completed and the implementation of the Furjano settlement is ready to start.

#### IV. ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS

16. Assistance requirements for refugees in 1985 and the estimated needs for 1986 are summarized as follows:

<u>Type of assistance</u>	<u>1985</u> (United States dollars)	<u>1986</u> (United States dollars)
Food (approximately 120,000 tonnes)	78 750 000 a/	79 000 000 a/
Water	1 111 000	1 253 000
Health	1 286 000	1 366 000
Shelter and domestic items	740 000	780 000
Transport and logistics	7 173 000	7 710 000
Communal construction	488 000	877 000
Education and community development	1 176 000	1 295 000
Lower secondary education	95 000	99 000
Support of refugee services	2 550 000	2 714 000

<u>Type of assistance</u>	<u>1985</u> (United States dollars)	<u>1986</u>
Self-help activities	754 000	770 000
Local integration	2 949 000	3 520 000
Counselling	130 000	167 000
Supplementary aid	36 000	44 000
Handicapped	70 000	114 000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	<u>97 308 000</u>	<u>99 709 000</u>

a/ Of which \$78 million provided through the World Food Programme or other donors.

New arrivals for the period 1 November 1984 to 31 December 1985

<u>Type of assistance</u>	<u>United States dollars</u>
Food (approximately 24,000 tonnes)	8 918 426
Shelter	3 552 000
Health	618 000
Water and sanitation	787 702
Transport and logistics	423 750
Assessment in the North West region	26 252
Support costs National Refugee Commission	36 561
Programme support	245 000
Radios and generators for the centres	35 000
	<hr/>
Total	<u>14 642 691</u>

17. A description of these requirements by sector is given below. These requirements do not include submissions made to the second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa under paragraph 5 (c) of General Assembly resolution 37/197, details of which are found in paragraphs 627 to 766 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/CONF.125/2). Such submissions comprised 14 infrastructure projects totalling \$79.9 million.

Food

18. During a Food Aid meeting of representatives of donor countries, UNHCR and WFP, which took place in Somalia in July 1983, the Government's request for 120,000 tonnes of food was accepted as a planning figure for 1984. In spite of this decision, however, only some 95,000 tonnes of food commodities could be distributed in 1984 to cover the needs of refugees. Despite the late arrival of food shipments - which caused serious distribution problems during 1984 - the food situation was generally better than in 1983. The figure of 120,000 tonnes has been retained for 1985. A breakdown by commodity of the requested 120,000 tonnes for 1985 follows:

/...

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Rations requirement</u>	<u>Stocks in hand</u> <u>or pledges a/</u>	<u>Positive (Negative)</u> <u>balance</u> (tonnes)
	<u>based on</u> <u>Government figures</u>		
Cereals	62 610	75 683	13 073
Flour	20 870	26 707	5 837
Oil	8 348	8 338	(10)
Milk	8 348	7 202	(1 146)
Corn soya milk	8 348	6 407	(1 941)
Beans	8 348	2 143	(6 205)
Dates	3 128	4 125	997
Total	<u>120 000</u>	<u>130 605</u>	<u>10 605</u>

a/ Source: WFP/UNHCR. Quantities exceeding 120,000 tonnes will be applied to and reported in 1986.

Food for new arrivals

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Ration requirements</u>	<u>Stocks in hand</u>	<u>Negative balance</u> (tonnes)
		<u>or in pipeline</u>	
Cereals	11 963	9 246	2 717
Oil	1 431	740	691
Corn soya milk	1 959	200	1 759
Pulses	1 440	1 010	430
Flour	3 840	3 361	479
Dates/dried fruit	721	119	602
Sugar	1 469	868	601
Salt	96	-	96
Dried whole milk	58	-	58
Dried skimmed milk	949	391	558
Total	<u>23 926</u>	<u>15 935</u>	<u>7 991</u>

19. As in previous years, basic food supplies continued to be provided from bilateral sources and by multilateral food donations through WFP. UNHCR provides supplementary food to combat protein deficiency among young children and pregnant or lactating women. Every refugee receives food rations, through the system of ration shops newly established by ELU/CARE whereby food is distributed to individual families only on presentation of a ration card.

### Water

20. The Refugee Water Supply Division, with the assistance of voluntary agencies, implements the programme of regular supply of potable water in the camps. The aim of providing each refugee with 10 to 15 litres of purified water per day was achieved in a number of locations; in other parts of Somalia, particularly in some of the camps in the North West, the situation continues to be critical. Water had to be delivered by truck in many places in the South due to the drying-out of rivers, and in the North because of lack of good quality ground water. One of the main improvements to the water supply programme was the introduction in 1984 of sand filtration units in the South.

### Health

21. Within the Ministry of Health, the Refugee Health Unit implements services for refugees in the camps, with the assistance of voluntary agencies. The general health situation in the camps remains satisfactory. The RHU intends to continue its efforts to reduce infant mortality in camps, to control major diseases, to enhance nutrition and to train the community health workers and the traditional birth attendants as well as other staff in order to reach these objectives. Funds have been budgeted by UNHCR in the current year to improve sanitation, to provide medicine and equipment and to continue all the services provided by the Unit. According to a health report in 1984, the overall health situation was stable and primary health care programmes were operating in all camps during that year. Refugees learned the importance of vaccination, clean water, sanitation, latrines, etc. and were taught to treat/control diarrhoea through simple salt, sugar and water preparations. Refugees are now aware of the necessity of medical care.

### Shelter and domestic items

22. The objective of this assistance is to provide refugees with basic domestic items such as soap, blankets, kitchen utensils, lamps, buckets and tarpaulins. Most of these items are distributed in the refugee camps as needed, while others are used as incentives to participation in any of the self-reliance activities undertaken in the camps.

### Transport and logistics

23. Funds have been budgeted by UNHCR in the current year to continue all services provided through the Emergency Logistics Unit managed by CARE. These include the leasing and operation of a light aircraft used for medical evacuation and the speedy transport of personnel, medicines and urgently required relief items.

### Communal construction

24. In 1984, an additional 50 classrooms and community centres were built and the community buildings, airstrips and feeder roads in the North West, Gedo and Lower Shebelle regions were maintained. The construction of some 80 classrooms and community centres is foreseen in 1985. Efforts will continue to repair and maintain existing communal facilities.

#### Education and community development

25. In 1984, funds were provided to continue primary education for some 75,000 refugee children between the ages of 7 and 15, with each pupil receiving basic supplies and materials. Family life courses, vocational training and a functional adult literacy programme have also been continued.

26. The teacher training programme, run by the In-service Institute for Teacher Training for primary school teachers from among the refugee population, benefited 600 first-year and 850 second-year trainees and 1,200 teachers were certified in 1984/1985. Despite a continuing lack of permanent school premises in many camps, 75,000 refugee children continued to receive primary education in 1985.

27. Some 1,000 refugees are expected to enrol in secondary schools in 1985, but the perennial problem of absorption of qualified refugee students by national secondary schools will remain in 1986.

28. At post-secondary level, there are at present 200 refugees studying at the Somali National University where entrance requirements are highly competitive.

#### Support of refugee services

29. Funds continue to be required to support the National Refugee Commission through the secondment of government officials, for payment of office rent, office equipment, vehicles, transport and general administrative support. In addition, UNHCR will cover the cost of the services of United Nations Volunteers seconded to the National Refugee Commission.

#### Self-help activities

30. Agricultural development remains a major component of refugee settlement projects. By the end of 1984, a total of some 3,000 hectares of land were under cultivation by some 14,000 refugee families. As from 1985, additional land will be allocated to refugees wherever possible on the basis of one hectare of irrigated land per family. Priority for allocation of land will be given to refugees who have already been trained on smaller plots. The assistance to such farmers, which will consist mainly of equipment, basic tools and fuel, will be limited in time and should enable selected farmers to attain the desired level of self-sufficiency.

31. The small number of self-help projects started in 1984 have experienced many problems such as lack of spare parts and/or material. There were also difficulties with access to markets. It is recognized that although these projects, which provide individual refugees with training and a source of income, have great merit, their impact is still limited due to the relatively small number of refugee families involved. It is now necessary to develop the scope of these activities and to reach a greater number of beneficiaries. One possibility, which is the focus of the programmes, is the establishment of credit schemes through which more refugees can be assisted to set up small businesses and cottage industries.



Local integration

32. During the first part of 1985, implementation of the Furjano project was begun and planning for other integration projects was continued.

Counselling

33. By the end of 1985, the assistance needs of 1,600 urban refugees in Mogadishu and Hargeisa will have been assessed. Their short-term needs are being met and measures to achieve durable solutions are being planned.

Supplementary aid

34. Assistance is provided to needy, newly-recognized urban asylum-seekers and other vulnerable refugees for a maximum period of six months or in the form of special, one-time financial assistance to enable them to meet their basic needs pending a durable solution.

Legal assistance

35. A legal adviser within the National Refugee Commission is working in close co-operation with the UNHCR Legal Officer. It is foreseen that the funds allocated for 1985 to cover the administrative and other expenses of this adviser will be covered within the budget of the National Refugee Commission.

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