

## Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Mogadishu Embassy

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Agenda Item No. 1

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4. **Presentation for Programme Committee:** 13 June 2023
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# **Somalia**

## **Denmark Strategic Framework**

### **2024-2028**

*Final draft 28.08.23*

## Indhold

List of Abbreviations .....	0
1. Introduction and vision for the partnership .....	1
2. Context, challenges and risks.....	3
3. Danish political priorities and strategic choices .....	10
4. Strategic objectives .....	13
5. Monitoring the strategic framework .....	16
6. Outline of bilateral development programme.....	17
Development engagements that would fall under strategic objective 1 .....	18
Development engagements that would fall under strategic objective 2 .....	20
Development engagements that would fall under strategic objective 3 .....	21
7. Tentative outline of bilateral programme budget .....	23
8. Annexes:.....	24
a) Map of Somalia .....	24
b) Key Data / Figures – Somalia.....	25
c) Results Framework .....	26

## **List of Abbreviations**

APP	Africa Programme for Peace
AS	Al-Shabaab
ATMIS	The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DPPA	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member State
HDP	Humanitarian, Development & Peace
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
IFU	Investment Fund for Developing Countries
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMS	International Media Support
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JSF	Joint Somalia Fund
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
NCC	National Consultative Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SME	Small/Medium Enterprises
SNA	Somali National Army
SO	Strategic Objective
SPA	Strategic Partner Agreement (Denmark)
UIM	Ministry of Immigration and Integration
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

## **1. Introduction and vision for the partnership**

Denmark's ambition is to be a present and relevant partner in the world, engaging in strategic alliances, and to develop equal partnerships with countries around the world. That applies particularly in Africa, as Europe's regional neighbour and an increasingly important continent politically, economically, and demographically.

Somalia is one of the most fragile and impoverished countries in the world. Somalia's instability affects not only the Somali people but also spills over to the entire Horn of Africa region, and is in turn, impacted by the instability within the region. The country is affected by poverty, conflict and instability, violent extremism, political crises and the consequences of climate change and unsustainable land use. Somalia's location in the Gulf of Aden, a central maritime transport corridor, and its proximity to Gulf States means that Somalia occupies a strategic location in an area of interest for Denmark and the European Union (EU).

Denmark's strategic and foreign policy interests in Somalia are focused on global challenges such as the consequences of recurring climatic shocks, fighting poverty, increasing the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable people, preventing and countering violent extremism, and enhancing maritime security. At the same time, Denmark is a long-term development partner to the Horn of Africa region, including to Somalia. Denmark wants to continue to strengthen our partnership with Somalia in areas of mutual interest both bilaterally and through the EU, as outlined in the EU-Somalia Joint Operational Roadmap.

Hence, the long-term vision for Denmark's partnership with Somalia is to support a more stable, inclusive prosperous, and resilient Somalia addressing root causes of instability, poverty, vulnerability, and inequality in line with Somalia's National Development Plan. A more stable and resilient Somalia would also reduce the number of internally displaced persons, the spread of violent extremism, the risk of piracy resurgence and contribute to curbing irregular migration, including towards Europe. Three interconnected strategic objectives underpin this vision:

**Strategic objective 1: Ensure adaptation to climate change through equitable access to resources and enabling inclusive and green growth.**

**Strategic objective 2: Promote stability and security, inclusive state building and protection of human rights.**

**Strategic objective 3: Strengthen resilience and addressing displacement and migration.**

Each of the three objectives are addressing key challenges facing Somalia, and are in alignment with Somalia's national development and stabilisation plans. A number of Danish engagements will contribute to more than one strategic objective, reflecting the interconnected nature of the objectives as well as the fragility factors influencing Somalia. To support this, Denmark will engage all instruments available including political dialogue, development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, as well as other foreign policy instruments – including peace and stabilisation instruments in collaboration with the Danish Ministry of Defence – as well as with the private sector, and civil society, including the Somali diaspora in Denmark. The objectives are founded in the overarching Danish priority of fighting multi-dimensional poverty based on evidence that poverty reduction leads to strengthened resilience. Moreover, Denmark's overall priorities of strengthening democracy, civic space and promoting and protecting human rights, and the inclusion of women and youth cuts across all objectives.

## **Danish past achievements and strengths**

Denmark's partnership with Somalia extends back over four decades. Much of the early Danish engagement focused on the maritime domain, first on developing Somalia's fishery sector, and later on ensuring maritime security including combatting piracy. Today, Denmark's partnership with Somalia includes a broad range of instruments, including political dialogue, diplomacy, stabilization efforts and humanitarian assistance, as well as one of the largest Danish bilateral development portfolios globally.

Denmark is recognised in Somalia for a strong commitment to protection and promotion of human rights and as a facilitator on dialogue dealing with difficult state-building issues, as well as for our strong role as an advocate for children and women's rights. Denmark is also known as a strong enabler of the private sector. Danish strengths and achievements build on a strong partnership with Somali counterparts and alignment with key Somali development priorities.

Denmark has strengthened **democratic governance** by supporting electoral processes, independent think-tanks, and promoting and protecting human rights. Denmark has supported activities that have strengthened institutions, including accountability and transparency in public financial management. Support to improved participation in peacebuilding and capacity development of local level government has also been part of the Danish engagement. Danish support has strengthened the social contract in Somaliland between government and citizens by supporting improved service-provision and the building of critical infrastructure, such as roads, water supply, and critical productive sector investments.

Denmark has also facilitated **inclusive economic growth** by strengthening the enabling environment for private sector growth and supporting public sector reform. Working with multilateral organizations like the World Bank and IMF to enable important reforms and build capacity has stimulated the private sector, and Denmark has supported the provision of loans to small and medium-sized enterprises in collaboration with other development partners and IFU.

Denmark has provided significant **humanitarian assistance and resilience support** for emergency food distribution, water, shelter, sanitation, and healthcare during times of crises. This has included the provision of critical cash transfers through social safety nets programmes targeting the health and nutrition of pregnant women and girls and their children as well as providing productive skills training to Somali youth.

Denmark's bilateral **peace and stabilisation work** is anchored in the Peace and Stabilisation programme for the Horn of Africa. Denmark is recognised as a relevant and flexible actor in the stabilisation space, building on over a decade of experience and strong alignment with Somali government priorities. Denmark is a long-term partner in local conflict resolution and political reconciliation with strong attention to maritime security and law enforcement.

**Democracy, civic space and human rights** is a core priority for Danish development cooperation and foreign policy endeavours. In Somalia, Denmark has led important work on human rights, for example through co-chairing the "Friends of Children Affected by Armed Conflict" initiative and have supported multilateral partners in advocating for children and women's rights, as well as combatting female genital mutilation and harmful social norms. Support for a nascent, but emerging, civil society was piloted through support to independent think tanks, through our Danish strategic NGO-partners, as well as by

driving a localisation agenda in humanitarian assistance. While Denmark and Somalia may not see eye-to-eye on all matters, experience shows that it is possible to maintain critical political dialogue, as seen in recent years, for example on the election model and policy dialogue regarding the “Sexual Offenders and Child Rights Bill.”

#### Major Danish Contributions

1

With Somalia strategically located along global shipping routes in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, maritime law enforcement and international trade are principal elements of stability efforts. Denmark has worked to improve the capacity to exercise regional and governmental authority across land and maritime borders in order to reduce transnational organised crime.

2

With the support of critical political think tanks, Denmark has played a role in **preventing political meltdown in the run-up to the 2022 elections** and supported the new government in restarting crucial accountability mechanisms such as a National Consultative Council (NCC).

3

Denmark is known for its longstanding presence and investments in Somaliland. Through the **Somaliland Development Fund**, Denmark has supported 1.4 million citizens to get access to over 11 million liters of water per day, built over 150 km of roads, and supported climate-smart agriculture through soil/water conservation on over 2,500 hectares of land.

## 2. Context, challenges and risks

Despite pronounced fragility and conflict, Somalia has experienced a certain degree of stability and nascent political and macroeconomic progress in the last ten years. The current central government, which came to power in May 2022, has shown willingness to reform, and has ambitions for a more stable and progressive Somalia. However, with Al-Shabaab controlling significant parts of the country and the lack of a functioning state in large parts of Somalia, the somewhat positive developments are still at risk of unravelled back by political crises, violent extremism, and a very limited ability to respond to climatic shocks.

### Geopolitics, regional and international partners

There is a broad regional and international interest in Somalia, not least due to its geostrategic location at the tip of the Horn of Africa and at the mouth of the Red Sea. Consequently, Somalia has an array of traditional and non-traditional partners, as well as an active Somali diaspora across the globe, including in Denmark.

Regionally, landlocked Ethiopia is an important player for political, economic, and security reasons, and has shown interest in acquiring stakes in ports in Somaliland to secure and enhance trade routes. Relations

between Kenya and Somalia have improved, with enhanced dialogue on regional security, as well as trade between the two countries. Somalia's ascension to the East African Community (EAC) is also subject of dialogue. Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti all support the joint military offensive against Al-Shabaab to prevent their infiltration into the wider region. The "Quads" (US, UK, EU and the UN) is an influential group with regular joint engagements vis-à-vis the Somali government on security, politics, and humanitarian issues. The US has a strong political and military presence, and is a key partner in the stabilization and development areas as well. The African Union (AU) remains a major player in the provision of security, primarily through the deployment of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS – previously AMISOM). Other international actors such as Turkey, UAE, and Qatar also provide political, financial and security sector support. Turkey is arguably the most supportive, with visible development and security support to Somalia. The Gulf states offer consistent and flexible financial support, and exert influence in Somalia as part of the regional geopolitical dynamics. China's role in Somalia has until now largely centred within the fisheries sector and are supporting the FGS against Somaliland secession. Russia has also been a partner in the region historically. Most recently, Russia has taken an interest in re-engaging Somalia in investments through debt forgiveness and security sector support through the provision of military equipment.

The EU is a significant actor within political and security affairs, as well as a large-scale provider of development funds to Somalia. A newly launched "EU-Somalia Joint Operational Roadmap" (May 2023) is centered on governance and democratization, security and stabilization and socio-economic growth, and holds clear links to EU's "Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for Somalia" (2021-2027). The EU is a key actor for Danish political engagement in Somalia, and the roadmap provides the umbrella for the EU's and the EU member states' engagement in the country. The Nordic countries and the UK are close and like-minded partners on a range of issues.

As a result of decades of conflict and subsequently weak Somali government institutions, funds are largely channeled through multilateral partners. With approximately \$1.9 billion in financing to Somalia, the World Bank is by far the largest development partner to the Somali government, with a mixture of IDA grants and budget support. EU is currently the only other development partner providing budget support to the federal government.

### **Climate change and natural resource management**

Climate change and poor natural resource management serve as a threat multiplier in Somalia and compound the challenges of political instability, insecurity, resource scarcity, rapid urbanization, and result in frequent humanitarian crises – all of these impacting poverty levels directly, including multidimensional poverty. Without effective adaptation, the effects of climate change will continue to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and reduce people's livelihood options, potentially creating breeding grounds for displacement, irregular migration, and recruitment to extremist and criminal groups. Somalia is the second most climate vulnerable country in the world.<sup>1</sup> It faces a number of climate-related risks, including droughts, floods, cyclones, and climate-related diseases and epidemics.<sup>2</sup> In the last decade, Somalia has witnessed both multiple exceptionally dry seasons and extended droughts, interspersed with

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<sup>1</sup> [Somalia | ND-GAIN Index](#) (accessed on 20-02-2023).

<sup>2</sup> [World Bank Group's "Climate Change Knowledge Portal," Somalia - Vulnerability | Climate Change Knowledge Portal \(worldbank.org\).](#)



exceptionally wet seasons and floods. During the fall of 2022, Somalia experienced the worst drought in 40 years. This has resulted in over 6.5 million Somalis becoming food insecure (out of a total population of approximately 18 million), 13 million heads of livestock perishing, and thousands of hectares of crops lost.

Extreme weather events occur with increasing frequency, leading to abject poverty and displacement. Without effective adaptation, the effects of climate change will continue to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and reduce people's livelihood options, potentially creating breeding grounds for displacement, irregular migration, and recruitment to extremist and criminal groups – and regularly contributes to conflict in Somalia through disrupted livelihoods dependent on agriculture and pastoralism, as well as increased competition over dwindling water and grazing areas. This in turn fosters climate-induced migration leading to inter-communal conflicts and rapidly growing urbanization.

Livestock and agriculture, two sectors particularly vulnerable to climate change, constitute up to 70 percent of the country's GDP. With over 80 percent of the country comprised of arid and semi-arid lands, even small climate change effects in these sectors are having dramatic effects on individuals' livelihoods. As climate change threatens the viability of these two sectors going forward, urbanisation is rapidly increasing, further straining government capacities and key life-support systems such as food and water resources, health, and infrastructure and service delivery.

As a result of widespread poverty and strain on resources, Somalis are turning to negative coping mechanisms, such as illicit charcoal production and deforestation, overuse of natural resources, and increasingly risky agricultural and pastoral practices. Climate change and land degradation affect Somali women and girls disproportionately, as they typically carry the heaviest workload, when it comes to fetching water, obtaining energy, and producing food. Women and girls are underrepresented in decision-making processes and left out in the planning of climate solutions.

However, there are opportunities for Somalia to make use of its resources in the longer term. Somalia has mainland Africa's longest coastline and the potential to benefit from a "Blue Economy" is large. Moreover, with some of the most consistent sunshine anywhere in the world (averaging over 3,000 hours a year), as well as the highest resource potential for onshore wind power in Africa, the potential for a green energy transition based on solar and wind power is evident.

### **Security, stability and state-building**

Somalia is characterized by instability, conflict, and fragility. After 25 years of a de-facto state-collapse due to a bloody civil war and clan rivalry combined with various unsuccessful regional and international attempts at interference, Somalia managed to adopt a Provisional Constitution in 2012. Since 2012, Somalia has seen a number of relatively peaceful – albeit very narrow, unrepresentative and only partially legitimate - election processes – the latest in 2022. The Provisional Constitution set the foundation for a federal model, including the establishment of five Federal Member States (FMS), with Somaliland continuing its claim to independence. To this day main settlement questions remain, including questions on agreements among political actors to share power and resources, constitutional mandates, as well as on key issues related to security.

The current political system, based on clan affiliation and political elite bargaining is under pressure as a consequence of a young demographic, high unemployment rates, climate-related environmental shocks, elite positioning and demands for more accountable governance. Somalia's public institutions mandated to regulate and implement politics, policy, reforms, budgets and laws remain nascent and amongst the weakest in the world. Somalia ranks as the most corrupt country globally, according to Transparency International's "Corruption Index" in 2022. Since the early 2000s, the Al-Qaeda affiliated terror organisation Al-Shabaab (AS) has been present in Somalia and currently controls large parts of the country, especially in rural areas in the south and south-central parts of Somalia. The success of AS is attributed to poor governance and limited ability of government to deliver basic services, including equitable access to justice. Al-Shabaab's ability to fill a governance vacuum has positioned them to extort citizens and businesses, making Al-Shabaab one of the richest extremist organizations globally, with the capability to conduct terror attacks in most parts of southern Somalia, including Mogadishu.

Shortly after the election of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in May 2022, his government initiated an offensive to combat Al-Shabaab, building upon a popular uprising against AS in some parts of the country. Stabilizing newly recovered areas from Al-Shabaab and delivering security, service delivery, access to resources, and political grievances will determine the long-term success of these offensives. The use of local clan groups supporting the Somali National Army has been effective, but efforts to reintegrate these armed factions into the national security architecture, as well as local reconciliation efforts, may face challenges at federal member state level.

Stability is also challenged by the extensive clan conflicts that are part of the history of Somalia. Political appointments are based on clan affiliation and the delicate balance of bargaining influence is left to the four largest Somali clans, each gaining an equal share of political power. Full inclusivity of key stakeholders, such as women, youth and other marginalized groups still remains a significant challenge, despite some progress. Women lack access to resources and decision-making power, leaving them more vulnerable to human rights violations. Early marriage is a major problem in Somalia, with severe consequences for girls' health and education. Somalia has the world's second highest fertility rate with 6.4 children per woman (2020). Maternal mortality is among the highest in the world, at 1,600 per 100,000 live births, and despite nascent progress, approximately 98 percent of women in Somalia undergo female genital mutilation (FGM).<sup>3</sup> Violence, including rape and domestic violence, is widespread, with no legal accountability system.

The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS – previously AMISOM) has since 2012 been a major security sector actor in Somalia, primarily acting as security provider to major infrastructure and supporting the Somali National Army (SNA) and other security sector partners. The mission is mandated by the United Nations Security Council and delegated to the AU. It is funded primarily by the EU (approx. 2.5 billion EUR since 2017) and the UK, and executed by a number of troop contributing countries, primarily Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, and Burundi. ATMIS is complemented by significant numbers of special forces – primarily trained by the US and Turkey. An expected draw down of ATMIS forces is set to take place between 2023 and 2024, and remains of critical security concern due to challenges of a smooth transition of ownership to the government and the lack of a solid threat assessment underpinning the transition plan.

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<sup>3</sup> [FGM-Somalia-2021.pdf \(unicef.org\)](#)

99% of girls and women btw. 15-49 years, 99% of girls btw. 15-19 years and 76% of girls in the age group 0-14.

Since 2012, there has been progress in terms of building technical, legal and regulatory systems with support from the international community. The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief process - initiated in 2020, has also driven progress on reforms. Through the HIPC process, Somalia will achieve debt forgiveness and potentially gain access to loans on the international financial market. HIPC is set to reach completion by the end of 2023, upon the realisation of an IMF programme, focusing on economic reforms, including strengthening domestic revenue mobilisation (currently at around 4 percent of GDP) and strengthening public financial management, including accountability mechanisms and balancing state budgets.

With the longest coastline in mainland Africa, including a high potential for maritime oil and gas exploration, Somalia's potential as a regional economic player in the maritime and trade industry is significant. However, limited capacity to police its waters means that Somalia remains vulnerable to illicit trade and activity. While piracy was a major threat 10 years ago, it has been effectively addressed through international efforts; but, other transnational criminal activities are still carried out in the waters off the coast of Somalia. This includes illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, as well as arms and human trafficking, which continue to sustain inland conflict and criminal enterprise. This forms part of a network channelling illicit goods to other parts of the world, including Europe.

Since declaring independence in 1991, Somaliland has been comparatively more stable and seen a gradual democratic progression. It has held eight credible, and largely free and fair, one-person, one-vote elections involving peaceful transfers of power. Economically, it has attracted large foreign direct investment projects, including a USD 500 million investment by DP World in Berbera Port. However, Somaliland's political settlement is under pressure and a need to widen the sphere of political participation has emerged. The current settlement is elitist and exclusive, particularly in regards to women, youth, and other marginalised groups. Governance has never been rules-based – nearly all elections in Somaliland require significant delays – and men dominate all three branches of government. Similar patterns exist between government and the business community where large taxpayers negotiate their taxes and large contracts have a strong clan balance element. Somaliland has witnessed a deterioration of political rights, civic space, and not least press freedom in recent years. Journalists face severe pressure from authorities, with police cracking down on independent media outlets.

### **Democracy and civic space, human rights**

Civic space in Somalia is dominated by clan affiliation and is severely restricted, while attempts to constrain civil society are widespread, which in turn leads to high levels of self-censorship. The legal framework for civil society focuses more on control of CSOs rather than safeguarding civic space. Activists fighting for freedom of expression, including journalists, have been regular targets of arbitrary arrests by security forces without trial and at times prosecuted using the country's outdated penal code. Federal and regional military courts continue to sentence people to death and carry out executions despite serious due process concerns. Consequently, Somali civil society organisations are unable or unwilling to effectively hold the government to account, with many advocates for human rights joining the government side or finding themselves without the means to make their voices heard.

The justice system remains weak and nascent with regular rights abuses and arbitrary execution of justice, including using the death sentence on children. Tension and inconsistency between the clan-based

traditional justice system, sharia and formal justice is strong. Key institutional and legal reforms have to some degree stagnated. The review of the country's outdated penal code was put on hold in 2022 and little movement on the passing of the federal legislation on sexual offenses or on key children's' rights legislation has been seen. Somalia has not established a national human rights commission, with the appointment of commissioners pending since 2018.

### **Poverty and resilience - economic and social development**

Somalia ranks as one of the poorest countries in the world. In 2021, the GDP per capita was 401 USD, with approximately 70 percent of the population living below the poverty line<sup>4</sup>. GDP growth rates in Somalia are extremely low. Between 2014 and 2021, real per capita growth rates averaged zero percent. The lack of an enabling environment for private sector development, the absence of a regulatory framework, high systemic levels of corruption, Somalia's isolation from the international financial system, high public expenditure relative to revenue collection and Somalia's reliance on development assistance and remittances, all hamper higher growth. However, HIPC debt relief should be a catalyst for promoting investments and better public services.

The vast majority of Somalis are employed in the informal economy, with women having particularly low formal sector employment rates. However, women have limited access to credit and are not proportionally represented in the political sphere, leaving the concerns of women-led enterprises at the margins of the political agenda. Livestock production and export represent the largest foreign exchange earnings for Somalia, accounting for approximately 80 percent of export earnings. Fisheries have enormous potential, but currently account for a mere 0.2 percent of GDP due to limited investment and opportunities for processing. Youth unemployment is a growing concern, with 48 percent of youth either unemployed or engaged in low-productive, low-paying employment, making them particularly vulnerable to human rights violations and abuse and at risk of recruitment by armed groups.

Access to finance remains a challenge in Somalia. Traditional Somali banks have a conservative loan profile, resulting in limited access to finance, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises as well as for women-led enterprises. The private sector is also affected by clan affiliation, and Al-Shabaab generates tax revenues through extortion of private sector actors, resulting in an unpredictable environment for Somali businesses. Electricity is expensive and oil-driven, all factors obstructing larger-scale investment and growth.

With poverty widespread in Somalia, the majority of households face many challenges related to literacy, education, healthcare, housing, personal security, food security, water and sanitation, and access to jobs and economic opportunities. Population growth, currently at 3.2 percent<sup>5</sup>, could lead to an estimated 35 million people in Somalia by 2050 – almost doubling the current population. This population growth is a serious threat amplifier to existing drivers of conflict and poses major risks specifically to conflict- and climate-related migration, rapid urbanization and instability. In May 2023, there were 3.8 million internally displaced people (IDPs) in Somalia, or almost 25 percent of the population, mostly located in the south and central parts of the country, particularly in Mogadishu. Increasingly, climate impacts are driving

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<sup>4</sup> USD 1.9 per day, World Bank (2020)

<sup>5</sup> WB WDI, 2021. On the rise since 2010, from 2,5 (2010)-3.1 (2021)

displacement – from January to May 2023, 1.1 million more IDPs were registered by OCHA, of these almost half were displaced because of climatic factors, drought and flooding.

Service provision is largely in the hands of the private sector, religious actors, international partners, incl. humanitarian actors, given the very low domestic resources and revenue generation. Public expenditure in social sectors is extremely low. The lack of services in most parts of the country, as well as limited livelihood opportunities, is a significant driver of urbanization. In addition, instability and conflict drive displacement and continue to affect access and movement of goods and people. The concentration of provision of services primarily in urban areas, where international actors have access, result in IDPs settling in urban areas, often in informal settlements. They live in impermanent, unsanitary conditions often governed by informal settlement managers, which may facilitate service access but are unable or unwilling to provide protection.

## Scenarios

Somalia is at a crossroads. On the one hand, the Somalis are experiencing popular opposition to Al-Shabaab for the first time. The country is on track to achieving debt relief based on economic reforms, and potentially Somalia has major oil and gas reserves. Somalia is geo-strategically important and has a strong diaspora that can contribute and influence from outside. However, it is unlikely that the situation will improve significantly in the short to medium term. Two scenarios are suggested for the medium term:

### ➤ **SCENARIO 1:** *Status quo – fragile progress*

In this scenario, Somalia will continue to be challenged by instability, climatic shocks and high demographic growth pressures. The drawdown of ATMIS forces is an additional near-term risk. However, limited positive development and state-building is possible and could be promoted by increased international pressure and support. Al-Shabaab will not disappear, but will gradually lose support and power while the central government consolidates its presence in more and more areas. The political situation will remain fragile but stable. There will be recurring political crises and conflicts, but the state will be able to implement reforms and build its legitimacy. A significant part of the population will continue to be dependent on humanitarian aid, but there will be increased mobilization of resources for long-term investments, including in climate adaptation.

➤ **SCENARIO 2: *Marked deterioration – possible collapse***

In this scenario, the security situation will gradually deteriorate because the central government, the president and the federal member state presidents are constantly fighting for power. This increases discontent among the population and undermines the fragile legitimacy of the state and the limited resilience of the people. ATMIS troops will no longer be there and Somali force generation will have proven insufficient to replace ATMIS. The security forces fragment along clan loyalties, causing the fight against Al-Shabaab to fail. Support from the international community will not be sufficient to reduce poverty and mitigate the effects of climate change and high demographic growth, and over time discontent and instability will grow. In the worst case, the current political agreement will collapse, with a security vacuum after ATMIS leave, and Al-Shabaab and local militias will gain increased power, e.g. with direct control over major cities.

The actual trajectory might end up between these two scenarios and will be influenced by political stability, climate events, stability of neighbouring states as well as the state's ability to manage the needs of the many Somalis living in abject poverty. Denmark's strategic framework and the future programming choices must therefore be flexible enough to adapt also to a markedly negative development, i.e. responding to a trajectory towards the worst-case scenario. In that case, a programmatic response could entail among other geographical retargeting of activities and substitution between instruments in the portfolio. Focus will be on ensuring diverse partnerships – national, bilateral and multilateral - and instruments in order to maintain flexibility towards an ever-changing and volatile context. Continuous risk management and political dialogue will be key to mitigate the risks.

### 3. Danish political priorities and strategic choices

Danish engagements in Somalia is anchored in Denmark's 2023 Foreign and Security Policy Strategy, emphasising a stronger attention to local demands and shared values, common interests and political priorities making way for an equal partnership. Shared interests between Denmark and Somalia include a stable Somalia, in a peaceful Horn of Africa, the fight against violent extremism, maritime security and attention to the multilateral rights-based world order. The long-term Danish commitment to Somalia provides a solid platform for a dynamic partnership between Denmark and Somalia at a time where the climate change agenda and the need for rethinking the resilience approach in Somalia is prominent.

In this light, key strategic choices for Denmark's partnership with Somalia include:

**Somalia calls for the full use of the Danish Foreign Policy toolbox:** Considering Denmark's bilateral engagements with multiple UN partners, EU and the WB, ensuring coherence between global and in-country engagements based on Danish policy positions for Somalia, will be important. In addition, Denmark will continue to work with the entirety of instruments active in Somalia, including strategic partnerships with Danish NGOs, partnership with IFU in stimulating economic growth and migration engagements in partnership with Danish Ministry for Immigration and Integration (UIM). Regional

engagements such as the Africa for Peace Programme will be leveraged to create synergies, as well as regional cooperation through the African Union (AU).

**Denmark bases its partnership on respect for national priorities and alignment with National Development Plans:** The long-term Danish commitment provides a solid platform for a dynamic partnership between Denmark and Somalia, building on a credible and equal dialogue; common visions for the prosperity of the Somali people as well as strengthened political and economic relations.

**Denmark wants to be a strong green partner for Somalia:** Denmark's green profile and expertise can pave the way for beneficial investments in a socially and economically fair green transition in Somalia. Building on Danish experience – both from Somalia and elsewhere – on engaging in climate adaptation strategies and leveraging Danish technology – both in adaptation and mitigation, as well as in natural resource management.

**Denmark is a long-term stabilization and peacebuilding partner:** Denmark has a history of supporting security, stabilization and peacebuilding in Somalia – including in the fight against piracy. Denmark has mobilized significant programmes and resources in the stabilization space and will use the opportunity to leverage this together with long-term development investments that can complement early recovery initiatives and reconciliation activities in newly liberated areas.

**Adjusted strategic approach to supporting gender equality, women's and girls' rights:** Danish engagements in Somalia have and shall continue to place emphasis on promoting gender equality, including funding for initiatives aimed at empowering women and girls, as well as supporting women's participation in governance, private sector, and general decision-making. It is evident from Denmark's experience that working with human rights, social norms and gender equality in the Somali context requires a consistent, yet pragmatic approach. Denmark will increase support to civil society in line with Danish priorities including the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, girls and marginalised groups, sexual and gender-based violence, as well as on women's political and economic participation.

**Denmark engages in humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus models:** The Danish programme portfolio in Somalia encompasses projects and resources across the HDP nexus. As a significant humanitarian donor, stabilization partner and development partner, Denmark is well-placed to ensure strategic cohesion and complementarity between these instruments, and to do effective model-building for engaging in this nexus. Specifically, humanitarian instruments can be leveraged together with long-term development investments in community resilience building and mitigating the high level of internal displacement.

**Strong alliances are key for leveraging Denmark's interests in Somalia:** Denmark will continue to prioritize partnerships and seek influence first and foremost through the EU, UN, the World Bank and the AU, as well as through bilateral alliances, such as with the US, UK and the Nordic+ countries, to ensure synergies, division of labor and influence. Denmark is committed to reinforce collaboration with and through the EU, making the EU and EU member states a preferred political, security and development partner for Somalia. The UK, US and AU are central partners related to Denmark's stabilization engagements, while partnerships with the World Bank, the EU and the Nordic countries are important on state-building, governance and economic development. Given the risk profile and capacity limitations of Somali institutions, working through implementing partners in Somalia remains a key modality – and a risk mitigation strategy – for Danish engagement in Somalia.

**Denmark supports a rules-based world order through equal partnerships:** Denmark is running for a seat on the UN Security Council 2025-2026. The candidature is an extension of Denmark's longstanding support for the UN and effective multilateralism, which are also priorities for Somalia. If elected to the Council, Denmark will work to advance cross-regional partnerships and a networked multilateralism that enables locally owned solutions to global challenges. Denmark would inform its work and policy influence in the Council through on-the-ground experience and in-depth knowledge of challenges faced by conflict-affected partner countries like Somalia. Denmark will be a strong voice for the meaningful engagement of non-members and civil society in the work of the Council, and will focus on critical crosscutting thematic priorities such as Women, Peace & Security, as well as the interlinkages between climate change and security, which are highly relevant in the Somali context.

**A geographically differentiated and balanced approach is needed:** While the Northern part of Somalia – including Somaliland and Puntland – over decades has shown to be relatively more stable, the situation in the Southern and Central part of Somalia remains volatile and with a stronger Al-Shabaab presence. These different contexts will be reflected in Denmark's portfolio, with the regional PSP program focusing more on the most fragile FMSs (South West State, Hirshabelle, and Jubaland), where Denmark supports early recovery, defection and reintegration, prevention of climate change related conflicts and various efforts to counter violent extremism and transnational organised crime. The bilateral program will to an extent focus more on the more stable FMSs (Puntland and Galmadug), as well as Somaliland, by addressing national and state-level settlement and by supporting inclusive governance and accountability, climate change adaptation as well as inclusive, green economic growth. Other instruments such as Denmark's humanitarian assistance, will operate in areas where needs are the highest.

**A strong Danish presence in Somaliland will be maintained:** Denmark will maintain a strong focus on Somaliland – as has been the case for a number of years. This decision is shaped by a number of factors including Somaliland's growing geopolitical significance, unique operating context and potential modelling role for development engagements, as well as interests in protecting progress made against recent democratic backsliding, threats to internal stability, and growing influence from non-Western actors. Somaliland continues to receive relatively less interest from development partners in comparison to the rest of Somalia, leaving Somaliland somewhat at the margins of discussions on resource- and power sharing. The ambition is to continue the considerable Danish partnership, benefitting from the relatively stable context. Denmark is, given its on-the-ground presence in Hargeisa, well placed to play an outsized role in strengthening donor coordination and partnership with government institutions. The relatively strong Danish presence in Somaliland is detached from Somaliland's ambition to obtain independence. Somaliland's international legal status must be clarified through dialogue between the different Somali parties with support from regional institutions.

The operationalisation of the vision for Denmark's partnership with Somalia is reflected in the three strategic objectives. While building on Denmark's political priorities, it is the ambition of this Strategic Framework, and the objectives underpinning it, to further expand the equal and close partnership with Somalia based on a solid foundation of shared interests in a stable, inclusive, prosperous and democratic Somalia. The priorities and objectives have been consulted with the Federal Government of Somalia, as well as with the Government of Somaliland, and are aligned with priorities outlined in both Somalia's and Somaliland's National Development Plans.



The Somali government wishes to overhaul the current inefficient aid architecture, and its ambitions for increased direct support through country systems are high, but the weakness of national institutions and continued high systemic levels of corruption in the country, imply high risks associated with on-budget support modalities without significant additional safeguards. Denmark will therefore continue to push for policy dialogue on key reforms between development partners and the Somali government.

The strategic objectives also reflect Danish experiences and builds on lessons learned from previous and current policy dialogue, from development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, stabilisation and maritime efforts, migration engagements, as well investments by IFU and work carried out by Danish civil society organisations operating in Somalia.

## 4. Strategic objectives

**Strategic Objective 1: Ensure adaptation to climate change through increased and equitable access to resources and enabling inclusive and green growth**



Denmark has made addressing climate change a top political priority. As part of Denmark's ambitions to be a global green frontrunner, Denmark aims to lead the way in promoting international climate action, increasing climate-focused activities in development cooperation, and **establishing green partnerships with government, civil society, and the private sector**. This also involves engaging in relevant global fora in order to bring Somalia into the global climate discussions, including with regards to Somalia's access to global climate change finance through global funds, not always accommodating fragile countries like Somalia.

**Denmark will ensure continued political dialogue with Somalia around climate change adaptation**, and mainstream efforts to tackle negative impacts of climate change as well promote nature-based solutions across the portfolio. Specifically, Denmark will work with Somali partners to provide improved access to water, use of climate-smart agricultural and natural resources management practices, and facilitate sustainable and inclusive green growth and employment. These focus areas fall within climate change adaptation, but will simultaneously contribute directly to poverty alleviation in Somalia. Specific attention will be given to gender transformative approaches and human rights across all engagements.

**Denmark will also promote green growth as a catalyst for climate adaptation and job creation.** With Africa's second largest coastline and some of the most consistent hours of sunshine anywhere in the world, the potential for solar and wind energy in Somalia is immense. Promoting investments in green energy will not only help address high-energy costs, one of the top constraints cited by small and medium businesses in Somalia, but also provide a basis for skilled jobs and broader private sector investment. Additionally, green investments in agriculture, one of the top employment sectors in Somalia, can help

rural farmers produce higher value crops, adopt more sustainable livestock management practices, and strengthen agricultural value chains.

## **Strategic objective 2: Promote peace-building, state-building and human rights**



Given Somalia's fragility - because of instability and armed conflict, widespread poverty and severe restrictions on human rights - and building on the nascent level of political settlement, Denmark will promote inclusive, accountable, and participatory governance in its partnership with Somalia. This involves work with a range of key stakeholders, including the Federal Government, Federal Member States and Somaliland, civil society as well as the private sector.

Denmark will continue to focus on **strengthening the development of legitimate, open and inclusive state institutions**. In collaboration with partners, Denmark will engage in dialogue and efforts to strengthen the “social contract” between Somali authorities and the people they serve.

Denmark will **support dialogue and negotiation around core political settlement issues**, such as control of security forces, resource- and power-sharing, as well as political representation through support to dialogue between key political elites and inclusive political processes as well as establishment of clear legal frameworks, procedures, and policies that promote transparency, accountability, and participation. Denmark will support public sector reform and help build public management systems and capacitate Somalia's civil service to prioritize and deliver services, both at central and federal member state level. This will include efforts to expand the tax-base as a vital element of state-building and enhancing state legitimacy.

Denmark will support the **voice and accountability** of ordinary Somalis through a nascent independent and rights-based civil society as well as local level participation in political decision-making processes. Denmark will prioritize support towards genuine civic engagement as well as capacity development for civil society organizations (CSOs) to enhance their oversight function and promote the inclusion of marginalized groups in decision-making processes, including women, youth and minorities. The support to the human rights agenda will be complemented by encouraging Somali authorities' role as duty bearers to better understand and enable a rights-based approach to tackling the development challenges in Somalia.

**Addressing root causes of instability and promoting local solutions to peace and stability** will be a focus for Denmark's peace and stabilisation work, as well as addressing the climate-security nexus through engagements both at local and national level. Tackling violent extremism to promote stability will continue to be a strong focus for Denmark's engagement in Somalia, as will the continued efforts to strengthen maritime security. Efforts will be made to couple country-level and global engagements, including Denmark's membership of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (2023-24), which offers an opportunity to draw attention to solutions to the peacebuilding challenges affecting Somalia and the region with due attention to local anchorage.

### Strategic objective 3: Strengthen resilience and addressing displacement and migration



In line with Danish development cooperation strategic interests, Denmark will contribute to enhance resilience for the most vulnerable Somalis. Denmark will **promote an approach to self-reliance focused on livelihoods**, with attention to individual, household, community and national-level resilience to shocks, both climatic and security related, including through support to anticipatory action. Addressing livelihoods and self-reliance is – in itself – a long-term approach to preventing migration, also outside of Somalia’s borders.

Given the rapid urbanisation in Somalia due to displacement more broadly, Denmark will under this objective **work both in rural, peri-urban and urban areas**, taking as point of departure specific vulnerabilities in different geographies of Somalia. Analysis of the factors of urbanisation should inform humanitarian, development and stabilization interventions in rural and urban areas.

While Denmark’s substantial humanitarian assistance to Somalia will address immediate and life-saving needs, including significant use of cash transfers, the **Danish bilateral engagement will support HDP nexus approaches**, ensuring complementarity between humanitarian assistance and long-term development efforts. This will be done through engagements (both humanitarian, stability and development-focused) working with collective outcomes, seeking to develop resilience at community level and at a broader systems level. It will be important to integrate long-term financial and institutional sustainability into HDP approaches, exploring links to local and national government systems, albeit weak and under-resourced. Moreover, Denmark will seek the complementarity in **engaging in peace building and resilience building at community level** in our stabilisation efforts and development engagements, applying a community driven development approach with focus on local decision-making and social dialogue.

In order to ensure sustainability of efforts to enhance resilience for the most vulnerable parts of the population, Denmark will continue its dialogue with government and international organisations to **promote the inclusion of resilience-enhancing efforts into government systems and budgets**, and advocate for bringing local government into the efforts. While recognising that it will take Somalia many years to be able to provide basic services to its citizens, it will be important to promote solutions to meet the needs of IDPs, informal urban settlers and other vulnerable groups, such as displaced minority groups, women and youth. Denmark’s long-standing support to multilateral partners working to provide services such as health and education will be leveraged to achieve this outcome, for example through our partnership with Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait, as well as support channelled through civil society organisations.

Denmark will also support the Somali immigration authorities **to strengthen their human rights based migration management**. This is done to enhance the authorities’ ability to manage and regulate migration effectively, ensure border management, provide services to migrants, and address various

migration-related challenges. Safe, orderly and regular migration management will in turn contribute to broader development outcomes in Somalia.

## **5. Monitoring the strategic framework**

The Danish Embassy to Somalia will continuously monitor and evaluate the progress and results of Denmark's overall engagement in Somalia in close cooperation with partners and relevant departments of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. M&E efforts will be complemented by high-level bilateral political dialogue with the Federal Government of Somalia, through the EU and other relevant partners, including relevant Somali line ministries, civil society and businesses, who have a stake in the implementation of the Strategic Framework.

Due to the extremely volatile security situation in Somalia, travelling within the country is constrained. The limited access will be mitigated by engaging and maintaining a close and constant dialogue with implementing partners on the ground and their third-party monitoring mechanisms.

The Embassy will explore the feasibility and options for establishing and facilitating a Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning (MEAL) function to provide Denmark with insights into progress on engagements as well as a risk management system. The possibility of integrating remote monitoring tools and geo-spatial mapping into this system will be explored with partners.

The difficult working environment in Somalia and the lack of access means that continuous risk assessment will be strongly emphasised. The risk assessment will be anchored at the Embassy and will be part of a light-touch review of Denmark's engagement carried out once every year and adjusted when needed. This mechanism will assess achievements on planned outcomes and help make informed decisions – also on adapting engagements to a changing context. Resources will be allocated for mobilizing short-term TA inputs, as needed, in support of the overall monitoring and learning function undertaken by the Embassy. The Embassy will engage in regular dialogue with civil society, notably Danish strategic partners present in Somalia, and with key Somalia think tanks and experts. Annual meetings between the Embassy and implementing partners will provide strategic direction and assess the continued relevance of interventions and the need for adjustments based on developments in scenarios and risks. These meetings will be informed by: i) outcomes of the annual political dialogue between Somalia and Denmark; ii) joint analyses undertaken with like-minded bilateral and multilateral partners as well as Danish strategic partners present in Somalia, and iii) evidence based learning from implementing Denmark's bilateral as well as multilateral engagement in Somalia.

## 6. Outline of bilateral development programme

### Overall priorities, strategic principles and implementation strategy

The bilateral development programme will be elaborated based on Danish strategies and priorities as set out in this document, and aligned with the National Development Plan of Somalia (and where relevant of Somaliland) as well as based on lessons learned from prior and ongoing engagements. The programme portfolio will consist of engagements designed to effectively contribute to the three strategic objectives of the framework. The bilateral programme should be seen as one important sub-set of several Danish bilateral and multilateral partnerships, as well as humanitarian and stabilization instruments brought to bear under this overall strategic framework.

At the policy level, Denmark will continue efforts to build on political access and dialogue with key Somali and international stakeholders and also undertake a “convening role” for knowledge and information sharing to help improve understanding, coordination and coherence in priority sectors between political interlocutors, development partners and Somali stakeholders.

Most engagements in the bilateral programme are expected to be led by partner organisations, be that multilateral, bilateral or CSO partners, but Denmark may take the lead in the implementation of a few strategic engagements, with due consideration of available capacity.

An important focus of the bilateral programme will be on developing and supporting emerging capacities within the government – e.g. through working with partners directly engaged with government, such as the World Bank. This is a medium-to-long-term institutional development strategy, part of state-building, before direct Danish on-budget support becomes feasible.

#### Principles for Engagement

- Prioritizing coherence and integration, with active efforts made to ensure synergies across instruments and our programmatic portfolio, as well as between political dialogue and programmatic delivery.
- Aligning Danish development priorities with national development plans.
- Setting pragmatic objectives that are focused, realistic in their ambition, aligned to the resources available, and achievable within the timeframe and fragile context;
- Narrowing our thematic engagements to ensure a tighter focus, increased synergies across engagements, and a sequencing of interventions rather than trying to address too many complex challenges in parallel;
- Pursuing a flexible and adaptive approach to respond to the fluid and dynamic nature of Somalia's political economy;
- Balance national level work with activities at the FMS and local level, including with civil society organizations with genuine constituencies, to increase its chances of success; and
- Complementing and reinforcing existing endeavours to promote more inclusive local governance processes for women, youth, and minority groups to rebalance the political settlements and encourage elite engagement with the wider population.

The above principles will be applied across the bilateral development programme: In addition, a number of priorities will cut across all engagements. **Gender equality** will be pursued applying a gender-transformative approach where possible in the planning, managing and monitoring all interventions to ensure equal access and benefits from engagements while addressing gender-based inequalities.

**Engaging youth** in dialogue and decision-making is key to fostering a democratic Somalia, given the young population of Somalia and their lack of voice in the political debate. Denmark will also follow the **Do No Harm principle**, engaging all stakeholders to ensure equitable access and distribution of resources, supporting the participation of local communities in decision-making, and considering the socio-cultural and historical context of the region. This also involves **conflict-sensitivity** as an underlying principle for all engagements. Engagements will be locally driven, **rights-based**, and target those with unequal access to resources and decision-making power, including women and youth. Finally, adaptation to negative consequences of **climate change** will be considered in all engagements, not only included in engagements with a particular focus on climate change adaptation.

## Development engagements that would fall under strategic objective 1

### *1.1 Improved Access to and Management of Water Resources*

The 2023 UN Conference on Water, the first held in 50 years, resulted in a clear “Water Action Agenda” strongly endorsed by Denmark. A bilateral programme in Somalia presents an opportunity for Denmark to accelerate the implementation of this agenda, given the critical importance of water resources in the country and the impending impact of climate change on water availability. By supporting the development of the water sector in Somalia, Denmark could improve living conditions and health, promote food security and productivity, and contribute to sustainable and equitable water management practices while addressing the climate-security nexus. In addition, water is a key driver of conflict in Somalia, the conflict further exacerbated by climate change and demographic growth.

**Improved access to water.** Denmark will explore means to support water infrastructure projects, such as dams, irrigation systems, and water storage and distribution facilities. This could include the rehabilitation of non-functional boreholes and the construction of new ones, strategically placed to provide equal access to water. It could also include the rehabilitation and construction of surface water harvesting structures such as sand and sub-surface dams and reservoirs to benefit agro-pastoral and pastoral communities and contribute to flood prevention and food security. In terms of targeting of initiatives, this could include meeting the water and sanitation needs of IDPs and vulnerable populations and strengthening community resilience in the nexus between humanitarian and development assistance, thereby also contributing to strategic objective 3 of the framework. This could include rehabilitating, extending, or building water distribution systems in urban and peri-urban areas. A WASH approach (or even a One-Health approach<sup>6</sup>), including hygiene and preventive health measures, could be relevant not least in IDP settings. Partners could include key multilateral organisations, but also the multi-partner facility Somaliland Development Fund, which could be focused more on water and green initiatives. Synergies with IFU instruments for sustainable infrastructure could be explored.

**Improved management of water resources.** Denmark could also consider supporting the development of water management plans that take into account the impacts of climate change. This could include activities to map and monitor water resources in Somalia, including across borders. Denmark’s

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<sup>6</sup> One Health recognizes the connection between human, animal, and planetary health – and calls for holistic, cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary solutions that has benefits in all sectors, cf. comments above on the direct benefits and co-benefits on health of climate smart agricultural practices.

expertise in sustainable groundwater management could be utilized to explore potential collaboration with key organizations working on this in Somalia, such as FAO, the World Bank and UNICEF.

Lack of water is an important driver of conflict at community level, while poor water quality is a major driver of diseases. Denmark could explore supporting local communities in developing strategies for water conservation and efficient water use, supporting local decision-making and governance, such as local water user groups, thereby supporting local systems of governance and increasing equity and inclusiveness. This could also be addressed through support to Danish and local NGOs working in this space. Special attention will be on including women in decision-making processes around water resource management.

### ***1.2 Natural Resource Management and Nature-based Solutions***

**Natural Resource Management.** Denmark could consider prioritizing strategic investments in natural resource management, climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food systems. Current land and natural resource management practices are deeply unsustainable, leading to deforestation, land degradation, and decreased resilience to climate change. Initiatives to address these challenges could include crop diversification, drought-resistant crop varieties, and sustainable land management practices. Strategies for sustainable agricultural practices could also be explored, such as water conservation, soil management, and information on crop selection.

**Promotion and use of Nature-Based Solutions.** Denmark could explore the promotion of nature-based solutions, such as reforestation, watershed restoration, and soil conservation. These solutions mitigate environmental degradation, reduce the risks of drought and floods, and provide important co-benefits, such as improved biodiversity, increased soil moisture and fertility, and protection of groundwater resources. This could include a specific focus on flood prevention. Somalia's regular flash floods not only threaten lives, property, and livestock but also wash away critical topsoil which decreases agricultural productivity in the medium- and long-term. Some successful flood prevention initiatives have focused on hybrid nature-based solutions like revegetation and reforestation.

### ***1.3 Green growth, business enabling environment, and market systems development***

Improving the ways that small and informal economic actors interact with markets will promote growth and create jobs, thereby reducing poverty. Marginalised groups—including women and youth – are often excluded from engaging in markets—either through barriers to loans, monopolies, fluctuating prices and access issues. Building on existing experience, Denmark could look to develop a **Market Systems Development approach** to address these barriers and enable small and medium sized economic actors to access markets by addressing the underlying factors for the barriers. This could include supporting the development of regulatory frameworks to include e.g. women as economic actors, and to support skills-creation, information, infrastructure and finance.

**Supporting inclusive green growth.** Climate adaptation holds significant potential for creating green jobs in a range of sectors. Denmark could continue and step up its support to green sector growth and job creation with a focus on facilitating access to renewable energy, especially decentralized small-scale solutions, sustainable production and improving environmental protection, through private sector approaches, including access to finance and technical assistance that could be targeted in this direction. Another area of interest would be supporting green jobs that promote the “Blue Economy” and the

sustainable use of ocean resources, not least within Somalia's fisheries sector. The existing Somaliland Development Fund could potentially be redesigned to contribute to the green (and blue) agenda in a targeted way, in collaboration with bilateral partners in this fund.

## **Development engagements that would fall under strategic objective 2**

### ***2.1 Political settlement, Strengthened Institutions and Public Accountability***

**Supporting capability, inclusion and accountability at FGS and sub-national levels.** Denmark will explore ways to support inclusive democratic processes, further strengthening institutions at federal member state and local levels. The work may support member states and local governments around district council formation, planning, revenue collection, execution and accountability. Where relevant, it may also support national as well as state-level and local election processes.

Through multilateral partnerships, for example with the World Bank's Multi-Partner Fund or relevant projects working to strengthen public financial management, Denmark would support strengthening of the role, accountability and legitimacy of the state, strengthening inclusive governance and financial integrity. This focus could also include work with bilateral joint programmes to increase the revenue mobilisation, include broadening the tax base at sub-national level – with a dual objective of increasing fiscal space, and to develop the state's role as a duty bearer, thereby strengthening the social contract, providing services to its citizens.

### ***2.2 Strengthening civic space and improved participation of women, youth, and minority groups in decision-making***

Denmark could explore scaling up support to a **constructive civil society engagement** on national and sub-national policy and service delivery issues. We could also look to support Somali expert policy inputs from think tanks and other experts in order to support evidence-based policymaking in Somalia, and to ensure strong policy analysis informing our broader portfolio implementation. Such an engagement could include taking a lead role in setting up a civic engagement mechanism. This could build on positive Danish experiences from other countries and in-country discussions with like-minded development partners. The mechanism could balance local ownership and governance with providing funding and capacity-development programs that would enable civil society organizations to effectively perform their oversight function and ensure that marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and minority clans are included in decision-making processes.

**Representation of women and youth in political decision-making.** As part of a wider civil society engagement, Denmark could initiate and support reforms to address the barriers that prevent women, youth, and minorities from participating in the political process. Such efforts could be integrated in engagements focusing on broadening civic space, institutional strengthening and local development engagements based on partnerships with civil society organizations, political parties, and other stakeholders to facilitate the participation of women, youth, and minorities in decision-making processes. This may be informed by ongoing advice from key female decision-makers and women-led organisations and potentially by a “youth sounding board”.



**Advocating for and protecting human rights.** Protecting and promoting human rights, particularly of women, youth, and minorities, is a central pillar of all Danish development support. Engagements that promote and protect human rights – working with both duty bearers and rights holders – will be considered under this strategic objective. This could be combined with the continuous advocacy on key human rights issues in our political dialogue with key government interlocutors.

## **Development engagements that would fall under strategic objective 3**

In support of the third strategic objective, Denmark will promote resilience, self-reliance and livelihoods, both at the individual, household, community and national level. The primary focus of engagements under SO3 will be at the local and community level, building resilience bottom-up. Under this strategic objective, engagements under the bilateral programme will complement and build on experience from the humanitarian assistance Denmark is providing to Somalia, and engagements would seek to engage across the HDP nexus to fight poverty and build resilience in a longer-term perspective.

Understanding the multi-faceted nature of poverty and vulnerabilities in Somalia and contextual differences within Somalia, **building resilience at individual, household and community level** should address both the lack of opportunities, and the lack of services, vulnerable Somalis are facing. While our humanitarian assistance provides support to the provision of services, the ambition for engagements under the bilateral programme is primarily to address the slack of opportunities for the most vulnerable Somalis by engaging in improving livelihoods. It will be necessary to target both rural and urban settings, taking into consideration the rapid urbanisation in Somalia as well as the high number of IDPs in towns and cities.

### ***3.1 Enhancing livelihoods and preventing internal displacement***

Nearly half of the Somali population are in need of humanitarian assistance. To reduce humanitarian needs in a longer-term perspective, engagements will seek to provide opportunities through improving livelihoods. This involves strengthening the ability of individuals, households, communities and systems to prepare for, absorb, adapt and recover from shocks from conflict or climate change and requires addressing the root causes of fragility. Many Somalis, in the absence of a functioning state, rely on the community and clan to provide protection and livelihoods, and service provision is often in the hands of either humanitarian actors, or informal and clan-affiliated networks.

As poverty, instability and conflict in Somalia is often manifested in lack of food, water and protection, this forces the most vulnerable parts of the population into displacement in the search of survival, which accelerates urbanisation and puts strain on already scarce local, and humanitarian, resources. Water, food and security are, consequently, central to improved livelihoods, as are small-scale economic opportunities.

Denmark would seek to engage in efforts to **promote community resilience in places of origin**, knowing that to alleviate displacement pressures, basic needs must be fulfilled in close proximity to where vulnerable populations are placed. This could also include climate adaptive services in both urban and rural areas, for example water, irrigation and climate-smart agriculture.

Building resilience at community level involves adapting and deploying community level capacities and resources to prepare for and respond to shocks and mitigate the impacts on community members. A

**community driven development approach** will be considered, including focus on social dialogue and local decision making in prioritizing needs and activities. This could contribute to local conflict mediation and resolution, and add to concrete experience and model building with emphasis on the peacebuilding focus of the HDP nexus, linking this to the humanitarian financing and development investments. Contexts and strategies will differ, and a flexible approach to strengthen livelihoods will be required, but it could include micro-loans for productive activities, livestock insurance schemes in rural settings and climate-smart agriculture interventions. Potential synergy with other Danish engagements around climate change adaptation will be explored.

Denmark could explore how to engage in efforts to improve livelihoods and self-reliance through **working with NGOs to model new approaches to livelihoods and self-reliance**, as well as protection efforts. Social safety nets in Somalia are often primarily the family, the local community and the clan affiliation – as long as the community has any resources to share. A targeted call for proposals from NGOs in this space could be considered, complemented by support through a multilateral organisation aiming to improve livelihoods both in rural and urban settings.

In addition, the needs of urban poor, often living alongside IDPs in informal settlements, could be considered in relation to resilience investments. A number of partners, both multilaterals and NGOs, are working on urban resilience, also in secondary cities, as part of a longer term strategy of improving national resilience and adaptation to changing climate and security circumstances.

## 7. Tentative outline of bilateral programme budget

Commitments	DKK million
Overall bilateral programme	1050
Commitment 2024	200
Commitment 2025	295
Commitment 2026	385
Commitment 2027	170

## 8. Annexes

### a) Map of Somalia



Map No. 3690 Rev. 10 UNITED NATIONS  
December 2011

Department of Field Support  
Cartographic Section

## b) Key Data / Figures – Somalia

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Source</i>
<b>Key economic data</b>			
Surface area (square km.)	637.657	2022	UNDP
Population	17.065.581	2021	WB WDI
Gross Domestic Product, GDP (Current USD, billion)	7.63	2021	WB WDI
GDP Growth (annual pct.)	4.0	2021	WB WDI
GDP per capita (current USD)	401	2022	IMF
“Ease of doing business”-index (1-100, 1=most business-friendly regulations)	20.0	2019	WB WDI
Tax revenue (pct. of GDP)	2.1*	2022	IMF
Net ODA received per capita (current USD)	140.4	2021	WB WDI
Net ODA received pct. of GNI	31.6	2021	WB WDI
Total debt service (pct. of GNI)	0.2	2021	WB WDI
Present value of external debt (pct. of GNI)	30.4	2021	WB WDI
Inflation, consumer prices (annual changes in pct.)	6.8	2022	UNDP
<b>Key social data</b>			
Population growth (Annual pct.)	3.1	2021	WB WDI
Life expectancy, total (years)	56	2022	UNDP
Total Fertility Rate (number of births per woman)	6.9	2019	UNDP
Population ages 15-64 (pct. of total population)	50.2	2021	WB WDI
Urban population (pct. of total population)	46.7	2021	WB WDI
Internally displaced population (percentage of total population)	17	2019	UNDP
Mortality rate, under-5 (1,000 live births)	128	2016	UNDP
Maternal mortality rate, modelled estimate, per 100,000 live births	692	2019	UNDP
People at least using basic drinking water (pct. of total population)	56	2020	WB WDI
Food insecurity (percentage of total population)	31	2022	UNDP
Prevalence of HIV, total (pct. of population ages 15-49)	0.1	2021	WB WDI
School enrolment primary (pct. gross)	9.1	2021	WB WDI
People living below poverty line (pct. of total population)	69	2022	UNDP
Female circumcision (aged 15-49, pct.)	99	2022	UNDP
Income per capita (current USD)	557	2018	UNDP
<b>Key environment data</b>			
Forest area (pct. of land)	9.5	2020	UNDP
People using at least basic sanitation services (pct. of population)	40	2022	UNDP
CO2 emission (metric tonnes per capita)	0.0	2019	WB WDI
Renewable electricity consumption (pct. of total final energy consumption)	95.03	2019	WB WDI
Access to electricity (pct. of population)	49.7	2020	WB WDI
<b>Key human rights data</b>			
Political rights, 0-40 points	2	2023	Freedom House
Civil liberties, 0-60 points	6	2023	Freedom House
Press Freedom Index (1-180)	44	2023	Reporters Without Borders

## c) Results Framework

