

# Settling the status of Population in Somalia

## September 2012

### Population Estimation Survey

*“The result of the PES will settle the ground for reconstruction of Somalia”* Minister of State for Planning and International Cooperation, Mogadishu, Ibrahim Suleiman.

*“We need to know how many kids that are born, and how many died. This is very important for us”* UNICEF Representative, Sikandar Khan.

*“This is fundamental, since we are working with human population needs”* WFP Representative, Stefano Porretti.

*“The new government needs data, and we don’t have that today”* Survey Director, Federal Government, Mogadishu, Nur Ahmed Weheliye.

*“As well as having the data, it would also assist us in building our own capacity”* Survey Director, Somaliland, Isman Warsama.

*“We need to collect, disaggregate and analyze development data according to international standards”* UNFPA Population Expert, Abdallah Abdellaz Zoubi.



*“Numbers tell us about people. This Population Estimation Survey will provide critical data to guide plans, policies and programmes to meet the Somali people’s need and improve their lives”*  
UNFPA Representative,  
Cheikh T. Cisse

### Because everybody counts, everybody deserves to be counted.

The transition is over. Monday 10 of September, the Somali people took a giant step forward on the path to peace and prosperity, and ended the transitional period decisively by selecting their next President.

Somalis have to focus on stabilization, reconciliation and building sustainable and accountable institutions of governance capable of providing services to their people. In order to make good decisions for the people they serve, access to good data is essential for policy makers. Data enables countries to measure progress, or lack of it.

Somalia had a long absence of any form of reliable data system that supports humanitarian, recovery or development actions since the collapse of the central government in 1991. The last population census was done in 1985/86, but no data was released. Only a few data were released from the earlier census conducted in 1975.

A settlement survey was done by United Nations Development Program back in 2005/06, but the Somali administration came out against it, because they felt that their population had been underestimated. Nevertheless, those data has been used as a framework for designing surveys until now.

It would be ideal to conduct a comprehensive population census for Somalia. However, basic requirements for conducting an internationally credible census cannot be met at the current stage because of concerns of national capacity and regarding security and stability in the central and southern parts of Somalia.

A population survey along with mapping and estimation procedures is the most practical option at this stage.

So the time has come to settle the status, once and for all. The Population Fund (UNFPA) is mandated by UN to support governments in using population data for policies and programs. Together with the Somali governments and in partnership and collaboration with the UN agencies the time is right for conducting a Population Estimation Survey.

The primary objective of the survey is to obtain reliable population estimates of Somalia that are classified by geographic areas, regions, districts and water points, and by demographic and some socioeconomic characteristics including age, sex, educational status, employment and access to safe water and mobility status.

For all development partners data is essential in demonstrating measurable results and accountability, particularly as it relates to funding and management.

The priority given by the national authorities for conducting this survey, formed the biggest motivation for the international organizations, represented by WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, FAO and WHO to adopt this initiative towards achieving greater coordination and integration between these organizations in support of national sustainable development efforts.



## Who runs Somalia?



## Population Estimation Survey

*“During the last twenty years, we couldn’t get adequate information for planning”* Deputy Survey Director, Puntland, Abdinasir Ali Dahir.

*“If the numbers are wrong we might be wrong, so this is a top priority for us”* FAO Representative Luca Alinovi.

*“For planning purposes you need to have population data, which is not there”* Statistical specialist UNDP, Sammy Oyombe.

*“With this UNFPA led exercise we can have a common methodology”* UNHCR Dep. Representative, Ayaki Ito.



UNFPA Somalia Country Office  
United Nations Complex  
Block P Level 2 UN Avenue Gigiri  
P.O. Box 28832-00200 Nairobi  
Kenya  
Tel: +254 207625742  
Fax: +254 207625741  
Email: [somalia.registry@unfpa.org](mailto:somalia.registry@unfpa.org)  
Webpage: <http://somalia.unfpa.org>

**Objectives** Is to provide evidence based, technically sound, reliable, estimates of population of Somalia including IDPs and nomads.

**Expected results** Estimates of the population size and number and spatial distribution of the households. Description of basic socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population, like age, sex, marital status, nationality, mortality, literacy, education, economic activity, gender disparities, immunization status. Estimation of the electoral population and those actually registered as voters, and a description of households, with size, living arrangements, access to water, energy and telecommunication.

**Methodology** Compilation and validation of existing data, from UNDP’s settlement survey from 2005/06, aerial and satellite images, WHO immunization data and primary data from the field. Update of the sampling frame and verification. Design survey tools, questionnaires and manuals. Recruit and train human resources and logistical and financial preparations. Implement the Population Estimation Survey.

Evaluate survey data for internal consistency. Cross checking indicators from the field survey and external sources. Estimate final population statistics and indicators.

**Budget and contributions** The survey will cost about 1 million USD in 2012 and 5.9 million USD in 2013. UN agencies have committed to supporting with funding, staffing and resources. Several donors have also shown a strong interest in contributing to the survey. Somali government commitments and contribution is expected, securing specific premises for the PES activities.

**Achievements** Methodology was adopted earlier this year in a workshop in Uganda. Project document are finalized. Expert meeting was held in Nairobi in September, where a consensus around the process of implementation and financial commitments was obtained. PES survey directors and deputy directors of Puntland, Somaliland and the Federal Government has been recruited. The sampling experts has been identified and in the process of recruitment. Geographic Information System expert recruitment is in the final stage. The process of recruiting of survey regional coordinators is ongoing.

## Timetable

- ◆ Sample design and update of sample areas Sep-Nov 2012
- ◆ Recruitment and Training of Field Staff Dec 2012
- ◆ Field Data Collection for the sample Feb 2013
- ◆ Data processing and evaluation Feb—March 2013
- ◆ Data analyses and delivering preliminary population estimates and indicators Feb— March 2013
- ◆ Report preparation and finalization April—June 2013
- ◆ Dissemination July 2013
- ◆ Design of Master Sample June—Aug 2013