Combined reports

Somalia's Missing Two Million (2026)

and the 2009 original, Somalia's Missing Million

Part one: Somalia's Missing Two Million: The Somali Diaspora and Development, 2009 to 2026. Mohamed Ibrahim, Somcare, November 2026.

Part two: Somalia's Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development. UNDP Somalia, 2009, prepared for UNDP by Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh.

The two reports are bound together so they can be read side by side. Each keeps its own page numbers. The 2026 study is independent and is not a UNDP publication.

Somcare, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. somcare.com.au

2009



SOMALIA'S MISSING TWO MILLION

THE SOMALI DIASPORA AND DEVELOPMENT 2009 TO 2026

2009 cover photo © N. Mediratta/WHO Somalia/2005, from Healy and Sheikh (2009), UNDP Somalia

Somalia's Missing Two Million

The Somali Diaspora and Development

2009 to 2026

A follow-up to Somalia's Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development (UNDP Somalia, 2009), prepared for UNDP by Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh. This is an independent study; it is not a UNDP publication.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of any organisation cited.

This report was prepared by Mohamed Ibrahim for Somcare.

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Photographs: the four photographs from Healy and Sheikh (2009) are reproduced, faded, to show continuity: cover © N. Mediratta/WHO Somalia/2005; p.4 © B. Bannon/UNHCR/2008; p.15 © UNDP; p.22 © UNDP Somalia. They are reproduced for non-commercial research and community information, with acknowledgement of their owners, under the 2009 report's permission for not-for-profit research use. UNDP Somalia confirmed on 15 November 2026 that it has no objection to this use. Permission was also requested from WHO, and from UNHCR, in November 2026; Somcare is grateful to both and will amend or remove their photographs promptly on request. The original report is available at https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/arabstates/Somalia-Missing-Millions.pdf. Cover inset: a Class 8 girl writes an English paper during the national Primary Education Certificate examinations in Mogadishu, 26 May 2021, AMISOM Photo, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons. Other new photographs are credited where they appear. Logo, maps and charts: Somcare.

First edition, November 2026. Corrections are welcome and will be made in later editions.

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Preface

In March 2009 I sat in a conference room at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi with more than ninety others: Somali scholars, fund-raisers, businesspeople, community organisers and officials from the United Nations and donor governments. We had come from five continents to review a study commissioned by UNDP Somalia, written by Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh, on the role of the Somali diaspora in the life of a country that had then been without a functioning central state for almost two decades. I travelled from Melbourne, and my name appears in the report's list of participants as Mohamed Ibrahim, from Melbourne, Australia.

I did not come to that room as an observer. For several years I had worked with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud at the Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD) based in Somalia, where he served as a director and I chaired the Board. CRD was one of the few Somali institutions doing research and reconciliation work inside the country at a time when there was no government to do it. I was based in the UAE at the time working in the high-ed sector. Its staff travelled between communities, listened to elders, businesspeople and women's groups, and tried to turn what they heard into practical steps towards peace. That experience taught me that Somalis abroad and Somalis at home are not two separate constituencies. They are one people, divided by distance and joined by obligation.

That conviction shaped what came next. From Melbourne I served as project manager for Somalia's country-code domain registry, .so, and as founding chair of the Internet Society's Somalia chapter. and I worked as a senior policy advisor for four Somali ministers of telecommunication. In 2014, during Hassan Sheikh's first presidency, I served as Minister of Post and Telecommunications. Through Somcare I have since studied the Somali community in Australia, including its census profile, its employment and education outcomes, and the remittance services on which so many families depend.

Australia offers a small but telling example of what the diaspora does. In 2015, when Westpac closed the accounts of the last remittance companies serving the Somali corridor, Oxfam estimated that about 7,500 Somali Australians were sending some A$33.5 million a year to family members. Community leaders, researchers and advocates pressed government and the banks to keep that lifeline open, and the work continues; Somcare's Somali Remittance Directory exists because families still need to know which services are safe and registered.

The giving is not only private. In Melbourne, Somali Australians joined the Rotary Club of Flemington Kensington to ship a forty-foot container of hospital equipment to Jarriban Hospital, extending care to some 40,000 people. Somali students at La Trobe University raised funds for medical missions while building, through Himilo Community Connect, a pathway into university for the next generation.

Australian links have also reached higher education: in 2026 Amoud University in Borama became a full member of the Australia Africa Universities Network, the only Somali institution in the network, a step supported by Somali Australians who helped build its ties with Australian universities. Examples like these, repeated across five continents, are what the 2009 report meant by the missing million.

The 2009 report gave its subject that memorable name. It argued that the Somali economy would have collapsed without the money and support the diaspora sent home, and that the international development community understood this lifeline poorly. Seventeen years later, both claims deserve testing against what has changed. The diaspora has almost doubled. Remittances, once only estimated, are now measured in official statistics. Somalia has a national diaspora policy, a central bank that licenses mobile money, and a federal parliament in which diaspora members remain prominent. Yet many of the questions raised in Nairobi remain open: who the second generation will become, whether remittances can move beyond consumption, and how the diaspora can be a partner rather than only a cash machine.

This report is an independent Somcare study. It is not a revision of the 2009 report, which remains the work of its authors and the copyright of UNDP. It uses the 2009 report as a baseline, setting each of its findings against the best current evidence. Where the evidence is weak, the report says so. Because of my past work with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who was elected President in 2012 and again in 2022, I declare that connection here. The analysis and views in this report are mine alone.

I thank Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, whose 2009 study made this follow-up possible; UNDP Somalia, for its prompt agreement to the reuse of the 2009 photographs; WHO and UNHCR, whose photographs are acknowledged here; and the Somali researchers, statisticians and community organisations whose work this report draws on. Any errors are mine.

Mohamed Ibrahim, Melbourne, November 2026

Executive Summary

WHAT HAS IMPROVED SINCE 2009

The diaspora has almost doubled and is now settled, educated and largely citizens of its host countries. Remittances have at least doubled. Somalia's economy grew 4.0 percent in 2024 and an estimated 3.1 percent in 2025, and HIPC debt relief cut external public debt from US$5.3 billion at the end of 2018 to about US$1.5 billion, 11 percent of GDP, in 2025. The Central Bank reports that mobile money reaches 84 percent of adults. Somalia has a National Diaspora Policy (2023), its first household budget survey since 1985 (2022) and a census under way. Life expectancy at birth has risen from 50.9 years in 2006 to 59.0 in 2024 (World Bank). In Australia, Somali unemployment fell and degree attainment rose between 2016 and 2021.

1. In 2009 UNDP Somalia estimated that at least one million Somalis lived abroad, about 14 percent of a population then put at 7.4 million. The United Nations now estimates that 1,935,594 people born in Somalia lived outside the country in mid-2024, against a home population of about 19.7 million in 2025. The diaspora has almost doubled; its share of the population has fallen to about 10 percent only because the population at home has grown faster. These figures count people born in Somalia, so the wider diaspora, including children born abroad, is larger.
2. The geography of 2009 still holds. Kenya, Ethiopia and Yemen host the largest Somalia-born populations, and UNHCR counted 952,930 Somali refugees and asylum-seekers in five neighbouring countries at the end of August 2026. In the West, census counts have risen sharply: 176,645 people identified as Somali in England and Wales in 2021, against the 2009 report's estimate of 93,000 for the whole United Kingdom.
3. The second generation, which the 2009 report said had not yet been researched, is now visible in census data. In England and Wales, 43.5 percent of people identifying as Somali were born in England, almost the same share as were born in Somalia. In Minnesota, people of Somali descent born in the United States rose from 19 percent to nearly 39 percent of the community between 2001 and 2023.
4. Diaspora political engagement, which the 2009 report described as one of the most significant arenas of re-engagement, has persisted. In 2017, 105 of 275 members of the House of the People held foreign passports. Every prime minister from 2000 to 2022 is reported to have held Western citizenship. The constitution approved by parliament on 4 March 2026 now bars the

President, the Prime Minister, the two Speakers and the Chief Justice from dual citizenship, while ordinary MPs may still hold it.

5. Remittances are now officially recorded, but the official numbers disagree. For 2024, the World Bank's World Development Indicators give US$2.12 billion, while the Central Bank of Somalia reports individual remittances of US$2.72 billion, 22 percent of GDP, rising to US$3.13 billion, 24 percent of GDP, in 2025. Every series is well above the roughly US$1 billion of 2004 that the 2009 report cited. The gap between sources is itself a finding (Chapter 12).
6. Fewer households appear to receive remittances than the 2009 report suggested. The 2009 report cited up to 40 percent of households; the 2022 Somalia Integrated Household Budget Survey reports that 20.7 percent received remittances in the previous twelve months. The difference is partly one of measurement, but it supports the 2009 workshop's warning that remittances miss the poorest.
7. The channels have changed more than the volumes. Mobile money, barely present in 2009, is now how most Somalis pay and receive: the Central Bank reports that it reaches 84 percent of adults, and the 2022 household budget survey found that 41.5 percent of remittance-receiving households were paid through a mobile wallet. The Central Bank issued its first mobile money licence in February 2021. At the sending end, banks in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia closed the accounts of Somali money transfer operators from 2013 to 2015, a risk the 2009 report did not anticipate.
8. The policy vacuum of 2009 has partly been filled. Somalia ratified a National Diaspora Policy in 2023, maintains a Department of Diaspora Affairs in its foreign ministry, adopted a National Strategy for Migration in 2024 and a National Labour Migration Policy in 2025. Somaliland has developed its own diaspora policy.
9. Australia, which the 2009 report called a new growth area, now has 18,401 people of Somali ancestry (2021 Census), up 13.8 percent since 2016, with 54.4 percent in Victoria and nearly half born in Australia. Somali Australian unemployment fell from 29.9 percent in 2016 to 23.0 percent in 2021 yet remains about four and a half times the national rate and the highest of 30 African ancestry communities. Somali graduates are unemployed at 10.0 percent, against 3.8 percent for graduates of all African ancestries (Ibrahim, 2026).
10. Of the 2009 workshop's recommendations, the call for better information has been met in part by official statistics, and the call for a policy framework has been met on paper. The calls for a development partnership in which the

diaspora is an equal partner, for organised diaspora business associations and for programmes reaching the poorest remain largely unmet. This assessment is preliminary.

11. Seventeen years on, the most basic numbers about Somalia and its diaspora still cannot be stated with confidence. Somalia's last published census dates from 1975; the census launched in 2023 has not yet produced results. Remittance estimates from the World Bank and the Central Bank differ by up to US$1 billion a year. This report therefore makes reliable statistics on population, migration and remittances its first recommendation to the Federal Government of Somalia.
12. The diaspora is already over-represented at the top of Somali politics, but through clan-based selection that gives ordinary Somalis abroad no vote. Italy, France, Portugal, Cape Verde, Algeria and Tunisia reserve parliamentary seats for citizens abroad. This report proposes, for national debate, a small number of seats in the House of the People elected by Somalis abroad in continental constituencies, once a credible register of citizens abroad exists.

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHOD

1.1 Purpose

The 2009 report, prepared for UNDP Somalia by Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh, combined a desk review, a partial survey of organised diaspora networks and a one-day workshop in Nairobi on 13 March 2009. Its aim was to help the United Nations understand diaspora support well enough to work with it. This study asks a narrower question: what has changed since 2009, measured as far as possible with the same indicators?

1.2 Approach

Each quantitative claim in the 2009 report was extracted into a register (Annex A) with its page reference. For each, the most recent comparable figure was sought from primary sources in the following order: United Nations agencies (UN DESA, UNHCR, UNFPA); the World Bank and IMF; national statistics offices (ONS, the US Census Bureau, Statistics Canada, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics Norway, Statistics Sweden); Somali public institutions (Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, Central Bank of Somalia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Secondary sources, including news reports and encyclopaedic summaries, were used to locate primary data but not as final evidence.

Each figure carries a status: Verified (checked at the primary source), Secondary (reported by a reliable secondary source, primary not yet checked), Conflict (sources disagree), or Gap (no current source found). Annex A shows the status of each key figure, and Annex B explains where the evidence is weakest.

1.3 Limitations

Three limitations carry over from 2009. Counting Somalis abroad depends on whether a country records birthplace, citizenship or ancestry. Ethnic Somalis from Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti are often indistinguishable from Somalia-born migrants. Remittance data rest on balance of payments estimates that cannot fully capture informal transfers. To these must be added the limits of a desk review: this report does not include a survey of diaspora organisations or key informant interviews, which are left for further research.

1.4 A note on images

To show continuity, this report sets each photograph from the 2009 report, faded, beside a photograph from today. The 2009 photographs belong to UNDP, WHO

and UNHCR and are reproduced, with acknowledgement, for non-commercial research and community information. UNDP Somalia confirmed that it had no objection to this use; WHO and UNHCR have also been asked. The people and places in these photographs are Somali, yet the right to show them again belongs, in law, to those who photographed them. That is itself part of the story of who records Somalia's development, and the request process is set out in an accompanying note.



2009 © *B. Bannon/UNHCR/2008. Reproduced from Healy and Sheikh (2009), p.4.*



2026 A *pupil writes on the blackboard in a newly renovated classroom at Hosingow Primary School, Jubaland State, 20 August 2020. AMISOM Photo, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.*

2. LOCATING THE DIASPORA: THE MISSING TWO MILLION

The 2009 report put Somalia's population at 7.4 million and its diaspora at more than one million. UNFPA now estimates Somalia's population at 19.7 million in 2025. UN DESA's International Migrant Stock 2024 counts 1,935,594 Somalia-born people abroad in mid-2024, up from 1,237,640 in 2010 and 1,701,493 in 2020. The Migration Policy Institute's tabulation of the same UN data gives a rounded 1,936,000. An earlier UNDP study, Cash and Compassion (Hammond et al., 2011), estimated the diaspora at between one and 1.5 million.

Measure	2009 report	Latest
Population of Somalia	7.4 million	19.7 million (UNFPA, 2025)
Somalis abroad	At least 1 million	1,935,594 Somalia-born (UN DESA, mid-2024)
Diaspora as share of population	14 percent	About 10 percent

Table 2.1. Size of the diaspora, 2009 and now.

The diaspora has almost doubled since 2009, yet its share of the population has fallen from 14 percent to about 10 percent. The two figures do not conflict. Somalia's own population has grown faster still, from 7.4 million to 19.7 million, so a larger diaspora now forms a smaller part of a much larger nation.

Figure 2.1 shows that the growth has been uneven. The recorded Somali population of the United States has risen about sevenfold, while those of the United Kingdom and Canada have doubled. Part of the difference lies in how each country counts: by birthplace, by ancestry or by self-identification. These figures are therefore best read as orders of magnitude and not as exact comparisons.

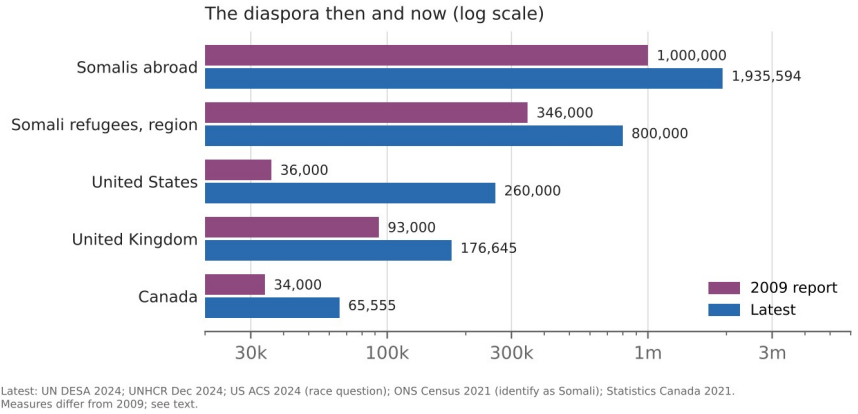


Figure 2.1. The diaspora in 2009 and now. Latest figures use different measures from those available in 2009 and are shown for scale, not as exact change.

Seventeen years after Nairobi, the missing million has become the missing two million.

2.1 The region

As in 2009, most Somalis abroad live in the Horn of Africa and Yemen. UN DESA data show the largest Somalia-born populations in Kenya (401,953), Ethiopia (389,246) and Yemen (285,211), followed by the United Kingdom (119,728), Libya (117,956) and Djibouti (99,940) (Figure 2.2). Refugee figures tell a related but narrower story. On 31 August 2026 UNHCR counted 952,930 Somali refugees and asylum-seekers in five neighbouring countries: 481,801 in Kenya, 364,749 in Ethiopia, 51,276 in Uganda, 41,171 in Yemen and 13,933 in Djibouti (Figure 2.3). The 2009 report counted roughly 346,000 in the five host countries it listed.



Figure 2.2. Where Somalia-born people live: selected countries, latest available year. Map by Somcare.

The 2009 workshop warned that at least half of the one million Somalis abroad were refugees living in hardship, placing a heavy burden on those settled in richer countries. That warning still applies: the refugee population in the region has more than doubled in absolute terms.

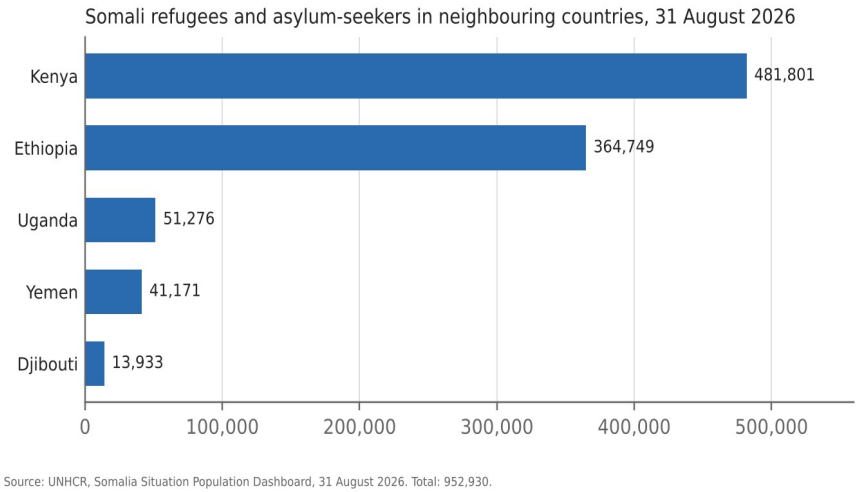


Figure 2.3. Somali refugees and asylum-seekers by country of asylum, 31 August 2026. Source: UNHCR.

2.2 The Gulf and new destinations

The 2009 report noted 20,000 to 100,000 Somalis in the Gulf and a new student migration to Malaysia. No reliable current figure for Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Türkiye or Malaysia was located, which is itself a gap that future data collection should close.

2.3 The West

Country	2009 report	Latest figure	Source and status
United Kingdom	93,000 (2008); London 33,000 (2001)	108,921 born in Somalia; 176,645 identify as Somali (England and Wales, 2021)	ONS, Census 2021. Verified
United States	36,000 (2000 census); up to 150,000 (other estimates)	About 260,000 of Somali descent (2024, race question); 166,000 to 193,000 (ancestry question); 92,401 Somalia-born (2023)	US Census ACS. Difference explained by question type (see text)
Canada	34,000 (2001 census)	65,555 Somali ethnic origin (2021); Toronto 19,810	Statistics Canada 2021 via community tabulation.
Sweden	10,000 (OECD 2005)	70,173 born in Somalia; 31,761 born in Sweden to two Somalia-born parents	Statistics Sweden via secondary summary.

Country	2009 report	Latest figure	Source and status
Norway	11,000 (OECD 2005); 20,000 (Horst 2008)	28,554 immigrants and 14,719 Norwegian-born to Somali parents (2020)	Statistics Norway via secondary summary. Latest figure located
Australia	Described as a new growth area	8,101 born in Somalia; 18,401 Somali ancestry (2021)	ABS, Census 2021. Verified
Netherlands, Denmark	14,000; 11,000 (OECD 2005)	No current figure located	CBS; Statistics Denmark

Table 2.2. Somali populations in selected Western countries.

The 2009 report relied on press estimates for cities, many of which exceeded official counts, for example 20,000 Somalis in Bristol. Census 2021 found 9,167 people identifying as Somali in Bristol, the fourth-largest Somali population of any local authority in England and Wales. The lesson of 2009 still stands: community estimates and official statistics measure different things and should not be mixed.

The United States shows how much the measure matters. In 2024 the American Community Survey added Somali as a detailed group under its race question for the first time. On that basis an estimated 260,000 people of Somali descent lived in the United States, about 107,000 of them in Minnesota. The older ancestry question, used by most earlier studies, gives figures between about 166,000 and 193,000 depending on the table and year, and the 2020 Census recorded 221,043 people identifying as Somali alone or in combination. None of these is wrong; each counts a different thing. This report uses the race-based 2024 figure as the best current measure of the Somali American community.

3. MOVEMENT SINCE 2009

The 2009 report described three waves of migration: labour migration to the Gulf in the 1970s, the refugee exodus after 1988 to 1991, and onward movement to the West through asylum and family reunion. It noted the diaspora was still on the move. Since 2009, four patterns stand out.

- Continued displacement. Drought, conflict and floods have kept internal displacement high: UNHCR estimated about 3.3 million internally displaced people in Somalia in January 2026. Internal displacement feeds onward movement.
- Return. UNHCR has supported 96,625 Somali refugees to return since December 2014, mainly from Kenya and Yemen, with a further 44,331 monitored as returning spontaneously (UNHCR, June 2025).

- Somalia as a host. Somalia now hosts refugees itself: 46,352 refugees and asylum-seekers in November 2025, mostly from Ethiopia and Yemen (UNHCR).
- Secondary and circular movement. The 2009 report observed European Somalis moving to the UK. Movement between Western countries, and seasonal or long-term return of diaspora professionals to Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Garowe, has continued. No systematic data on this movement were located.

4. CHARACTERISTICS AND THE SECOND GENERATION

The 2009 report distinguished the first generation, children raised or born abroad, and recent arrivals, and argued that the attitudes of the second group would decide the diaspora's long-term role. It noted that detailed empirical research on this group remained to be done. Census data now allow a first answer on size, if not on attitudes.

- England and Wales (2021): 43.5 percent of people identifying as Somali were born in England and 43.1 percent in Somalia. Those born in England were young, with 83.8 percent aged under 20.
- Minnesota (2001 to 2023): US-born people of Somali descent rose from 19 percent to nearly 39 percent of the state's Somali community, while the share who were not citizens fell from over 76 percent to 9 percent.
- Norway (2020): 14,719 Norwegian-born people with two Somalia-born parents, alongside 28,554 Somalia-born immigrants.
- Australia (2021): 49.5 percent of Somali Australians were born in Australia, one of the highest Australian-born shares among African ancestry communities, and 35.5 percent of the community was under 15 (Ibrahim, 2026). Australian-born Somali Australians recorded higher unemployment (29.4 percent) than the overseas-born (21.3 percent): a second-generation penalty that the 2009 report could not have observed.

Socio-economic outcomes remain difficult in most host countries. In England and Wales, a local authority summary of Census 2021 reports that 55 percent of Somalia-born residents were economically active, 12 percent worked in professional occupations against 20 percent nationally, and 49 percent of Somalia-born households were overcrowded. The 2009 workshop linked low socio-economic status partly to the burden of remitting; that link remains untested.

The attitudes of the second generation towards remitting, return and Somali politics remain largely unresearched. This is the main question for future research.

5. POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

In 2009 the diaspora was highly visible in Somali state institutions. The report counted the Prime Minister and 18 of 37 ministers in the February 2009 federal cabinet as diaspora returnees, and in Somaliland ten of 29 ministers, the head of the Guurti and 30 of 82 members of the House of Representatives. It called the diaspora a double-edged sword: a funder of clan conflict at times, and of reconciliation at others.

The pattern has continued. According to the parliamentary database Wakiil, the House of the People elected in 2016 included 105 of 275 members holding foreign passports, down from 198 in the previous parliament, with British, American and Kenyan passports the most common. Every prime minister appointed from 2000 to 2022 is reported to have held Western citizenship. The current federal parliament, sworn in in April 2022, has 275 members in the House of the People and 54 in the Upper House. No published count of the diaspora share of the 2022 parliament or the current cabinet was located.

The most significant change is legal. The constitution approved by both houses of parliament on 4 March 2026, and signed into law on 8 March, bars the President, the Prime Minister, the two Speakers and the Chief Justice from holding dual citizenship and requires formal renunciation, while ordinary members of parliament may keep a second nationality. In mid-2026 the President also ordered cabinet ministers to surrender foreign passports or resign. This marks the first formal limit on a practice that the 2009 report treated as a defining feature of Somali politics, and it reflects the criticism, already noted in 2009, that returnees can leave when problems arise.

The diaspora's role in Somaliland's institutions and its 2024 presidential election, and in Puntland, deserves separate study and is outside the scope of this report.

6. REMITTANCES

6.1 Volume

In 2009 there was no official remittance series for Somalia. The report quoted estimates of US$750 million to US$1 billion for 2004 and, from Lindley (2007), US$1.6 billion to Somalia and US$700 million to Somaliland. Workshop participants doubted figures above US$2 billion, noting that much might support Somalis outside the country. Two official series now exist: the World Bank's, based on IMF balance of payments data, and the Central Bank of Somalia's, compiled from reporting by banks and money transfer businesses. They do not agree.

Source and definition	2024	2025
World Bank WDI, personal remittances received	US$2.12bn (17.7% of GDP)	Not yet published
Central Bank of Somalia, individual remittances	US$2.72bn (22% of GDP)	US$3.13bn (24% of GDP)
Central Bank of Somalia, all inward transfers (individual, business, NGO and other)	US$6.43bn	US$6.78bn
Central Bank Governor, public statement on annual remittances	About US$3.2bn a year	

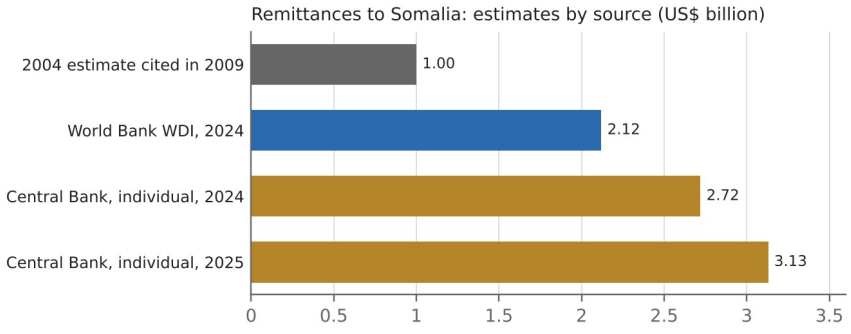
Table 6.1. Remittance estimates for Somalia. Sources: World Bank WDI (series BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT); Central Bank of Somalia, Annual Report 2025, Table 11; Governor's statement as reported by Garowe Online and Caasimada.

The WDI series stood at US$1.30 billion in 2018 and US$2.12 billion in 2024, after a peak of US$2.18 billion in 2023. The Central Bank's figure for individual remittances in 2024 is about US$600 million higher than the World Bank's. The Central Bank's figure for all inward transfers, three times the World Bank's, includes business payments and NGO funds and should not be read as remittances.

Some of the difference is definitional, and some reflects different data vintages and coverage, including whether Somaliland's inflows are fully captured. Whichever series is used, remittances have at least doubled since the 2004 estimate cited in 2009 and remain about a fifth of GDP or more. The 2009 report called Somalia the fourth most remittance-dependent country; on the WDI series it now ranks 16th of 185, a fall in rank driven by faster GDP growth, not by lower inflows.

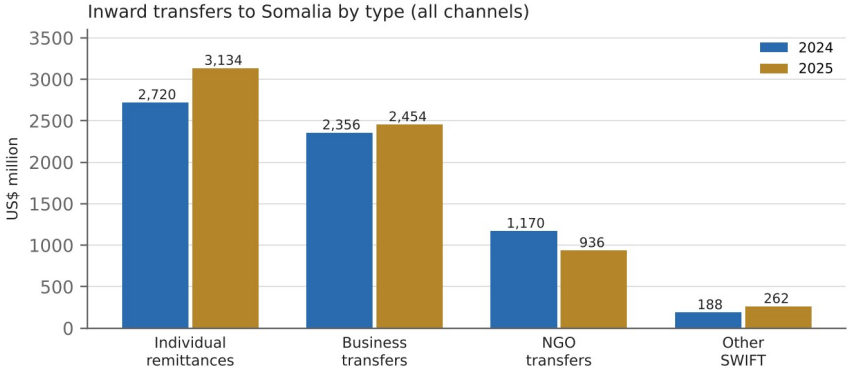
The Central Bank Governor has put annual inflows at about US$4.2 billion, of which US$3.2 billion is remittances and US$1 billion aid. The Central Bank's

own breakdown (Figure 6.2) shows why the totals are so different: in 2025 individual remittances were US$3.13 billion of US$6.79 billion in inward transfers, with business transfers of US$2.45 billion and NGO transfers of US$0.94 billion. NGO transfers fell by a fifth between 2024 and 2025, consistent with the reduction in foreign aid that the Central Bank and the IMF both note.



Sources: Healy and Sheikh (2009); World Bank WDI BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT; Central Bank of Somalia, Annual Report 2025, Table 11.

Figure 6.1. Remittances to Somalia: World Bank and Central Bank of Somalia estimates compared with the 2009 report's figure.



Source: Central Bank of Somalia, Annual Report 2025, Table 11 (banks plus money transfer businesses). Totals: US$6,434m (2024); US$6,786m (2025).

Figure 6.2. Inward transfers to Somalia by type, 2024 and 2025. Source: Central Bank of Somalia, Annual Report 2025, Table 11.

6.2 Reach

The 2009 report cited remittances as 23 percent of household income and reaching up to 40 percent of households. Later household surveys give lower

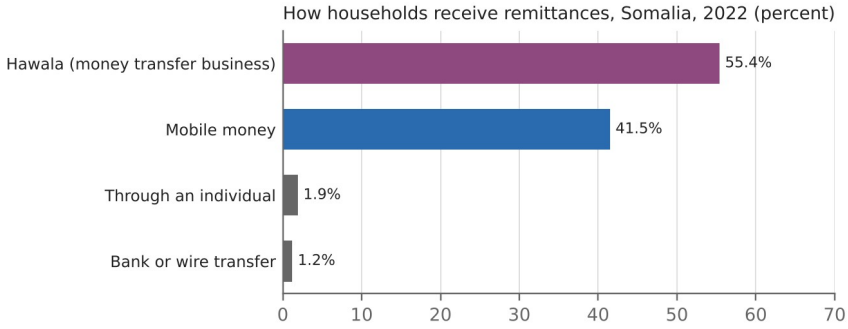
reach. The World Bank's Somali High Frequency Survey (Wave 2, 2017) found about 15 percent of households receiving remittances. The 2022 Somalia Integrated Household Budget Survey, the first national budget survey since 1985, reports that 20.7 percent of households received remittances, from within Somalia or abroad, in the previous twelve months, with nomadic households far less likely to receive them than urban or rural households. A 2017 survey for the World Bank found 37 percent of Somalis had received international remittances in the past year, which shows how much the figures depend on the question asked.

The distributional finding of 2009 holds. Urban households are more likely to receive international remittances, and households that receive them are less poor: 58 percent of recipient households were poor in 2017, against 71 percent of those that did not receive. The 2009 workshop's concern that remittances fail the poorest therefore remains valid. A 2026 analysis of 2017 survey data found that informal support, mainly remittances and zakat, reached twice as many households as formal aid (64 against 32 percent), while 29 percent of households received neither.

6.3 Channels: mobile money

The 2009 report did not mention mobile money; Hormuud Telecom launched EVC Plus only in 2011. By 2017 a survey commissioned by the World Bank found that 73 percent of Somali adults used mobile money, and the Central Bank now reports that mobile money reaches 84 percent of adults. On 27 February 2021 the Central Bank issued its first mobile money licence, to Hormuud, bringing EVC Plus under formal regulation. By the end of 2025 the Central Bank supervised 13 domestic commercial banks, one international bank branch, 14 money transfer businesses and six mobile money operators, and had introduced the Somalia Instant Payment System (SIPS) with a national QR standard, SOMQR.

Hawala has not been displaced. Among households that received remittances in the month before the 2022 household budget survey, 55.4 percent were paid through a money transfer business and 41.5 percent through mobile money; fewer than 2 percent used a bank (Figure 6.3). Nomadic households relied most on mobile money (72.3 percent), urban households most on hawala (62.0 percent).



Source: Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, SIHBS 2022 Main Report (2023), Table 10.3. Households that received remittances in the previous month.

Figure 6.3. How households receive remittances, 2022. Source: SNBS, SIHBS 2022 Main Report, Table 10.3.

Remittances now commonly arrive in mobile wallets, linking the diaspora directly to the digital economy inside Somalia.

6.4 Channels: de-risking

The 2009 report's risk list was an ageing diaspora, generational change, donor fatigue and the economic crisis in the West. It did not foresee the closure of bank accounts held by Somali money transfer operators. Barclays in the United Kingdom closed its accounts with Dahabshiil in 2014. In early 2015 Merchants Bank of California, which handled an estimated 60 to 80 percent of US remittances to Somalia, closed its Somali accounts, and Westpac, the last Australian bank serving Somali remittance companies, followed. Regulators' anti-money-laundering pressure, not evidence of misuse by individual senders, drove these closures. The consequence, documented by Oxfam and others, was higher costs and a shift towards cash and less visible channels.

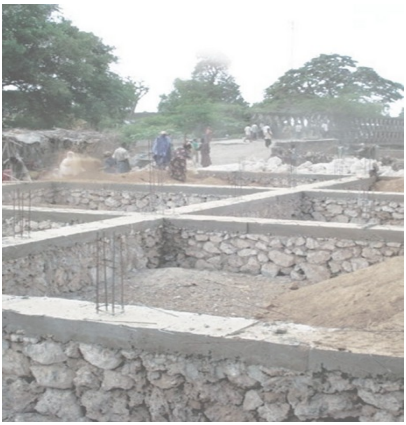
7. INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The 2009 report found the diaspora to be the main investor in Somalia, supplying 80 percent of start-up capital for small and medium enterprises and between 30 and 40 percent of the shareholders of one major telecommunications company. It listed telecommunications, remittances, construction and trade as leading sectors, and noted the absence of formal banking.

The economy is larger and more formal than in 2009. The Central Bank estimates real GDP growth at 4.0 percent in 2024 and 3.1 percent in 2025, with average inflation of 3.7 percent in 2025. Licensed banks and mobile money operators now

work under the Central Bank. Hormuud Telecom, the largest private employer, reports more than 12,000 Somali shareholders, many of them abroad, against 283 at its founding in 2002. Somalia reached the HIPC completion point in December 2023, securing about US$4.5 billion in debt relief; external public debt stood at US$1.48 billion, about 11 percent of GDP, at the end of 2025.

No current estimate of the diaspora share of SME start-up capital, or of diaspora investment by sector, was located. The World Bank's 2023 Migration and Development Brief discusses diaspora finance for private capital mobilisation in general terms; a Somalia-specific estimate would require survey data.



2009 © *UNDP. Reproduced from Healy and Sheikh (2009), p.15.*



2026 Mogadishu *skyline, 2026: more than 6,000 buildings went up in the city in five years. Photo: Isma4l, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons.*

8. HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

The 2009 report described fast, informal diaspora responses to emergencies, often mobilised through Somali media and telecommunications companies, and steady support for schools, hospitals and universities in home districts. It described this as becoming part of the traditional obligation to those left behind.

That role has grown with the scale of crises: the 2011 famine, and the droughts of 2017 and 2021 to 2022. Fundraising has moved from radio appeals to mobile money and social media, and mobile money is now also a channel for humanitarian cash transfers. The 2011 UNDP study Cash and Compassion documented how the 2011 famine galvanised diaspora giving, both individual and collective.

No inventory exists of the schools, hospitals and universities founded or sustained by the diaspora since 2009, and no direct successor to the UNDP QUESTS programme, which recorded 505 diaspora placements in 2007 and 826 in 2008, was identified. Building such an inventory, with IOM Somalia, universities and the Ministry of Health, would be a practical first task under the National Diaspora Policy.

9. THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

In 2009 there was no Somali government policy on the diaspora. The workshop's recommendations were addressed to UNDP and donors. Since then, a formal framework has emerged.

Year	Instrument	Notes
2016	Foreign policy naming diaspora engagement as a pillar	Reported at the time by advisers to the foreign minister
2023	National Diaspora Policy ratified by cabinet	Developed by the Department of Diaspora Affairs with IOM, after consultations in all federal member states during 2021
2024	National Strategy for Migration	Includes reducing remittance costs and diaspora engagement
2025	National Labour Migration Policy	Developed with ILO support
2025	Somaliland National Diaspora Policy finalised	Validation workshop held in Hargeisa

Table 9.1. Diaspora policy instruments since 2009. Sources: EU Diaspora for Development country factsheet; Somaliland ministry reporting.

Implementation is the open question. The EU's country factsheet notes a continuing lack of diaspora-targeting programmes despite the policy.

10. CASE STUDY: SOMALI AUSTRALIANS

The 2009 report named Australia as a new growth area. Australia is the base of this study, and Somcare has already examined the community in detail, so it serves as a case study of change since 2009.

This chapter draws on the Somcare Follow-Up Study (Ibrahim, 2026), which updated the 2020 La Trobe University study with 2021 Census data from ABS TableBuilder Pro, using the Ancestry Multi Response (ANCP) variable, and on the book Somali Australians: From Belonging to Participating (Ibrahim, 2026). All Census values are subject to ABS perturbation.

10.1 Size and location

The 2021 Census recorded 18,401 people of Somali ancestry, up 13.8 percent from 16,175 in 2016. Ancestry is the better measure for this community because many Somali Australians were born in Kenya, Ethiopia or Djibouti: The Census counted only 8,101 people born in Somalia. Victoria held 54.4 percent of Somali Australians, followed by Queensland (16.5 percent), Western Australia (16.3 percent) and New South Wales (9.7 percent). Arrivals peaked in 2001 to 2010, when Australia's humanitarian programme prioritised the Horn of Africa, after a first wave in the 1990s.

The community is young and increasingly Australian-born. In the Follow-Up Study's settlement table, 8,833 of 17,831 Somali Australians (49.5 percent) were born in Australia, and 35.5 percent of the community was under 15, about double the national share of 18.2 percent.

10.2 Education and employment

La Trobe University's 2020 study (Harvey, Szalkowicz and Luckman) found that Somali Australians accessed vocational and higher education at higher rates than other Australians, but that employment outcomes were stubbornly poor. It reported that a Somali Australian with a bachelor's degree was about as likely to be unemployed as an Australian who had left school at Year 10 or earlier.

The Follow-Up Study finds improvement and a persistent gap:

Indicator, 2021 Census	Somali Australians	Comparison
Unemployment rate	23.0% (1,562 of 6,794 in the labour force)	National 5.1%; all African ancestries 7.9%; Kenyan Australians 5.7%
Change since 2016	29.9% to 23.0%	Different age ranges in the two studies; broad comparison only
Australian-born unemployment	29.4% (45.7% in 2016)	Overseas-born Somali Australians 21.3%
Rank among 30 African ancestry communities	Highest unemployment	Range 4.6% (Malawian) to 23.0%
Labour force participation	58.4%, lowest of 30	All African ancestries 74.3%; Kenyan 86.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher, persons 15+	16.6% (13% in 2016)	National 26.3%
Bachelor or higher, of those with a non-school qualification	40.9%	All African ancestries 52.0%; Kenyan 65.7%
Unemployment of bachelor graduates	10.0%	3.8% for graduates of all African ancestries

Table 10.1. Somali Australians in the labour market. Source: Ibrahim (2026), Follow-Up Study and book, Appendix B.

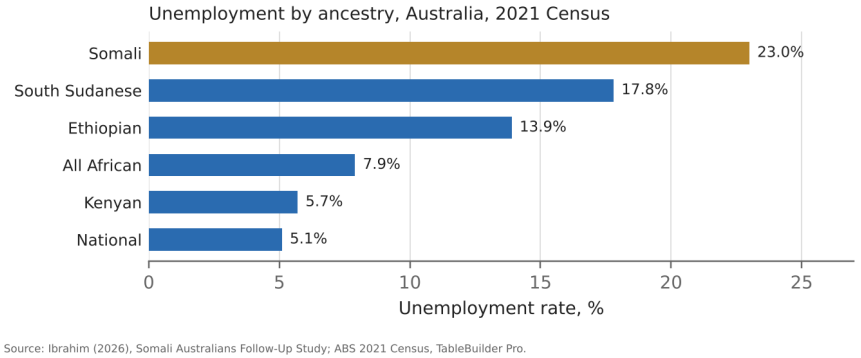


Figure 10.1. Unemployment by ancestry, Australia, 2021 Census. Somali Australians recorded the highest rate of 30 African ancestry communities.

Education does not close the gap. Somali tertiary attainment is similar to that of Ethiopian and South Sudanese Australians, whose unemployment rates (13.9 and 17.8 percent) are well below the Somali rate. The Follow-Up Study therefore treats migration stream, employer behaviour and discrimination as leading explanations, while noting that Census cross-sections establish association rather than cause and proposing a correspondence audit study to test name-based discrimination directly.

For this report the Australian findings matter in two ways. First, they show the second-generation question raised in 2009 in hard numbers: a generation born and educated in Australia is entering the labour market at a disadvantage. Second, they bear on remittances: households with unemployment near one in four, and participation below 60 percent, carry the obligation to remit from a narrow income base, the burden the 2009 workshop described.

10.3 Remittances from Australia

Oxfam estimated in 2015 that around 7,500 Somali Australians sent about A$33.5 million a year to Somalia, more than double Australia's humanitarian aid to Somalia in 2014. The closure of Westpac's remittance accounts in 2015 removed the last major Australian bank from the corridor. Somali Australians continue to send money through remittance providers, which must register with AUSTRAC,

and Somcare's Somali Remittance Directory lists providers serving the corridor. Access to banking for these providers remains the corridor's main risk.

11. THE 2009 RECOMMENDATIONS REVISITED

The 2009 workshop produced short-term actions for UNDP and recommendations from four working groups. The table gives a preliminary assessment, to be tested through interviews.

2009 recommendation (summarised)	Preliminary assessment, 2026
Better communication and information sharing between the UN and diaspora groups	Partly met. Official data on population and remittances now exist; structured UN to diaspora channels are limited.
Map and catalogue diaspora projects on the ground	Not met at national scale.
Partner with diaspora organisations for service delivery; build their capacity to work with donors	Partly met through IOM and NGO programmes.
Support business associations and chambers of commerce; promote research on Somali business	Unclear. No current evidence was located.
Find ways to support remittances, transport and telecommunications businesses	Mixed. Telecoms and mobile money have flourished; remittance banking access deteriorated after 2013.
Target the poorest, who receive no remittances	Not met. Recipient households remain less poor than non-recipients.
Consult the diaspora on the constitution; include it in peace talks	Met in part. Diaspora politicians are central; the 2026 constitution now limits dual citizenship in top offices.
Revamp QUESTS and involve the diaspora in its design	Not met. No successor programme was identified.
Establish an e-network of workshop participants	No active network was identified.

Table 11.1. Status of the 2009 recommendations.

12. COUNTING SOMALIA: THE DATA PROBLEM

This report set out to replace the estimates of 2009 with measured facts. For the diaspora's host countries, it largely succeeded: censuses in Britain, Australia, Canada, the Nordic countries and the United States count Somalis directly, even if each counts in its own way. For Somalia itself it often could not. The difficulty

is not a lack of effort by researchers. It reflects the absence of the basic statistical infrastructure that most states take for granted.

Somalia's last census to publish results was held in 1975 and counted 4.2 million people. A second census in the mid-1980s was carried out but its results were never released. The 2014 Population Estimation Survey, supported by UNFPA, was the first large household survey in decades but was not a census. In May 2023 the Federal Government launched a Population and Housing Census, planned for 2024 to 2025, with enumeration to begin in late 2024. As of this report, no census results have been published. Every population figure for Somalia in this report, including the denominator for the share of Somalis living abroad, is therefore a model-based projection rather than a count.

Every population figure for Somalia in this report is a model-based projection rather than a count.

The same problem runs through the other indicators. Remittance estimates for a single year, 2024, range from US$2.12 billion to US$2.72 billion depending on the institution, a difference of about US$600 million in an economy of about US$12 billion. The share of households receiving remittances ranges from about 15 percent to 40 percent depending on the survey and the question. There is no official figure for the number of Somali citizens abroad, for how many hold dual nationality, or for how many have returned. Data on diaspora members in parliament come from an independent database, not from parliament. Diaspora investment, the core finding of the 2009 report, is not measured at all.

Unreliable numbers are not a technical inconvenience. They weaken the case Somalia makes to host-country regulators and banks that remittance corridors are safe and transparent, the case at the centre of the de-risking crisis described in Chapter 6. They leave the Federal Government unable to show its diaspora what it contributes, or to plan services, elections and revenue around an accurate population. And they allow figures to be quoted selectively, by every side, in debates about aid, remittances and migration.

This report therefore proposes, as its first outcome, that the Federal Government of Somalia treat diaspora and remittance statistics as a national priority, with the following tasks:

- Complete and publish the Population and Housing Census, including a module on household members living abroad, the most direct way to count the diaspora from home.

- Have the Central Bank of Somalia and the World Bank and IMF publish one reconciled remittance series, with a published note explaining definitions, coverage of Somaliland and other regions, and revisions.
- Mandate the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics and the Central Bank to produce an annual Diaspora and Remittance Statistics release, drawing on UN DESA, host-country censuses and domestic surveys.
- Through the Department of Diaspora Affairs and Somali embassies, build a voluntary diaspora register and request Somali-specific tabulations from host-country statistics offices, as Australia's ABS, Britain's ONS and others already produce.
- Measure diaspora investment through business and enterprise surveys, so that the role the 2009 report identified as most important can finally be quantified.

13. A WIDER ROLE FOR THE DIASPORA, AND A VOICE IN PARLIAMENT

13.1 From cash to partnership

The 2009 workshop hoped the diaspora would move from reactive giving to proactive, development-minded engagement. The evidence in this report shows how much that engagement could offer. The diaspora is Somalia's largest source of foreign exchange, its most willing investor in high-risk conditions, and the first responder in drought and conflict. It holds skills Somalia lacks: doctors, engineers, teachers, financial regulators and statisticians trained in other systems. It is also Somalia's most effective advocate abroad. Somali communities in Washington, London, Ottawa and Canberra are the constituents who can persuade host governments to keep remittance corridors open, recognise qualifications and support Somali development.

A partnership of this kind requires more than a policy document. It needs channels through which the diaspora can invest with protection, contribute skills without losing residence rights abroad, and hold the state to account for how its contribution is used. The most direct of those channels is representation in the national legislature.

13.2 Representation today: influence without accountability

The diaspora is already over-represented at the top of Somali politics, as Chapter 5 showed: 105 of 275 members of the 2016 House of the People held foreign passports, and successive prime ministers held Western citizenship. But these

members are selected through clan-based indirect processes inside Somalia. They do not answer to the Somalis living abroad, who have no vote of their own. The 2026 restriction on dual citizens in the four highest offices responds to public suspicion of returnee politicians, but it does nothing to give ordinary diaspora members a voice. The result is the worst of both: diaspora influence without diaspora accountability.

13.3 How other countries do it

A number of countries reserve seats in their national parliaments for citizens abroad, elected by those citizens in constituencies drawn by region of the world.

Country	Seats for citizens abroad	How the world is divided
Italy	8 deputies and 4 senators since 2022 (12 and 6 from 2006 to 2020), about 2% of seats	Four zones: Europe; South America; North and Central America; Africa, Asia, Oceania and Antarctica. Members must live in the zone they represent
France	11 deputies in the National Assembly since 2012	Eleven single-member constituencies covering the world
Portugal	4 deputies	Two for Europe, two for the rest of the world
Cape Verde	6 deputies	Two for Africa, two for the Americas, two for Europe and the rest of the world
Algeria	8 of its parliamentary seats	Constituencies abroad, many voters in France
Tunisia	18 of 217 in the 2011 Constituent Assembly	Six constituencies abroad, including France, Italy, Germany, the Americas and the Arab world

Table 13.1. Selected overseas constituencies. Sources: Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; IDEA; published summaries of national electoral law.

Italy's system is the closest model for Somalia because its diaspora, like Somalia's, is large relative to the home population and spread across every continent. It is not fixed: the 18 overseas members (12 deputies and six senators) were cut to 12 (eight deputies and four senators) when Italy reduced the size of its parliament by referendum in 2020, with effect from the 2022 election. The lesson is that overseas seats are a political choice that must be defended and periodically reviewed.

13.4 An option for Somalia

This report proposes, for national debate, that Somalia consider reserving a small number of seats in the House of the People for Somali citizens abroad, elected by them in continental constituencies. At around 2 percent of the House, as in Italy,

this would mean five or six seats. One illustration, reflecting where Somalis abroad live, would be:

- Africa: Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Uganda, South Africa and the rest of the continent, home to the largest Somali populations abroad, including most refugees.
- Middle East and Asia: Yemen, the Gulf states, Türkiye, Malaysia and the rest of Asia.
- Europe: the United Kingdom, the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and the rest of Europe.
- North America: the United States and Canada.
- Oceania: Australia and New Zealand, possibly combined with Asia given their size.

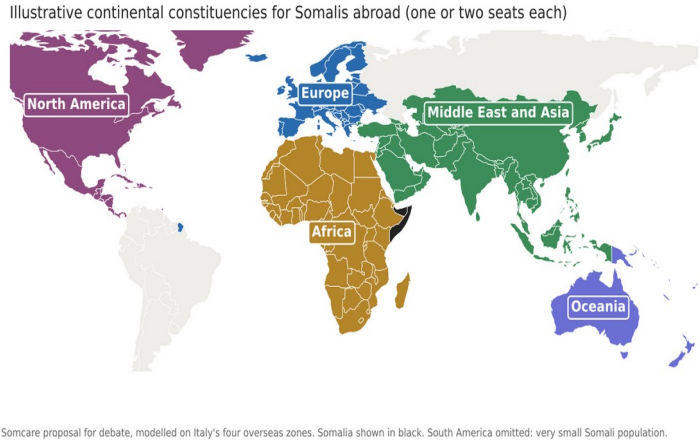


Figure 13.1. Illustrative continental constituencies for Somali citizens abroad. A Somcare proposal for national debate, not a recommendation on boundaries.

Several conditions would have to be met first, and each links to a finding of this report. Somalia would need a credible register of citizens abroad, which depends on the census and diaspora register proposed in Chapter 12. It would need a transition from clan-based indirect selection to direct elections for overseas seats to mean what they do elsewhere. Registration and voting would need to reach refugees in Kenya, Ethiopia and Yemen as well as citizens in the West, or the seats would represent only the most comfortable part of the diaspora. And the arrangement would need to address Somaliland, whose diaspora is among the most organised but whose government does not recognise federal institutions.

There are serious objections, and the debate should hear them. Overseas seats could import clan competition into diaspora communities abroad. Low registration could give a handful of voters a seat each, as critics have argued in other countries. Citizens at home may resent representatives who do not live with the consequences of the laws they pass. Host countries may be wary of foreign election campaigns on their soil. None of these objections is decisive, and several are answered by design choices such as residence requirements, minimum registration thresholds and independent electoral supervision. Formal, accountable representation of the diaspora would be more transparent than the informal over-representation that exists today.



2009 © *UNDP Somalia. Reproduced from Healy and Sheikh (2009), p.22.*



2026 Graduates *at a University for Peace ceremony in Mogadishu, where 166 Somali students received doctorates and master's degrees, 2 December 2022 (cropped). ATMIS Somalia, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.*

Diaspora influence without diaspora accountability is the worst of both. Formal representation would be more transparent than the informal over-representation that exists today.

14. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is, above all, a story of progress. Somalia in 2026 is not the collapsed state of 2009: it has a federal government, a central bank, rising revenues, debt relief, a growing private sector and an expanding school system. Much of that progress was financed, staffed or led by the diaspora.

The missing million has become the missing two million. The diaspora is larger, more settled and more visible in official statistics than in 2009. It still sustains a large part of household consumption in Somalia, still dominates the top of Somali politics, and still funds emergency response faster than the international system.

The changes are in the institutions around it: mobile money, a regulating central bank, a national diaspora policy and the first legal limits on dual citizenship in high office. The risks have also changed: the threat of 2009 was an economic crisis in the West; the threat that materialised was the withdrawal of banks.

Recommendations:

- Statistics, the first outcome of this report: the Federal Government should complete and publish the census, reconcile the official remittance series and produce an annual Diaspora and Remittance Statistics release, as set out in Chapter 12, so that the figures in this report never again have to be rebuilt from scattered and conflicting sources.
- Remittance corridors: host governments, including Australia, should treat safe remittance corridors to Somalia as development infrastructure, and regulators should give licensed Somali money transfer operators predictable access to banking.
- Implementation of the National Diaspora Policy: the Department of Diaspora Affairs should publish an implementation plan with measurable targets, including a register of diaspora-founded institutions.
- Second generation: governments and universities in host countries should fund research on the attitudes of Somalis born abroad, the question the 2009 report left open.
- Representation: the Federal Government and parliament should open a national debate on reserving a small number of seats in the House of the People for Somali citizens abroad, elected in continental constituencies on the Italian model, once a credible register of citizens abroad exists (Chapter 13).
- Reaching the poorest: humanitarian and social protection programmes should be designed on the assumption that remittances do not reach the poorest households.
- Australia: Australian governments should address the gap between Somali Australians' education and employment, since Somali graduates are unemployed at more than two and a half times the rate of all African-ancestry graduates, through employer partnerships, recognition of overseas qualifications and pathways for young Australian-born Somalis.
- Somcare: Somcare will publish the data behind this report, invite corrections from Somali institutions and the diaspora, and seek partners for the survey of diaspora organisations and the second generation that this report could not undertake.

ANNEX A. DATA REGISTER, 2009 AND NOW

Indicator	2009 (page)	Latest	Status
Population	7.4m (p.3)	19.7m (2025)	Verified
Somalis abroad	1m+, 14% (p.3)	1,935,594 (2024), about 10%	Secondary
Refugees in region	About 346,000 in five countries (p.3)	952,930 (Aug 2026)	Verified
UK	93,000 (p.5)	108,921 born; 176,645 identify (2021)	Verified
External public debt	Not covered	US$1.48bn, 11% of GDP (2025)	Verified
USA	36,000 (p.5)	About 259,000 descent (ACS 2024); 193,061 ancestry	Verified
Canada	34,000 (p.5)	65,555 (2021)	Secondary
Sweden	10,000 (p.5)	70,173 born	Secondary
Norway	11,000 to 20,000 (p.4 to 5)	28,554 plus 14,719 (2020)	Secondary
Australia	Growth area (p.1)	18,401 ancestry; 8,101 born (2021); unemployment 23.0%	Verified
Remittances	US$1.6bn plus US$0.7bn (p.9)	US$2.12bn to US$2.72bn (2024) by source	Unreconciled: see Ch. 12
Remittances, % GDP	4th most dependent (p.9)	17.7%, 16th (2024)	Secondary
Households receiving	Up to 40% (p.10)	20.7% (SIHBS 2022)	Verified
SME start-up capital	80% (p.10)	None found	Gap
Share of income remitted	11%, London (p.18)	None found	Gap
Diaspora in cabinet	18 of 37 (p.8)	None found	Gap
MPs with foreign passports	Not given	105 of 275 (2016 parliament, Wakiil)	Secondary
Mobile money use	Not covered	84% of adults (CBS, 2025)	Verified
QUESTS placements	505; 826 (p.16)	None found	Gap
Diaspora policy	None	Ratified 2023	Verified
IDPs	Not covered	About 3.3m (Jan 2026)	Verified

ANNEX B. NOTES ON THE EVIDENCE

This report relies on the best figures that could be located from Melbourne in 2026. Readers should note the following, and Somcare welcomes corrections for later editions.

- Diaspora size: UN DESA counts people born in Somalia; children born abroad are not included, so the true diaspora is larger.
- Remittances: World Bank and Central Bank of Somalia figures differ by up to US$1 billion a year (Chapter 6 and Chapter 12). Central Bank figures are taken from its Annual Report 2025. The two series measure different things and are not reconciled here.
- Population: Somalia has no published census since 1975; all population figures are projections.
- Western countries: some figures for Canada, Sweden and Norway come from secondary tabulations of official data, and the years differ between countries.
- Law and policy: statements on Somalia's 2026 constitution, electoral law and overseas constituencies elsewhere rest on published summaries and analysis rather than the legal texts.
- Scope: this is a desk review. It does not include a survey or interviews, and it does not cover Somaliland and Puntland in depth.

Annex C

Permission to Look Back: A Note on the 2009 Photographs

Why this annex

This report follows Somalia's Missing Million, published by UNDP Somalia in 2009. To show continuity, its design sets each photograph from the 2009 report beside a recent photograph of the same theme: a girl in 2005 beside a girl sitting her national examinations in 2021; a building site beside the Mogadishu skyline of 2026. Before using the four 2009 photographs, Somcare sought permission from the agencies credited with them. This annex records that process, with the full correspondence, because the process itself says something about how knowledge of Somalia is produced, owned and shared.

Somcare respects copyright and has followed the rules throughout. The purpose here is not to complain about individuals, who were courteous and, in UNDP's case, quick. It is to describe, calmly and on the record, the world in which Somali researchers work.

What happened

Date	Step
14 November 2026	Somcare writes to UNDP Somalia's Head of Communications, copied to WHO, requesting permission for the four photographs and offering to share the draft.
14 November	UNDP Somalia refers the request to a colleague.
15 November	Somcare asks the colleague to assist. WHO sends an automatic reply: its publications since 2016 are open access, but WHO photographs may not be reproduced in any medium without permission, requested through an online form.
15 November	Somcare submits WHO's online form and writes to the WHO Photo Library with the context.
15 November	UNDP asks to see the photographs. Somcare sends all four, with a sheet showing credits, pages and proposed use, and a preview of the cover.
15 November, 9.41 pm	UNDP replies: "These are older photos. If they are being used for non-commercial research purposes, we have no objection to use."
16 November	The WHO Multimedia Library replies that the 2005 photograph is not in its archives and cannot be located and suggests choosing an alternative image from its library and applying again through the permission form.
At publication	UNHCR: no reply.

In three days, then, the three agencies gave three different answers. UNDP Somalia agreed to non-commercial research use. WHO, having directed the request to an online form, replied that it could not find its own photograph. UNHCR has not replied. UNDP's answer was quick and generous, and WHO's was courteous and prompt. The structure behind all three answers is the subject of the rest of this annex.

Who was asked in 2005 and 2008?

Copyright in a photograph belongs to the photographer, or to the organisation that employs or commissions them. It does not belong to the person photographed, to the school in which a lesson was taking place, or to the street on which a building stood. In the 2009 report the four photographs are credited to a photographer and an agency: a WHO photographer in 2005, a UNHCR photographer in 2008, and UNDP. The people in them, a girl in a plum headscarf, a smiling boy, schoolgirls at their desks, are not named, and the report does not say how their consent was obtained.

That omission may well be protective. WHO's own guidance requires photographers to obtain informed consent and to put the best interest of a child first, and anonymity can protect children in a conflict. The point is not that consent was absent; it is that the record which survives shows rights running in only one direction. When the picture was taken, the community gave something. When the picture was published, ownership passed to the institution, and the community's part in the image disappeared from the record.

The irony

Seventeen years later, a Somali researcher who took part in the 2009 workshop that reviewed the original report wishes to show how Somalia has changed. To do so, he must ask agencies headquartered in New York and Geneva for permission to show Somali children and Somali places to Somali readers. The girl in the 2005 photograph, now a young woman, has no standing in that decision. Nor do her school, her family or her city. The researcher must write, wait, complete forms and send the photographs back to the institutions that hold them.

These agencies are publicly funded, including by taxpayers in Australia, where Somcare is based, and the 2009 report was itself a public-interest study. Its own rights notice allows not-for-profit research use with acknowledgement. Yet the

burden of proof rests entirely with the person asking, and the absence of a reply carries the same practical force as a refusal.

It is hard not to see in this an older pattern, in which knowledge about Africa was produced by outsiders, held by outsiders and licensed back to Africans. The agencies do not intend this, and their rules apply equally to everyone. The effect, however, is not neutral. Where the subject, the setting and the history are Somali, and the right to reuse belongs elsewhere, Somalis become petitioners for their own past.

The photograph that no one can find

WHO's reply adds a twist that would be comic if the principle were not serious. The photograph of the girl on the cover of the 2009 report is still credited to WHO, and under WHO's rules it may not be reproduced in any medium without WHO's permission. Yet WHO has told us, politely and promptly, that the photograph is not in its archives and cannot be located because it dates from 2005. The institution that holds the right to say yes no longer holds the picture. It has neither granted permission nor refused it; it simply cannot answer the question.

Meanwhile the photograph itself is not lost at all. It sits on the cover of a report that UNDP still publishes, free of charge, on its own website. Anyone in the world can download it, view it and print it for private use. What no one can do, under the rules as written, is show it again in a new study of the same subject without the permission of an owner who cannot find it. In copyright terms the photograph has become something close to an orphan work, the term lawyers use for a protected work whose rights holder cannot practically be traced. Here the rights holder is known; it is the work that has been lost to its owner.

WHO's suggested remedy is to choose another image from its library. That advice makes sense for a magazine looking for an illustration. It makes no sense for a study whose purpose is to set one particular Somali girl, photographed in 2005, beside a Somali girl sitting her examinations in 2021. The point of the comparison is continuity. Any other photograph would break the line the report is trying to draw between then and now.

Set out plainly, the position is this. The girl, now an adult, was never asked whether her picture could be reused and is not asked now. The agency that claims the right to decide cannot find the picture. The agency that published it has no objection. The researcher, who attended the workshop that reviewed the original report and who is himself Somali, has spent three days, more than ten emails and

two online forms seeking leave to reprint four faded photographs in a non-commercial study. None of this protects the girl in the photograph. All of it protects a claim of ownership that its owner can no longer exercise.

The case for the rules

There are good reasons for this system, and they deserve to be stated fairly. Copyright rewards the skill of photographers, many of whom are freelancers who depend on licensing. Control over reuse allows agencies to prevent an image of a vulnerable child from being taken out of context, used in advertising or attached to a misleading story; WHO grants photo permissions only where the use reflects the context and identity of the people shown. Australian law also makes room for research and review through fair dealing. In this case the system worked as designed: UNDP responded within two days and agreed.

These are real protections, and Somcare accepts them. They protect the photographer and the institution well, and the subject in part. They give the community photographed no voice at all. And, as the WHO reply shows, they can outlive the institution's own record of what it owns, so that a rule designed to protect people ends by protecting nothing but a credit line.

What would be fairer

Three modest changes would address most of the problem without weakening the protections. First, agencies could release photographs in publicly funded reports under the same non-commercial open licence many now use for text, as WHO already does for its publications. Second, captions could record, where safe, that consent was obtained and from whom, so that the people in an image are acknowledged as participants rather than scenery. Third, requests from researchers and institutions in the countries photographed could be handled through a simple, free and time-limited process, in which silence after a set period counts as consent for non-commercial research. Fourth, where an agency can no longer locate a photograph in its own archive, it should say plainly that it will not object to non-commercial reuse with acknowledgement, rather than leave the requester with neither a yes nor a no. The European Union created a limited route of this kind for orphan works in 2012; international agencies could adopt a simple version of their own.

A further step lies with Somalis themselves. A Somali national photographic archive, or a commons of openly licensed images contributed by Somali photographers, would mean that the next report on Somalia need not ask permission to show it.

Conclusion

This report reproduces all four 2009 photographs, faded and acknowledged, for non-commercial research and community information. UNDP Somalia has confirmed it has no objection. WHO has confirmed that it cannot locate its photograph and so has neither granted nor refused permission. UNHCR has not replied. Somcare will amend or remove any photograph promptly if its owner asks. The correspondence that follows is reproduced so that readers can judge the process for themselves. It is a small episode, but it shows the world in which Somali research is done: courteous, rule-bound and, in its structure, still unequal.

The correspondence

Reproduced in full or in extract. Personal email addresses are removed; officials are identified by role.

1. Somcare to UNDP Somalia, copied to WHO, 14 November 2026

Subject: Permission request: reuse of four photographs from "Somalia's Missing Million" (UNDP Somalia, 2009) in a non-commercial follow-up report

Dear Mr Sigdel, and colleagues at WHO and UNHCR,

I am writing to request permission to reproduce four photographs from "Somalia's Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development" (Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh, UNDP Somalia, 2009) in a non-commercial follow-up study.

I took part in the Nairobi workshop of 13 March 2009 that reviewed the original report, and I am listed among its participants. Somcare, the Melbourne-based non-profit I founded, is now preparing "Somalia's Missing Two Million: The Somali Diaspora and Development, 2009 to 2026". It sets each finding of the 2009 report against current evidence. To show continuity, it pairs each original photograph, reproduced in faded form, with a recent photograph showing what has improved since 2009.

The photographs are: Cover photograph, credited "© N. Mediratta/WHO Somalia/2005"; Page 4 photograph, credited "© B. Bannon/UNHCR/2008"; Page 15 photograph, credited "© UNDP"; Page 22 photograph, credited "© UNDP Somalia".

Proposed use: A non-commercial research report, published by Somcare in print and as a free PDF, with legal deposit at the National Library of Australia. Each photograph is reproduced unaltered except for fading, with its original credit and a reference to the 2009 report. No use in advertising, fundraising or campaigns.

The 2009 report grants permission for not-for-profit teaching and research use where the copyright owners are acknowledged. I would be grateful for written confirmation that this use is acceptable to UNDP, WHO and UNHCR. As the WHO and UNHCR

photographs appear in a UNDP publication, I would also welcome guidance from UNDP on whether it can clear all four, or whom else I should contact.

The 2009 report was a publicly funded contribution to understanding the Somali diaspora. Our aim is to build on it in the same public-interest spirit and to acknowledge its authors and the agencies involved. I would be glad to share the draft and to include any credit wording you prefer.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards, Dr Mohamed Ibrahim, Founder and Director, Somcare, Melbourne, Australia

2. UNDP Somalia, Head of Communications, to Somcare, 14 November 2026

Dear Mohamed,

Please contact Ilyas copied here for the photos/permission.

Best regards, Kamal

3. Somcare to UNDP Somalia colleague, 15 November 2026

Dear Ilyas,

Please see email thread below and assist in getting the permission to reproduce the photographs mentioned below. Thanks.

Regards, Mohamed

4. WHO permissions mailbox, automatic reply, 15 November 2026 (extract)

IMPORTANT: This is an automatically generated email, note that this mailbox will not be checked periodically.

WHO materials post Open Access: Permission IS NOT required for the reuse of WHO materials issued under the CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence subject to the reuse being for NON-COMMERCIAL purposes and any adaptations are licensed under the same or similar licence.

It is important to note, that while most of the content in WHO publications is owned by WHO, there may be materials that are credited another source. It is your responsibility to determine whether permission is needed for reuse and subsequently obtain permission from the copyright holder.

WHO Photos and Videos. WHO photographs and videos are copyrighted and are not to be reproduced in any medium without first obtaining permission from WHO. Permission may be granted for use so long as the usage accurately reflects the context and identity of all subjects depicted in the photograph. To request permission, please complete our online permissions form.

5. Somcare to WHO Photo Library, copied to UNDP Somalia, 15 November 2026

Subject: Permission request: WHO Somalia photograph (N. Mediratta, 2005) for a non-commercial research report

Dear WHO Photo Library team,

I have submitted a request through the WHO online permissions form and am writing to provide context.

The request concerns one photograph credited "© N. Mediratta/WHO Somalia/2005". It appeared on the cover of "Somalia's Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development" (Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh, UNDP Somalia, 2009). I do not have the WHO image reference number; the photograph shows a young Somali girl in a plum headscarf.

Somcare, a Melbourne-based non-profit, is preparing a follow-up study, "Somalia's Missing Two Million: The Somali Diaspora and Development, 2009 to 2026". To show continuity with the 2009 report, its cover reproduces the original photograph in faded form, unaltered otherwise, beside a 2021 photograph of a Somali girl sitting her national primary examinations. The use reflects the same context as in 2009, and the report makes no statement about the person shown.

Proposed use: cover of a non-commercial research report, in print and as a free PDF, in English, distributed worldwide, with legal deposit at the National Library of

Australia. Credit: "© N. Mediratta/WHO Somalia/2005", with any wording WHO prefers. No sale, advertising or fundraising use.

I would be grateful for written permission, and I am happy to share the draft cover.

Kind regards, Mohamed Ibrahim

6. UNDP Somalia colleague to Somcare, 15 November 2026

Dear Mohamed,

Thanks for your email. Could you please share the photos for which you are seeking permission to reproduce?

Best, Ilyas

7. Somcare to UNDP Somalia colleague, 15 November 2026

Dear Ilyas,

Thank you for your help. Please find attached the four photographs, as they appear in "Somalia's Missing Million" (UNDP Somalia, 2009): 1. Cover photograph (PDF page 1), credited "© N. Mediratta/WHO Somalia/2005"; 2. Page 4 (PDF page 9), credited "© B. Bannon/UNHCR/2008"; 3. Page 15 (PDF page 21), credited "© UNDP"; 4. Page 22 (PDF page 28), credited "© UNDP Somalia".

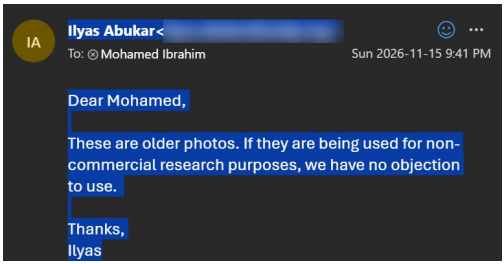
I have also attached a one-page sheet showing each photograph with its credit and proposed use, and a preview of the proposed cover. Each photograph would be reproduced faded, with its original credit, beside a recent photograph of the same theme, to show progress since 2009. The report is non-commercial and will not be used for advertising, fundraising or campaigns.

I understand UNDP can confirm permission for photographs 3 and 4 directly. For photographs 1 and 2, which are credited to WHO and UNHCR, I have submitted a request through WHO's permissions form and would be grateful for any help UNDP can offer in reaching the right contacts at WHO and UNHCR.

A written confirmation by email would be sufficient for our records.

Kind regards, Mohamed Ibrahim

8. UNDP Somalia colleague to Somcare, 15 November 2026, 9.41 pm (screenshot)



Email address obscured.

9. WHO Multimedia Library to Somcare, 16 November 2026

Dear Mohamed Ibrahim,

Regarding the requested image, I'm afraid we are unable to assist. The photograph is not available in our archives, and as it dates to 2005, more than 20 years ago, we have been unable to locate it.

You are welcome to browse the WHO Multimedia Library (multimedia.who.int) for alternative images. If you identify an image you would like to use, you can request permission through our official licensing process by completing the WHO Permission Request Form and including the relevant image Reference ID.

Hope this helps and best regards,

WHO Multimedia Library

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M*Ai* *expanding Somali stories to the world, one star at a time.* *Photo courtesy of the author.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mohamed Ibrahim, also known as **M*Ai***, is a researcher at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne and the founder and director of Somcare. He took part in the 2009 Nairobi workshop that reviewed the original study, and later served Somalia as Minister of Post and Telecommunications. He wrote this report to bring the story of Somalia's diaspora up to date, seventeen years on.

About this report

Somalia's Missing Two Million builds on *Somalia's Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development* (UNDP Somalia, 2009), by Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh. It keeps the look of that report and brings its evidence up to 2026. It is an independent Somcare study and is not a UNDP publication.

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Part two

Somalia's Missing Million

The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development, 2009

Prepared for UNDP Somalia by Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh. Reproduced unchanged for not-for-profit research and community information, with acknowledgement of UNDP Somalia.

Original:
undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/arabstates/Somalia-Missing-Millions.pdf



UNDP Somalia

SOMALIA'S MISSING MILLION

THE SOMALI DIASPORA AND ITS ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

2009

Somalia's Missing Million

The Somali Diaspora And Its Role In Development

2009

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Executive Summary

1. The Somali Diaspora makes a major contribution to the Somali economy and livelihoods through remittances, humanitarian assistance and participation in recovery and reconstruction efforts. This study seeks to highlight where and how the Diaspora's development efforts are currently focused so that the UN/UNDP can better understand and support their significant humanitarian and development activities.

2. With 14% of its population outside, Somalia is a globalised nation. At least one million Somalis live in the Diaspora, concentrated in three main areas: the Horn of Africa and Yemen; the Gulf States; and Western Europe and North America.

3. Kenya and Yemen have the highest number of Somali refugees. In Europe, the UK has the largest Somali community and attracts Somali migrants from elsewhere in the same continent. The next largest refugee communities are in the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Italy. The US and Canada have big Somali communities concentrated in Minneapolis, Ohio and Toronto. The Somali Diaspora is still on the move. Malaysia and Australia are new growth areas.

4. Conflict-driven mass migration from Somalia began 20 years ago but had been preceded by smaller waves of economically driven migration. Distinctions exist between the first generation, their foreign raised offspring and newer arrivals to the Diaspora. The first and third of these groups maintain the closest ties to their homeland. Second generation loyalties are still evolving but will be vital for future dependence on Diaspora support.

5. In conflict resolution and peace building, the Diaspora is a double-edged sword, contributing significantly to both. Financial obligations to support the clan in times of conflict have endured. Yet Diaspora intervention in support of local reconciliation and state building has been a key ingredient for success, notably in Somaliland and Puntland.

6. Since 2000, the Diaspora has been highly visible in the state institutions of Somalia, including Somaliland[1] and Puntland[2], occupying top leadership positions of the state, political parties, cabinet, parliament and civil service. Some question the prominent role of the Diaspora in Somali politics.

7. Remittances to family members inside the country are a well-established practice. Remittance flows were estimated at up to US$1 billion in 2004 but could be as high as US$1.6 billion to Somalia and US$700 million to Somaliland. Remittances represent 23% of household income with up to 40% of households receiving some assistance.

8. The Somali Diaspora is the major investor in the country and provided 80% of the start-up capital for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). For-profit activities contribute to economic recovery and improving livelihoods. Returnees establish businesses individually or as a group and pool resources or manage business at the executive level. Investment is spread over various sub-sectors such as small-scale industries, telecommunication, remittances and trade.

9. Another form of intervention, often linked to business networks, is the provision of emergency relief in times of natural or man-made crises. The Diaspora has proven capacity to send immediate cash and supplies to address the emergency needs of the victims. Funds are often mobilized by and distributed

[1] Somaliland reference is to the unilateral self-declared Northwest regions of Somalia - since 1991
[2] Puntland reference is to the Puntland State of Federal Somalia, which represents parts of Northeast regions of Somalia – since 1998

through the private media. Contributions of this kind stretch beyond local affiliation and are given from a sense of patriotism or religious obligation towards the affected.

10. The Somali Diaspora makes its most sustained and direct contribution to development and service delivery by establishing and supporting local institutions in the home region, district or village. Long-term, systematic support typically involves paying salaries for teachers and health workers and support for orphanages. The scale of this activity is hard to quantify because it involves hundreds (probably thousands) of small fund-raising networks operating across the globe. It appears that the practice of supporting facilities in the home area within Somalia is becoming part of the traditional culture of obligation towards those who are left behind.

11. Finally, Diaspora members contribute to development through their work for international development agencies. Returnees contribute their skills and technical know-how, where they teach in the local universities and provide technical support to government departments. The UNDP Qualified Expatriate Somali Technical Support (QUESTS) project has helped to promote this activity in areas of stability.

12. Overall, the activities of the Diaspora in the political and economic spheres tend to be mutually supportive of each other and are resulting in an ever-strengthening Diaspora network that plays an increasingly significant part in the life of the country.

13. Following a workshop at which this study was discussed, a number of recommendations have been put forward with a view to forging a stronger development partnership between the United Nations/ UN Development Programme for Somalia, international community and Diaspora, and the Somalis working to enhance development in the country.

Introduction

SOMALIA'S MISSING MILLION: THE SOMALI DIASPORA AND ITS ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

The Somali Diaspora makes a major contribution to the Somali economy and livelihoods through remittances, humanitarian assistance and participation in recovery and reconstruction efforts. Without this support, the economy of the country would have collapsed long ago. Nevertheless, the scale of assistance from the Somali Diaspora and the manner in which their support is delivered on the ground is little understood by the international development community. For the purpose of improving humanitarian and development planning, UNDP commissioned this study to improve its understanding of the role of the Diaspora with a view to establishing better channels of communication with them and with the development and humanitarian communities they sustain inside Somalia.

This study seeks to highlight where and how the Diaspora's efforts are currently focused and to maximize the valuable contribution that the Diaspora can make to humanitarian, recovery and development efforts. A partial survey of organized Diaspora networks formed part of the study. Based on the findings of the study, a workshop explored possible mechanisms for engagement between the Diaspora and development partners, and made recommendations to enhance the achievement of their common developmental goals.

LOCATING THE SOMALI DIASPORA – IN SEARCH OF THE MISSING MILLION

Somalia's population is commonly estimated at 7.4 million, of whom more than one million are thought to live abroad. This estimate implies that some 14% of Somalia's population is now living outside the country as a Diaspora community, a proportion so large as to justify describing Somalia as "a truly globalised nation" (Menkhaus, 2009).

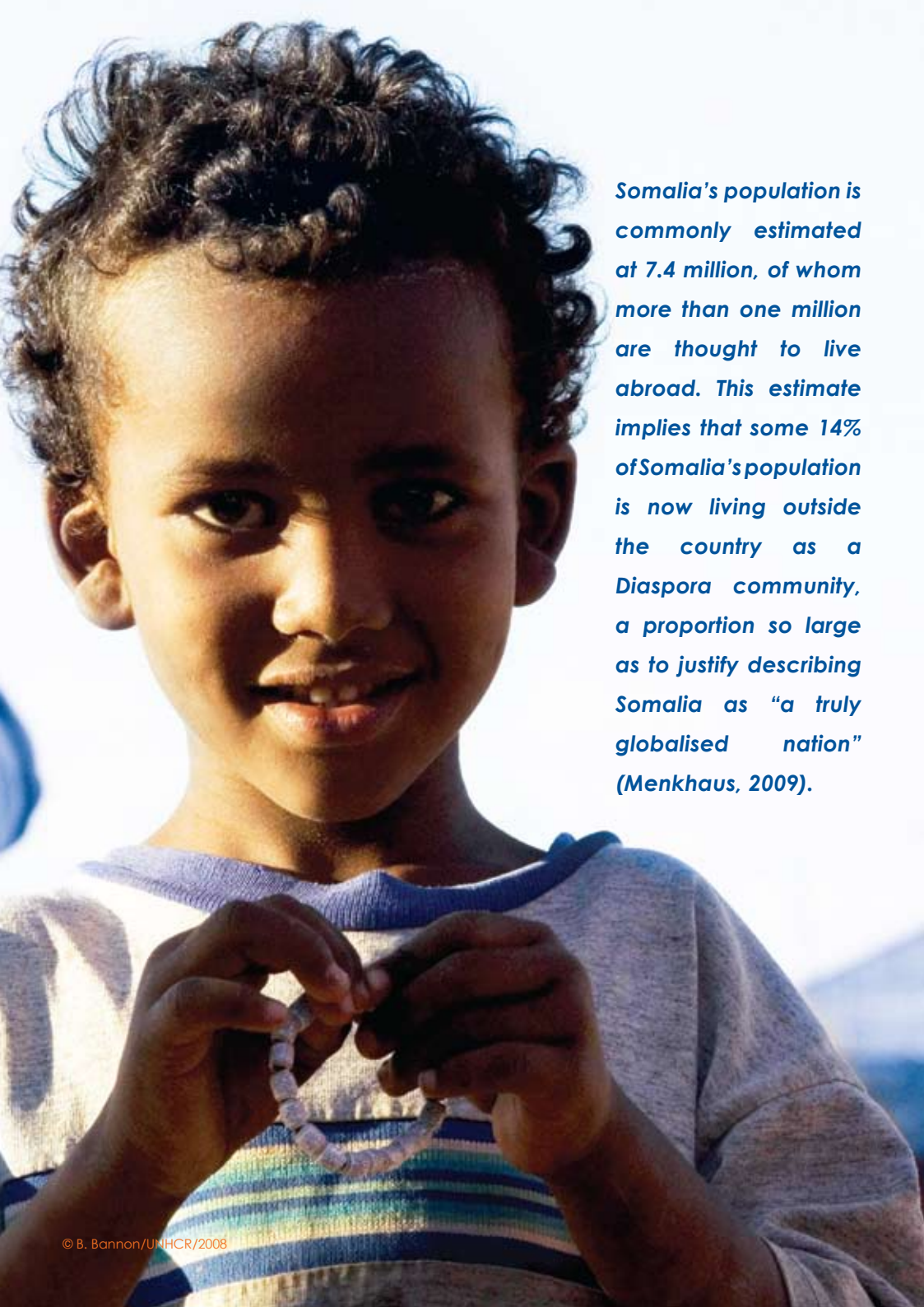
The greater part of this exodus has occurred during the last twenty years, coinciding with years of conflict and prolonged state collapse. To give a sense of the enormous scale of this outward migration, the equivalent for the US would be the loss of 42 million people, or 4 million Canadians, 5 million Kenyans or 8 million British citizens. Perhaps the closest historical parallel is that of the Great Irish Famine in the mid-19th century that resulted in the Irish population dropping from over 8 million to less than 6 million within a decade.

Unlike the Irish migrants of the 19th century, Somalis have not left their homes permanently to start a new life elsewhere. In an age of globalization, characterized by accessible transportation and rapid communication, the Somali Diaspora has remained very intimately connected with the homeland. Many members of the Somali Diaspora with right of abode elsewhere continue to live, work and invest in Somalia. There are estimated to be 15,000 Canadian citizens in Somaliland alone.

There are considerable difficulties in collecting reliable and statistically comparable data about the migratory movements that have produced the Somali Diaspora. The following are sets of data that tell just parts of the total story.

The largest concentration of Somali people outside Somalia is to be found in neighbouring countries and within the wider region. Reliable enumeration, even if it were to be attempted, would be made much harder on account of the sizeable communities of Somali Kenyan, Ethiopian and Djibouti citizens, from whom the Somali migrants are not readily distinguishable. UNHCR figures for registered refugees are as follows:

Kenya	224,000
Ethiopia	17,000
Djibouti	7,000
South Africa	8,000
Yemen	91,000



Somalia's population is commonly estimated at 7.4 million, of whom more than one million are thought to live abroad. This estimate implies that some 14% of Somalia's population is now living outside the country as a Diaspora community, a proportion so large as to justify describing Somalia as "a truly globalised nation" (Menkhaus, 2009).

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Another large community of Somalis resides in several of the Gulf States and is equally hard to enumerate. A 2003 estimate (Perouse de Monclos) suggested 20,000 in Saudi Arabia and 25,000 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). More recent estimates suggest a figure as high as 100,000 (Menkhaus). A relatively new target of Somali migration is Malaysia, where over 1,000 Somali students are currently enrolled in higher education (Malaysia Student Association). There are thought to be large student communities in Sudan and Egypt but it has not been possible to ascertain student numbers in these countries.

The third section of the Somali Diaspora is that dispersed among the Western countries, defined here for convenience as the members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Although statistical data is more readily available for these countries, population survey information is collected and aggregated in different ways. This makes it difficult to calculate with any certainty the size of Somali communities that are dynamic and still very much on the move. Asylum-seeker figures and census data on "foreign born" populations tell part of the story. However, as growing numbers of the Somali Diaspora are born abroad and others acquire new passports and nationalities, information on the size of Somali communities in the West becomes harder to distinguish clearly.

OECD (rounded) figures on asylum seekers from Somalia, aggregated by country for the period 1997-2005, show the destination of Somali refugees in the following priority:

The Somali Diaspora communities are often heavily concentrated in certain towns and cities. Their migration can sometimes occur on a large scale in a very short timeframe.

UK	45,000
Netherlands	13,000
US	12,000
Norway	10,000
Sweden	7,000
Switzerland	5,000
Canada	5,000
Denmark	5,000
Germany	4,000
Italy	3,000
Belgium	2,000
Ireland	1,500
Austria	1,000
Finland	1,000
Turkey	1,000

These figures are indicative of preferences since 1997, but it needs to be remembered that most of the asylum seekers will have been refused asylum or permission to remain.

The asylum figures are not a reliable guide to the size of Somali communities established in OECD countries. Migration occurs in many other forms (family reunion programmes, illegal immigration and movement from third countries) and much Somali migration had already occurred before 1997, when these statistics begin. Finland, for example, at the lower end of the asylum table, had received 4,500 Somali refugees from the Soviet Union by 2002 and could count 9,000 Somali speakers in its population in 2004. Italy is thought to have a Somali community in excess of 10,000 and Norway has a Somali population of 20,000, half of whom arrived in the country during the last five years (Horst 2008).

Census data for parts of the "population born in Somalia" is available for only some of the OECD countries. The following figures show major Somali Diaspora communities as follows:

UK	93,000 (2008)
USA	36,000 (2000 census)
Canada	34,000 (2001 census)
Netherlands	14,000 (2005 OECD)
Denmark	11,000 (2005 OECD)

These figures can quickly become out of date. US Somali refugee resettlement figures for the ten years 1983-2004 reached 55,000 and 13,000 Somalis entered the US in 2004 alone. Some authorities put the US figure as high as 150,000 (Lehman & Eno 2003, Menkhaus 2009). Sweden, Italy and Norway census data records "foreign population by nationality", a figure that tends to decline over time as migrants or refugees acquire citizenship. OECD collated figures of Somali populations in these countries in 2005 are as follows:

Norway	11,000
Sweden	10,000
Italy	6,000

There are two final observations to be made about the location of the Somali Diaspora in OECD countries before moving away from the statistics. The first is that Somali Diaspora communities are often heavily concentrated in certain towns and cities. The second is that Somali migration can sometimes occurs on a large scale in a very short timeframe.

To illustrate the first point, press reports claim there are 40,000 Somalis living in Toronto, 70,000 in Minneapolis (with 20,000 in St Paul alone) and 75,000 in Columbus, Ohio. These estimates clearly outstrip the official statistics noted above. In the UK, Somali communities are concentrated in various parts of London (33,000 in 2001 census) and other major cities including Bristol (20,000) and Manchester (10,000). Liverpool's 9,000 strong Somalis community has deep roots and Cardiff's 7,000 residents of Somali descent represent one of the oldest migrant communities in Britain dating from the 1880s.

At the other extreme, the city of Leicester has gained a Somali community of 13-15,000 within the last ten years. The majority of them are Dutch, Danish and Swedish passport holders who decided to move to the UK. Leicester is a major city of over 250,000 where Somalis now form some 5% of the population. A similar movement has been observed in the rather different context of Lewiston (Maine). Between 2001 and 2007, this small American town of 36,000 people gained 3,500 Somali migrants, constituting 10% of the population (Kusow, 2007).

WAVES OF MIGRATION

"Transnational Nomads" a term coined by Cindy Horst in 2006 to describe Somali refugees in Kenya.

Cindy Horst's book, Transnational Nomads, showed how Somali refugees were able to adapt their "nomadic" heritage to life in refugee camps, including a high degree of mobility and strong social networks that reached beyond the confines of the camp, as far as the US and Europe.

The traditional Somali society is rooted in nomadic pastoralism in which mobility is an essential feature of the culture and way of life. Movement in search of pasture and water for the livestock is an economic necessity to maintain the quality of production in the pastoral economy. In previous times, mobility was based on the search for peace and better economic opportunities. At times of violent conflict, nomads were forced to migrate temporarily to the neighboring clan territory. Such migration was reversed as soon as the conflict ended and people returned voluntarily to their original territory. Drought was another factor that caused migration in search of water and pasture for the livestock, the lifeline of the economy and the foundation of pastoral livelihoods. This type of migration would last until water and pasture became available in the original territory.

Besides such temporary migration inside Somalia, the footprints of early Somali migrants are visible in different parts of the world, particularly the Arabian Gulf and the homelands of western colonial powers that occupied Somalia in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Early Somalis travelled in the Gulf region for business and religious purposes and went

to the west for economic reasons and in search of a better life. The first Somali migrants settled in the UK in the 1880s, laying the foundations for the Somali communities that grew up and still flourish in the UK's major port cities (Liverpool, Cardiff and London). Further waves of migration began in the 1970s, bringing Somalis to Norway and elsewhere in Europe. These early Somali migrants were actively linked to Somalia through remittances and frequent visits. Seamen from Northern Somalia remitted money back through Yemeni traders who had representatives inside Somalia.

Since Somalia's independence in 1960, there have been further waves of Somali migration to the outside world. The first was in the early 1970s, following a long drought season (*dabadheer*) in most of the northern and central regions, which devastated the local economy. This wave of migration was prompted by major loss of livestock in the 1973/4 drought and the lack of employment opportunities in the local economy to aid recovery. At the same time, there was demand for labour in the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia, as the oil boom took off. The lifting of certain travel restrictions by the Somali government helped to facilitate migration. The Somali labour force in the Gulf became an important source of hard currency for Somalia at a time when the economy was ailing due to a combination of factors, arising from the transition from a socialist to a market economy, the aftermath of the war with Ethiopia in 1977 and political turmoil inside Somalia.

The Diaspora in the Gulf sent money back to Somalia using the franco-valuta system (Gundel 2002). This system resulted from a government policy that lifted import/ export restrictions. The franco-valuta system enabled Somalia to receive estimated revenue of US$370 million (Menkhaus 2008). After 1990, many of the migrants remaining in the Gulf went to Europe and North America as asylum seekers. The main reason for this was that employment opportunities in the Gulf were drying up because of the first Gulf war, while return to Somalia was unattractive due to state collapse and the subsequent civil wars.

The third wave of migration from Somalia has been much the largest and is still continuing. From the late 1980s and early 1990s there has been a continuous exodus of refugees from Somalia to the neighbouring countries. Many of these refugees and their relatives later ended up in Europe, North America and Australia. As they became more established there, they started to feed the Somali economy and support Somali livelihoods with hard currency through remittances. The Diaspora saved the Somali people inside Somalia and throughout the Greater Horn region from economic collapse and extreme impoverishment (Menkhaus 2008) at a time of state collapse and widespread insecurity over two consecutive decades.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOMALI DIASPORA

The three waves of migrants from Somalia can be categorized into the following five categories:

- The first and oldest group was the seamen from the port cities of the Red Sea, who left Somalia long before independence. These were men with limited formal education and skills.
- The second group comprised remnants of the Somali labour force that established itself in the Gulf countries during the 1970s and 1980s but were unable to return to Somalia due to political instability.
- A third, relatively privileged, group comprised those Somalis who had been studying outside Somalia, the diplomatic corps of the Somali state and their families and other Somalis who happened to be outside the country in 1990 at the time of the state collapse.
- The fourth group was the refugees who escaped from civil conflict and fled to refugee camps in the neighbouring countries. The first such exodus was out of Somaliland into Ethiopia at the time of the destruction of Hargeisa in 1988. Mass movement of Somali refugees into Kenya occurred in the early 1990s, during the period of intense conflict in Mogadishu and in response to widespread pillage and famine in Southern Somalia.

- The fifth group was the relatives left behind who later benefited from family reunion programmes and joined their relatives who had settled in the western countries. Still, more came through different channels facilitated by those established outside the country.

Somali migrant groups have different characteristics in terms of age, qualification and level of integration into the host societies. Depending on the reasons for migration, Somali migrants can be broadly classified into three main groupings.

- The first is the generation of fathers and mothers who settled in the host countries as refugees, often having spent time in refugee camps in neighbouring counties.
- The second category is the children of these families who either accompanied their parents or were born in the host country.
- The third category is latest arrivals, the young generation, with or without skills and educational qualifications, who went to the west for economic reasons, through family reunion programmes or any other means.

Of these three groups, the first and the third are most strongly attached to Somalia. They are steadfast in providing help to the relatives left behind by either arranging sponsorship to bring them to the west or sending money back to support them in Somalia. This group is the centripetal force that constantly maintains and reinforces the bonds with the homeland through marriage, philanthropy and business undertakings.

The attitude of the second group, those born or largely raised abroad, is very crucial for the role that Somali migrants might play in the long-term future of Somalia. Their role could be highly significant in the post-conflict transition to peace and development. Detailed empirical research on the attitudes of this group remains to be done. For some, their relationship with Somalia is minimal and they may never have returned to visit the country. Compared to the other groups, they have the highest level of integration with the host communities culturally and in their perceptions. They have limited understanding of the concept of the culturally bound duty to support the extended families left behind and might be resistant to the idea of sending money to Somalia.

On the other hand, there is abundant evidence that Somali Diaspora families who have the necessary means often return to Somalia. Many Somali families residing in Europe opt to spend the summer holidays there, renewing their bonds with their families. Estimates of summer visitors to Somaliland from the UK are as high as 10,000 per annum. The key determining factors appear to be security and affordability. In zones and times of relative security, Diaspora families return, creating a seasonal economy that injects significant amounts of money into local service industry (Menkhaus 2008). Insecurity and displacement caused by the conflicts in 2007/8 interrupted the summer economy in Mogadishu.

The loyalty of the old established Somali community in Cardiff, UK, to their homeland of Somaliland is just one illustration of the resilience of Somali identity in a complex globalised world. By the same token, many second generation Somalis in the Diaspora are taking a serious interest in the politics of the region and are actively engaged in lobbying and advocacy, as well as promoting philanthropic and development programmes.

Such activities are consistent with trends observed in other (non-Somali) Diaspora groups in which nationalist sentiment and a homeland project helps to deal with physical and existential displacement and sustains what sociologists call "an alternative imagined community". The Somali Diaspora is in this sense a dynamic and evolving community with potential of many kinds.

Political Engagement

For close to two decades, the Somali political crisis has represented the most complete and intractable case of state collapse to confront both the Somali people and the international community. Consequently, a number of

reconciliation conferences were organized and held outside Somalia. The case of Somaliland in the early 1990s was different and unique due to the collaboration between the Diaspora and the local communities led by a strong and committed traditional leadership inside.

Somaliland's business people largely funded the lengthy reconciliation processes that laid the foundations for its future stability. The collaboration between the different actors inside and outside the country achieved remarkable success in building peace and restoring law and order.

The Somaliland Diaspora has always been an active element in the equation of state building and the restructuring of the political system of the country. A clear illustration of this is the number of Somalis from the Diaspora holding leadership positions in the political institutions of the country.

Ten ministers in a cabinet of 29 are returnees. Two of the three political parties in Somaliland are also led by returnees. The head of one of the two legislative chambers – the *Guurti* – is a Diaspora returnee, along with 30 members of the 82-member House of Representatives.

Elsewhere in the Somali republic, Puntland differed from the Southern regions. As in Somaliland, the collaboration between the Diaspora, local civic actors and the traditional leadership succeeded in establishing relative stability and the growth of their own governance structures.

Puntland leaders nonetheless attended all the national reconciliation conferences for restoring the Somali state. During the 1990s, these conferences had been dominated by armed faction leaders and space for civilians, including Diaspora representation, was limited.

The Arta process of 2000 provided the first real opportunity for the Diaspora from Puntland and the Southern regions to play a meaningful role in Somali national politics. At the same time, civic actors began to assert their role in the political discourse of the country.

The civic actors in general and the Diaspora in particular were highly visible in the parliament, cabinet and top leadership of the state. The first Prime Minister of the Transitional National Government (TNG) was a Diaspora politician and so were several members in the parliament and cabinet. The Diaspora appeared to be a driving force in steering the country's politics away from the monopoly of the armed groups and helping to empower the unarmed civic actors.

During the Kenyan-led peace process (2002-4), the trend increased for two reasons:

- The first was the increase in the number of MPs. The Transitional National Parliament had 175 MPs, a figure that rose to 275 for the Transitional Federal Parliament. The figure has now risen to 550 MPs.
- The second major reason is the growing interest and involvement of the Diaspora in politics, reinforced by the perception within the clans that they deserve recognition for their role in supporting the clan at times of crisis.

The proportion of Diaspora representatives in the TFG continues to grow. In January 2008, the Prime Minister and two-thirds of the cabinet (10 out of 15 Ministers) were Diaspora members. In the cabinet appointed in February 2009, the Prime Minister and half of the cabinet (18 out of 37 Ministers) are Diaspora returnees. In addition to the Ministerial positions, most of the senior civil servants were also from Diaspora. The Diaspora members in national politics have national character in which all Somali clans are represented. An assessment of the contribution of these Diaspora members to the reconstruction of the political system of Somalia is beyond the scope of this report.

However, national-level political involvement has undoubtedly become one of the most significant arenas of Diaspora re-engagement in the country.

In matters of peace and conflict, the Diaspora has proved to be a double-edged sword. At times, it has contributed to fuelling the conflicts that destroy, while at other times it has acted as a lifeline and safety net for millions who would otherwise have perished.

In the early 90s, during internecine clan conflicts, the Diaspora was a powerful engine that drove the conflict into unimaginable proportion of social, political and economic destruction. Indeed Cindy Horst has observed that "the most likely source of financial income for clan disputes comes from clan members in the Diaspora, and committees are set up in Somalia, occasionally combined with initiatives outside Somalia, to tap this source in a structured way." Evidence collected in Norway indicates that during 1994, payment of individual monthly sums of $300 were not uncommon. In some cases, funds were being raised from opposing clans in conflict living alongside each other in Norway." Aggregate figures are harder to obtain, but sums between US$500,000 and US$5 million have reportedly been raised in support of clan conflicts (Horst 2008).

Contributing to conflicts in the home country is a common characteristic of the global Diaspora. Recognized to a lesser extent has been the financial role of the Somali Diaspora in conflict resolution and peace building. This has not been limited to shutting off the resources that fuel conflict, but has also involved pooling tangible funds to invest in local reconciliation. The experience of the Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD) in local reconciliation attests to the strong participation of the Diaspora in defusing tensions and providing finance to support elders resolving clan conflicts (CRD 2007). CRD reports Diaspora delegations of clans in conflict visited the areas as one team, facilitated local reconciliation by injecting financial incentives in Diya payments, and promised to rehabilitate local facilities such as schools and health clinics as incentives to sustain the peace. The Diaspora role in local peace building extends to supporting local actors to establish administrations at local, regional and national levels.

Finally, it should be noted that not everyone welcomes Diaspora involvement in politics. Many people criticize the role of the Diaspora and their impact on the reconstruction of state institutions. The returning Diaspora are criticised at times as opportunists who return in peacetime but have the chance to run away when a problem arises, instead of assisting its resolution. However, the Diaspora politicians argue the expectation and the demand from their intervention is very high, while political change is a time-consuming phenomenon in which the impact can only be felt long after engagement. The question of Diaspora intervention and the return of Diaspora in general are not free from controversy.

ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO SOMALIA

"Few countries in the world possess Diasporas with as much economic and political importance to their homeland as does Somalia" Ken Menkhaus.

(i) Remittances

Whatever their demographic, gender and qualification differences, the Somali Diaspora is a major contributor to the livelihoods of Somalis and to recovery and development in general. In 2004, the worldwide Somali Diaspora was estimated to send remittances worth between US$750 million and US$1 billion to Somalia each year (UNDP, 2002), making the country the fourth most remittance dependent country in the world. The amount includes support given to individual families and other relatives and friends, contributions to aid development and investment in small and medium enterprises.

Like the Diaspora population statistics, reliable estimates of the aggregate volume of remittances to Somalia are difficult to obtain. Estimates from the remittance companies involve access to commercially sensitive information and it is not easy to disaggregate transfers of funds within the Diaspora from the amounts sent in to the country. It is not possible to distinguish between funds transferred for livelihood support and investments in land property and business either. Recent research reports Diaspora remittance transfers of US$1.6 billion to Somalia and US$700 million to Somaliland (Lindley 2007). The other way of measuring remittances is through surveys of household income, but people tend to under report their income. A 2002 household survey indicated incomes of just US$360 million (Quoted by Lindley).

The remittances from the Diaspora represent about 23% of the Somali household income (UNDP/World Bank 2003) but are unevenly distributed across the country. People living in towns are more likely to have relatives living abroad and benefit disproportionately from Diaspora assistance. A household survey in Hargeisa found up to 25% of households claiming remittances as their sole source of income. They were used to cover living expenses and to pay for education and health services (Lindley 2007). Another study found that 40% of Somali households benefited from the money sent by the Diaspora. In addition, 80% of the start-up capital for the SMEs in Somalia benefit from this money (Chalmers and Hassan, 2008).

Remittance transfer used to be the preserve of men but there is evidence from Norway that women are increasingly important contributors.

The benefits of sending money back home are not limited to the economic well-being of those left behind, but also have important social significance. Besides being a lifeline, the remittances are the glue that binds together families separated by physical distances. Laura Hammond argues "Remittance results in strengthening of this transnational community that exists in multiple localities. … inability or failure to remit can weaken the social ties, sow the seeds of conflict and alienation of the sender". (Hammond 2007).

Although it is outside the scope of this report, it should be observed that the substantial support from the Diaspora is not without its own social cost. The perceived obligation to send money to the family and relatives left behind poses economic and social stresses and strains for members of a community that also face major challenges in their country of residence. These include limited employability due to lack of skills, lack of transferability of qualifications gained elsewhere in the world, race factors and a sense of alienation.

There is little evidence as yet of "remittance fatigue". As Somali communities become more established and economically successful in the Diaspora, the trend could even be to increase.

There are however a number of factors that could lead to a reduction in remittances in the future:

- The first is the phenomenon of an aging Diaspora with less employment opportunity. But on the whole the Somali demographic suggests a youthful profile (The US 2001 census calculated a median of just 26 years).
- Age and cultural difference among the old and the young generations could lead to lessening of bonds to Somalia, but there is no real evidence that this has occurred.
- Dissatisfaction with the way that money is used could cause a loss of interest, but evidence from the UK indicates that the Somali Diaspora believes that their own assistance is properly used and that they have achieved much better levels of accountability, both social and financial, than international donors.
- A final factor to be considered is the economic crisis in the west and the prospect that this could reduce the resources available to send back home.

(ii) Economic Recovery

The Somali Diaspora has a visible role as a motor of change in the nascent market economy and the recovery process in general. A good example is how Somaliland has succeeded in attracting its Diaspora to contribute money, skills and professional expertise despite the lack of formal diplomatic recognition from the international community (Cassanelli 2007). However big the Diaspora contribution might be it cannot be a panacea for development problems in the homeland, although the literature suggests that if properly tapped, such assistance can contribute to development and the reduction of poverty (House of Commons 2004).

The Somali Diaspora has brought significant investment into the local economies. Establishing small and medium enterprises is another quantum leap for the informal local economy. Investment usually takes the form of either establishing a new business individually or as a group from the Diaspora or part investment and part leading the business

at executive level. Most of the major companies in the country fall into one of these categories. A top manager of a big telecommunication company informed the writer that 30% – 40% of their shareholders are from the Diaspora. Besides investment, most of these major companies are also managed and led by Diaspora.

The business intervention of the Diaspora is spread over a wide range of sub-sectors, such as small-scale industries, telecommunication, construction, remittances and trade. The scope, level of investment and geographical distribution of the products or services delivered from these business sub-sectors are different. However, these investments have all created employment opportunities, which improve the livelihoods of many families, and also provide affordable services, gave revenue to the government and introduced new ways of doing business as a culture of good practices for the local businesses.

Examples include modern real estate facilities in the cities of Somalia, the Coca Cola factory in Mogadishu and the burgeoning Information Communication and Technology (ICT) industry managed by the telecommunication companies operating throughout Somalia. The Somali Diaspora investment in the economy is particularly important, since they alone have been willing to risk investment in a climate of great uncertainty and economic risk. The role of the Diaspora in economic recovery has provided a foundation for political reconstruction in many regions of Somalia (Cassanelli 2007).

HornAfrik, the first FM radio established in Mogadishu, was a Diaspora undertaking. This was followed by successive creations of new outlets. The positive contribution of the FM radios in Mogadishu is another example of the Diaspora acting as change agents. The early media outlets opened political space for the public through talk shows, direct interviews and teleconferencing of Somalis inside Somalia, the Diaspora, and sometimes the internationals who follow Somali affairs and the diplomatic corps of other countries. This media space enabled people to express their views freely. The media outlets portray not only the suffering of the Somali people but also the good side of Somali life, including the beauty of the landscape and the potential investment opportunities of the local economy. They present the success stories in both for profit and for not for profit undertakings.

In Somaliland, the contribution of the Diaspora in business is very high. Most of the visible business in Hargeisa is either owned or managed by returnees. Peter Hansen has described the expatriate returnees as "a transnational aristocracy" (Quoted by Lindley).

These Diaspora men and women took enormous risks to invest their lifetime savings in a place where uncertainty remains very high. As Hassan Ahmed Bulbul, a Diaspora owner of a hotel and restaurant in Hargeisa, explained, "There was no guidance and support available at the time I came back with very limited Diaspora returnees on the ground who could give guidance and support regarding the pitfalls to avoid and locally appropriate approaches to use when starting business in Hargeisa".

Among the major challenges the returning Diaspora identified were the lack of any business incubator facility established by the government or organized associations for the young and mostly inexperienced returnees. Even those who had past experience from their host countries found their experience were not always appropriate for the local context. Another obvious gap is the lack of official banking and financial institutions. Self-reliance is essential in a "Do all by yourself environment" with business people having to provide their own facilities, infrastructure and training. As yet there is little common organization among the returning Diaspora. They come individually and have to face the challenges as best as they can. They are not organized and lack a common voice to address the multiple challenges and give support to new returnees. As a result, every returning member has to go through the same painful path that the first returnees went through.

In partnerships with local people, mismatch in ways of doing business from the experience of the host countries and traditional Somali business practices

can create confusion and sometimes conflict. Business people have found it difficult, and in many places impossible, to bring in new ideas such as franchised business due to the absence of an adequate regulatory framework. New businesses lack government protection and many small-scale industries are knocked out from the market due to the penetration of imported goods of superior quality and in many instances cheaper. In other cases, the Diaspora suspect they are treated as people with money to give and risk being unfairly treated, overcharged or misled. The last but not the least challenge is the fast changing field of technology and workforce training requirements that the local companies have limited capacity to meet. Although there are big telecommunication companies, there is not one telecommunication school in Somalia. This imposed the companies to bear the burden of developing a workforce to operate very delicate and sophisticated technology.

Despite these many challenges, the Somali Diaspora remains the driving force behind the current informal economy. In many parts of Somalia, the Diaspora established and supported organizations are the major sources of employment for the local labour market. This represents a major contribution to the livelihoods of many Somali families. The telecommunication companies, financial sector and small industries are among the major employers. Many of these economic endeavours are cross-cutting in the Somali regions. The cross-cutting character of business has also contributed to local peace building and forged links between different communities. This applies not only inside Somalia, but also in neighbouring countries and across the wider world wherever large communities of Somalis are concentrated.

(iii) Humanitarian and Emergency Assistance

Somali business community has played a key role in mobilizing humanitarian assistance at times of crisis. Somali websites, FM radios and TVs established as business operations by the Diaspora are outlets that expose and portray the suffering of the less fortunate Somalis that have no relatives or friends in the Diaspora but still need assistance. Most of the Diaspora contribution to humanitarian emergency aid came about as a result of the combined effort and influence of the local and Diaspora media outlets. The media outlets received and dispersed cash handouts sent by the Diaspora to unknown victims they had seen or heard about from the websites and radios.

The role of the Diaspora in supporting local organizations is at its peak when humanitarian crises overwhelm the resources of local organizations, for example during crises such as the droughts, floods or medical needs to help the victims of violent conflict. There are numerous examples of interventions of this kind when Somalis step in to help other Somalis. In these interventions, the Diaspora contribution is highly visible.

In the drought of 2006 in the southern regions of Somalia, a drought committee established in Mogadishu in March 2006 received US$ 600,000 after a campaign to raise awareness among Somalis of the situation of the victims in drought-affected regions. More than US$ 100,000 was raised in a four-hour fundraising programme through the radio organized by SIMAD[3] and HornAfrik Media Inc in collaboration with three major telecommunication companies[4] in Mogadishu.

Emergencies such as these are recognised as a national issue that transcends local particularities or affinities to the victims. The drought appeal of 2006 received contributions from Somalis inside and outside the affected regions. The ranges of contributions during that night ranged from So. Sh. 15,000 from a mother in an IDP camp in Mogadishu to US$15,000 from a businessperson in Dubai. However, the majority of the contributions that night came from the Diaspora in the UK. In another

[3] SIMAD is the acronym of Somali Institute of Management and Administration Development.
[4] The three companies were Hormuud, Telecom Somalia and NationLink.

example, in 2007/8, the Coalition of Grassroots Women Organizations (COGWO) raised funds in support of 23 victims suffering from rape injuries and other diseases that were incurable in Somalia and the region. COGWO successfully raised more than US$188,000, mainly from the Somali Diaspora in US, UK, Canada, South Africa and Uganda.

Another example is the October 29th 2008 Hargeisa bombings. In response to the attack, members of the Somaliland Diaspora were able to despatch urgent specialised medical supplies to Hargeisa Hospital from Dubai within hours of the incident. According to Dr. Yasin Arab, the hospital was short of the necessary supplies and several lives would have been lost without the timely provision of the appropriate medicines for those injured in the bomb blasts.

(iv) Development Assistance (Service Delivery)

In addition to emergency responses, the Somali Diaspora has played a strong positive role in seeking to address multiple development deficits of present day Somalia. Diaspora organizations have supported or established service delivery facilities and many are organised to provide regular funding flows to pay salaries in schools or hospitals. Among many examples are the support of (UK-based) Nomad International to the accident and emergency department of Hargeisa Hospital, the role of Mooragaabey in supporting education in Bay and Bakool regions and the reopening of Banadir Hospital in Mogadishu.

The scale and complexity of such development assistance can vary. Bur Saalax education project in Puntland is a boarding school established by a Diaspora group, where more than 320 children are given education, shelter and food. Besides building the facility (classrooms, dormitories, offices, etc), the Diaspora spends more than US$ 9,000 every month for the maintenance of the project, in addition to contributions in kind from the UN agencies such as WFP and UNICEF.

Besides such examples, where financial inputs are the major factor that made the difference, the Somali Diaspora contributes ideas, skills and new ways of doing things. This includes establishing and running institutions that provide public services.

Hayatt Hospital and Arafat Specialist Hospital in Mogadishu are good examples. The East Africa University and Dayax Islamic Bank in Bosasso and Amoud University in Somaliland are among the good examples of Diaspora established and mainly Diaspora run institutions. The Diaspora has demonstrated a sustained commitment to supporting the emerging higher education institutions. Contributing to the university libraries, university computer laboratories, and above all the capacity building of the university staff is a landmark achievement of the Diaspora.

Furthermore, the Diaspora has supported local civic organizations to tackle problems that local organizations/NGOs cannot address alone. The case of COGWO, which sponsors patients with health problems that cannot be resolved in Somalia and the region, in collaboration with Healing the Children of Minnesota is a good example of the interaction between the Somali Diaspora and local humanitarian aid organizations. In this collaboration, a number of rape victims with consequent health complications and others with diseases such as cancers that require sophisticated medical operations have been flown into Minnesota and operated successfully.

The practice of supporting the home region/area within Somalia is becoming a culture or part of the traditional obligation of supporting the extended family left behind. Most of the humanitarian and development interventions of the Somali Diaspora take place in one of three ways. The first is the regular flow of the remittances that provide a lifeline

[5] QUESTS Annual Report 2007 (unpublished)
[6] QUESTS Annual Report 2008 (unpublished)
7 Ibid

and safety net for the Somali people inside Somalia and those scattered in the refugee countries in the neighbouring countries. The second is the regular support for an existing institution to deliver public services. There are educational and health facilities throughout the country that continuously receive support from the Diaspora. Most of the supported services are situated in the home region or district of the supporters. The third form of assistance is when there are emergencies and crises such as droughts and floods. In this case, the support is not regionalized and is mainly observed as a religious obligation to support a needy fellow Somali. In many cases, it is not institutionalized. It takes place informally and through prominent individuals who the people trust due to their role in supporting and advocacy for the vulnerable in the past.

(v) Human Resources

The Diaspora is especially relevant to economies in transition on account of its potential to address shortages of key skills and resources, which can accelerate the dynamics of the transition. The QUESTS project of UNDP Somalia was an initiative intended to encourage the Somali Diaspora to serve their country with their expertise in the development and governance sectors to accelerate the recovery process of Somalia.



The Somali Diaspora makes a major contribution to the Somali economy and livelihoods through remittances, humanitarian assistance and participation in recovery and reconstruction efforts.

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Trends of Diaspora Activities and Interests

The Diaspora has been supported in the transfer knowledge and skills through the QUESTS project of UNDP. Through QUESTS, the Diaspora has contributed necessary expertise in both public and private local institutions. In 2007, the number of QUESTS placements of the Diaspora experts in different institutions was 50[5], while in 2008 the number increased to 82[6] placements. More than 100[7] institutions that support the Somali people benefited from the QUESTS project in capacity building, supporting policy formulation and institutional development in general. Besides the above benefits, the QUESTS project is a good attempt to reverse the brain drain of Somalia.

The sustained engagement of the Diaspora in politics, the economy, development, service delivery and philanthropy has resulted in the growth of a strong informal relationship that cuts across the various sectors of Diaspora engagement and contributes to a mutually reinforcing network of interlinked activities. This has helped indirectly to strengthen the understanding and use of the services provided by the other civic groups. In this complementary web of engagements, the service of one group reinforces the delivery of the other. For example, businesses use the media to advertise, promote new products, new services and raise public awareness of their products. The more businesses use the media the more media airtime is available to inform about the economic and investment opportunities in different parts of Somalia. Similarly, the media exposes the sufferings of the vulnerable or victims of misfortune to well-off Somalis in the business community and abroad who raise funds for their assistance.

Symbiotic relationships of this sort can be seen across the range of Diaspora supported activities. The provision of remittances fuels the local market for Diaspora business, which in turn provides jobs and helps to reduce dependence on remittances and potentially releases more funds for investment in business and jobs for livelihoods. Successful reconciliation and peace building enhances business activity and vice versa. It also opens up further space for engagement by the Diaspora in political life or in administrative activity through QUESTS. Sustained Diaspora support to institutions that provide public services – schools, hospitals, etc – represent a longer-term investment in home communities that also could reduce dependency on remittances.

By all these means the Diaspora can act as catalysts of change at local, regional and national levels. It is a phenomenon recognised worldwide that the Diaspora is the key actor for countries in transition, whether this transition is from conflict to peace or from dictatorship to democracy. Despite uncertainty and risk, they bring new political and economic ideas, new skills and monies and, above all, new ways of doing things in a country that needs them.

Looking back at the Somali Diaspora footprint of the last two decades, there is a positive trend in long-term political, social and economic reconstruction and recovery. Albert Hirschman (1958) noted that "Development is not so much about allocation of existing resources but rather about mobilizing resources that are hidden, scattered or badly utilized". The characteristics of the Somali Diaspora as a major source for post-conflict recovery and development fit the above quote.

There are factors and conditions on the ground that encourage the return of the Diaspora while other factors discourage them to return. A key determinant for return is security. Since most of the Diaspora left home country because of insecurity, they put security as their top priority: "high level of security, high level of return; low level of security, low return". Uncertainty in the local security situation hinders return and often prompts returnees to go back to their host country. The main motivator for return is affection for the home country and

people. This is a highly motivating factor for older people and those who get satisfaction from working in aid delivery. The third factor returnees indicate was the stress of life in the host countries, involving long hours of work, limited opportunities to socialize, coupled with inhibitions to the Somali entrepreneurial culture which can be practiced easily in the home country.

Factors that discourage the return of the Diaspora, particularly those who want to invest heavily, include fear of a return to conflict. This uncertainty about local security keeps many Diaspora members from returning or, even if they do return, to limit their investment and time. There is also fear of failure in business, which compounds the risks of leaving an established life in the host country and putting limited savings in a business operating under considerable risk. Lack of local information also creates uncertainty and discourages investment. The third factor that discourages return is the lack of conduciveness of the local environment, such the standard of infrastructure, hygiene and health facilities, and public law enforcement mechanisms on the ground.

Since the Somali Diaspora is new and in most places the first generation is still dominant, one cannot equate their support network with that of their better-established counterparts, such as the Chinese and Tamils. The Somali Diaspora is still at an early stage of formation but is already having impact inside Somalia and in some countries it is reaching the consolidation stage. However, one of the most enduring challenges they face is the division of the Diaspora community, both inside and outside the home country. The Somali Diaspora shares all the characteristics of a post-conflict society. All the factors that divide the Somalis inside their country also divide the Diaspora. As a result, the Diaspora is organized neither in the host country nor in the home country. This division denies them a common voice, which could otherwise help to promote the changes necessary to speed the country's political and economic recovery.

The size and strength of the Diaspora is in large part a product of the lack of functioning state institutions in Somalia that would otherwise have tapped the hidden, scattered and badly utilized resources it contains. The challenge remains whether and how the Diaspora can deploy its resources – financial, intellectual, social and political – to achieve reconciliation and a stable political and economic order in the country.

Summary Findings and Recommendations of the Workshop Assessing the Diaspora's Contribution to Somalia (Nairobi, 13 March 2009)

The workshop brought together over 40 Somali participants, including Somalis from five continents: North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa. It combined scholars and researchers, fund-raising organizations in the Diaspora, organizations delivering assistance in different parts of Somalia and UN development agencies and donors. (The participant list and agenda is attached at Annexes 2 and 4 respectively).

The purpose of the workshop was to review and enrich the findings of the report and to develop recommendations about a future partnership for development between the Diaspora and UNDP. UNDP Resident Representative Mark Bowden opened the meeting and explained that UNDP recognised the vital role that the Diaspora was playing in both development and humanitarian assistance. Their assistance created a safety net for Somalis that development agencies had not been able to provide. Assistance from the Diaspora was at least as important as the help provided by the international development community. Recognising the very real challenges that the Somali Diaspora faces in trying to promote development in their home regions, UNDP was looking to understand the assistance better and facilitate it to the best of their ability.

The Remittance Economy

Presentations and discussion of the "International Perspective" focused chiefly on financial remittances and their consequences. Some doubts were cast upon the reliability of estimates used in the report (over US$ 2bn in remittance flows) given the shortage of comprehensive data on money flows within the Hawala networks. Participants believed that much of this total might not be destined for Somalia itself but could instead be supporting Somalis in need outside the country or used in business ventures. There was evidence from Somaliland to suggest that 13% of the funds remitted were for investment.

Panelists and participants drew attention to the negative aspects of the remittance economy. It was noted that at least half a million of the estimated one million Somalis outside the country were refugees registered with UNHCR and themselves living in great hardship. This emphasized the very considerable financial burden that was placed on those Somalis who had established themselves in more favourable environments.

Research findings attested to the difficult choices and considerable sacrifices made by Somalis outside to sustain help to those within the country. A growing proportion of the remittances were coming from women in the Diaspora. The drain on resources was a possible contributing factor to US research findings of the low socio-economic status of Somalis relative to other East Africa migrants.

There was evidence from London that Somalis were remitting on average 11% of their income. It was argued that the strain of providing assistance on such a scale could constitute an obstacle to successful integration and economic advancement of Somalis settled outside.

A key concern of the workshop was that reliance on a remittance economy was not sustainable. In the short term, the credit crunch could be expected to result in a sharp reduction in remittance flows. In the longer run, it was assumed that younger generations of Somalis growing up as part of communities overseas would stop remitting on this scale. Apart from fears about sustainability, other negative effects of remittances were observed.

The funds were for the most part unproductive, and mainly used for consumption. Little research had been done on the impact or use of remittances

but it was believed that it helped to foster attitudes of dependency inside Somalia. Another negative aspect of remittances, and especially pertinent to the development agenda, was that they failed to address the needs of the poorest, most of whom received no assistance at all.

Social Remittance

Professor Abdi Kusow introduced the concept of "social remittances" into the discussion, referring to the potential for skills and knowledge, or human capital, to flow from the Diaspora to Somalia. The value of social remittances depended on Somali communities establishing themselves successfully overseas and building their own skills and capability.

As this occurred it could be expected that the nature of economic remittances would evolve with a shift from gifts for purely personal consumption to more community and development-minded assistance. Such a change represented a change in Diaspora attitudes from reactive to proactive support and could entail a willingness to think of assistance "beyond the community", including the needs of the poor and marginalised.

Panelists and participants working inside Somalia urged some caution over social remittances, noting that traditional Somali methods had proven their relevance in reconciliation and peace building in many parts of the country. Other developments, including a "Renaissance in Education" had occurred under exclusively Somali ownership and the Somali run universities inside the country were probably the most effective institutions in the country. However, there was acknowledgement that the Diaspora had more to offer than their cash and possessed management skills and institutional experience that could be better harnessed for development.

Towards Development Partnership

The key purpose of the workshop was to identify what UNDP as a development agency could do to enhance the development efforts of the Diaspora more effectively. Examples were provided of some Diaspora based or funded organizations that were working in partnership with UNDP and other UN agencies. Dr Hansen pointed out the potential for donor development agencies to develop projects with Diaspora organizations in their own countries, provided that capacity building was included and procedures for funding were not too onerous. He cautioned against development agencies disrupting the much-needed Diaspora support networks and encouraged an approach that built on existing systems that had proved their worth. UNDP also outlined the evolution of the QUESTS project for bringing suitably skilled people from the Diaspora into development programmes.

During a break-out period for discussion, workshop participants considered what kind of assistance from UNDP and the UN would help to facilitate the development activities of Diaspora groups. A list of the recommendations that were put forward is attached (Annex 1).

A number of common threads emerged. First, there were signs of a real interest in a development partnership that recognised the unique knowledge and access that the Diaspora could bring to the relationship. The first requirement to develop this was much greater communication and dialogue. Diaspora groups did not necessarily have much information about the work of UNDP or other UN agencies working in key areas of interest to them, notably the education and health sectors. Filling the knowledge gap, on both sides, would help to show where the synergies could be found. Another requirement was the need for capacity building to enable Diaspora organizations, many of them small and voluntary, to develop the tools needed to engage with donors.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Diaspora remains politically fragmented, but a common picture emerged as to how its many components were working to support those at home. The workshop provided a rare opportunity for Diaspora participants and Somalis working inside the country to share ideas and learn from their experiences in different countries abroad and in different regions of the country. It is possible to consider ways of helping to address these common development challenges despite the absence of a common Diaspora voice.

The workshop illustrated the common interest that exists between Diaspora groups and UNDP and other development agencies to support Somali development and economic recovery. UNDP indicated its readiness to find ways to facilitate and enhance support for Diaspora led activities. Participants agreed that there was potential to build a new kind of development partnership in various sectors. UNDP will now consider developing mechanisms through which the UN and international development partners can link up with the Diaspora community and put this partnership into practice. The participants from the workshop were divided into four groups, comprising development, business, humanitarian and peace building. The recommendations that came out from each group are summarized here, while the details are presented in Annex

1. The recommendations can be divided into two categories – one with a short time horizon and the other long-term. Actions that need to be taken immediately as a follow up to the workshop include:

- Establish an e-network among participants of the workshop to share findings and recommendations and as a basis for future consultation.
- Share information on the workshop (report and findings) among all UN agencies and encourage use of the network to disseminate information about the full range of UN projects and programmes.
- Explore the possibility of developing separate platforms on sectors where Diaspora groups invest most heavily for development (e.g. schools, health) and means to triangulate these platforms with relevant local authorities.
- Prioritise the sector(s) in which the UN and UNDP is best equipped to facilitate Diaspora assistance, such as strengthening the social safety net, improving the business climate and continuing programmes to harness skills and knowledge for development purposes. More specifically, the interventions should target the poorest of the poor, who are currently not beneficiaries. The UN needs to explore ways in which these vulnerable groups benefit and are supported by the Diaspora, international agencies and development partners.
- Identify additional information mapping and research needs in priority sector(s) as a basis for pilot programmes in different regions.
- Make the revamped QUESTS programme more accessible and possibly involve Diaspora in design of the next phase.

The longer-term goal will be towards establishing channels for undertaking joint efforts to achieve operational effectiveness and greater coordination for humanitarian assistance and development. Here, the role of the Diaspora in promoting development, expanding business opportunities, providing humanitarian assistance and peace building is elaborated. There was general consensus on forging a strong partnership between the UN and the international community with the Diaspora and taking a common approach to

capacity development and engagement based on the institutional mandates and areas of work. A summary of the major issues that came out from the workshop are also presented below:

The participants from the development group highlighted the important role played by the Diaspora in Somalia and how it channelled its support based on local knowledge and conditions, which many a times was not reflected in donor programmes and interventions. The issue that needed to be tackled here was how to draw upon local knowledge in assessments, focusing on service orientation in partnership with the Diaspora. New partnerships need to be developed for effective service delivery and the promotion of public private partnership.

The role of the Diaspora in funding start-up medium and small enterprises and in the management of business enterprises in Somalia was highlighted by the participants of the business group. This group felt it was important for the international community to support business diversity and focus on enhancing local production.

The group highlighted the importance of social corporate responsibility and gender mainstreaming in the interventions, and emphasized on how the UN and the international community could come together with the Diaspora to promote this culture. The group also identified areas – infrastructure, legal frameworks and local institutional capacity – where the two parties could mobilize efforts to overcome business constraints to create a conducive environment that complies with global regulations. By way of facilitating the development of local business associations, the group suggested the international community can support the forging of Somali partnerships with global business networks.

The humanitarian group highlighted the important role the Diaspora has played as an enabler of rapid response and delivery during times of natural disasters. They have also played a key role in delivering key safety nets and this role can be expanded by strengthening their capacity to engage with UN logistical resources and make better use of UN response capacity, with the support of the UN system.

The partnership with the Diaspora can be used to strengthen the linkage with the local communities to provide more effective local response through rapid response committees and improved information management.

The Diaspora can play a positive role in peace building through their engagement with traditional leadership and inclusion in local national peace processes. The UN and the international community could support the Diaspora to be more systematically engaged in peace building through closer participation and involvement in international processes and effective support to traditional mechanisms.

The Diaspora can also play a more effective role in promoting a culture of peace through internal dialogue within the Diaspora community in support of peaceful resolution of conflicts rather than fuelling conflict. The international community can also assist the Diaspora to strengthen their engagement at the political level, with the local political parties and institutions.



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The Somali Diaspora makes its most sustained and direct contribution to development and service delivery by establishing and supporting local institutions in the home region, district or village.

Diaspora members contribute to development through their work for international development agencies. Returnees contribute their skills and technical know-how, where they teach in the local universities and provide technical support to government departments.

Annex 1: List of Recommendations from the Discussion Groups

Development Group

- Improve communication.
- Develop mechanisms to streamline Diaspora projects/prioritise according to need/ support on basis of merit/effectiveness.
- Partner with Diaspora organizations for service delivery.
- Undertake mapping/cataloguing of Diaspora/ NGO projects on the ground.
- Enhance funding for a UN/Diaspora partnership focusing on PPP and dynamic sectors.
- Consult with Diaspora on new UN/Diaspora development projects.
- Enhance Diaspora organizations' capacity to work on equal basis with donor community/ advocate for participation of Diaspora in development on an equal basis/enable Diaspora organizations to become more effective while retaining their identity.
- Develop community-based needs assessment and channel assistance through these assessments.
- Improve infrastructure building projects.
- Develop a strategic plan for prioritising service delivery, with involvement of all stakeholders.
- Integrate rural development into all development projects.

Business Group

- Encourage capacity building across the board.
- Be more developmental.
- Encourage more production than service industry.
- Encourage business diversity.
- Provide information on, support and engage in Public Private Partnerships.
- Encourage Corporate Social Responsibility e.g. stop selling out-of-date drugs.
- Find ways to build up and support remittances, and transport, telecommunications businesses.
- Develop mechanisms to encourage Somali business groups to work together, developing their capacity and facilitating their engagement with counterparts in other countries.
- Assist in the formation of Chambers of Commerce to coordinate business councils.
- Develop strategies to promote research on Somali businesses (in and outside of Somalia).

Humanitarian Group

- Build trust between UN agencies and Diaspora organizations. Help build accountability tools that work for both sides.
- Build official relationships between UNDP and Diaspora organizations.
- Create localised rapid response committees that can co-ordinate with locals at time of acute emergency need.
- Improve information sharing on UN activities and reciprocal information-sharing with Diaspora about the local situation.
- Accept role/delivery assistance from Diaspora/ local organizations when security is problematic for UN agencies.

Peace Building Group

- Encourage Diaspora to help with capacity building for local NGOs, and in employment and skill training.
- Provide peace radio programmes, promoting culture of peace, peace education programmes.
- Promote respect for human rights and minority rights.
- Support use of traditional systems for peace-making.
- Consult widely on the constitution, including Diaspora views.
- Facilitate Diaspora participation in peace talks.

Annex 2:
List of Participants

	Name	Organization
1	Abdi Jama Ghedi	Daryel Association
2	Abdi Kusow (Prof)	Oakland University, Michigan, USA
3	Abdinur Sh. Mohamed	Ohio Department of Education, USA
4	Abdirahman Hussein	Somali Student Association, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
5	Abdirahman Omar	UNHCR
6	Abdirashid A. Ainanshi	Hormuud Telecom
7	Abdirazak Mohamed Ahmed	Puntland Diaspora Network
8	Abduba Mollu Ido	CIDA
9	Abdullahi Abdinoor	Consultant
10	Abdullahi Sheikh Ali	UNDP
11	Abdullahi Haidar (Dr)	Independent Consultant
12	Abdurahman M.	
13	Abdurashid Ali	Somali Family Services (SFS), USA
14	Aden Abdi DFID	
15	Aden Mohamed	GTZ
16	Alejandro Bendana	UNDP
17	Ali Mohamed	Moorogaabey, UK
18	Ali Doy	Consultant
19	Amina Haji Elmi	SSWC
20	Amina Sharif Hassan	Toronto, Canada
21	Asha Osman	SWEC
22	Asha Shacur	SWEA
23	Ashraf El Nour	IOM
24	Barbara-Anne Krijgsman	UNDP
25	Barlin Ali	Virginia, USA
26	Bashe Musse	SOMNOR
27	Bradley David	IOM
28	Bruno Lemarquis	UNDP
29	Cedric Barnes	FCO
30	Charles Petrie	UNPOS
31	Christian Balslev-Olesen	UNICEF
32	Dahir Hassan Arab	SIMAD
33	Daud Abdi	US Embassy
34	Elena Giannini	IOM
35	Faisa Loyaan	Saferworld
36	Farah Abdulsamed	Sweden
37	Farah Sheikh Abdikadir	AMA, Mogadishu
38	Fatima Jibrell	Horn Relief
39	Giorgia Garafalo	Italian Cooperation
40	Graham Farmer	FAO
41	H.E Mohamed Ali Nur	Embassy of the Somali Republic
42	Hassan Ahmed Hussein (Bulbul)	Harwanaag, Hargeisa
43	Hassan Sheikh	Consultant/SIMAD
44	Hatem Bamehriz	NDI
45	Helen Bonuke	Royal Danish Embassy
46	Helena Ostman	EC
47	Hibo Yassin	COSPE

Annex 2:
List of Participants

48	Hodan Hassan	USAID
49	Hon. Abdullahi Abdulle Azhari	TFG
50	Ilias Dirie	ILO
51	Ingrid Koeck	UNPOS
52	Jasmin Chadha	COSPE
53	Johan Svensson	Interpeace
54	John Kiyaga-Nsubuga	UNDP
55	Jussi Laurikainen	Finnish Embassy
56	Kaltun Hassan	UNDP
57	Lydia Nguti	UNDP
58	Maarten Wammes	Royal Netherlands Embassy
59	Mariam Ibrahim	UNDP
60	Mariam Osman	
61	Mariam Yassin Hagi	Somali Women Diaspora
62	Mark Bowden	UNDP
63	Marthe Everard	WHO
64	Maryan Sheikh Osman	
65	Medina Amer	Dallaalo Humanitarian and Development Organization
66	Moe A. Hussein	UNDP/UNRCO
67	Mohamed Aden Hassan	UCL, London/NOMAD
68	Mohamed Barre	UNDP
69	Mohamed Hussein Hassan	Somali Cause
70	Mohamed Ibrahim (Dr)	Melbourne, Australia
71	Mohammad S H Osman 'Jawari' (Prof)	UNDP
72	Mohamoud Abokar	Media Organization
73	Momodou Touray	UNDP
74	Munir H. Abdillahi	Daallo Airlines
75	Mustafa Awad	APD
76	Namita Mediratta	UNDP
77	Peter Hansen (Dr)	DIIS
78	Peter Makalingin	Oxfam NOVIB
79	Richard Ngetich	UNDP
80	Rina Kristmoen	Norwegian Embassy
81	Roberta Russo	UNHCR
82	Sally Healy	Consultant/Chatham House
83	Sammy Oyombe	UNDP
84	Sergio Carranza	Spanish Embassy
85	Seroni Anyona	UNDP
86	Sriram Pande	UNDP
87	Susanne Kirkegaard	RDE
88	Valerie Costa	CISP
89	Varsha Redkar-Palepu	UNDP
90	Yusuf Ahmed Omar	SATO
91	Zahra M. Abtidon	Geelo
92	Zahra Omar Maalin	PHRN
93	Zeinab Ayan Ahmed	ILSAN, Bosasso/WAWA Network

Annex 3: Note on Sources

The literature of population movement and dispersal (migration) is of two main kinds. The first puts emphasis on the relationship between the migrants and host country, and the second looks at the interaction of migrants with their country of origin, which is the focus of this study. The relationship is considered in the wider international context of globalization and associated population movement.

For the purpose of this study, we will use the term Diaspora as defined by African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)… "Peoples formed through dispersal (for whatever reason) but who maintain a memory of and links with "home", the place of origin".

While there is an established literature on the generic subject of Diasporas and their relationships, scholarly research on the Somali Diaspora, that is research grounded on empirical findings, is still very much in its infancy. Several scholars are undertaking pioneering research work on the subject of the Somali Diaspora (leading figures include Abdi M Kusow, Anna Lindley, A.O. Farah, Joakim Gundel, Cindy Horst, Peter Hansen). Some of the leading international scholars on Somalia (Ken Menkhaus, Lee Cassanelli) are also shedding new light on the subject. However, a great deal more research will be required before the accumulation of studies begins to approximate a full picture of an extremely dynamic, fast-changing and still highly mobile Somali community. Fortunately such research can be said to be in progress.

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Annex 4:
Workshop Agenda

Venue: Safari Park Hotel
Friday 13 March, 2009 8.30 am – 5.30 pm
Session One: Introduction

08.30	Welcome and opening remarks: Mark Bowden, UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator, Somalia
08.40	Remarks: Mr. Charles Petrie, UN Deputy Special Representative to the Secretary General (DSRSG)/UNPOS
08.50	Introduction to the workshop: Sally Healy (Consultant), Hibo Yassin (COSPE)
Session Two: Report on the Diaspora Contribution to Somalia	
09.00 – 09.	40 Introducing the report "The Diaspora Contribution to Somalia": Outline of report and key findings: Hassan Sheikh (Consultant), Sally Healy
09.40 – 10.00	Q & A
10.00 – 10.15	Refreshment/Break
Session Three: Contrasting the International and the Somali Perspective	
10.15 – 11.30	The International Experience: Diaspora Perspectives Chair: Mark Bowden
10.15 -10.45	"Diasporic Somaliness: Transnational Migration and Social and Economic Remittance in Stateless Global Context" Professor Abdi M Kusow (USA)
10.45 – 11.15	Views from Europe: Mohamed Hassan Aden (UK), Farah Abdulsamed (Sweden)
11.15 – 11.30	Q & A
11.30 – 12.30	Somali Experience: Perspectives from Somali Communities Chair: Professor Mohammad Jawari Panelists: Zaynab Ayan Ahmed (Bosasso), Hassan Ahmed Hussein (Hargeisa), Maryan Sheikh Osman; Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir (Mogadishu)
12.30 – 13.45	Lunch break
Session Four: Donors, Development and the Diaspora	
13.45 – 14.30	Working with the UN Chair: Graham Farmer, Representative (FAO) Panelists: Abdurashid Ali, Executive Director, Somali Family Services (SFS, USA), Ali Mohamed (Mooragabey, UK)
14.30 - 15.15	Possible Mechanisms for Donor/Diaspora engagement Chair: Mark Bowden Panelists: Dr Peter Hansen, Denmark, Barbara-Anne Kriijgsman, QUESTS/Governance (UNDP)
15.15 - 15.30	Refreshment/break
Session Five: Break Out and Discussions	
15.30 - 16.30	Break out session: Challenges and Opportunities Working groups on (i) business; (ii) humanitarian; (iii) peace building; (iv) development
16.30 – 17.00	Plenary and Feedback from sessions Chair: Sriram Pande, Senior Economist, UNDP
Session Six: Conclusion	
17.00 –17.30	Wrap up and concluding recommendations: Sally Healy, Hassan Sheikh
17.30	Closing Remarks: Charles Petrie and Graham Farmer Facilitators: Sally Healy (Consultant), Hibo Yassin (COSPE, INGO); Master of ceremonies: Moe Hussein, Liaison Officer, UN

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