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Better Migration Management
Horn of Africa



Better Migration Management (BMM) Programme in Somalia

General context

Somalia is a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants. According to the IOM, one of the world's most dangerous and most frequented migration corridors, which connects the Horn of Africa with the Gulf States, runs through the country. Every year, tens of thousands of migrants and refugees make the hazardous journey for economic and safety-related reasons.

The United Nations (UN) estimates the number of people in need in Somalia at almost 7 million, which is due in particular to extreme weather events and political instability. According to the UN, Somalia is experiencing one of the world's most challenging mass refugee movements, with around 3.5 million internally displaced people (December 2023). In July 2023, the number of Somali refugees and asylum seekers worldwide was 714,390. Almost 80% fled into neighbouring countries like Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen and Uganda. The Dadaab refugee camp in northern Kenya is currently hosting the largest number of Somali refugees.

Irregular migration is widespread and poses a serious challenge, often resulting in migrants being exploited en route. Somali youth working in the



Project name	Better Migration Management Programme
Political Partner in Somalia	Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development (MoPIED)
Duration	April 2016 to September 2025
Partner countries	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda
Implementing Partners in Somalia	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

informal sector are at high risk of trafficking as they resort to seeking employment opportunities abroad because of family or economic pressure. Men, women and children are trafficked from or within Somalia by criminal networks for forced labour, sex trafficking, torture for ransom, military support roles, direct combat and marriages to Al-Shabaab militants.

Implemented by



BMM's approach and activities

In 2016, Germany and the European Union (EU) established the Better Migration Management (BMM) Programme. Now in its third phase, the programme aims to enable national authorities and institutions to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration and to effectively address and reduce trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants within and from the Horn of Africa region using a human rights-based approach.

BMM focuses on three components: migration governance, strengthening effective institutions to address trafficking and smuggling, and protection of vulnerable migrants. Jointly implemented by British Council, CIVIPOL, GIZ, IOM and UNODC, BMM maximises the impact of activities through global expertise as well as integrated and comprehensive local solutions. GIZ provides the overall coordination towards achievement of the objective by all implementing partners.

Regionally, BMM works in coordination with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU). In Somalia, the programme is implemented by GIZ, IOM and UNODC.

Recognising the risks to its people and challenges as a major transit route in the region, Somalia has made efforts towards improving migration governance and fighting human trafficking. The Federal Government of Somalia appointed the Office of the Special Envoy for Migrants' and Children's Rights (OSE) to coordinate efforts to facilitate regular, safe and orderly migration. Two technical task forces on Return & Reintegration and Trafficking & Smuggling with representation from the federal member states bring together government agencies to streamline the governments' efforts. At the operational level, the Somali Police Force has set up a specialist unit to investigate and counter trafficking in human beings. BMM continues to support the national partners in building a governance framework for safe migration and strengthening the capacities of relevant agencies. There is a particular focus on promoting cooperation among government agencies as well as with the federal member states of Somalia, particularly Somaliland and Puntland along the major migration routes in the north of Somalia.

BMM staff coordinate their activities closely with those of other international organisations and projects funded by the EU and other donors in Somalia, such as EUCAP, UNSOS and ATMIS, to harness synergies and avoid duplications.



The participation on regional conferences on migration strengthens the cross-border cooperation. ©GIZ/Mulugeta Gebrekidane.

Migration governance

BMM continues to support the OSE in developing a comprehensive National Migration Policy Framework. A roadmap was developed in phase II, which is being implemented in phase III. This also requires the transition of the task forces into a National Coordination Mechanism (NCM) in line with the AU and IGAD regional migration frameworks, which facilitates the effective cooperation of all relevant agencies. Terms of Reference and clear mandates for the NCM will support a whole-of-government approach to migration in Somalia, which means to integrate the collaborative efforts of all government departments and agencies.

BMM also supports the Immigration and Naturalization Directorate (IND) in the implementation of the new Immigration Act in Somalia.

In Somaliland, BMM continues to build the capacities of the Mixed Migration Task Force (MMTF) as the coordination body for a whole-of-government approach and provided support for the development of a comprehensive 3-year-strategy, which aims to improve migration management and strengthen coordination

While the country has not yet ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its protocols on smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, BMM has supported the Ministry of Justice to produce a roadmap for its accession. The programme supports the translation of UNTOC, the roadmap and the revision of laws accordingly as well as the development of regulations to allow for straightforward application of the law by practitioners.

Effective institutions to address trafficking and smuggling

BMM is improving the quality of national and regional investigations and prosecutions of trafficking crimes through basic and specialised training and the provision of equipment to law enforcement agencies and prosecutors. It will accompany the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for investigator-prosecutor cooperation and address case management and data management systems. In cooperation with the Judicial Training Institute of Somalia, BMM trains prosecutors and the judiciary to strengthen the quality of court proceedings.

For improved integrated border management, BMM will operationalise the five integrated border management committees (IBMC) established in phase II.

The programme also supported better communication across border stations in Somaliland with the installation of HF and VHF radios. This is still being finalised and the programme provides training on operation and maintenance.

In Somaliland, BMM supported the National Human Rights Commission to set up a pool of competent trainers, which facilitates training for law enforcement agencies on the rights of migrants. The commission also hosts an online directory of service providers for vulnerable migrants. The commission also hosts an online directory of service providers for vulnerable migrants.

Protection

Under the mandate of the OSE, BMM partners with the National Museum of Somalia to implement awareness raising campaigns for young Somalis to make better migration decisions. A study tour to Germany was conducted to gather ideas and best practices for an exhibition on migration.



Committees will be established to improve the protection of children on the move at community level in Somaliland. ©IOM



Whole-of-government coordination is essential for effective migration governance (©GLZ)

An international campaign to promote safe migration and combat human trafficking is being implemented at regional level. It focuses on communities and uses creative methods and art to raise awareness. Somali communities are often impacted by migration either through an influx of migrants or the drain of young people. BMM supports migration-affected communities to develop their own action plans to address these challenges.

In Somaliland, a basic referral flowchart exists under the MMTF. It clarifies roles in identifying, registering and protecting vulnerable migrants. BMM will further disseminate the flowchart and link it to the online directory of service providers and other tools. This helps service providers to assist and protect vulnerable migrants efficiently and improves migrants' access to information about services provided.

CSOs play a key role in providing essential services to migrants. BMM supports a national network of CSOs working with vulnerable migrants in Somalia and the BMM initiated East and Horn of Africa Anti-Trafficking Network (EHAAT), a regional network consisting of around 100 CSO from the region. The programme continues to build their capacities through training and networking and connecting them to government structures. In phase III the focus will be on building the sustainability of the EHAAT.



Results of BMM (April 2016 – September 2023)



1,341 representatives of state departments supported in improving the coordinated management of migration and strengthening national migration policies, legislation and cross-border cooperation.



51 capacity building measures for **1,262** governmental and non-governmental actors implemented in the field of investigation and prosecution of human trafficking, integrated border management, and the referral of migrants to services.



465 vulnerable migrants directly assisted (phase I only) and **1,258** referred to services providing accommodation, basic services, medical support.

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