



## COUNTRY PROFILE



Girls have an opportunity to learn through the USAID-supported Somali Reader Series.

### OVERVIEW

Since 1991, Somalia has essentially been a collapsed state. The social costs of war have been enormous, leaving Somalia with some of the lowest human development indicators in the world. The situation in Somalia is highly fluid, and Somalia's social, economic, and political development faces formidable challenges. Given the long-term absence of central institutions in Somalia, ongoing efforts to support peace and stability and to rebuild law

enforcement, governance, and social service institutions remains a priority for the United States.



USAID responds to Somalia's key challenges by supporting peace-building and national reconciliation initiatives, building the capacity of governance institutions and civil society groups, improving the delivery of social services, and meeting humanitarian and early recovery needs.

### PROGRAMS

#### PEACE AND SECURITY

USAID's programs in peace and security are focused on fostering the conditions needed for sustainable peace and reconciliation. The programs bring together local communities, civil society representatives, and Somali political leaders around the steps needed to build a sustainable, peaceful society. The program raises public awareness through extensive public consultations, workshops, and stakeholder dialogue on peace building and state reconstruction. The youth livelihood program seeks to reduce insecurity by providing skills training and employment opportunities to high-risk youth through local community-based partners.

#### GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

USAID works with several partners to improve governance at the national, regional, and local levels, and to support key elements of civil society. USAID and the international community are supporting the implementation of transitional processes as outlined in the Transitional Federal Charter, including the constitution-making process and preparations for national elections. USAID is also assisting the establishment and strengthening of representative local governance institutions, including training parliamentary members to improve legislative processes and increasing

#### SOMALIA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1960  
Population: 8.8 million (estimate)  
Income per person: n/a

Source: U.S. State Department

#### USAID IN SOMALIA

[www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan\\_africa/countries/somalia](http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/countries/somalia)



## COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

the legislature's capacity to reach out to constituents and civil society. USAID is directly supporting civil society's active engagement in peace, reconciliation, and reconstruction, with particular support for women and other under-represented groups.

### **INVESTING IN PEOPLE**

Civil unrest has eroded Somalia's basic social services. USAID assists local communities by providing integrated health and education interventions and improving the capacity of governance institutions to deliver services throughout Somalia. USAID programs expand access to education through non-formal methods, such as interactive radio instruction, strengthen capacity by training new teachers, especially women, and improve quality of education through curriculum development. Programs also improve water infrastructure while building the capacity of local government and communities to sustain the improvements. USAID has a higher education partnership with the University of Hargeisa to establish a program in conflict mitigation, and is also helping Somalia remain polio-free through child vaccinations.

### **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

USAID's emergency relief activities in Somalia benefit more than 3.2 million people affected by repeated shocks of drought, flood, and conflict through health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and protection projects implemented by partners. USAID has also addressed needs related to the regional drought and food security crisis, monitoring conditions, identifying priority needs, and facilitating coordination and information sharing among international relief organizations. USAID's food assistance benefits more than 2 million vulnerable Somalis.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

East Africa Mission Director  
Lawrence Meserve  
P.O. Box 629  
00621 Village Market  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: 254-20-862-4000

Somalia Desk Officer  
Marissa Lemargie  
Tel: 1-202-712-1738  
Email: [mlemargie@usaid.gov](mailto:mlemargie@usaid.gov)