

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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# VISION

Inspired by the Holy Scriptures, by the teachings of the Catholic Church and by the life experiences and the hopes of people living in poverty and other inhuman conditions, Caritas Somalia strives for a world where the voices of the poor are heard and acted upon, where each person is free to flourish and live in peace and dignity. We work with people of all faiths and with those who have none, in favour of minorities and people living in poverty.

# MISSION

Caritas Somalia's mission is to end poverty, promote social justice and uphold human dignity. Also, it responds to catastrophes such as drought, floods, famine and armed conflicts.

# VALUES

DIGNITY OF HUMAN PERSON RESPECT MERCY AND COMPASSION  
COMMON GOOD SOLIDARITY  
INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR  
INTEGRAL ECOLOGY FRATERNITY AND GRATUITOUSNESS RELIGIOUS  
FREEDOM AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY



## EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

I am happy to present to you the Annual Report of Caritas Somalia for the year 2023. As you can see Somalia has passed from a catastrophic situation of drought, to one of floods because of the El Nino phenomenon.

The country is rebuilding itself after years of turbulence, lately because of radical Islamic groups who still continue to create problems.

In this context Caritas Somalia, especially through international and local partners has been able to assist a number of people in need, adding its contribution to the intervention of so many other actors. During these years, even in the most difficult circumstances, I repeatedly said that some good things can be done to express our compassion and love, inspired by the values of the Gospel and social teaching of the Catholic Church.

Dear friends, this is my last Report after more than 45 years of missionary life, particularly of life engaged in the humanitarian field. I am retiring back to Italy from where I have come some many years ago. I have lived, as I love to say, adventures and misadventures. I will keep In my heart and prayer the people of Somalia and all friends and collaborators that I have met.

I thank them all.

To the people of Somalia and to all other countries that know instability and conflict I wish,

with a Somalia word, “Nabad” (peace).

Djibouti, 2/03/2024

Bishop Giorgio Bertin

# GENERAL CONTEXT

In 2023, Somalia continued to be afflicted by a challenging humanitarian situation due to conflicts and extreme weather conditions. The seasonal cycles of dry and wet conditions have become more extreme and frequent, with the drought of 2020-2023 considered the most severe in the last forty years. Although humanitarian assistance and the Gu rains starting from March 2023 prevented worse consequences, families struggled to recover due to historic Deyr rains and flooding in October and November 2023. These events damaged critical infrastructure and flooded over 1.5 million hectares of farmland, causing mass displacements, involving over 1.2 million people mainly in the districts of Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubbaland, and South-West. Critical bridges in Baardheere, Buurdhuubo, Bu'aale, and Luuq in Jubbaland State and Buuloburde in Hirshabelle State were swept away or damaged, while there was an increase in waterborne diseases.

The ongoing conflict in Laascaanood has contributed to an extremely challenging operational environment. On July 8, 2023, during fighting in the contested region of Sool, a health center was hit, causing casualties and the destruction of two ambulances. Partners continue to provide assistance to Laascaanood but are significantly hindered by security concerns and access restrictions. About 200,000 people were displaced by the outbreak of fighting in December 2022. Following the latest escalation of the situation on August 25, thousands sought refuge in other "Somaliland" villages. Subsequently, some families started to return to Laascaanood.

The current operation against Al-Shabaab has created humanitarian access opportunities for those in need. However, insecurity has also contributed to an extremely challenging operational environment for humanitarian agencies. From January to March, about 430,000 people across Somalia were displaced due to conflict and insecurity. Approximately 580,000 people live within territories controlled by non-state armed actors, with most of these displaced persons being women and children. Out of 74 districts, 23 are considered difficult or extremely difficult to reach. Additionally, on July 11, Al-Shabaab imposed restrictions on vehicle movements to and from Baidoa in the South-West State, which hosts approximately 650,000 internally displaced persons. Prices of rice, pasta, and sugar increased by almost 20 percent in some areas. The restrictions were lifted on July 21, but the situation remains of concern, given the possibility of similar future restrictions.

The changing security landscape in Somalia following the downsizing of the African Union peacekeeping forces and the potential for shifts in insecurity patterns will require adaptability for humanitarian operators to remain and operate, and promote acceptance of humanitarian interventions

# WHAT WE DO

Our current global strategic Framework from 2021-2025 has six priorities, namely:

- Migrants and IDPs empowerment
- Development Projects
- Emergency Response
- Education and Health
- Women Empowerment
- Advocacy & Peace Building

**Migrants and IDPs  
empowerment/Women Empowerment**

## **FROM WAR TO A NEW FUTURE OF HOPE AND RECONCILIATION IN NAIROBI – KENYA**

**From 09/2021 to 12/2023**

The urban refugee population in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi, Nakuru, and Mombasa, continues to grow as refugees seek better opportunities and services. This trend has put additional strain on already limited resources available to support refugees and asylum seekers, exacerbated by the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the increase in urban refugee numbers, many still face difficulties accessing essential services, including education.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The main goal of the project is to improve the living conditions of Somali refugees in urban areas and promote self-reliance. Specific objectives include providing psychosocial support and emergency relief to vulnerable families, offering academic and vocational courses to youth and women, and establishing a daily care centre for children while women attend training sessions.



## RESULTS

### and emergency relief

- **73** families (66f, 7m) have received rent support.
- **33** (29f and 4m) sought medical support.
- **60** families (52 f and 8m) were issued with food vouchers.
- **148** home visits were done to verify the needs of some of the beneficiaries.
- **4** cases that were determined to require specialized counseling services were referred to HIAS and CVT in the spirit of complementarily

### the youth

- **30** students (16m and 14f) were selected and have pursued the following courses: 1 in HR management, 10 in ICT, 6 in Business Management, 4 in community health, 2 in journalism, 2 in international relations, 1 in cartography and GIS, 1 in advanced language, 1 counseling psychology, 1 in electrical engineering, and 1 in project management.

### 15 women

- **15** mothers have been selected and placed at Marianist Imani Training Centre in Eastleigh. The courses they have enrolled in are: 10 in beauty therapy, 2 in catering, and 3 in tailoring courses.
- **15** more mothers have trained in business skills in January 2022.
- **13** Somali beneficiaries have been placed for basic language literacy classes where they are learning English and Swahili languages

### Provide daycare services for the children

- **12** children between ages 1-9 years old were hosted in the daily care centre which accommodates children for the period that women are in the training sessions.



# THE TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN IN KISMAYO, LOWER JUBA, SOMALIA

From 09/2023 to 12/2023

The President of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud, has launched the "Plant-a-Tree" campaign to engage all Somalis in the country's reforestation efforts. The campaign, supported by the FAO, aims to address environmental neglect caused by conflicts and drought. It promotes the planting of fruit trees and emphasizes the importance of community involvement in environmental conservation. Additionally, the role of education and training in creating an environmentally conscious and responsible population is highlighted. In collaboration with Caritas Somalia, the NGO VAD is committed to training farmers and local communities to promote sustainable agricultural practices and environmental management.

## OBJECTIVE

The overarching goal of the project is to implement sustainable agricultural programs, specifically permaculture, through activities such as animation, training, mobilization, and advocacy. These efforts are designed to contribute to the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of territorial ecosystems, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation. The specific objectives of the project include: planting native trees to enhance biodiversity and mitigate the effects of climate change; elevating environmental awareness and encouraging the adoption of sustainable practices within local communities; fostering community engagement and instilling a sense of responsibility toward environmental conservation.



## RESULTS

- **1060** trees (consisting of 350 ficus trees, 350 mogana trees, 350 neem trees, and 10 baobab trees) have been planted.
- **50** training sessions have been conducted, with 10 sessions held in each village, as part of a comprehensive environmental training program aimed at raising awareness and promoting sustainable practices. The training covered aspects such as the reduction of global warming, the increase of green coverage, and the prevention of soil erosion.

## Emergency Response

# EA24/2022 EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO THE DROUGHT AND FOOD INSECURITY IN HUDDUR, BELETWEYNE AND BULO BURTE - SOMALIA

From 12/2022 to 07/2023

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is critical, with significant challenges in terms of food security and displacement exacerbated by floods and lack of funding. Favourable rains brought relief in some areas but were insufficient to reverse the effects of prolonged drought. Floods severely affected Beletweyne, with 85% of the population impacted and 247,000 people displaced. Huddur and Buloburte saw an increase in cases of moderate hunger. Lack of funding has led to service reductions, including WFP cash assistance. Beletweyne, Huddur, and Buloburte are also affected by an AWD/Cholera epidemic, exacerbated by limited access to sanitation facilities and clean water.

## OBJECTIVE

The overarching goal of the project is to address priority and immediate needs of drought-affected and vulnerable communities through continued provision and extension of quality integrated WASH, health, and nutrition services. Specific objectives include providing 180 gender-sensitive temporary hygiene services, ensuring temporary access to clean and safe water through water trucking, conducting hygiene promotion to prevent AWD/Cholera, organizing garbage collection and clean-up campaigns, and providing dignity and other protection materials to vulnerable women and girls of reproductive age.



## RESULTS

- **3000** dignity kits have been distributed to women and girls.
- **120** have been trained to participate in the clean-up campaigns.
- **180** gender-sensitive temporary toilets complete with hand washing facilities have been constructed.
- **1080** people have benefited from the temporary hygienic services.
- **623** children (219 boys and 404 girls) have been sensitized with hygiene promotion activities.
- **36000** people have benefited from the water distribution.

### Educational Project

## EDUCATIONAL PROJECT FOR SELECTED CHILDREN FROM IDP CAMPS AND MINORITY SETTLEMENTS IN HARGEISA – SOMALILAND ( SOMALIA)

From 2016 to present

The Daami settlement, situated within Hargeisa, hosts a diverse population of around 15,000 individuals, primarily composed of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who fled conflict or drought in South and Central Somalia during the mid-1990s. This population includes various clans such as the Ajuran sub-clan, Issa Musa, Is-haq, and a minority from the Gabooye clan, specifically Tumal and Yibir. Additionally, there are Ethiopian migrants, predominantly Oromo or Jarso, who consider themselves as economic migrants.

On the other hand, the Digale IDP camp, located north of Hargeisa, accommodates over 6,000 individuals, primarily children and youth. Most of the IDPs in Digale originate from the Haud region, where clans such as Habar Awal, Arab, Idegale, and Habar Yoonis, all Is-haq, are predominant. Despite the challenging circumstances, life in the camp is organized by committees, including the Camp Committee and the Educational Committee, and basic services such as schooling are provided, although not all children are able to attend due to various reasons, including financial constraints.

## OBJECTIVE

The project aimed to provide daily transport, nutrition, books and their monthly fees to attend Salaama School in Hargheisa in order to give a possibility of access to education. The objective of the project is also to guarantee and to promote gender equality and girls' emancipation: the number of girls represents 50% of the total.



## RESULTS

- **25** of the kids have passed to eighth grade of primary school (last year).
- **6** children to seventh grade of primary school.
- **1** has passed to third grade. She has started the school in 2021 because she has replaced her daughter who died in July 2020.

## EVENTS

**7-9 March:** Msgr. Giorgio Bertin and Sara Ben Rached have participated in the Regional Conference in Beirut organized by Caritas Mona. The Regional Conference serves as the highest decision-making body of the region, comprising the presidents and directors of the 14 Member Organizations (MOs), or their representatives.

**9 March:** Msgr. Giorgio Bertin was elected as the new Regional President for a 4-year term.

**11-16 May: Msgr.** Giorgio Bertin and Sara Ben Rached participated in the 22nd General Assembly of Caritas Internationalis held in Rome on the theme "Building new paths of fraternity," inspired by the Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti.

**25 May:** Puntland's 2023 municipal elections, marking the second instance of one-person, one-vote elections in the autonomous state. A historic victory was achieved, with 30 districts conducting peaceful elections

**28 May:** The president of Somalia announces that beginning next year, the country will change to a presidential system and elect officials by direct vote, ending more than three decades of indirect voting where lawmakers elected the country's leaders with the approval of clan and elderly leaders

**2-3 October:** Sara Ben Rached has participated in the Joint Partners Meeting and Fraternal Cooperation for the North Africa and Horn of Africa zones in Tunis. During the discussions, topics of regional significance such as Institutional Development & Capacity Strengthening (IDCS), Management Standards (CI MS), communication, and advocacy were addressed, tailored to the challenges and interests of the Caritas organizations.

**1 December:** Somalia becomes an official member state of the East African Community and the United Nation Security Council unanimously votes to remove the arms embargo on the Somali government and military