

A.8 Somalia - 2007 - Civil conflict

Resettlement

Project type:

- Resettlement project
- Support to local authorities in sourcing private land
- Security of tenure to IDPs and urban poor
- Provision of extendable one-room shelter
- Service provision to family plots

Emergency:

Somalia civil conflict – 1991 onwards (chronic emergency)

No. of people displaced:

400,000 IDPs in Somalia before 2007; 1 million in 2008
25,000 IDPs estimated to be in Bossaso

Project target population:

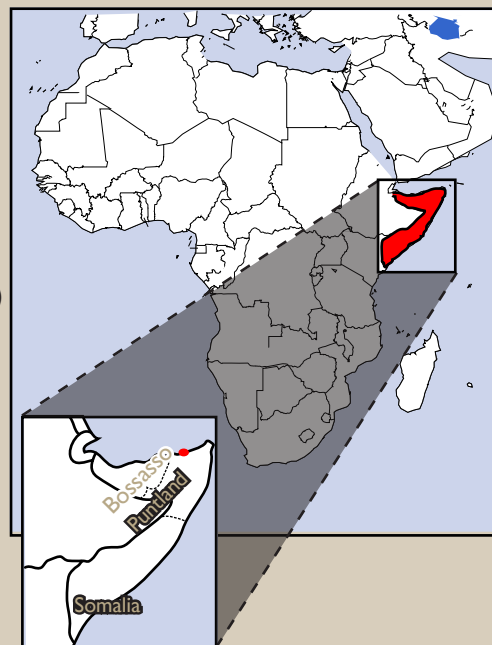
140 families; 80% IDPs and 20% urban poor

Occupancy rate on handover:

100% of resettled IDPs (112 families);
25% of urban poor (7 of 28 families)

Shelter size

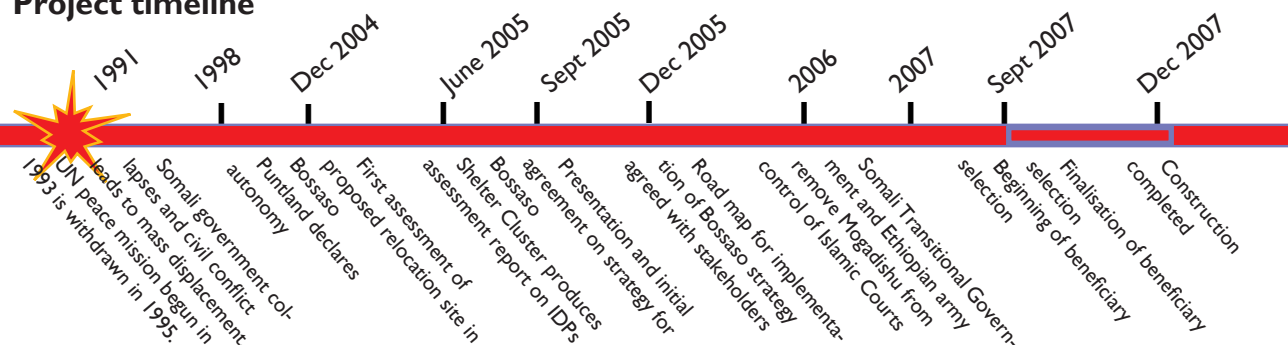
13.5m² extendable shelter on a 7.5m x 15m plot (including shower and toilet)



Summary

A resettlement project in Puntland, Somalia, preceded by in-depth discussions on the concepts of access to land for IDPs and related negotiations on land rights. A consortium of agencies built a serviced community settlement supporting beneficiaries in the construction of extendable single-room houses and providing them with temporary shelters on their new plot.

Project timeline



Strengths and weaknesses

X Beneficiary involvement in construction increased a sense of ownership and sometimes meant a higher quality of workmanship at lower cost compared to contractors. Contractors were necessary for some of the infrastructure works.

X Announcing the outcomes of meetings publicly was one way of avoiding a breakdown of communication with local authorities and ensuring transparency.

- In a place without clear land policies, laws or record systems, land issues were complicated and sensitive and required careful investigations, localised responses and public awareness-raising through mass media and meetings.
- Joint planning and implementation by agencies through

a coordinated system was necessary to limit manipulation of the process by powerful groups.

- Although slow, the beneficiary selection process used simple and verifiable criteria that ensured that the target group was assisted.

- Donated land does not always guarantee sufficient quantity or quality of land. As a result, an integrated urban development plan can be hard to develop. Assessment of land suitability and direct discussions with private landlords to clarify donation conditions are necessary before land is formally donated to the municipality.

W Working with the municipality was difficult, due to its low capacity, high turnover of staff and overlapping responsibilities with the clan system. Documenting

Strengths and weaknesses (continued)

decisions and agreements made was of little help due to literacy issues.

W Selection of beneficiaries took much longer than expected, so some construction work began before knowing who the final beneficiaries would be. This limited participation.

W At times not all the humanitarian agencies involved communicated the same messages. This meant that agreements sometimes had to be renegotiated.



Sites and services: the project focused on negotiating land and providing access, secure compound walls, water and sanitation.

Background

Bossaso is a coastal town in the Puntland region of northern Somalia. Puntland, with 2.8 million mostly nomadic/pastoralist inhabitants, has been semi-autonomous since 1998. Due to its relative stability, it has become an attractive area for IDPs fleeing conflict in South Central Somalia.

Bossaso has a significant population of IDPs, many of whom had been present for over ten years. The livelihood opportunities created by the fast-developing port of Bossaso is a strong pull factor, along with some IDPs' clan connections in the area.

There is no land administration and there are few documentary records, so customary law, secular law and sharia law all overlap.

Aim of the project

The idea of the permanent resettlement project was to substantially improve IDP protection, security of tenure, access to basic services and infrastructure (especially water and sanitation), and to provide a solid base for income-generating activities (renting out rooms, space for shops or productive activities), in addition to the provision of a better shelter.

Freeing IDPs from paying rent for inadequate shelter meant that they could use resources for basic services, such as education and health. Construction training would provide beneficiaries with new skills.

The project indirectly tackled governance-related issues relating to land, and broader urban development and city planning issues. Approaching these issues directly, without a clearly visible project, would have been difficult.

Implementation

Negotiations with authorities for accepting the permanent resettlement of IDPs within Bossaso, and the relative provision of suitable land, began in 2004. These negotiations were linked to a joint UN strategy for IDPs in Somalia published in 2005.

Once a strategy for Bossaso had been agreed upon between humanitarian agencies and Bossaso authorities, the project began in 2006. It was implemented by a consortium of agencies, all of whom were represented in the newly established Somalia Shelter Cluster.

Construction was completed by the end of 2007. The duration of the project was longer than initially envisaged, due to difficulties in obtaining land, a long beneficiary selection process and the challenges of maintaining consensus with a relatively unstable and inexperienced local government system.

Land issues

The original site proposed by the local authorities was rejected on the grounds that it was too far from the town and limited economic integration of the IDPs with the host community. This was a key requirement by the

agency to improve livelihood opportunities for beneficiaries and promote peace between the IDPs and the host population.

A committee was established to identify land within the current urban growth areas. During Ramadan, calls were made for land donations. Five of the offered sites were selected and officially handed over to the municipality. The land transfer was endorsed by the sharia court in December 2005.

With no clear legal framework in Puntland, customised 'letters of allotment' had to be developed to substitute for an 'ownership title'. Beneficiaries received the right of occupation, use and inheritance for the first 15 years. After this, each family would also acquire the right of disposal (selling the property for profit). For the document to provide the strongest protection for IDP tenure, it was signed by the beneficiary, the mayor, the minister of local government and the magistrate of the sharia court.

Selection of beneficiaries

Beneficiary selection took longer than planned. Some 80% of plots were to be allocated to IDPs and 20% to poor families from the host community. This approach limited the interest of powerful members of the host community from exerting too much influence in the selection of IDP beneficiaries. Post-occupancy assessments found that few of the urban poor beneficiaries in the project



Photo: J. Ashmore

Many of the sites initially offered were rejected because they were far from Bossaso and possible livelihoods. The five selected sites were donated following requests for land made during Ramadan.

occupied their site, preferring instead to rent out the new accommodation or leave the house empty, while the occupancy rate on project completion from IDP families was 100%.

The selection process, managed by the multi-representative Bossaso selection committee, began in September 2006. IDP beneficiaries were selected by April 2007, but agreement on urban poor beneficiaries was not reached until November 2007.

Before selecting individual families, the IDP settlements with the worst shelter conditions were identified. Selection committees were formed in each of these settlements and were tasked with putting forward individual households who had lived in Bossaso for more than six years, with no fixed assets and at least three children. More detailed 'vulnerability' criteria were rejected due to the complexity of Somali family structure and the lack of identification documents.

Selection lists were made public to allow time for complaints to be investigated (one of the settlements produced a list that excluded an ethnic minority). The final selection of the 112 IDP families was made through a lottery broadcast on local TV and radio, which was deemed a fair method by beneficiaries.

'Compared to the shelter I had before, I can now say that my life has improved 100 percent. The resettlement programme was completely transparent and well done'.

Technical solutions

This project provided the infrastructure for a serviced community settlement, well integrated with the host population, and support to IDPs for the building of individual dwellings within the settlement.

Contractors were used to trace roads for the new settlement and connect it to the municipal water supply. This also benefited those living along the route of the new water pipes. An ongoing solar-powered street lighting project was also started towards the end of the project.

A plot was provided within the settlement for each family to construct their own house, with support from the consortium.

Two different agencies implemented the construction of the 140 housing units in two phases using contractors. The first phase took five months and involved the construction of foundations, boundary walls, sanitation (shower, toilets and septic pits) and a 4.5m x 3m floor slab. Phase I cost US\$ 1,850 per housing unit.

The second phase began after beneficiary selection was complete and took three months, finishing in December 2007. The beneficiary families moved onto their plot, living in a temporary tent-like shelter provided by another agency until the work was completed. The temporary shelters were later used as additional rooms or for storage.

Food for work for a maximum of 30 days was provided to beneficiaries for the construction period, along with US\$ 30 to hire a mason (families sometimes did masonry work themselves, with technical support, and kept the money). The main agency provided technical support in the form of cash for skilled labour and employment of a foreman for supervision.

Giving the families the opportunity to select their own mason (rather than following the wishes of the local authorities who wanted the whole construction process contracted out) meant that they had greater quality control over the work done and allowed the agency to avoid the problems of a tendering process.

The cost for the second phase was US\$ 580 per housing unit. This excluded agency staff costs and food-for-work contributions but included all other logistics, administrative and material costs.

Logistics and materials

Materials were procured locally, with contractors responsible for their own procurement.

Bill of quantities

The following table shows the bill of quantities for Phase 2 of the project, averaged for a single unit (some units were corner units rather than free-standing).

Materials	Quantity
Hollow concrete blocks (150 mm x 390 mm x 180 mm)	281 pieces
Cement for mortar and concrete ring beam	5 bags
Sand for mortar and concrete ring beam	1 tonne
Aggregate / ballast for ring beam concrete	0 tonnes
Y8 bars (12m long) for ring beam	4 pieces
R6 rings (6m long) for ring beam	2 pieces
6x1 white wood for form work	12 metres
28-gauge galvanised corrugated iron sheets	14 pieces
Structural grade 150 x 50 (6' x 2') timber roof rafters	18 m
Structural Grade 75 x 50 (3' x 2') timber roof purlins	27 m
Roofing nails	1 kg
Ordinary wire nails	1 kg
Steel single doors (0.8m x 2m)	1 set
Double leaf-steel window (1m x 1m)	1 set
White wash	4 bags
Brushes for whitewashing	2
Bamboo/rope for ceiling mats	As required