

SOMALI REGIONAL STATE		Main areas of return
Accessibility	<p>The Somali regional state is accessible from Addis Ababa by commercial flights that land in Jijiga, in Dolo (which is close to Afder), in Gode and Kabri Dar.</p> <p>It is also accessible by road with 2 days of travel of more than 1000 Km. The road is paved approximately half-way.</p> <p>There are bus companies that go to the Somali region every day and at reasonable fares.</p> <p>One can also take the train to Dire Dawa and from there access the Somali region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afder - Jarar/Degehabur - Fanfan - Gode - Nogob
Population	<p>The latest population figures for the Somali region are 3,439,860 of whom 1,875,996 are males and 1,563,864 females. A national census supposed to have taken place on 7 April 2019 has been postponed. The ratio between male and female is 120:100.</p>	
Ethnic groups	<p>The ethnic composition includes Somali 95.6%, Oromo 2.25%, Amhara 0.69%, and Somali 0.63%, and Guragie 0.14%.</p> <p>The Somali language is predominantly spoken and is the working language of the region.</p>	

POPULATION MOVEMENTS	
	<p>140,292 households comprising 857,090 IDPs were identified in 395 sites in the Somali region. These figures represent an increase of 9,580 IDPs (+1.1%) since November/December 2019. This was primarily caused by the opening of 4 new IDP sites in Filtu and Dekasuftu woredas of Liban zone, as well as secondary internal displacement of returning IDPs in Tuliguled woreda of Fafen zone due to conflict. Conflict was the main cause of internal displacement with an estimated 513,271 IDPs (60%) and drought an estimated 294,087 IDPs (34%).</p>

RULE OF LAW	
Local authorities / Administration	The lowest administrative level in the Somali region is the kebele, which is under the responsibility of the woreda. The woredas are run by woreda administrators. Like the structure at federal level, each woreda has an elected council.
Civil status and documentation	As far as life events registration and documentation are concerned, one has to report to the desk for vital events (birth, marriage, death) in the woreda of residence, where one can register childbirth and obtain a birth certificate. The same desk is in charge of issuing identity cards, which are in fact residence identity cards. These two documents constitute the first step towards obtaining a national passport, which is issued by the regional division of the Immigration Nationality and Vital Events Agency (INVEA) in Jijiga. It should be noted that fees for a passport are much higher (600 ETB) than the ones for civil status documentation, which are less than 50 ETB.
Access to justice	In the Somali region in general, Sharia law is more common than making use of the national system with its three layers: woreda court, High Court and Supreme Court that are accessible to all citizens living in the region. Following a government announcement due to COVID-19, courts have been closed at all levels. But urgent cases that affect life, liberty and public safety are entertained by the courts. Other cases will be re-adjourned and new cases will not be accepted.

SECURITY	
General	In December 2018, the general security situation in parts of the Somali region was volatile due to inter-communal clashes mostly located in Fanfan and some isolated incidents in other locations. No incident reports were received on other locations of intended return areas in the Somali region. The Ethiopian Defense Forces (EDF) were deployed to affected areas, if needed. Apart from this, local groups of civilians are organized to play a role of military to maintain peace and security in the area.
Law enforcement	In Gode and Fanfan, due to the proximity with the Somali border, in addition to the Police, there are elements of the Ethiopian Defense Forces, the Federal Police and the regional Special Police. In the other four areas of return, there are local Police elements only. The authorities can ask for a deployment of the other three forces in the case of major incidents. People have unhindered access to the Police, which is the first point of entry for reporting security incidents. Uniformed police solve minor disputes and conflict over farmland, water and pastures, as well as other communal assets.
Risk related to non-exploded devices	Except from Dollo Ado, where one had been found, no reports on risk of non-exploded ordonnances in the woredas of return have been received so far.

PROTECTION	
Persons with specific needs	Should they have particular concerns, persons with specific needs can report to the Regional Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs and the Regional Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs. PSNs can also access the representations of the Bureau in their zones and woredas.
Child Protection	ICRC and the Ethiopian Society (ERCS) conduct activities aimed at restoring family links provided that the application comes from a family member of the person for whom tracing is requested and that he/she has already tried to re-establish contact by all other

	<p>possible means with no result. In addition, precise and complete information on both family members has to be provided in order to facilitate restoration of family links. The Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs is also involved in the response to child protection issues and one can report to them in their respective zones and woredas. Birth certification is done at the woreda level, where parents have to declare the birth of their child.</p> <p>In the Somali region, girls are often exposed to the risk of dropping out of school. The authorities conduct regular sensitization campaigns with the support of UN Agencies and NGOs. As a result of lack of basic services and livelihood interventions, many children are engaged in child labour to generate income for their families.</p> <p>Situations of children in conflict with the law have been reported mostly in Jarar zone particularly for theft and robbery resulting in conviction.</p>
SGBV	<p>Situations such as early and forced marriages, female genital mutilation/cutting and domestic violence are frequent in the Somali region due to cultural norms and economic reasons. Girls have to assist parents in raising the younger siblings, participate in domestic chores and get married at an early age. Cases of rape and other sexual violence have also been reported in Jarar zone, whilst the highest rate of FGM/C is reported in Afder zone. There is a One-Stop-Centre in Jijiga to which SGBV survivors can report incidents. In areas, where One-Stop-Centres have not been established, survivors can report to the Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs or its representation at the zone level.</p>
Social cohesion/Land issues	<p>The Somali region has often been the theatre of conflict over natural resources and specifically over grazing land and water sources. The community uses traditional dispute resolution mechanisms to solve disputes, however mediation and conflict resolutions mechanisms are sometimes unsuccessful and may generate major security incidents. Community leaders and elders participate in mediation conducted at the kebele level. Should the mediation fail, the issue is brought to the woreda level and eventually at the regional level.</p>
Food security and Livelihoods	<p>Livestock and crop production are the main means of livelihoods for the majority of the residents together with trade and to some extent fishing and bee keeping. Flood recession agriculture and/or rainfed agriculture is common, particularly maize and sorghum, being widely practiced by local people along the rivers. The major rivers Shabelle, Genale, Dawa, and Web rivers are the 4 rivers in the region. The ^{first} two are perennial, while the rest are seasonal. All these rivers have major tributaries and are large enough for the local population to depend on. Despite its huge natural resource potential and opportunities, the region is one of the poorest in the country and considered an emerging region.</p> <p>The major crops cultivated in the region are sorghum and maize. Wheat and barley are also harvested in smaller quantities each year. There are three big rivers used for irrigation. The overall unemployment rate in the Somali region stands at 86.7%.</p> <p>The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) has two branches in Afder, more than ten in Fanfan, one in Jarar and three in Gode, where transactions can be made. This is in addition to branches opened in other locations of the regional state. However, one needs proper identification documents to open a bank account. There are also functioning ATMs from which cash can be withdrawn.</p> <p>However, in order to assist Ethiopians to return home with the support of UNHCR and ARRA, exceptionally, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) has accepted to make use of Laissez-Passers as temporary identity documents for the opening of bank accounts with the expectation that returnees will soon obtain their identity cards from the relevant authorities</p>

	<p>In addition to the CBE, the Somali region has its own micro-finance institution that facilitates cash transfers and uses mobile money among other transfer modalities. Returnees are advised not to bring local currency of their countries of asylum to Ethiopia, as they will not be able to change it into ETB.</p>
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ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Health	<p>There are three levels of health facilities that could be considered for returnees: In all kebeles, there are health posts that provide outreach services, including prevention and referral services. The health posts serve as the link between the community and higher level health facilities. Minor diseases are also treated at the health posts by health extension workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the woreda level, there are health centres that provide comprehensive primary health services both preventive and curative, in-patient and out-patient services. The health centres also provide vaccination and psychosocial support. However, not all health centres have psychiatric nurses. Services are provided by general practitioners and public health officers. - At the zonal level, one can access the General Hospitals to which cases needing surgery or obstetrical care, as well as other specialized treatment are referred to. <p>Fees at public health facilities are affordable. A consultation at a public health facility is between 5 - 20 ETB. An average cost for treatment at outpatient level is between 150 - 200 ETB. Additionally, fees depend on the type of investigation, the severity of the illness, the required treatment and the location.</p> <p>It is advisable that persons with chronic medical conditions that require continuous treatment, return with a 3-month supply of medicines. These conditions include tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, hypertension, diabetes, asthma, mental health illness etc. The treatment can be administered through available services at the health centres.</p> <p>Beside measles outbreaks, in Afder, Jarar, and Fafan zones in early 2018, no other major disease outbreak has been reported in areas of return.</p> <p>Services at private clinics are much more costly than at public health facilities. Given the poor quality of services in some private clinics in regional states, it is advisable to use public facilities.</p>
Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)	<p>In terms of access to water, available information on Afder, Fanfan, Jarar and Nogob zones indicate the following functional accessible sources : 100 boreholes (most of them in Fafan zone), 453 hand dug wells (most of them in Jarar zone), 1166 birkas (most of them in Jarar), 69 dams (mostly in Jarar zone). People also resort to fetching water from the rivers and springs in Afder zone.</p> <p>Deep boreholes represent only 6% of all water sources, which means the region depends solely on unsustainable water sources that can easily be impacted by rainfall patterns. Overall, 32% of all existing water sources need urgent rehabilitation to alleviate suffering and reduce the risk of overstressing those functioning, as well as costly water trucking needs, particularly in Fafan, Jarar and Korahey zones.</p> <p>In terms of sanitation, there is a very poor coverage of latrine facilities across the region.</p>
Education	<p>Primary and secondary education is under the responsibility of the Regional Education Bureau. In each woreda, there is an Education Office that oversees the overall management of education.</p> <p>There are primary and secondary schools in each woreda of the Somali region. Enrolment for primary and secondary education is free of charge, however, parents need to cover</p>

	<p>the cost of educational materials and uniforms. For grades 1-8, the medium of instruction is Somali, while English is the medium of instruction for grades 9-12.</p> <p>As far as tertiary education is concerned, certificates obtained while in asylum have to go through the equivalency mechanism to be valid in Ethiopia, as holders of foreign higher education certificates do not automatically qualify for admission to Ethiopian higher education programmes. In this regard, they need to obtain an equivalency assessment or verification of foreign certificate with the <i>Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA)</i>, the responsible agency.</p> <p>Once this process is completed, students can enroll at Jijiga University following the signing of a cost-sharing agreement with the Government for the tuition fee 75 % of which is covered by the Government.</p> <p>Students can be placed at any of the universities in the country by the Ministry of Education (MoE) after completion of grade 12 and scoring of a minimum grade point average set by the MoE or through special placement exams.</p> <p>Currently, due to COVID-19, students are staying at home, after schools were closed across the country/regions. Therefore, the regional Education Bureau has released broadcasting lesson through TV for grades 7 -12 and on radio for grades 1 - 6</p>
Shelter	<p>Outside of the regional capital Jijiga, most of the houses are made of mud bricks with a roofing made of grass. As livestock is the most common economic activity of people in the Somali region, semi-nomadic migration patterns related to the rain and greener pastures for their livestock determine the way their houses are constructed: not to be permanent structures in the landscape, but merely as periodic shelters. Pastoralists usually live in huts made of grass on a frame of bent sticks.</p>

HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

	<p>Both humanitarian and development actors have ongoing activities that support the Government's efforts towards the improvement of the population's well-being in the Somali region. The main sectoral activities that UN Agencies and NGO partners engage in are Protection, WASH, Health, Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Food. Additionally, UN agencies and other actors are also heavily involved in supporting the Government with IDP programmes.</p> <p>In the north eastern part of the Somali region, UNHCR has a Sub-Office in Jijiga, covering three Field Units: Aw Barre, Kebrebeyah and Sheder. There is another UNHCR Sub-Office in Melkadida, which is located in the South. Returnee monitoring activities will be carried out by the Field Units with the support of the the Jijiga and Melkadida Sub-Offices within their respective areas of responsibility.</p>
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REINTEGRATION GRANT INFORMATION (to be reviewed)

MPCG	<p>The provision of cash assistance in the country of origin aims to address the basic needs of the returnees during the first six months after arrival. A Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) has been determined in Ethiopia. The multipurpose cash grant is calculated based on a specific sectoral approach to respond to the needs of a family in terms of food, shelter (rent), core relief items and education. The modalities and amount of payments in ETB are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -One-time cash-over-the-counter through CBE upon arrival in Ethiopia, which is equivalent to around 10% of total amount depending on the specificities of each household)
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	-Two bank account transfers after a week and three months, around 40% and 50% of total amount respectively.		
	MPG (Multi-Purpose Cash Grant)		Amount (USD)
	Multi-purpose cash grant for household of 1		850
	Multi-purpose cash grant for household of 2		1170
	Multi-purpose cash grant for household of 3		1540
	Multi-purpose cash grant for household of 4		1825
	Multi -purpose cash grant for household of 5		2160
	Multi-purpose cash grant for household of 6 and above		2560
	Education costs (Uniform and school materials) per child 3 -18 years		
		ETB	USD
	Education costs - uniforms and school materials	900.00	35
	Persons with Specific Needs		
		ETB	USD
	Extra support to persons with specific needs		100
	Transportation for each HH member		
	ETB	USD	
Transport costs	1000	36.54316	

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES	
COVID-19	<p>The first COVID-19 case in Ethiopia was confirmed on 13 March 2020. The number of patients is on the rise with community infection being the most important. As a result, the federal and state governments have taken more and more restrictive measures to contain the virus. The country's land borders have been closed. Individuals can only enter the country on the condition that they agree to be quarantined for 14 days, at their own expense. The states are taking similar actions. A State of Emergency has been declared by the Government of Ethiopia in an effort to limit the spread of the virus. Bordering regional states have established quarantine centres at border crossings in response to irregular entry of migrants. Refugees are advised not to spontaneously return to Ethiopia due to lack of services at the border and the risk of facing other protection risks. The impact of COVID-19 is as follows:</p> <p>Macroeconomic context and public finance: i) Decline in economic growth. ii) Decline in GDP growth rate iii) Increase in cost of living due to reduced offers. iv) Government revenue reduction due to less tax payment. v) Less foreign exchange earnings required for much needed imports, as well as vi) hits on remittances and the tourism sector that will also affect foreign exchange earnings hindering the ability to service debt payments entailing 'mortgaging' of the future.</p> <p>Health and Nutrition: i) Increased rates of illness is expected to put pressure on the quality of health care in Ethiopia with potential service saturations and severe limitations for low-income households in terms of affordability and accessibility. ii) Disrupted health services for non-COVID-19 related needs. iii)</p>

	<p>Malnutrition due to : a) Household food insecurity due to loss of income b) Caring practices for children and women are likely to go down, as livelihoods are affected c) Access to health services may be disrupted due to health workers' limited access to health facilities or lack of motivation or fear of infection.</p> <p>WASH: i) The majority of low-income households are at heightened risk of contracting COVID-19 due to poor sanitation practices and hygienic conditions. ii) Movement restrictions will disproportionately affect low-income households in underserved areas, which depend on daily wages to pay for safe drinking water for their households amongst other daily needs</p> <p>Education: i) Children from low-income HHs will not benefit from home-schooling during school closures, hence widening inequalities in the learning gap between the lowest and highest quintiles. iii) School closures will lead to a decline in food intake and nutrition, possibly increase school dropouts and adversely impact human capital development iv) School feeding programmes have been suspended due to school closures.</p> <p>Social Protection: i) COVID-19 will likely limit control and surveillance operations, as well as deployment of experts to field locations to combat the desert locust upsurge. ii) Rise in the price of key commodities, driven largely by behavioural changes in urban areas – food hoarding, etc. iii) Widespread loss of income and deeper levels of poverty as social distancing intensifies, which has an impact on the service industry, tourism and for the sizeable self-employed population. The combination of labour constraints and limited access to markets will drive poverty and exacerbate food insecurity.</p> <p>Child Protection: i) New stressors on parents and child caregivers, who may have to find new childcare options or forgo work. ii) Disease control measures that do not consider the gender-specific needs of women and girls may increase their protection risks and lead to adverse coping mechanisms. iii) Heightened risk of intimate partner violence in settings, where those who live with domestic abuse could be at greater risk of violence/abuse – particularly women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons, iv) Prevention and response services will be less accessible to survivors of abuse and violence v) School closure puts additional burden of care on women and hence may affect their mental and physical wellbeing.</p>
Locust invasion	<p>About one million individuals have been affected by the desert locust invasion and require emergency food assistance. Of these, some 390,000 are in the Somali region, 360 000 in the Oromia region and Dire Dawa city administration (combined), 100,000 in Afar, 72, 000 in Amhara, 43,000 in Tigray and 13,000 in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) region, reported in April 2020.</p> <p>Swarms declined in the South due to control and breeding, while mature swarms moved into the nearest (Afar) and eastern (Somali) regions. Hopper bands continued to mature near Dire Dawa, as well as in adjacent areas of northwest Somali region. In Central Somalia, mature adult locusts are present near the Ethiopia border in Galguduud region. Huge swarms of locusts, the size of a city, forced more than 15,000 people to flee their homes in Southern Oromia region, the Wachile area affecting 12 villages during May 2020. These locusts have already destroyed large swaths of food and pasture in the region. Experts have described the ongoing desert locust infestation in the Horn of Africa as the worst in 25 years. Widespread rainfall in late March created an ideal environment for locust breeding. The situation may get worse, when the insects mature and grow</p>

	<p>wings. The desert locust can fly up to 19 kilometers per hour and cover up to 130 kms per day.</p> <p>Ethiopia is aerial spraying the swarms in three locations: Arbaminch in Southern Ethiopia; Jijiga, in the Somali region and Dire Dawa in the eastern part of the country. Huge of swarms of locusts have been reported in six woredas of the Gambella region on 19 May 2020.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has complicated efforts to fight the locusts mainly by delaying deliveries of pesticides.</p>
<p>Elections</p>	<p>Restrictive measures have been taken, while the country is planning to hold its sixth national elections. The federal and state governments will take even more restrictive measures, as the impact of the pandemic progresses, which will make preparations towards the elections practically impossible. Political parties will not manage to campaign or hold meetings or public rallies, which are critical pre-election democratic activities, which determine the legitimacy of election results. The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) will not manage to make the necessary preparations to successfully administer the elections. Federal and state authorities will also be unable to carry out functions that are critical for peacefully holding the elections, since they will be preoccupied with combatting the pandemic. Moreover, voters will not be able to come out and vote in large numbers on election day without taking health risks, unless the pandemic is contained by then. Electronic or remote voting is not an option in Ethiopia for the simple reason that the country does not have the necessary technology and financial resources to do this. Most of the opposition groups were quick to signal their support for the postponement of the national elections. There is no clarity, whether elections will take place without significant violence accompanying the polls.</p>