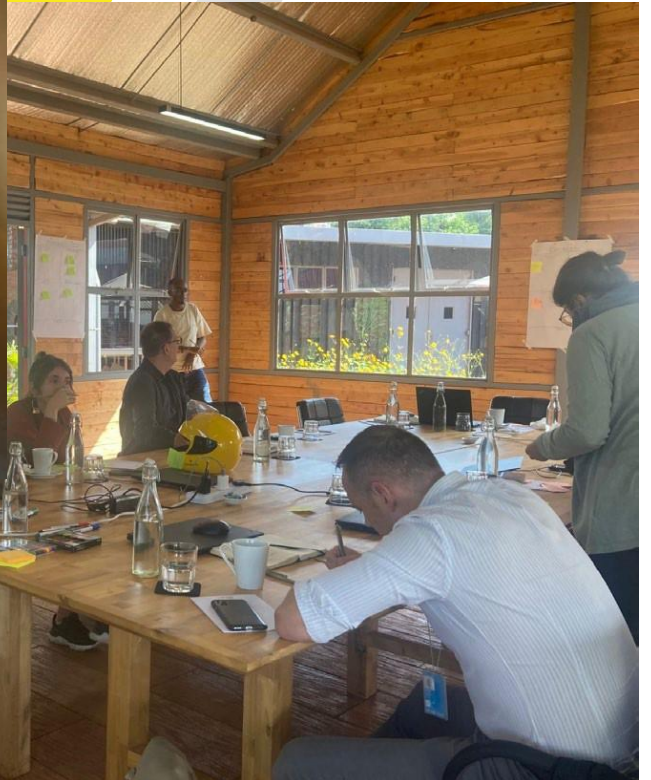




COUNTRY PARTNER

Somalia

Saameynta 2024 Lessons learned



Authors: Federica Acquaviva, Milena Adnyanata, Karel Boers, Sebastian May, Abdirizak Omar, Osman Mohamed Osman, Sophos Sophianos - September, 2024

Edited by: Shuichiro Arafune, Rebecca Rosario Hallin (KIT)

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Executive summary

This document lists the lessons learned, achievements, and challenges experienced by the Saameynta Joint programme (henceforth Saameynta) related to establishing durable solutions for internal displacement. As agreed among implementing partners during a writeshop in June 2024, this report discusses six key thematic areas: land governance, capacities, social accountability, access to basic services, economic development, and investments. It also covers cross-cutting themes and ways to transition into new durable solutions programmes.

Saameynta aims to share this document with a broader audience of partners and practitioners, and use this document – and the process of adaptive learning that lays beyond its draft – to refine its programming activities and apply lessons learned to its future durable solutions programmes.

Introduction

In the first week of June 2024, colleagues from Saameynta’s three implementing partners (IPs) – the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) – came together to capture insights and experiences they have gained since the programme’s inception in 2020. Together, they identified six thematic areas from which this lessons learned document has been developed: social accountability, capacities, economic development, access to services, land governance, and investments. While reflections over activities’ results and impact on targeted beneficiaries will continue to be discussed through other platforms (i.e., annual reports), this document focuses on analyzing the thematic areas from a programmatic perspective, outlining strategic learnings from Saameynta’s implementing partners that could benefit the broader durable solutions programming in Somalia.

Hereafter, we share the achievements, challenges, and gaps identified for each of these theme. These six thematic areas were specifically selected because they have emerged as critical components in the implementation of Saameynta, which aims to achieve durable solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Somalia. By focusing on these areas, the Saameynta programme addresses the foundational and cross-cutting issues that impact the stability, integration, and long-term well-being of displaced communities. Each thematic area is integral to creating a holistic and sustainable approach to development, ensuring that the needs and rights of displacement-affected communities (DACs) are comprehensively met.



The second section of this report reveals the cross-cutting themes of note recognized during the IPs meeting, while the final section describes how the lessons learned from Saameynta can be applied in the design and implementation of future durable solutions programmes.

Thematic areas

1.1 Land governance

As Somalia scores one of the fastest urbanization rates in the world, mainly due to rural-to-urban displacement caused by conflict and environmental degradation accelerated by the effects of climate change, durable solutions in this context cannot ignore the need of a strong focus on land governance to steer managed and equitable urban development where displaced communities can benefit from. Addressing challenges stemming from a displaced population that is mostly willing to permanently settle and integrate in towns remains hindered by insecure tenure leading to forced evictions, sub-standard housing, and lack of available public land for IDPs to settle, but also by low level of institutional capacities in land administration and urban planning.

Saameynta aims to develop solutions through a structured approach to land management and urban planning, likely to improve service delivery and residents' living conditions, reduce disputes and increase security over land tenure. By focusing on building the capacity of land-mandated institutions and putting the right institutional regulatory framework in place, land governance interventions act as a backbone of further programme's interventions at the national level. Key areas of interventions are urban integrated participatory planning, access to land and land justice mechanisms, and improved delivery of land administration and land rights through institutionalization of appropriate infrastructures and systems.

Lessons learned

- (1) The Saameynta programme has learned that interventions addressing displacement must prioritize foundational work on land governance – an approach at the core of durable solutions. In Somalia, where land governance complexities are compounded by shifting policies and a continuously changing situation, it's evident that achieving tenure security requires ongoing follow-up actions beyond initial interventions. Such actions must be based upon localized strategic development frameworks (e.g. district development plans, city development strategies, city extension plans, etc.) and more institutionalized coordination mechanisms between the Federal Member States (FMSs) and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS).
- (2) Sustainable outcomes require more time, resources, local ownership, and political commitment.
- (3) Mainstreaming land governance matters within the programme, and ensuring these are embraced by all IPs, is crucial for sustained impact. A national strategy on how to operationalize the Urban Land Management Laws developed under the programme should be designed, building on synergies with other programmes (i.e., IDSF programme). The design and endorsement of the laws, continuous awareness raising on them, and understanding them, are all crucial elements for them to become relevant and useful. The target audience for these campaigns should be the entire population of the reach of the documents, not just internally-displaced persons (IDPs). Awareness raising towards targeted groups should be inscribed into area-based structures at the district level, to ensure that all the HLP partners mainstream their awareness raising and trainings in a consistent manner to achieve greater impact.
- (4) To enhance tenure security of displacement-affected communities (DACs) households, core activities by implementing partners should be planned from the onset of programming. These should also be the lead initiative that dictate where other durable solutions activities and integrated area-based durable solutions packages are implemented.
- (5) Consider the efficiency and application scale of Land Governance Intervention such as the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) and fit for purpose land administration. For example, STDM seems not suitable for smaller urban centers with very limited capacities of local authorities in land administration. There is a potential opportunity to define additional complementary tools

under the Saameynta programme. More professionalization, digitalization, and predictability of funding for human resources in land departments is essential. This is discussed further in the “Capacities” section.

- (6) In terms of land dispute management, a functioning statutory land governance framework will give people more options in terms of available fora for dispute resolutions, but the formal system will not replace the other land governance frameworks (Xeer, Shari’a) that in Somalia co-exist under the principle of legal pluralism. Strengthening the statutory legal framework for dispute resolutions will contribute to peacebuilding and stabilization by ensuring predictability of the law and detachment from clan dynamics while ruling on cases, but raising awareness among the population and enhancing trust in government mechanisms remain key elements for ensuring that people decide to make use of institutional dispute resolution mechanisms.

What has been achieved

- (1) The enactment of the Urban Land Management Law in Southwest State (SWS), and the subsequent establishment of an operational state interministerial committee, marks a notable achievement. This initiation was followed by a set of training and awareness-raising activities for government authorities and public notaries, which was crucial to prevent these laws from being mere documents. In the meantime, the SWS Ministry of Public Works, Reconstruction and Housing initiated reaching out to districts across SWS, for public awareness campaign on the ULML and establishment of land departments (Xudur, Berdaale, Barawe, Afgooye).
- (2) Another success involved increasing the capacities of land departments across FMSs through comprehensive training exercises, with assistance via partnerships with organizations such as The Hague Academy for Local Governance. Saameynta’s support to land departments, transitioning them towards more effective taxation systems, as well as in the development of inclusive city strategies, demonstrates commendable strides towards sustainable urban development.

Challenges and gaps

- (1) Discussions among IPs and the FGS should include more guidance on good practices and policy directions, especially regarding urban and regional planning tools and temporary tenure security solutions. Capacity-building efforts must be followed-up to ensure integration and sustainability.
- (2) Fundamental challenges in land governance include the inability of municipality land departments to effectively measure impact, which in turn relates to the existential gap in funding for these entities due to flawed taxation systems. By extension, this impacts the programme, as it is dependent on the data developed by the land departments. While focus should be on improving internal reporting within the local government structure, further focus for future programming should be on third party monitoring (i.e., GLTN, GIST) to elaborate on feasible methods for impact measurement, with the long-term view of capacitating FMS institutions to capture impact in line with their oversight functions.
- (3) Inadequate recording of tenure documents by the municipality land departments, along with the lack of a proper digital information management system and resources to sustain interventions in digitized land information management systems, pose significant risks to tenure security and land governance. In this regard, there is need to better explain the tools (STDM, fit-for-purpose land administration) and their related impact upon specific interventions, to all stakeholders involved.

What is still in the pipeline

- (1) The Saameynta programme aims to offer platforms that allow for practical exchanges and discussions among stakeholders (FMS, municipalities, communities, international actors), facilitating solutions to challenges faced in cities such as Garowe and Bosaso, also with regards to further raising awareness and capacity building over the urban regulatory framework under the leadership of Puntland Ministry of Public Work.
- (2) Follow-up actions for the STDM will be prioritized, ensuring that efforts to map tenure security lead to tangible improvements in security and land governance.
- (3) Findings from ongoing local research on land value capture in Bosaso (wider Gribble area) will be

used to inform strategies to leverage land value for sustainable development and to be integrated into municipal by-laws. This will be conducted in conjunction with an initiative from Bosaso Municipality, designed to revise the current property taxation management to be based upon land value categories (banding system) with attention to inclusivity and IDP needs.

- (4) Efforts will continue to develop guidelines and directives for local authorities, so they can operationalize legal provisions for public land designation in city extension areas (so-called 30% rule in Puntland). This action will contribute to achieving a better understanding of the benefits of planning vibrant and mixed-land use neighbourhoods, and the advantages of upgrading informal settlements with high numbers of marginalized communities. In turn, this enhanced awareness can be used to help governments recognize the comprehensive benefits of upgrading informal settlements, fostering local ownership and commitment to inclusive urban development.

1.2 Capacities

Durable solutions interventions require strong ownership by both the government and communities in order to be successful and aid in enhancing trust between citizens and government. As such, Saameynta aims to increase the capacity of authorities and DACs to plan, leverage, finance, and implement durable solutions at scale, and reinforce mutual accountability. To ensure that government ownership is reflected across the three different levels of governance and their specific roles – oversight and coordination at the FGS level, monitoring and legislation at the FMS level, and operations at the municipal level – the programme aims to build the capacity of municipal authorities and those acting as focal points within line ministries. These actions will be paired with capacity injections across all levels of government governance in the form of trainings, salary payments to key personnel, and provision of equipment.

Lessons learned

- (1) The programme has learned that a unified capacity-building approach among international agencies is critical for coherent and effective programme implementation.
- (2) Sustainability of programme impact must be prioritized through the integration of capacity-building efforts into government systems and securing ongoing funding for personnel. Funding for personnel whose salaries are currently supported by the programme needs to be negotiated with relevant authorities before capacity strengthening activities are commenced.
- (3) Mitigating challenges related to the flow of information and coordination allows government officials to be aware of activities conducted under Saameynta and wisely plan the distribution of resources among different areas under the various programmes they oversee. Thus, the Saameynta programme will focus on the continuous engagement and skill enhancement of Focal Persons at the FMS, ensuring they are well-integrated with municipal activities and programme management. This approach will not only afford the Saameynta IPs access to line ministries, but also enable the ministries to actively contribute to programming.
- (4) Improved coordination mechanisms between the Federal Government, FMSs, and municipalities are essential for cohesive implementation. Saameynta has learned that funding FMS-based area coordinators through the Resident Coordination Office (RCO) can be a crucial step towards harmonized durable solutions interventions across the country.
- (5) Empowering local authorities and reducing their reliance on external advisors will strengthen local governance and decision-making in durable solutions activities. This could be achieved through the training of (national) advisors who could be deployed to the municipalities aligned with a post-programme retention plan.

What has been achieved

- (1) The Saameynta programme has developed a comprehensive plan for capacity support, targeting government authorities. Various training activities have been implemented to enhance the technical knowledge of authorities. The initiative has also focused on professionalizing local authorities' capacities in managing land value capture transactions and using digital platforms for

community engagement and financial management (Consul Platform).

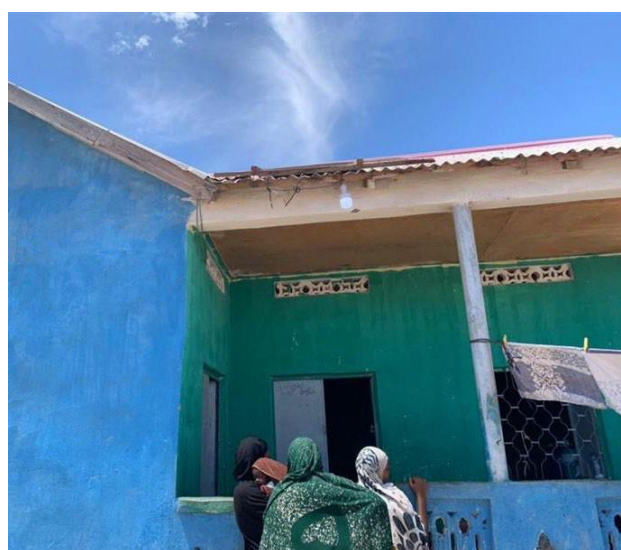
- (2) Focal Persons have been recruited from the line ministries of FMSs to provide dedicated support to the programme's initiatives. By deploying advisors to support municipalities in political-economy analysis, tax collection practices, and service delivery, the Saameynta programme successfully gained significant access and had a direct involvement in the decision-making process in the municipality of Bosaso.

Challenges and gaps

- (1) Achieving a unified capacity-building approach among various agencies, particularly durable solutions stakeholders, has been difficult, and hindered cohesive efforts. Ensuring that capacity-building initiatives are sustainably embedded within government institutions has been a concern for the sustainability beyond the programme, especially regarding the maintenance of Focal Persons' roles and salaries post-programme.
- (2) The engagement of Saameynta Focal Persons has been limited due to their low capacity levels and detachment from municipalities, where most activities are implemented. Coordination among government institutions, including interactions at federal and municipal levels, has been lacking. The limited capacity of municipalities has necessitated the hiring of external advisors for mayors, which undermines local authority empowerment, and the sustainability of these positions remains to be seen and has not yet been discussed.
- (3) Additional capacity gaps include the underutilization of relevant data on displacement, socioeconomic development, and spatial impact due to info-monopoly structures; a lack of equipment for professionalizing government functions; insufficient coordination with regional bodies like IGAD and EAC; and inadequate inclusion of the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in capacity-building efforts.

What is still in the pipeline

- (1) Continuous capacity-building activities are planned for implementing partners (NGOs and CSOs), with ongoing FMS capacity injections to support these efforts.
- (2) Reflections and assessments on the deployment of an advisor to the mayor in Bosaso are underway.
- (3) Enhanced coordination mechanisms among federal, member state, and municipal levels are being developed to improve the programme's cohesiveness.
- (4) Strategies are being devised to ensure the sustainability of capacity-building efforts, including embedding these initiatives into government systems and securing ongoing funding for capacitated personnel. These planned activities aim to address existing gaps and strengthen the overall impact of the Saameynta programme.
- (5) Improve coordination with implementing partners from local governance programmes across Somalia (i.e., Dowlaatkab).



1.3 Social accountability

Social accountability enables dialogue and engagement between DACs and the government, with the aim to restore the social contract. It is crucial to bring local authorities and communities closer together, capacitate CSOs and DACs on social accountability, and link bottom-up approaches to the policy level. Saameynta

enhances social accountability through community-based planning (CBP), leading the Community Action Plan (CAP), guiding the Social Cohesion Strategy (including formative assessment), and conducting the Consul Platform for e-governance.

Lessons learned

- (1) A significant lesson learned is the importance of involving communities, local authorities, and government at the design stage of social accountability initiatives, and reflecting on lessons learned from predecessor programmes in this sphere. Often, aid programmes are pre-designed and only introduced to communities at a later stage, resulting in a lack of transparency and trust. Engaging key stakeholders from the beginning ensures that assistance provided is relevant, transparent, and less prone to diversion and exclusion.
- (2) Prioritizing enhanced public information sharing is critical. Many existing accountability mechanisms are programme-specific and sometimes fully digital, which can be confusing and ineffective for the communities they serve. More public forums and inclusive spaces are needed, at which communities can learn from both the government and international actors about displacement initiatives in place, and provide direct feedback to aid providers and local authorities on their interventions.
- (3) It is important to ensure that feedback mechanisms can effectively escalate community concerns to decision-makers. Many current channels are managed by aid providers, leading to concerns around transparency and accountability. There needs to be a greater role for local and federal governments in the design and implementation of these mechanisms to ensure they are responsive and inclusive.
- (4) Expanding the concept of representation within social accountability processes is essential. The clan system in Somalia significantly influences access to social assistance, often leading to the exclusion of marginalized groups. Efforts must be made to include these groups more effectively to ensure that social cohesion and accountability processes are fair and comprehensive.
- (5) Saameynta has learned that using training alone to capacitate Somali FMSs on the Social Cohesion Strategy and Consul Platform is insufficient. To be more in line with the operational context, characterized by limited IT skills and infrastructures, capacitation would be better achieved through physical town hall meetings, to complement the e-governance platform, and enhanced stakeholder mapping on social cohesion.

What has been achieved

- (1) A notable achievement has been the successful implementation of CAPs in Baidoa and Bosaso. These plans have become essential tools for guiding discussions between local authorities and DACs.
- (2) The development and launch of the Southwest State Social Cohesion Strategy has been pivotal. Cooperation with CSOs, such as the Civic Forum on Human Development, has been particularly effective, resulting in a high-quality Social Cohesion Strategy.
- (3) The introduction of the Consul Platform for e-governance in the Southwest State has provided a digital means to enhance social accountability and community engagement.

Challenges and gaps

- (4) Due to insufficient reflection and capturing of lessons learned from previous durable solutions programmes, designing the social cohesion and accountability component of the Saameynta programme has proven to be challenging.
- (5) The development of the Southwest State Social Cohesion Strategy faced delays, and capacity injections to the Southwest State Ministry of Interior did not yield immediate results.
- (6) The social accountability toolkits developed for Southwest State were underutilized. There may be many reasons for this, including that the toolkits were developed before the social cohesion strategy was in place, or that the government did not find using them to be relevant or beneficial enough. It could also be the case that the government lacked the capacity to deploy them in the field.
- (1) While the Consul Platform was launched in

SWS and local authorities were trained, the platform has not yet been widely used. As the Platform was only launched recently, it is too early to assess the reasons behind its underutilization. However, as seen in other experiences, it seems that training needs to be accompanied by awareness raising efforts and grassroots engagement for these kinds of platforms to get off the ground.

- (2) The absence of awareness-raising activities for community capacity-building exercises has compounded these challenges, limiting the programme's effectiveness.



What is still in the pipeline

- (1) In Puntland, the Social Cohesion Strategy and the Consul Platform are in development. A local service provider was selected through open tender to conduct the complete social cohesion workstream, including stakeholder mapping, assessment of existing initiatives, drafting of the strategy, and training of the FMSs. Special consideration is given to engaging local partners to map tools and initiatives on social accountability.
- (2) The Saameynta programme plans to conduct a protection risk assessment in Bosaso and offer training on mental health and psychosocial support, communication, and financial literacy, to support improved social cohesion in DACs.
- (3) To strengthen the Consul Platform and the Social Cohesion Strategy in Southwest State, Saameynta intends to organize physical town hall meetings at the neighbourhood level. These meetings aim to raise awareness about developed social accountability tools and link bottom-up approaches, from CSOs to policy. From this, discussions will be facilitated between local authorities and DACs, populating the e-governance platform and generating wider dissemination.

1.4 Access to services

IDPs face challenges in accessing essential services, and these barriers interface with various structural problems, such as competition over resources, discrimination, poor awareness of IDP rights, and lack of social safety nets.

To foster access to services in the targeted cities, the Saameynta programme will employ both direct and indirect service delivery models. Through direct service provision (funding for infrastructure construction based on community priorities), the programme will build community confidence and ensure rapid social cohesion by minimizing competition for resources and increasing access to services.

Conversely, indirect mechanisms (co-funding mechanisms, development briefs) will be used in service delivery to create space for local service providers – including private sector stakeholders, NGOs, and community based organizations – to apply their knowledge, skills, and services for efficient project delivery in a way that enables continuity after the donor funding phase.

Lessons learned

- (1) The Saameynta programme has learned that improving access to basic services requires more than just traditional humanitarian approaches. Innovative service delivery methods that involve the private sector and public-private partnerships (PPPs) are required to ensure sustainability and attractiveness for investors. These approaches must consider the vulnerabilities of the communities served, ensuring that enhanced services do not lead to increased costs for relocated populations. It is crucial to adopt a “leave no-one behind” perspective to maintain affordability and accessibility for all residents.

- (2) Another key lesson learned is the importance of creating livable environments in relocation sites, which meet residents' needs and attract long-term investment. Achieving this not only involves increasing access to essential services in underdeveloped areas, but also showcasing efficient service provision models that can attract future investments. By leveraging the increased land value resulting from infrastructure improvements, the programme can create potential for long-term investment.
- (3) To integrate services, it is vital to enhance linkages and mobility between relocation sites and urban areas. It is also crucial to expand service delivery to targeted sites while simultaneously making existing services in relocation neighborhoods appealing for host communities.

What has been achieved

- (1) Basic services offered include access to land, housing, water infrastructures, credit, and livelihood opportunities. Specific projects based on community priorities have also been implemented, such as micro-irrigation systems and market fences in Baidoa and a football field in Gribble.
- (2) Housing typologies developed in Barwaaqo have set new standards for other programmes, influencing designs in different site locations within Baidoa.
- (3) Coordination with other UN agencies, such as UNHCR and UNCDF, has been strengthened – particularly in planning infrastructure and services. This has ensured alignment with city strategies and reduced uncertainties around future projects.
- (4) In order to support the long-term visions of citizens and local authorities, continuous consultations among implementing partners have led to a better managed spatial development of sites.

Challenges and gaps

- (1) Once construction projects are completed, there is a need for sustainable maintenance and additional investments to scale-up infrastructures – such as building more houses or improving the piping system for the borehole in Barwaaqo. It is important to continue seeking funding for the sustainable maintenance and development of infrastructure.
- (2) Strengthening area-based coordination structures, including spatial monitoring and foundational service delivery activities, is essential.
- (3) It is critical to develop more climate-adaptive solutions to service delivery.
- (4) More consideration should be given on how to better leverage the role of the private sector as service provider, starting from the early stage of the programme.

(1) What is still in the pipeline

- (1) Looking ahead, Saameynta plans to build several infrastructures in Bosaso and Baidoa (houses, water infrastructures, community prioritized projects such as health centre, public spaces, waste management facilities, etc.) that will enhance socio-economic rights for DACs, complemented by site projects identified under development briefs. These efforts aim to demonstrate that integrated area development and site services are achievable through proper planning, coordination, and monitoring.
- (2) Resource mobilization (through development briefs) is also crucial. Not all investments need to come from the programme budget.
- (3) Leveraging increased land value resulting from infrastructure development, especially in relocation sites where land is publicly owned, remains a critical aspect to address. It is vital to ensure that infrastructure development leads to sustainable and inclusive growth.
- (4) The programme will focus on enhancing linkages between relocation sites and urban areas, supporting towns and private sector actors in expanding service delivery to targeted sites and creating appealing services for both relocated and host communities. Entry points for this are still being identified, but the objective is to enhance human mobility across urban/peri-urban areas to foster integration.

1.5 Economic development

Saameynta’s approach to economic development is rooted in a comprehensive understanding of local economies – achieved by performing economic analyses and labour market or feasibility assessments to identify entry points to support demand-driven livelihoods opportunities that reflect the structure of the economy. This economy-wide approach to growth, employment, and livelihoods by supporting local businesses and institutions aims to be a longer-term support and complement to humanitarian actions. By providing access to credit, business skills development, and guidance to enterprises, Saameynta enables businesses to expand and scale their operations, subsequently creating more jobs. This increase in job opportunities directly leads to improved livelihoods for individuals, greater economic stability for communities, and promotes a stronger, more resilient local economy.

Lessons learned

- (1) Short-term livelihood support alone is insufficient for achieving durable solutions. A comprehensive approach is required that includes both immediate support and long-term planning. Addressing immediate needs through cash-for-work programmes and offering livelihood support for DAC-owned businesses helps meet basic needs and jumpstart income generation. However, sustainable solutions require partnering with the private sector to facilitate access to credit and provide training programmes focused on business skills such as financial management and marketing.
- (2) From the outset, the programme has seen how land tenure security interacts with livelihood opportunities that can be further leveraged to strengthen IDP communities.
- (3) As per Saameynta’s assessment, registered companies are more sustainable than unregistered businesses. Providing support on business registration and inclusive financing is pivotal to enhance sustainability.
- (4) Building the capacity of government institutions to support Somali businesses in the long-term is essential for sustained support and economic development.
- (5) The existing education and training opportunities available to many Somalis may not fully align with the needs of modern businesses. To bridge this gap and be able to offer more relevant training opportunities, collaboration is needed among the private sector, educational institutions, and government agencies.

What has been achieved

- (1) Comprehensive assessments done at the outset of the programme identified viable livelihood



opportunities for IDPs in sectors including agriculture, livestock, and fishery. In Baidoa, the agriculture, livestock, and poultry sectors were found to be the most promising, while Bosaso offered opportunities in agriculture, fishery, and trade services.

- (2) The programme has also facilitated capacity-building of the Enterprise Development Unit in Baidoa, which provides business development skills to IDPs and partners with local banks to simplify loan criteria and reduce interest rates for IDPs. These efforts have been instrumental in creating a foundation for long-term economic stability for displaced communities.

Challenges and gaps

- (1) Many businesses in Somalia remain unregistered, due to weak governance and insecurity. This

issue has hindered the programme’s ability to match IDPs with job opportunities in registered businesses, and also prevents businesses from accessing necessary support and resources.

- (2) There is a significant skills gap between the current capabilities of IDPs and the needs of modern businesses, making it difficult for IDPs to secure employment opportunities.
- (3) Considering the role of the private sector in providing employment opportunities for IDPs is a key area of focus. However, collaboration between the private sector, educational institutions, and government agencies is also needed to bridge the gap between the skills provided by training programmes and the needs of modern businesses.
- (4) Limited access to finance further exacerbates employment challenges, as many IDPs and small businesses struggle to obtain the necessary capital to start or expand ventures.
- (5) Poor infrastructure in Somalia, including inadequate transportation and communication networks, further limits economic opportunities and the effectiveness of business operations.
- (6) The absence of access to land for IDPs complicates efforts to integrate them into business and employment opportunities. This is especially the case in the agriculture and livestock sectors, which require secure land tenure for successful implementation.

What is still in the pipeline

- (1) Saameynta plans to support private sector actors by providing capacity building support, mentorship, and coaching. This will empower businesses to participate in durable solutions for IDPs and enhance livelihood opportunities through job creation.
- (2) The programme aims to focus on evidence-based approaches for livelihood interventions to ensure effectiveness and suitability for the specific context. Targeting registered businesses for these initiatives is crucial, as they are more sustainable and offer greater employment opportunities compared to unregistered ones.
- (3) Refining the activities to support the Enterprise Development Units at the chamber of commerce to better target sectors that employ IDPs.

1.6 Investments

With an 18-month period remaining for the programme’s implementation, Saameynta has recently entered the investment pathway, which will be consolidated throughout 2025. The essential components for this stage are development briefs, investment fora, and fostering engagement with the private sector. Through the drafting and dissemination of development briefs (led by municipal authorities), the programme will help identify and attract major investments from private, government, multilateral sources in mixed-use land development packages and urban public works, and link these with durable solutions at scale through the resulting land value increments. Saameynta’s IPs consider the investment pathway as a viable exit strategy for the targeted cities.

Lessons learned

- (1) The programme has learned that land tenure is crucial for achieving development goals. Investing in land that can sustain itself requires consideration of land tenure and livelihood opportunities from the outset.
- (2) The impact of integrated development briefs is maximized when they incorporate capacity-building and service delivery models. Considerations over the sustainability and scalability of investments need to be prioritized.
- (3) By involving private sector actors early on, beyond development briefs, their expertise and resources can be leveraged throughout the implementing process. Each development brief must include a clear statement on the business model and case, detailing who will take over the business investment and infrastructure.
- (4) Area-based coordination should be used as a strategic tool among implementing partners and the government, emphasizing capacity-building to ensure cohesive and effective implementation.
- (5) Major investments from diverse sources should focus on generating land value increments that finance infrastructure for IDP durable solutions at scale, ensuring DAC inclusivity. The private

sector should collaborate with communities and local authorities to support service delivery, livelihoods, social and public infrastructure, and other investment opportunities.

What has been achieved

- (1) Development briefs have been initiated, mixed-use land development packages have been introduced, and livelihood support (including through trainings and the facilitations of bank loans) has been provided to communities affected by displacement. These achievements have laid a strong foundation for sustainable development and economic growth in the targeted areas.
- (2) Collaborations with local authorities and communities has ensured that the activities aimed at investments are aligned with local needs and priorities, contributing to the overall success of the programme.

Challenges and gaps

- (1) As the humanitarian mindset is still prevailing in Somalia, some municipalities lack solid of commitment towards durable solutions and understanding of potential benefits coming from developmental actions aimed at addressing priorities of vulnerable groups and integrating IDPs in the city fabric. This hampers progress, and communities remain unaware of their priorities, leading and leads to misaligned efforts, contributing to people's lack of trust in the government.
- (2) Ensuring that investments follow the framework outlined under Saameynta requires better coordination between the Saameynta programme, the government and other programmes and consortiums, to avoid competition over proposed projects.
- (3) Limited funds further complicate the prioritization of development packages.
- (4) Outcomes may take many years to materialize, potentially extending beyond the current programme's timeframe.
- (5) Coordination meetings with the local government through Saameynta's sister programme, Danwadaag, have been somewhat effective in Baidoa. However, coordination is fragmented in Bosaso, with informal discussions held with the municipality and separate Saameynta IP meetings conducted with other stakeholders.
- (6) DACs should be involved in investment forums in a sustainable manner, to ensure their perspectives and needs are considered. Private sector engagement is crucial for long-term success, and area-based coordination among humanitarian and development partners in Bosaso must be improved under municipal leadership. Clear strategies to sustain business models for private investors should be delineated.

What is still in the pipeline

- (1) The investment pathway remains a critical component of Saameynta, as it aims to consolidate various categorical elements into a cohesive plan for implementation. This pathway encompasses significant investments from private, government, and bi- and multi-lateral sources, focusing on mixed-use land development packages and urban public works. These investments are intended to generate land value increments that can finance and build infrastructure for DACs and durable solutions at scale. However, some important steps are still pending – either in continuation or having not yet started. One essential pending component is the municipality's ownership – with the UN's support – of the investment pathway. This involves drafting comprehensive development packages focused on infrastructure provision and creating livelihood opportunities for DACs.
- (2) Investment forums and development briefs are also core activities in the pipeline. These forums and briefs will play a crucial role in attracting investment and providing detailed plans and strategies to support sustainable development in the region. The investment pathway aims to connect large investments with lasting solutions at a great scale, using land value increases and making sure that community-level investments are consistent with wider urban development plans.
- (3) Another critical endeavor is helping DAC's cultivate businesses through access to credit and livelihood interventions to enhance their economic prospects and foster community growth.
- (4) The programme will create clear avenues for private sector engagement with communities and

local authorities, fostering an enabling environment for PPP investments in social and public infrastructure and basic services for DACs.

- (5) Saameynta will leverage the value generated by urbanization and infrastructure investments to catalyze a wider range of community-based durable solution priorities in Baidoa and Bosaso. This includes supplementing the limited funding of other existing durable solutions interventions through community-managed funds, ensuring that communities realize their own collective priorities

2. Cross-cutting themes

This section reflects on the lessons learned in relation to integrating and mainstreaming gender equality and climate adaptation considerations into Saameynta. These themes have been identified as cross-cutting issues, and their incorporation into the programme is essential to achieving holistic, sustainable impact. Constantly reflecting on these themes ensures that interventions are relevant, equitable, and responsive to the needs and challenges of different groups (i.e., women or IDPs particularly affected by climatic disasters).

Additionally, their integration ensures that the programme does not inadvertently reinforce gender biases, ignore climate impacts, or overlook important data insights. By embedding such considerations into the core framework, the programme can achieve more comprehensive and effective outcomes that are both inclusive and resilient, even in activities where these themes are not the primary focus.

Gender

Displacement is a barrier to improving living conditions for all affected, and it impacts women and girls disproportionately. Based on the recognition that gender inequality begins in the household level and is reinforced by informal practices and formal institutional arrangements, in Somalia the most salient challenges women face included: sexual and gender-based violence, impaired access and ownership to housing, land and property, lack of meaningful participation in decision-making, and limited access to services and resources. Saameynta therefore recognizes that gendered dimensions of displacement need to be addressed strategically throughout its programming, as different groups require different interventions to be able to access durable solutions and different interventions may have different consequences on diverse gender groups.

Within the programme, Saameynta faced challenges and demonstrated gaps in its approach to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. These included a gender imbalance within its core team, as well as a lack of consistent understanding and application of gender as a concept, which impacted (gender sensitive) engagement with local stakeholders and the implementation of activities and project documentation. Additionally, the programme struggled to sufficiently address structural power inequalities and lacked clarity in its theory of change and pathways towards gender equality. Addressing these challenges and gaps is essential for Saameynta to be best positioned to address and advocate for gender equality among IDPs in Somalia.

To overcome these challenges, Saameynta must – in its design phase – continue to prioritize and institutionalize gender mainstreaming across all aspects of the programme. This involves ensuring gender balance within the core team; providing team members with comprehensive training on gender concepts and analysis; and embedding gender considerations in all programme documents, strategies, and activities from the outset. By integrating gender perspectives into the programme's design phase, Saameynta can lay a strong foundation to effectively address gender disparities and promote women's empowerment.

Climate

Somalia is a country particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, facing higher frequency of climate-induced disasters, unpredictability of climatic patterns, food insecurity, rising temperatures and increasingly erratic and unpredictable rains (droughts and floods), rising sea levels, groundwater salination, severe storms and land degradation. These phenomena layer on precarious social, economic and political conditions, as well as on the ongoing armed conflict with Non-State Armed Forces, impairing the Somalia's adaptive capacity by restraining access to livelihoods and to basic services essential to guarantee human rights of the Somali population. By supporting and strengthening durable solutions to displacement, Saameynta is therefore tackling one of the consequences triggered by climate change, namely climate-induced displacement.

Climate change and environmental degradation of the region will likely continue to increase in frequency and intensity – meaning it will be crucial to establish a climate pillar in future programming structures. At the same time, fast urbanization rates and the lack of proper urban planning will magnify the vulnerability of the urban population in terms of physical assets and economy. As migration has been historically used as a coping strategy to deal with environmental shocks, solutions in Somalia must be seen through a climate lens, in order to build resilience to climate shocks and enable communities to adapt to the changing environment they live in. Therefore, it is important to streamline climate resilient considerations and climate adaptation measures into area- and territorial-based approaches.



3. Informing new durable solutions programmes

The strong focus on achieving durable solutions to internal displacement, shifting from a humanitarian to a developmental perspective, is a relatively recent development. While durable solutions programmes have increased in the last decade, they are still undergoing a learning journey in terms of adapting to different contexts on the ground and identifying successful interventions for scaling. Saameynta is a pilot programme in the durable solutions sphere and, stemming from its experiences, the below have been identified as key programming components for the introduction of developmental solutions in Somalia. Although these are not new concepts for most practitioners, they should be considered in the specific context of durable solutions – whereby activities are no longer short-term humanitarian interventions, but solutions with durability and sustainability at their core.

Lessons learned

- (1) A key lesson learned from the project initiation phase (PIP) experience is that while an inception or transition phase is crucial for starting a new durable solutions programme, it must be supported by robust **coordination**, especially in a multi-agency programme.
- (2) A joint planning mechanism for **programme governance** should be established during the PIP. The mechanism should enable stakeholders to collaboratively develop work plans, budgets, and a results framework, all merged into a comprehensive project document that includes **area targeting and localization**. Working together across agencies as a cohesive team is vital to plan effectively and ensure all elements are aligned.
- (3) A strong Programme Management Unit (PMU) is essential to ensure the coherence and integration of foundational assessments, such as **stakeholder mapping** and studies on land governance and economic analysis, through a data-driven approach.
- (4) A durable solutions programme that is both **adaptive** and predictable in its funding can significantly enhance its implementation, as it enables **flexibility** in programming while ensuring stable financing – which is critical for the successful rollout of new projects. Such a design also allows for the assessment of **suitability of tools, mechanisms, and the sequencing of activities**. Taking this approach would enhance coordination, ensure timely completion of necessary groundwork, and facilitate a smoother transition into the core programme, avoiding the fragmentation and delays experienced during the PIP.
- (5) The Federal Government’s view is that each durable solutions programme is a tool that supports people to enter a single, specific pathway to solutions. In line with this, a stronger

compartmentalization of programming could be beneficial in terms of resource allocation. Although there is still the need to lay down foundations in several key durable solutions areas, narrowing down the focus to a few notable pathways under each programme would reduce the dispersion of resources and enable IP interventions to be more effective.



Challenges and gaps

Project initiation phase/transition phase

The PIP of the Saameynta programme, which commenced in 2019, faced numerous challenges and gaps that hindered its effectiveness. Despite its intention to set the stage for smooth implementation by conducting essential studies and groundwork, the PIP encountered significant difficulties.

The team's initial vision was to identify target cities using an evidence-based methodology; negotiate with IPs on tasks, responsibilities, and budgets; and

deliver comprehensive assessments on land governance, economic analysis, and gender. However, these elements were individualized by each IP, resulting in a lack of coherence. Misunderstandings regarding funding further complicated matters, leading to incomplete elements. The PIP, lasting two years, failed to facilitate a seamless transition into the core Saameynta programme. This extended period caused a disjointed start, with standalone assessments, no developed programme team or

PMU, and significant time gaps between some assessments and the programme's commencement.

With regard to the PIP, and when commissioning any assessment in general, reflections should be made

on how it interlinks with other activities: if it does not, it should not be commissioned.

External and internal overlaps/stakeholder mapping

During the PIP, a mapping exercise was supposed to take place to identify the stakeholders acting in the durable solutions sphere and their capacities. However, this was never conducted in a consistent fashion. Disregarding other programmes' activities (or even ignoring the existence of some programmes in the target locations, especially where many actors are operating on the ground, as with the case of Baidoa) can hinder the potential to leverage synergies and may cause overlapping. While some UN-led programmes were taken into account, those run by NGOs (especially local ones) were ignored; leading to missed opportunities to take advantage of others' contextual knowledge and bottom-up tailored interventions.

Moreover, interventions made, or planned to be made by non-traditional donors – which may liaise bilaterally with municipal or state authorities and are faster in implementation – should be captured during the initial stakeholder mapping. This is to

avoid problematic situations, such as when the Qatari Foundation took over a plot of land to build houses in Baidoa, but nobody was aware of their plan until construction began. Mapping stakeholders' activities in the DS landscape will also ensure that development of the city follows the plan sponsored by local authorities, allocating different responsibilities to different actors and encouraging coordination rather than competition.

Mapping activities is also important in terms of development briefs: stakeholders need to be aware of the projects sponsored under these documents, so that they do not implement the same activities in different locations, and do not compete to implement different projects in the same site location. This exercise should be paired with solid operational presence on the ground so that information can be disseminated in a timely manner.

Coordination

The coordination structure of the programme presented challenges and gaps, particularly in the establishment and operationalization of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) that was envisioned for internal coordination. Despite a clear internal structure with the PMU, the JSC remained unrealized throughout two years of active implementation due to significant hurdles – notably the lack of human capacity within the RCO to coordinate high-level decision-makers from government, donors, and agencies to come together. This gap hindered effective high-level decision-making and strategic oversight.

Staff turnover in the government and agencies, along with the dispersion of Saameynta team members across multiple locations (including Nairobi, Mogadishu, and target cities), further complicated coordination efforts. However, this dispersed staffing model did present opportunities for engagement with donors, stakeholders, and government agencies at various levels. A key lesson learned is the importance of establishing coordination structures that are feasible and sustainable, with clear roles, responsibilities, and capacity-building measures in place from the outset to ensure effective internal coordination and stakeholder engagement.

Programme governance

The delayed staffing process and lack of involvement from implementing staff during the design phase posed significant challenges to the programme's implementation. This resulted in a lack of institutional knowledge transfer and understanding at the onset of the project, leading to delays and inefficiencies.

Additionally, the reluctance to embrace adaptive programming and the protectionism of mandates has impacted the programme's ability to effectively address emerging needs and adapt to changing circumstances. Vital assessments, such as the

housing and land market assessment, were also not conducted. Moreover, difficulties in transferring ownership of key initiatives, such as the development briefs, between agencies further exacerbated delays and inefficiencies.

A key lesson learned is the importance of fostering institutional collaboration and flexibility from the outset, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the design phase. A culture of adaptability must be promoted to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme.

Area targeting

The Saameynta programme implements different sets of activities leading to durable solutions pathways. For instance, in Somalia, durable solutions are often linked to providing basic services for IDPs in a relocation site, such as Barwaaqo. However, integrating IDPs into a relocation site on land provided by the municipality that is located far away from the city centre can be costly, due to the fact that basic services and livelihoods need to be provided and road access improved. Thus, providing durable solutions to the wider population of IDPs and the host community in a city at large might be more cost efficient. The programme could reach more beneficiaries and be more impactful if it targets DACs residing in a city at large instead of IDPs in relocation sites. This, however, requires advocacy among the government and different stakeholders.

An approach for Saameynta 2.0 could be to layer several activities – such as housing/rental subsidies, livelihood support, training, and other support – for the most vulnerable DACs, to put these people on a durable solution pathway. Achieving this will require conducting an encompassing area-based assessment of the living situations and needs of DACs during the inception/transition phase, and the correct sequencing of activities layered in durable solutions packages for the target population. It will also necessitate a definition for when IDPs are considered to be out of displacement and on the solution pathway (e.g. intention to integrate, safety and security, and low risk of re-displacement).

Data (usage) and knowledge management

In a context like Somalia, where several international actors and government entities collect and share population and displacement data in an inconsistent fashion, the significance of a harmonised statistical framework on IDP statistics for comparable data cannot be underestimated. In line with the importance accorded to evidence-based programming for solutions, and with the government's willingness to lead on measuring displacement data through an agreed monitoring framework, emphasis is placed on coordinating data collection and analysis with all the relevant stakeholders.

The programme needs reliable data that the government and UN agree on to inform Saameynta



programming. To guide and target Saameynta's expansion, it is necessary to use existing tools, such as LORA and the Durable Solutions Progress Survey. The data from these will show which set of activities are to be prioritized per location.

To avoid overlap, the programme also needs to conduct mapping of all the current tools and interventions being used by UN partners and other stakeholders, to coordinate and complement interventions.

Furthermore, data collected should reflect dynamics on the ground and should be comparable across different regions/programmes. This will not only support the implementing partners in adapting the programming but continuous access to more accurate information, can also help show limitations, in for example access to tenure security, and by extension provide sufficient context and evidence for donors to appreciate why some interventions to lay foundations (in this case on land governance) may take longer than expected.

Adaptive programming – agility, flexibility

The Saameynta programme is designed to scale-up durable solutions. However, it proved challenging for the team to scale-up lessons learned during previous programmes, as these were not consistently captured during their initiation phases. Therefore, Saameynta had to start programming in order to gain knowledge and learn lessons, and then adapt itself

accordingly to scale-up successes (i.e., from Baidoa to Bosaso, although the context is different, thus requiring tailoring of activities). In line with a continuous learning approach, a solid knowledge management framework that records lessons learned, challenges, and risks is needed to allow flexible changes in programming

Suitability of planned activities

The Saameynta programme undertook a comprehensive approach to tackle internal displacement in Somalia. This included conducting in-depth assessments and developing targeted strategies for key cities, including Bosaso and Baidoa. These assessments covered various aspects, such as socio-economic analysis, labour market evaluation, and feasibility studies.

The insights gleaned from these efforts proved to be invaluable, informing crucial decisions about infrastructure development and livelihood creation within the targeted cities. By addressing these interconnected areas, the programme aims to foster long-term solutions for displaced populations and empower host communities.

Sequencing of activities

The sequencing of activities is a fundamental precondition for smooth programme implementation. For Saameynta the sequencing was planned to go from assessments to framework activities, to physical implementation to attraction of investments. However, in Baidoa, there was frequent disregard for this sequential order of activities. Many physical activities were scheduled and executed while the foundational phase of Saameynta was still in progress. This issue occurred partly due to the delay in officially launching Saameynta in 2022, which created a scenario whereby implementing partners, under pressure to quickly deliver tangible and impactful results, prematurely proceeded with physical activities. Although Saameynta's interventions were guided by

formative assessments, community consultations, and informal exchanges with other stakeholders on the ground, they lacked a comprehensive understanding of local needs and priorities, which are typically provided by tools like the CAP, the city strategy, and the LORA values. Consequently, there was often minimal triangulation or coordination between Saameynta's activities and interventions by other stakeholders, as well as among Saameynta's activities themselves.

The experience in Baidoa underscores the importance of following the most suitable and localized sequence when planning and implementing durable solution interventions. Learning from Baidoa, by contrast, in Bosaso, Saameynta ensured that its activities only

took place when the necessary previous steps had been completed. Foundational activities are implemented before any physical intervention on the ground begins. A workshop involving Saameynta IPs was recently held, which resulted in a detailed, logically sequenced pathway and timeline to inform Saameynta interventions in the coming year.

Planning for city-wide urban development – including comprehensive development briefs that

incorporate both spatial and investment plans – is also crucial, as leveraging land value depends on significant investments which have not yet occurred for Saameynta. For instance, a major road expansion to Bosaso is planned for the final year, which makes it challenging for the programme to guide the municipality on increasing land value. By following a structured sequencing of activities, as well as planning investments carefully, Saameynta aims to achieve effective and sustainable outcomes.

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