

EVALUATION OF THE RESPONSE TO THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SOMALIA





WHAT WAS THIS EVALUATION ABOUT?

From 2021 to 2023, Somalia faced its worst drought in 40 years. Many people didn't have enough food or water, and famine threatened millions. To help, the United Nations worked together and provided \$2.3 billion in aid funding in 2022. This evaluation looked at how effective this help was and what could be improved. The evaluation involved over 150 interviews with aid workers globally and in Somalia and consultations with 381 people who were affected by the crisis in Somalia and Somaliland across 12 districts.

These areas included those heavily impacted by the recent drought and those less affected, such as Burhakaba, Burtinle, Hobyo, Afmadow, Wajid, Bal'ad, Baidoa, Hargeisa, Mogadishu, Huddur, Las 'Anod and Burco. In addition to interviews, the researchers also reviewed a range of documents and data. The results were discussed and improved during workshops with key groups in Mogadishu and internationally.



WHAT DID THE EVALUATION FIND?

The international response provided by UN organizations and NGOs saved many lives, by providing food, water, and malnutrition treatment for hungry children. However, the help also had some shortcomings and even caused some problems. The report explains what worked, what didn't, and how things can be improved. Here is a summary of its findings and recommendations:

1. HUMANITARIAN IMPACT:

The aid helped prevent famine and saved tens of thousands, maybe even hundreds of thousands of lives. Many people said they would have died or been forced to move without help. At the same time, focusing only on short-term aid left people less able to recover and caused many to move to cities in search of help. There, they found difficult living conditions.

- **Recommendation:** Link short-term aid to long-term plans, like building livelihoods and rebuilding homes, so people don't have to move to unsafe areas or areas that are not suitable to have a better life.

2. SECURITY AND ACCESS:

Aid reached many places, including some that were inaccessible in previous crises. But other areas remained hard to access for humanitarian actors. Strict security rules made it hard for aid workers to visit people who needed help, or to be more present in places where vulnerable people live.

- **Recommendation:** Make UN security rules more flexible so aid workers can be present in more areas currently out of reach.

3. COORDINATION BETWEEN AID ORGANIZATIONS:

Some new ideas, like better monitoring of aid delivered or new ways to collect feedback from affected communities, helped improve the response. But too many meetings between aid organizations and confusing systems slowed down decisions and wasted time.

- **Recommendation:** Reduce unnecessary meetings and create simpler systems to make better joint decisions and coordinate the crisis response better.

4. GAPS IN CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION:

Food aid helped people survive, and cash assistance let them buy other necessities. Not enough focus was put on providing clean water and sanitation, which led to diseases like diarrhea, especially in children.

- **Recommendation:** Prioritize clean water and sanitation to save more lives, especially in IDP camps and crowded areas.

5. HELPING MARGINALIZED GROUPS:

Aid reached more minority and marginalized groups thanks to better planning. Women, people with disabilities, and other minorities were less of a focus for most aid providers.

- **Recommendation:** Fund more Somali aid organizations and make sure they reach all parts of the affected population. Pay more attention to who works for international organizations and how over-reliance on some clans can be avoided.

6. STOPPING AID DIVERSION:

Aid organizations implemented important reforms to make aid delivery more transparent and fairer, and to deal with corruption. Despite these efforts, aid was sometimes stolen or misused, and local organizations felt excluded from decisions.

- **Recommendation:** Work with local groups to stop aid misuse, share information about aid available more transparently, and create a reliable system for tracking who gets help.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY:

None of the issues identified in this evaluation are new. Many previous studies have shown similar challenges. Humanitarian organizations don't have effective mechanisms to make sure they improve their work. Most affected people don't know how decisions about aid are made, and they weren't included in important choices.

- **Recommendation:** Be more transparent about who is responsible for addressing shortcomings of the humanitarian system in Somalia and make sure to follow up on progress made. Be transparent about the aid available and the aid provided, and make sure people's feedback is heard and acted on. Involve communities more closely in planning aid programs.

CONTACT US:

For more information or questions, contact Raagsan at the toll-free number: 2224

