



WFP & Social Protection

Somalia case study

WFP is working with the government and humanitarian partners to help Somalia develop its social protection policy and system.

Background

Over the past 25 years, Somalia has endured violence, political instability and environmental and economic shocks, leaving Somalia among the least developed countries in the world. [Over half of its population lives below the poverty line.](#)

Somalia has emerged from a “failed” to a “fragile” state with the establishment of a Federal Government in 2012. Under the Somali Compact (2013–2016), it identified five Peace and State Building Goals (PSGs) and worked together with the United Nations and donors to realize them.

WFP and UNICEF co-led the social protection sub-working group under PSG5 for Revenue and Services. Efforts focused on raising awareness, understanding, commitment and energy for the development of social protection.

In 2015, the sub-working group agreed on a definition of social protection for Somalia and outlined initial and mid-term milestones.

Interventions

Together with UNICEF and partners, WFP is working in many areas to help build Somalia’s social protection system.

Country Capacity Strengthening

The key priorities set out by the Somali Compact continue under the 2017-2019 National Development Plan. UNICEF is co-leading the sub-working group on Disaster Management, Social Protection and Food Security and Nutrition, with support from WFP.

In 2016, it provided training to the Government on social protection theory. In 2017, WFP Somalia began a joint programme to assist the Government in developing a national social protection policy and strategies to reach the most vulnerable. WFP, in partnership with UNICEF, also helped develop social protection goals for the resilience chapter of the Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development.

Establishing a Multi-Agency Nationwide Registration and Assistance Delivery Platform

In 2015, WFP launched its beneficiary identity and benefit management system SCOPE in Somalia. Other agencies—namely UNICEF, FAO, Save the Children, World Vision International, Norwegian Refugee Council, and the Danish Refugee Council—have shown interest in using SCOPE. More than two million people in Somalia are now registered in SCOPE and it is used, including by partners, to deliver various forms of assistance.

Building Shock-Responsiveness into the System

At a national level, WFP is working with the regional and federal disaster management departments to strengthen capacity in monitoring, needs assessments, early warning, triggers for early response, targeting, and response coordination.

At a community level, WFP implements programmes designed to improve food security and resilience to shocks. In 2016, food assistance for assets programmes and conditional and unconditional cash-based safety nets reached 360,000 Somalis while 140,000 children received WFP school meals.

Partnerships

WFP works closely with UNICEF to help build the social protection system and with both UNICEF and FAO on the Joint Resilience Programme.

The inter-agency Cash Working Group (CWG) for Somalia was reinvigorated in early 2017. It is a platform for partners engaged in cash-based programming to share lessons and analyses and to coordinate. Collaboration in the CWG and around the SCOPE platform has led to important steps towards harmonization of transfer values for cash-based programming and collaboration on coverage.

Lessons from both the CWG and SCOPE will be important to inform the setup of the national social protection infrastructure.

Next steps

The Italian Cooperation is currently funding the joint WFP-UNICEF programme to develop the social protection policy, as well as supporting activities. The funding is channelled through the Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development of Somalia.

The two main components of the programme are:

- development of the social protection policy and framework in partnership with the federal and regional member states;
- identification of strategies to reach the most vulnerable (in particular elderly, children, women, displaced people) by means of a set of studies throughout the country

Other components include: capacity strengthening, development of social protection indicators linked to the SDG targets, a communications strategy, and mapping of service locations.

Sustainability

The country heavily depends on foreign aid and remittances from diaspora. In 2016, official development aid totalled US\$ 1.3 billion or 25 percent of the gross domestic product and remittances from diaspora were estimated at US\$ 1.2-2.0 billion or 23-38 percent of the gross domestic product. It is clear that stable financial support is a pre-requisite for the building and implementation of a government-owned, shock-responsive social protection system.

Future progress in the development of the social protection system will also depend on capacity support to the federal and regional governments in the form of human resources, as well as systems to formalize revenue collection and service delivery.

Ultimately, economic development and strengthened markets are also key in guarding Somalis against the impacts of shocks. This requires policies, regulations and legal frameworks for an inclusive development of the economy; facilitation of private sector investment; formalized financial and banking systems; and formal instruments for insurance and credits.

Somalia continues to face many challenges, including most recently a drought that has again brought the country to the brink of famine. Over three million people are unable to meet their daily food requirements and another 3.1 million people are in need of livelihoods support to prevent them from sliding into crisis.

Further reading

OCHA (2017). [Somalia Cash Programming Interactive Data](https://data.humdata.org/organization/ocha-somalia). Available at: data.humdata.org/organization/ocha-somalia

WFP (2017). [Reducing Malnutrition and Strengthening Resilience to Shocks for a Food Secure Somalia. Standard Project Report 2016](#). Rome: WFP



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