



**DSU Benadir**

# DSU Newsletter

*FINDING NEW APPROACHES TO RECURRING CHALLENGES*

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first issue of the DSU newsletter, a quarterly newsletter which keeps you up to date with the Government Programme on durable solutions and solutions related activities in Benadir. Significant coordination and planning have been undertaken across multiple levels of government alongside our partners and donors; the outcomes of those activities as they relate to the Benadir Region will be highlighted below.

### OVERVIEW:

The focus of the first quarter of 2019 for Benadir Regional Administration's (BRA) newly created Durable Solutions Unit (DSU) was mainly on capacity building, outreach, engagement, creation of new partners and strengthening of existing relationships, and renewing energy within BRA on displacement.

With support from the European Union (EU), BRA was able to fully capacitate the Urban Solutions Task Force (USTF) and the DSU under the EU-REINTEG Programme (Increasing access to basic services and creation of realistic livelihood opportunities in the main accessible areas of return and departure in Somalia).

The unit increased BRA engagement with the National Commission of Refugees & IDPs (NCRI), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Humanitarian and Disaster Management (MOHADM), and in close coordination with the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) on durable solutions and displacement related issues in the region. Furthermore, Durable Solutions Partner Coordination Platform was established which will provide partners, donors, government actors, civil society and affected communities a space to work together on sustainable solutions in the region in a coherent and synchronized manner.

Despite the enormous land issues facing Mogadishu, the allocation of land for the construction of up to 300 homes for displaced and urban poor families in the city was successfully facilitated by H.E. Mayor of Mogadishu, Abdirahman Omar Osman (Eng. Yarisow). First site assessment was conducted by BRA Urban Planning technical staff and further consultations and assessments are underway.

Other highlights for the first quarter of 2019 included successful trainings and capacity building of BRA officials and staff, and other governmental actors on lawful evictions, housing land and property rights, secretarial and planning skills, and the dissemination of DSU's work, mission and purpose.

Lastly, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in partnership with BRA began rehabilitating a youth center in Wadajir District that will provide vocational skills training and space for community-led social cohesion activities.



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## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



**H.E. Abdirahman Omar Osman**

**(Eng. Yarisow)**



[@engyarisow](https://twitter.com/engyarisow)

On January 31, 2019, Benadir Regional Administration officially inaugurated the Durable Solutions Unit, a historic initiative that will tackle the urgent crisis of growing protracted displacement. With a clear vision defined to addressing mass displacement in the region, the unit has been hailed as a model on how the government can take a leading role to solutions as the duty bearers for displaced citizens.

While short-term humanitarian assistance needs still exist, we know displacement-affected families are increasingly seeking support that leads to self-reliance and a more dignified life. BRA recognizes the need for a common approach to displacement and the importance of linking durable solutions to rapid population growth and urbanization as we grapple with issues around housing and land.

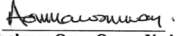
Driven by the Mayor's vision of phasing out displacement by 2023, the DSU will create an enabling environment with the overarching goal to phase out displacement through local integration, creating safe return to points of origin or safe resettlements in other regions across the country.

Coordination with partners and defining common outcomes for all stakeholders is a key pillar for the unit. In a short period of time, the unit has made significant strides to reaching out to various stakeholders including government, UN agencies, civil society and most importantly our affected communities. My administration will continue to push forward a progressive and inclusive agenda for all citizens.

I would like to thank all those who continue to support the development of our region.

Thank you,

Mayor of Mogadishu and Governor of Benadir Region

  
Abdirahman Omar Osman Yarisow  
Mayor  
Benadir Regional Administration

## MESSAGE FROM THE DS COORDINATOR



**Dr. Hodan Ali**



[@hodansomali](https://twitter.com/hodansomali)

Being back in Somalia and seeing the extreme levels of destitution faced by families and watching thousands of families lose their lives every year due to conflict and natural disasters has profoundly impacted my life and ignited a sense of urgency in my work.

As a primary healthcare practitioner, I've always been driven by the basic principles of equity, access and local ownership of addressing societal issues. Fundamentally, I see displacement being more about the marginalization, lack of provision of basic services and inequitable sharing of resources with affected communities.

Nearly every corner of Mogadishu is home to a displaced family and urban poverty continues to rise dramatically. For the past 18 months, we've grappled with this and more importantly; we've focused our efforts in solving the city's mass displacement crisis.

Setting the institutional foundations to manage displacement has been our main priority for the first quarter of 2019. With the support of partners, the Mayor and the dedicated staff at DSU, I am proud to report that the unit is beginning to unpack displacement through innovative and consultative approaches and made considerable strides to developing regional priorities and a strategy on displacement.

It has been my experience that, when government shows leadership and ownership, real solutions are possible. This isn't to say that a resistance won't be felt to keep afloat the status quo, but to underscore that without a clearly articulated vision from government, the task to secure and improve the lives of nearly 80% of the population that earn less than \$2 a day will remain illusive.

I am a firm believer that we can no longer afford to prescribe to the current mode of aid that only perpetuates chronic dependence, nor can we afford to squander money invested by donors meant to lift communities out of poverty. All levels of government with the support of donors and partners must lead a process that converts current modalities of aid into a more substantive and impactful development strategy that is in line with national and regional priorities. Somalia is ready to bridge the humanitarian-development nexus and a return on investments must be tangible and visible.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues from the international community, local partners and government counter parts whom alongside our unit and the administration are championing finding sustainable solutions for half a million displaced people and host communities that share similar burdens. Special thanks to the vibrant, talented and committed DSU team who work tirelessly to bring this vision to bare fruits.

Thank you,

Humanitarian and Durable Solutions Coordinator for Benadir Region





# DURABLE SOLUTIONS UNIT

## AREAS OF FOCUS

We work to maximize synergies between government and development partners to stimulate new thinking on recurring challenges. We strive to create an enabling environment that reverses urban displacement trends by bringing displaced citizen's voices at the forefront of the durable solutions discourse. Our core priorities are; reducing protection risks through a rights-based approach, increasing access to rights and basic services, promoting social cohesion, and producing livelihood opportunities.

### Finding Durable Solutions to Urban Displacement



## ABOUT EU-REINTEG

EU-REINTEG is an EU funded durable solutions program designed to substantially improve living conditions of IDPs and Refugee Returnees through the establishment of governance systems, increased Housing, Land and Property Rights and social, economic and political inclusion.

### SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

- Strengthening relevant governance structures through capacity building and accountability mechanisms to create the relevant sustainability potential for solutions
- Implementing innovative, replicable and scalable solutions for basic and protective service delivery and employment.
- Producing, by the end of the project, a comprehensive and implementable urban durable solution strategy which includes financing schemes for the scale and complexity of Mogadishu's IDP situation.

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## EUROPEAN UNION INVESTS IN SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR BENADIR'S IDPs

The European Union, in partnership with the Benadir Regional Administration and the United Nations launched a €12 million project to protect and support the reintegration of IDPs in Benadir Region. Officially known as EU-REINTEG, the aim of the project is to facilitate the local integration of Mogadishu's IDP population through enhanced governance, employment and access to basic and protective services.

The establishment of the Durable Solutions Unit wouldn't have been possible without the support of the European Union who continue to champion government owned and government led approaches to addressing Somalia's development needs. EU-REINTEG is the largest durable solutions investment in the country and paves the way for locally driven solutions. The program stands to build up to 300 hundred homes for displaced families and host community in the region. We thank the EU for supporting government efforts at all levels.

*"Government ownership is essential in order to achieve durable solutions. All Governments have the primary responsibility to cater for the needs and protect the rights of displacement-affected communities, but we also know that when Government is involved for instance in preventing unlawful evictions the likelihood of success is far greater than when they are not engaged. The international community needs to be constantly reminded of the importance of building government capacity to provide services if we are really interested in achieving sustainable results. The EU Trust Fund RE-INTEG Programme has capacity-building of, and close cooperation with, the Government of Somalia at the core of the programme. As an example, we are glad to be able to support BRA in its work to monitor and prevent unlawful evictions and support the Mayor's vision to address the displacement crisis and integrate displacement affected communities in Mogadishu."*

Ms. Pilar Palmero (EU—Head of Cooperation)



## European Union launches a €12 million Reinteg programme for Internally Displaced Persons in Benadir region



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*The launch saw the attendance of many high-level officials and actors in the humanitarian-development sphere in Somalia. From left: BRA Humanitarian and Durable Solutions Coordinator Dr. Hodan Ali , Mogadishu Mayor H.E. Abdirahman Osman (ENG. Yarisow) and Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Mahdi Gulleid.*

## BRA launches the Durable Solutions Unit

Benadir Regional Administration officially launched the Durable Solution Unit (DSU) on Friday, January 31st, under the office of the Governor and Mayor of Mogadishu, H.E. Abdirahman Omar Osman (Eng. Yarisow). The unit is responsible for coordinating and consolidating various solutions programming aimed at supporting displacement-affected communities in the nation's capital.

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*"Displacement and migration adversely impacts Somalia's economy and especially damaging to local production and an active labor force. Traditional livelihood systems are collapsing in many parts of the country and potential farmers, fishermen, and rural herders are trapped in Mogadishu IDPs settlements, I am pleased to see BRA move to establish the DSU and their commitment to finding sustainable solutions to displacement. Somali private sector is willing to contribute to this vision and ready to play a vital role on finding durable solutions to Mogadishu displacement."*

*Abdirahman Galambe, Deputy President, Somali Chamber of Commerce and industry*

## Social Incubator Opening in Mogadishu



The creation of a social enterprise incubator for IDPs is in the final stages of completion in Mogadishu's Xamarweyn District. UNDP in partnership with BRA with support from EU-REINTEG will provide downstream mentoring and support for social enterprises and other small businesses.

Dedicated to the late Mohamed Sheikh, Bilaabo Center will support 375 social enterprises and small businesses. In addition, 40 of them will receive financial support and lastly 500 IDPs will receive entrepreneurship and financial literacy training.

[\\*Photo credit: @EU in Somalia](#)

### What does DSU do?

- Translate the Mayor's vision of phasing out displacement by developing solutions-framework and implementing rights-based policies
- Advocate for a sustainable and dignified solution for DACs
- Create synergies between implementing DS partners
- Foster linkages between BRA and FGS
- Coordination of partners and stakeholders
- Facilitate interactions of partners and BRA technical branches with DACs
- Promote networks of advocates that support all aspects of DS (local integration, safe returns and resettlement).

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## How will DSU do it?

- By capacitating BRA departments and districts on addressing DACs needs
- By planning, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating innovative DS initiatives
- By overseeing proper implementation of housing land and tenure security policies
- By allocating the needed revenues into service delivery that support local integration
- By engaging the private sector to invest and create economic and affordable housing opportunities
- By representing BRA at displacement related forums at national and international arenas

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**HUMAN RESOURCES:** 18 staff for the DSU and 4 staff for the USTF recruited. 10 guards for the incubator hired. 5 staff will be brought on to support the incubator.



**CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:** 108 district level staff, 34 District Commissioners (DC) and Deputy DCs, 90 BRA staff have an increased capacity on planning and organizing, and about durable solutions, housing, land and property rights (HLP) and lawful evictions.



**EVICION PREVENTION:** Risk Assessment Tool developed. BRA partner consultation completed and preparation underway for joint mapping of eviction risks in IDP camps. BRA has also drafted an HLP Policy and guideline on evictions. The Unit is working with the FGS to adopt appropriate legislation to ensure protection of IDPs from unlawful evictions through EU-REINTEG.



**LAND & HOUSING:** 4.6 acres of land to construct up to 300 homes for IDPs and city's urban poor have been allocated. DSU engineers and urban planners completed the assessment of the site and are hopeful that social cohesion is possible. Community outreach, beneficiary selection, and design of the homes are underway.



**COORDINATION:** Increased engagement and coordination with partners and donors, NCRI, MoFA, MoHADM, MoPIC and in close coordination with the Office of the Prime Minister on durable solutions and displacement related issues in the region.

## Adjusting to the Impossible

In Jowhar, Aisha was a notable banana farmer and used the income she earned from farming to support her family.

“I remember one day, a banana supplier called me from Mogadishu requesting a large shipment of bananas. My life was good, I miss those times,” says Aisha.

In 2011, a little less than a year before her own displacement, Aisha was sitting at home as she watched many people walking with their

belongings. She would soon learn that those people were fleeing the deadliest drought in Somalia’s recent history.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



*“When Aisha Abukar arrived in Mogadishu from Jowhar in 2012, she knew that her life would never be the same again.”*

### FACTS & FIGURES:

**W**ith over 550,000 displaced people, Mogadishu is the 2nd fastest growing city in the world

**A**bout 55% of IDPs concentrated in 2 of Mogadishu’s 17 districts

**C**hildren under the age of 18 and women make up 80% of IDPs





## BRA IDP POLICY FINALIZED

Early 2019, BRA developed its first ever IDP and Returnees policy. The policy has a durable solutions outlook and covers access to land, tenure security and inclusive development, individual documentation, social inclusion, and access to services among other issues.

The IDP Policy is specific to Benadir and will be implemented by the DSU. It is mostly informed by ongoing efforts to adopt a national IDP policy. As such, the policy serves as a **living document** that will continue to be adapted as the IDP situation in Mogadishu evolves on the ground. The BRA IDP and Returnees Policy will be delivered in collaboration with various government institutions at each level, as well as with national and international organizations.

“We appeal to all agencies and donors at various levels to work with BRA on implementing this policy and that all programmes and intervention related to finding durable solutions for displacement in Mogadishu be guided by this policy to ensure that on-going projects are in line with the government’s agenda and plans.” - H.E. Abdirahman Omar Osman (Eng. Yarisow), Mayor of Mogadishu

[IDP POLICY IN SOMALI:](#)

[IDP POLICY IN ENGLISH:](#)

*“It is the government that has neglected the displaced people. It is they who are supposed to provide the displaced with land. (male, Daynile)”*

## FINDINGS FROM CITIZEN-LED DISCUSSIONS ON DISPLACEMENT AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN MOGADISHU



The Durable Solutions Unit in partnership with the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) and Africa’s Voices Foundation (AVF) have piloted a Common social accountability platform in Benadir region. The platform was mobilized to build public dialogue in Mogadishu on critical displacement topics such as forced evictions, social cohesion, perspectives of displaced and host communities on durable solutions and to gather public opinion to inform ongoing durable solutions programmes and decision-making.

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE REPORT: COMMON SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PLATFORM](#)

Furthermore, ReDSS also recently concluded another study on lessons learnt and practices to support re-integration programming in three cities in Somalia—Mogadishu, Kismayo and Baidoa.

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE REPORT: SOMALIA SOLUTIONS ANALYSIS UPDATE](#)



## HELIWAA SITE ASSESSMENT PROVES SOCIAL COHESION IS POSSIBLE

A team of engineers, urban planners, and environmental scientists made their way to the land allocated by Mogadishu's Mayor to test its suitability for displaced and urban poor families. The team was led by Heliwaa District Commissioner, Abulhakim Omar and he was very excited about his district being the first pilot of the REINTEG housing strategy.

The planned site to construct the homes for displaced families saw is surrounded by markets, a police station, hospital, mosque and more social and community assets that will prove valuable to the social cohesion hopes of BRA's housing strategy and reintegration of displacement affected families.

"The site assessment is a momentous step and we wish to reiterate the importance of understanding the local community, The new communities will need to be absorbed into the fabric of local community life and by mapping social/community assets before we build the houses and upgrading existing structures, both the host and the new community can benefit from its existence. Community cohesion is particularly important in Mogadishu's context as insecurity persists and creating responsible communities that feel attached to their surroundings will help make life in this city enjoyable again, " said BRA Senior Urban Planner, Jibril Abdullahi.



*"I am excited that this pilot is taking place in my district. Re-integration is possible here and we will set an example for other districts to follow." - Abulhakim Omar, Heliwaa District Commissioner*



A mosque and a hospital are located nearby the construction site, also in the vicinity are markets, police station and schools. These social and community assets make it possible for IDPs and host community to interact more.



BRA environmentalist takes sand sample from the site to do further soil testing. This will help engineers know how heavy the structure built on top of the soil can be and other things such as flood risk of the land



# GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

## Citizen Voices

“The solution is for the government to take responsibility for its people because the displaced people are citizens. The government should care for its people by procuring lots of land for them and building houses for people to live in.” (male, Heliwa)

“The government should procure land for displaced people to live on and then later start taxing them.” (female, Hodan)

“There should be mechanisms in place to prevent the challenges that bring about people being displaced. People should come together—both government and individuals—to put aside money and buy them land to settle them in.” (male IDP, Heliwa)

“They [IDPs] can be supported by the government keeping them in one place and so there they can be aware of their problems and can be provided with the necessary help. And they will trust the government because they will see it to be a functional government that takes care of its people.” (female host, Shangani)

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*“Achieving Durable Solutions for displaced people in Somalia will take a huge collective effort. Multi-sector efforts will be required that cut across humanitarian, development and security objectives. Achieving genuine long-term solutions will require investment in government led processes that can, for example: secure land and title deeds, provide security guarantees and ensure civic rights are respected for all citizens. These are but some of the elements that only a state can and must provide in the collective effort to bring about the change in approach needed.”*



*Mr. Seb Fouquet (Senior Humanitarian Adviser at DFID)*

*“Local governments are best placed to directly engage local communities in achieving durable solutions that are fit for purpose and contributes to local reintegration. Agencies can play a pivotal role in providing substantive technical and financial support to enable local governments to facilitate and encourage inclusive and sustainable communities in cities.”*

*Mr. Ishaku Maitumbi (Officer in Charge, UN-Habitat Somalia)*



*“National, regional and local authorities such as BRA have the primary responsibility in leading and coordinating on durable solutions processes for displacement-affected communities. To this end, there is need for concerted efforts to provide support towards strengthening local authorities’ capacities to enable them play a leadership role in (re)integration of displacement-affected communities.”*



*Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat*

*“No programme interventions will contribute to long-term change if they are not designed and undertaken in close collaboration with government and the displacement effected population themselves. Somalia has a federal government and strong regional administrations that control the district authorities responsible for local service delivery and protection.”*

**DANIDA Durable Solutions Program**



## DURABLE SOLUTIONS UNIT BENADIR REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Established under the leadership of the Mayor of Mogadishu and Governor of Benadir Region, the DSU is mandated to seek dignified and sustainable solutions for displacement affected communities.

It serves as a channel of communication between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), development partners, private sector, civil society, DACs and BRA.

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## DONORS AND PARTNERS



The establishment of the Durable Solutions Unit wouldn't have been possible without the support of the European Union (EU) who continue to champion government owned and government led approaches to addressing Somalia's development needs. EU-Reinteg is the largest durable solutions investment in the country and paves the way for locally driven solutions. The program stands to build up to 300 hundred homes for displaced families and host community in the region. We thank the EU for supporting government efforts at all levels.



DFID-UKAid has also made solutions investment in Benadir region with important contributions towards strengthening government capacity. This investment will help the region gain institutional expertise required to deliver basic services which a vital process to state building and stability and will deepen public trust in government institutions. We want to thank the DFID-IOM teams for the constant engagement and close collaborations with DSU on program planning.



From the onset, the World Food Program (WFP) has shown a keen interest in building a stronger partnership with BRA. WFP has embodied the mantra of "doing things differently" by signing the first direct partnership with a local government institution. For the past year, WFP and BRA have been working on developing a social protection strategy for the region and co-delivered the first social safety net activity in 14 districts. This direct partnership will support the region to directly deliver social protection programs. This new WFP/BRA model of working converts traditional approaches of aid to a more sustainable model that gradually transfers the delivery of these vital services to local government. Thank you for the visionary leadership.



I want to take this opportunity to thank World Bank and our implementing partners, UN-HABITAT, UNDP, UNHCR, IOM, DRC and ReDDS. Though the challenges are many, we continue to forge new partnerships towards a common vision and collective outcomes.

## DURABLE SOLUTIONS UNIT

Xamarweyne District  
Mogadishu, Somalia

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