

A Crack in the Sky

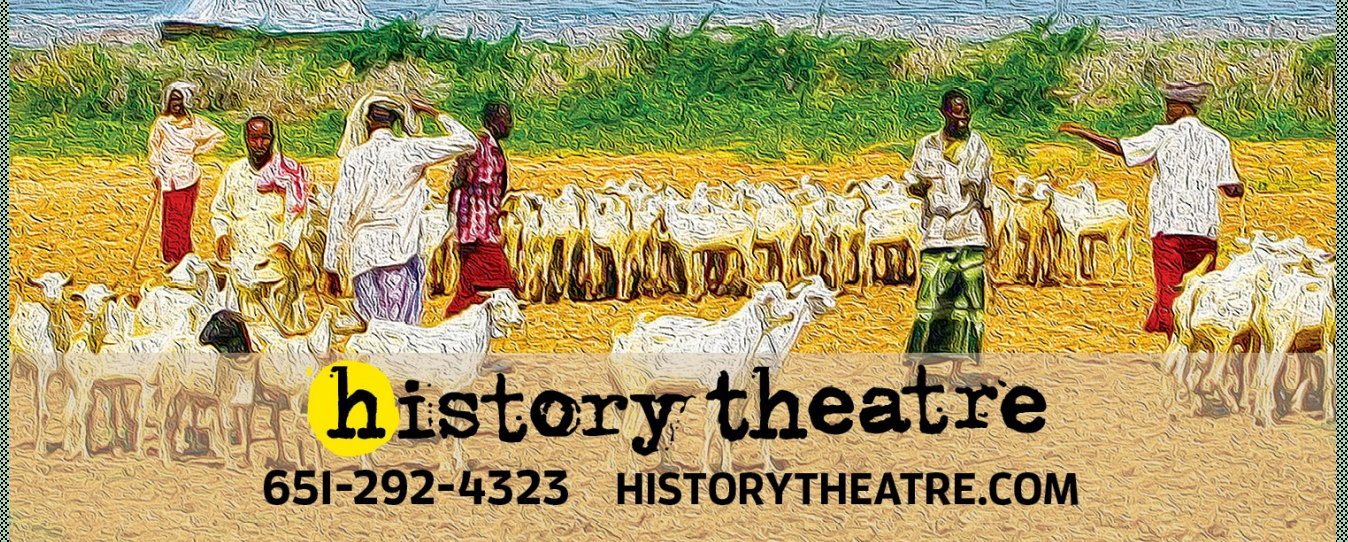
Cirka Qayb Yar Banaan

From Somalia to the U.S.A.

Wuxuu USA yimi

Feb 10
thru Mar 4
2018

by Harrison David Rivers and
Ahmed Ismail Yusuf
Directed by Faye Price



history theatre

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Play Guide



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Table Of Contents

3– Ahmed Yusuf– Author of *Somalis in Minnesota*
4-7: Somalia Timeline
8-9: Somalia History
10-12: Drought in Somalia

Activities

Crisis in the Horn of Africa: Understanding the Famine in Somalia
Refugee Defined
For Further Information

Ahmed Yusuf

Author of *A Crack in the Sky*



How did you first get involved in adapting your story for the theater?

I just had written a play or matter of fact what I thought was a play and asked someone from the Minnesota Historical Society to help me reach Ron, thinking that they were related. (Shhhhh, don't let him know that!) So, Alison Aton from MHS and I met with Ron and Anya. He put the fictional draft aside and said, "How did you get here (to Minnesota?) I began to tell a few things about how I made it to the USA and then to Minnesota. There, Ron simply said with his unassuming matter fact way, "Why don't you write that and send it to us." I wrote a draft. He emailed me back and said, "Listen, we think there is a play somewhere in there. Do you mind if we pair you up with someone who knows the theatre language and nuance."

Short time later he suggested the playwright Harrison David Rivers. Harrison and I met, hit it off and been together ever since.

What was your process like writing this play?

The process has been great, educational and intriguing. We started from my draft and during the journey developed a method of communication. For example, Harrison would ask a question, normally an illuminating one. I would respond in narratives at times, and at times a play form. He uses it whichever way he sees fit. On a few occasions we talked over the phone. We would also speak to each other when we meet about an idea one of us has, and he would take it into account. Mostly the animal characters are all his creation but the rest is shared narratives.

What has it been like seeing your story played out on stage?

Seeing my story on stage is surreal. In a way I can see it's me but on another it's no longer mine. It's in the public domain now. It feels like you gave birth to a child, and have no idea what he/she is going to make out of his/herself, yet you are excited anyway. I believe that itself will soon change once the show hits the stage.

What do you hope audiences take away from your play?

I would like the audience to see how an immigrant has the same aspiration they do for themselves or for their children but he/she has to climb a steep mountain to get there. Yet, regardless of hardship faced, the hunger to succeed and fear of failure are with him/her.

Besides the book *Somalis in Minnesota*, Ahmed has published fictional short stories, articles, reviews, and research papers. His new book *The Lion's Binding Oath*, a collection of short stories is due to be released in June 2018.

Somalia – Timeline



The Horn of Africa has been home to Somalis since ancient times.

13th-17th centuries - Ajuran Sultanate dominates much of the Horn of Africa before collapsing into rival regional sultanates.

1875 - Egypt occupies towns on Somali coast and parts of the interior.

1860s - France acquires foothold on the Somali coast, later to become Djibouti.

1887 - Britain proclaims protectorate over Somaliland.

1888 - Anglo-French agreement defines boundary between Somali possessions of the two countries.

1889 - Italy sets up a protectorate in central Somalia, later consolidated with territory in the south ceded by the sultan of Zanzibar.

1925 - Territory east of the Jubba River detached from Kenya to become the westernmost part of the Italian protectorate.

1936 - Italian Somaliland combined with Somali-speaking parts of Ethiopia to form a province of Italian East Africa.

1940 - Italians occupy British Somaliland.

1941 - British occupy Italian Somalia.

Independence

1950 - Italian Somaliland becomes a UN trust territory under Italian control.

1956 - Italian Somaliland renamed Somalia and granted internal autonomy.

1960 - British and Italian parts of Somalia become independent, merge and form the United Republic of Somalia; Aden Abdullah Osman Daar elected president.

1963 - Border dispute with Kenya; diplomatic relations with Britain broken until 1968.

1964 - Border dispute with Ethiopia erupts into hostilities.

1967 - Abdi Rashid Ali Shermarke beats Aden Abdullah Osman Daar in elections for president.



Aden Abdullah Osman Daar

Drought and War

1969 - Muhammad Siad Barre assumes power in coup after Shermarke is assassinated.

1970 - Barre declares Somalia a socialist state and nationalizes most of the economy.

1974 - Somalia joins the Arab League.

1974-75 - Severe drought causes widespread starvation.

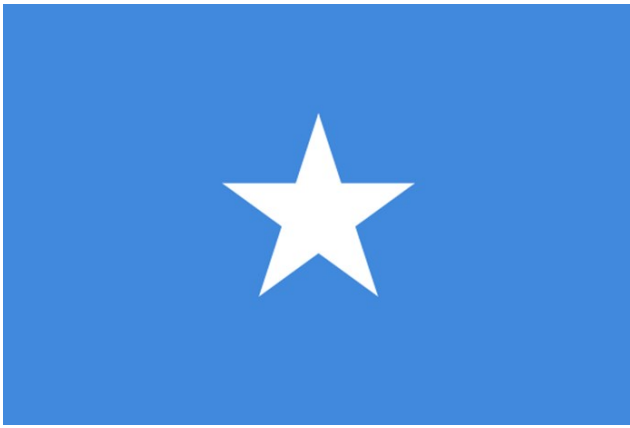
1977 - Somalia invades the Somali-inhabited Ogaden region of Ethiopia.

1978 - Somali forces pushed out of Ogaden with the help of Soviet advisers and Cuban troops. Barre expels Soviet advisers and gains support of United States.

1981 - Opposition to Barre's regime begins to emerge after he excludes members of the Mijertyn and Isaq clans from government positions, which are filled with people from his own Marehan clan.

1988 - Peace accord with Ethiopia.

1991 - Mohamed Siad Barre is ousted. Power struggle between clan warlords kills or wounds thousands of civilians.



Somaliland breaks away

1991 - Former British protectorate of Somaliland declares unilateral independence.

1992 - US Marines land near Mogadishu ahead of a UN peacekeeping force sent to restore order and safeguard relief supplies.

1993 - US Army Rangers are killed when Somali militias shoot down two US helicopters in Mogadishu and a battle ensues. Hundreds of Somalis die. US mission formally ends in March 1994.

1995 - UN peacekeepers leave, having failed to achieve their

mission.

1996 August - Warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed dies of wounds and is succeeded by his son, Hussein.

Puntland autonomy

1998 - Puntland region declares autonomy.

2000 August - Clan leaders and senior figures meeting in Djibouti elect Abdulkassim Salat Hassan president of Somalia.

2000 October - Hassan and his newly-appointed prime minister, Ali Khalif Gelayadh, arrive in Mogadishu to heroes' welcomes. Gelayadh announces his government, the first in the country since 1991.

2001 April - Somali warlords, backed by Ethiopia, decline to support transitional administration.

Somalia: Who supports who?

2004 August - In 14th attempt since 1991 to restore central government, a new transitional parliament inaugurated at ceremony in Kenya. In October the body elects Abdullahi Yusuf as president.

2004 December - Tsunami off Indonesia displaces 10,000s on Somali coast.

2005 February-June - Somali government begins returning home from exile in Kenya, but there are bitter divisions over where in Somalia the new parliament should sit.

2005 November - Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Ghedi survives an assassination attempt in Mogadishu.

Islamist advance

2006 February - Transitional parliament meets in central town of Baidoa for the first time since it was formed in 2004.

2006 March-May - Scores of people are killed and hundreds are injured during fierce fighting between rival militias in Mogadishu. Worst violence in almost decade.

2006 June-July - Militias loyal to the Union of Islamic Courts take Mogadishu and other parts of south after defeating clan warlords.

2006 Ethiopian troops enter Somalia.

2006 July-August - Mogadishu's air and seaports are re-opened for the first time since 1995.

2006 September - Transitional government and Islamic Courts begin peace talks in Khartoum.

2006 Somalia's first known suicide bombing targets President Yusuf outside parliament in Baidoa.



Islamists retreat

2006 December - Ethiopian and transitional government put Islamists to flight, capturing Mogadishu.

Ethiopia intervenes

2007 January - Islamists abandon their last stronghold, the southern port of Kismayo.

President Abdullahi Yusuf enters Mogadishu for the first time since taking office in 2004.

Air strikes in south against al-Qaeda figures are first direct US military intervention in Somalia since 1993.

2007 March - African Union troops land in Mogadishu amid battles between Islamist insurgents and government forces backed by Ethiopian troops, after UN Security Council authorized six-month peacekeeping mission.

Piracy concerns

2008 May - The UN Security Council allows countries to send warships to Somalia's territorial waters to tackle pirates.

2009 January - Ethiopia completes withdrawal of troops, announced the previous year, and Al-Shabab capture Baidoa, formerly a key government stronghold.

Al-Shabab highpoint



2009 October - Al-Shabab recaptures the southern port of Kismayo after defeating the rival Hizbul-Islam militia.

2010-12 - Famine kills almost 260,000, the UN says.

2010 January - UN World Food Program withdraws from Al-Shabab areas of southern Somalia after threats to lives of its staff.

2010 February - Al-Shabab formally declares alliance with al-Qaeda, begins to concentrate troops for a major offensive to capture the capital.

2011 January - Pirate attacks on ships worldwide hit seven-year high in 2010, with Somali pirates accounting for 49 of 52 ships seized.

2011 July - UN formally declares famine in three regions of Somalia.

2011 Al-Shabab partially lifts ban on foreign aid and UN airlifts its first aid in five years to Mogadishu.

2011 Al-Shabab pulls out of Mogadishu in what it calls "tactical move".

Kenyan intervention

2011 October - Kenyan troops enter Somalia to attack rebels they accuse of being behind several kidnappings of foreigners on Kenyan soil.

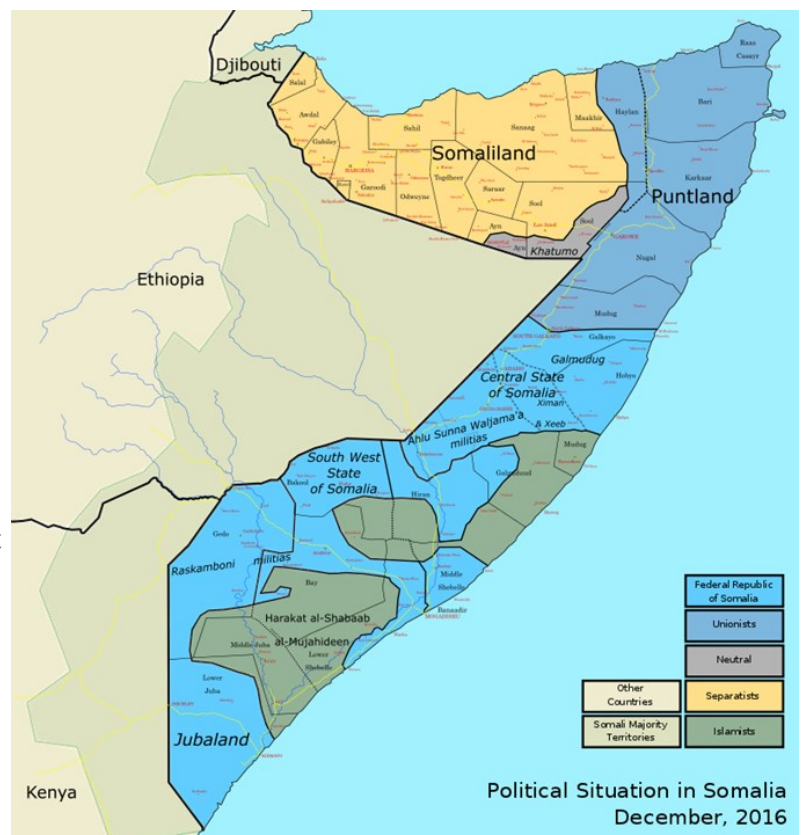
New parliament, president

2012 August - Somalia's first formal parliament in more than 20 years is sworn in at Mogadishu airport, ending eight-year transitional period.

Pro-government forces capture the port of Merca south of Mogadishu from Al-Shabab.

2012 September - MPs in Mogadishu elect activist Hassan Sheikh Mohamud president over the incumbent Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. First presidential election in Somalia since 1967.

2012 October - African Union and government forces recapture Kismayo, the last major city held by Al-Shabab and the town of Wanla Weyn northwest of Mogadishu.



2013 January - US recognizes Somalia's government for the first time since 1991.

2013 June - Veteran Al-Shabab leader Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys is taken into custody by government troops after he is ousted by more extreme Al-Shabab figure Ahmed Abdi Godane.

2013 Spike in violence with various attacks by Al-Shabab, including on presidential palace and UN compound in Mogadishu.

2013 September - International donors promise 2.4 billion dollars in reconstruction aid in three-year "New Deal".

Shabab attacks Kenya

2013 September - Al-Shabab seize shopping center and kill 60 people in Kenyan capital Nairobi, saying it is retaliation for Kenya's military involvement in Somalia.

2014 May - Al-Shabab says it carried out a bomb attack on a restaurant in Djibouti, saying the country is used as a launch pad to strike Muslims.

2014 June - Al-Shabab claims two attacks on the Kenyan coast which kill more than 60, saying operations against Kenya would continue.

2014 September - Al-Shabab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane killed in US drone strike. Government offers 2-million-dollar bounty for his successor, Ahmad Omar.

2014 November - Government launches country's first postal service in more than two decades. Mogadishu's first ever cash withdrawal machine installed in a hotel.

2014 November-December - Al Shabab carry out mass killings in north-east Kenya, including on a bus and a camp of quarry workers.

2015 April - Al-Shabab claim responsibility for killing 148 people, mainly Christian students, at Garissa University College in northern Kenya. Kenya carries out air raids on Al-Shabab bases in Somalia in retaliation.

2015 May - US Secretary of State John Kerry pays brief visit to Mogadishu, the first officeholder to do so, a few weeks after Al-Shabab raid government quarter of the city and kill 17 people.

2016 February - African Union leaders agree on need for more funding and support for their military presence in Somalia after weeks of increased Al-Shabab attacks on public spaces and pro-government troops.

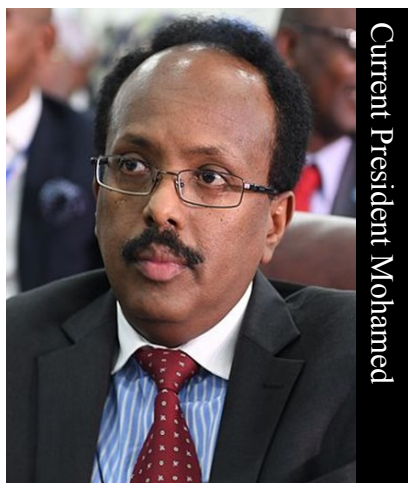
Government and African Union troops recapture southern port of Merca that Al-Shabab briefly seized.

2016 November - Leaders of two Somali regions, Puntland and Galmudug, agree to respect a ceasefire in the disputed city of Galkayo. Fighting in the city reportedly displaced 90,000.

2017 February - Parliament elects former prime minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, known as Farmajo, as president. Al-Shabab threatens to target anyone collaborating with him.

2017 March - Pirates seize tanker off coast of Puntland in the first hijacking of a large vessel in the region since 2012.

2017 May - President Mohamed at London conference calls for lifting of arms embargo to help defeat Al-Shabab. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres says conditions are now in place in Somalia for it to become a success story.



SOMALI HISTORY



Somalia is a country of approximately 14.5 million people located in the horn of East Africa. There is no definite date on which the country of Somalia was said to be formed. The Somalis' own origin story tell that it was a thousand years ago, perhaps a little less, that Arabs landed on Somali beaches, wandered in the mainland, and married African natives. What is understood is that most of what is known about Somali history does not go back much further than the nineteenth century. From 1827 to 1963, colonial powers divided Somalia into five parts: French Somali, British Somali, Italian Somali, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia to Ethiopians and in 1963, the Northern Frontier District for Kenya.

After ten years of United Nations trusteeship and through Italian efforts, British and Italian Somali united under one flag, riding on the winds of freedom sweeping through the continent of Africa in the

1960s. The newly united Somalia established its first-ever government, led by President Aden Abdulla Osman, a Prime Minister, and a judicial system. From the outset, the new nation tried to rally the remaining parts of Somalia to join in reunification, particularly the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. But the Organization of African Unity—now the African Union—did not support a new wave of boundary quarrels.

In 1964 Prime Minister Sharmarke lost his position following a foreign policy disagreement with President Osman about with whom Somalia should militarily ally itself as it sought to dislodge the Ogaden region from Ethiopia. The new prime minister, Abdirizak Haji Hussein focused on institutional building, taking immediate action to curb insidious corruption, attempting to raise ethical standards, and establishing a merit-based employment framework. But this courageous, competent prime minister lasted just two years in office. In 1967, Sharmarke returned into the forefront, claiming the presidency. He was assassinated in 1968 and the following days a military coup, led by Major General Muhammed Siyad Barre, gained control of the country. In 1970 Barre declared Somalia to be a socialist state.

Armed domestic opposition to Siyad Barre arose in 1988 in the Northern part of the country. The Somali National Movement (SNM), the United Somali Congress (USC), and the Ogadeni Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) joined forces to fight against Siyad Barre's government. In 1990 as Barre began to lose control of the country, the local political and business figures came together to sign the Mogadishu Manifesto, calling for Barre's resignation.

Mohammed Siyad Barre fled Somalia in January 27, 1991 and Somalia descended into a state of anarchy. After Barre fled from the country the USC established an interim provisional government, which was headed by provisional President Ali Mahdi Mahammad. As of September 1991, Somalia is effectively under the control of as many as 12 rival clans and sub-clans.

Somalia currently has no stable government and many of the areas of the country continue to be under self-rule with control held by local leaders.

In 1991 Somalia's political system completely collapsed, and by 1992 famine and civil war had consumed the nation. As a result, an estimated 400,000 Somalis died and hundreds of thousands more and were forced to leave urban and rural areas for refugee camps in Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda. As many as one million Somalis now live outside of their homeland. Clan-based factions continue to divide the country into strongholds marked by fighting and random banditry.

The People

The Somali people are mostly divided into numerous clans and sub-clans that trace their ancestry back to a common ancestor. Most Somalis make their living off the land and their culture is rooted in a tradition of pastoralism — traveling with herds of goats, sheep and camels. Camels especially are an important symbol of wealth.

Men are at the center of Somali society and public life. It is acceptable for Somali men to marry up to four wives, but only one fifth of men do so. Somali women have more freedom to be educated, work and travel than many Muslim women, but are nonetheless traditionally charged with all domestic tasks.

Language

Somali is the language of Somalis. Somalis retain primarily an oral culture in which religious and political oratory as well as storytelling, songs and poetry are highly valued. Many Somalis also speak Arabic, the language of Islam. Older Somalis may have received education in the colonial languages — English in the north and Italian in the south. Some Somalis in Minnesota may also speak Swahili as a result of living in Kenyan refugee camps.

Religion

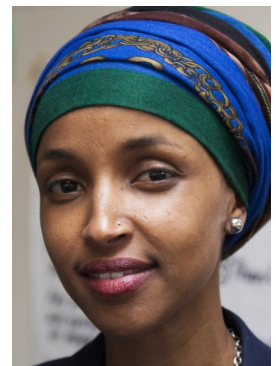
Somalis are almost exclusively Sunni Muslims. Many social norms in Somalia are derived from Islamic tradition. Islam forbids believers to eat pork products or drink alcohol. Those who strictly follow Islam may not work in an establishment that serves either pork or alcohol. Islam requires the faithful to pray five times per day. Some Somalis will stop work to pray at prescribed times or pray during a break or other arranged time. Somali women may cover their heads and bodies when they are in public in accordance with Islamic tradition.

Arrival in U.S.

Since 1993, Somalis have come to Minnesota as refugees. The majority of Somalis in Minnesota have come as secondary migrants from other regions of the U.S. as well as Toronto, Ontario where there is also a large Somali population.

Minnesota Population

The 2000 census placed the number of Somalis in Minnesota at 11,164, but the community believes that number was low. There may be as many as 35,760 to 150,000 Somalis living in Minnesota with 80% residing in Minneapolis, likely the highest concentration of Somalis in the U.S. The majority of Somalis live in the Cedar Riverside, Phillips, and Elliot Park neighborhoods of South Minneapolis. Increasingly, Somali families can be found moving to Metro area suburban communities along with outstate communities such as Marshall, Owatonna, Rochester, St. Cloud and Willmar.



Ilhan Omar—Minnesota House of Representatives
First Somali-American Muslim legislator

Drought in Somalia



The Horn of Africa is facing what has been called the worst drought in 60 years, with an estimated 12.4 million people urgently needing food.

Recurring drought have repeatedly hit Somalia since 1964 and have caused profound social, economic and environmental impacts. The drought affected areas become more vulnerable and the short intervals between

droughts leave the affected communities with little time to recover. These cyclical droughts have also caused extreme food insecurity, poor health care, and lack of access to safe drinking water. This has resulted in the deaths of humans and livestock and the destruction of farm and grazing lands, leading to displacements, endemic diseases, rural migration, urban poor and increased child mortality rates throughout Somalia. Looking back, there have been 42 droughts in the Horn of Africa since 1980, affecting an estimated 109 million people, with 47 million people experiencing drought in the region in the last decade alone. The most well-known famine was in Ethiopia in 1984, some estimates put the death toll as high as 1 million.

The seasons and livelihoods in Somalia revolve around rainfall. The main rainy season (called *gu*) is from April to June and a second rainy season (called *deyr*) is from October to November. All other months are dry. Crop prices follow a seasonal trend: they decrease in July/August as the *gu* harvest replenishes stocks, increase between September and December as market stocks are used up, and decrease again in January/February with the *deyr* harvest.

The rains are particularly crucial to the Somalis whose livelihoods depend on the land. In the pastoral zones, lush pasture nourishes livestock, thus increasing their value. In the agricultural zones, a good harvest lowers crop prices, replenishes household stocks and provides work. Drought has a severe impact. In 2016, poor *gu* rains led to a low harvest. Later that year, the *deyr* rains were also poor and the harvest fell by 70%. In the northern parts of Somalia the dry season was hotter and drier than usual, and the region had experienced drought during the previous two years. This destroyed the harvest and livestock. In southern Somalia, 2017 began with a dry season that was hotter and drier than usual. The 2017 *gu* rains started late and were below normal, which led to a low harvest.

Somalia is a case of subtle connections between drought, food insecurity and conflict. As almost always, food insecurity does not result from a meteorological drought alone. In Somalia the protracted conflict, lack of access to markets, and underlying structural factors play important roles in determining the risk

Politics, international borders, war and changed demographics disrupt traditional pastoralist community methods, leaving livelihoods with little chance of success. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, there have been at least seven periods of food insecurity that coincided with droughts. Some were times of famine, which the UN defines according to certain measures of hunger, malnutrition and death, and others were food crises, when hunger and malnutrition rose sharply. The major events were: a famine in 1991–92, food crises in 1999–2000, 2006 and 2008, another famine in 2011–12, a food crisis in 2014 and a food crisis verging on famine in 2016–17.

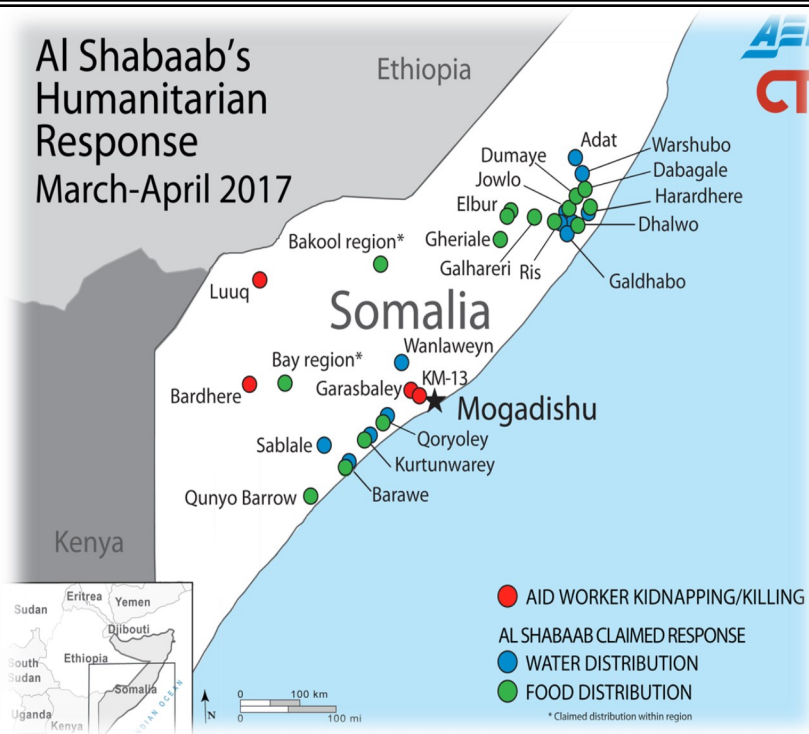
At the same time, the country has been in a state of civil war. Conflict in Somalia has deep political roots that go back decades. After the Somali-Ethiopian war in 1977-78 drained the government's coffers, severe austerity was implemented to control debts and protests were met with brutal repression. Eventually, the Siad Barre government, which had been in power since October 1969, collapsed in January 1991, ushering in civil war between rival clan-based political factions.

In southern Somalia, the militant group Al-Shabaab key agricultural areas. The group relies on a variety of tactics to get new recruits and solidify its presence. For example, in one area it builds canals to make local farmers less dependent on rainfall, thus cultivating goodwill. At the peak of the 2011/12 drought, Al-Shabaab was reported to have sabotaged the relief effort by restricting access to humanitarian agencies

Somalia's new president, Mohamed Farmaajo has already declared the current drought a national disaster, and the country is in the process of formulating its first national disaster management policy. For this policy to be effective, Somalia needs a Somali-led integrated disaster information system that identifies food insecurity and directs response. Other useful steps include harnessing knowledge and technology to meet the people's needs.

Here are 10 facts about hunger in Somalia

1. Most recently, hunger in Somalia has worsened due to a two-year drought. 6.2 million people are severely food insecure. Almost three million cannot reach their daily food requirements.
2. In 2011, an estimated quarter million people died due to a severe famine.
3. Somalia has an infant mortality rate of 13.7 percent, the third highest in the world.
4. 1 in 8 children under five is acutely malnourished. Malnutrition is largely to blame, according to UNICEF. Life expectancy is 51 years.
5. The situation is worse in rural areas, as poor rainfalls have resulted in crops and water shortage. Nearly three-quarters of the country's livestock has died, which harms pastoralists' livelihoods.
6. The drought has reduced maize and sorghum harvests to about 25 percent of past averages. Food prices in Somalia have reached near record levels.
7. Hunger in Somalia is also high among internally displaced populations (IDPs). Approximately 638,000 of the 1,200,000 IDPs in Somalia are struggling to feed themselves. IDPs are on the move and suffer from loss of income and reduced access to social services.
8. Somalia has one of the world's lowest school enrollment rates. Just 42 percent of children and 36 percent are girls are in school. The U.N. World Food Program operates a program that provides free school meals as a way to both improve attendance and address hunger in Somalia.
9. Over two decades of conflict have left 1.1 million of the population displace in their own country, and almost 1 million refugees in neighboring countries.
10. Overall, 73% of Somalis live on less than US\$2 per day.



Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their country and cannot return home safely. They are escaping war, persecution or conflict. People fleeing for any other reason – even dire poverty – are defined as migrants. Refugees are protected by international laws. These laws prevent them from being returned to danger and give them access to fair asylum procedures.

As global temperatures increase, more and more people are feeling the impacts of climate change. People fleeing because of climate change don't have the same protections. Climate refugees are forced to leave their homes because of environmental changes which risk their lives or livelihoods. Such changes might include extreme weather, drought or rising sea levels. By 2050, there could be up to 200 million people displaced by rising global temperature – according to the International Organization on Migration. Drought and extreme storms are forcing people to leave their homes in search of a better life. And there is an increasing risk of communities clashing over precious natural resources such as water. Most displaced people are in the global south. Developing nations host 86% of all recognized refugees.

The majority of climate refugees remain in their own countries. The same is true for those displaced by conflict. They are known as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). However, many IDPs don't get the help they are entitled to because they are not identified or registered. Some will be forced to move to different countries seeking greater security. As climate change gets worse, we're likely to see more people having to permanently leave their countries behind.



Somalis displaced by the drought, arrive at makeshift camps in the Tabelaha area

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate-change/climate-refugees>
<https://www.climatecentral.org/analyses/somalia-drought-2016-2017/>

International Committee of the Red Cross
United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNCHR, February 2017
The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 2017

ACTIVITIES



Crisis in the Horn of Africa: Understanding the Famine in Somalia

Overview | What are the causes and aggravating factors of the famine in Somalia? With millions of people affected in the Horn of Africa, what is being done to address their problems, and what type of international aid are Somalis receiving? In this lesson, students view photographs of the crisis in Somalia, develop background knowledge about the country and then delve into the crisis there and the international response.

Materials | Photographs of, and facts about, the famine in Somalia for a gallery walk or slide show, computers with Internet access, student notebooks, resources about Somalia.

Warm-Up | Before class, post New York Times photographs of the famine in Somalia around the room or prepare to show a slide show on a screen. Sources include these slide shows:

[Famine in Somalia– Fleeing Somali’s Drought](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/07/15/world/africa/20110716_SOMALIA_)

http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/07/15/world/africa/20110716_SOMALIA_

[Waging War in Somalia, a Country in Chaos](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/08/10/world/africa/20110811_SOMALIA.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=F6D27C5E05F32E87CAC90B8F2491BE81&gwt=pay#1)

[http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/08/10/world/africa/20110811_SOMALIA.html?
mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=F6D27C5E05F32E87CAC90B8F2491BE81&gwt=pay#1](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/08/10/world/africa/20110811_SOMALIA.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=F6D27C5E05F32E87CAC90B8F2491BE81&gwt=pay#1)

Include in the gallery or on the screen at least three snippets of information about the situation in Somalia from New York Times coverage, like the following, all from the Times Topics page on Somalia:

“For a generation, Somalia has been a byword for the suffering of a failed state.”

“A combination of drought, war, restrictions on aid groups and years of chaos have pushed four million Somalis — more than half the population — into ‘crisis,’ according to the United Nations.”

“Is the world about to watch 750,000 Somalis starve to death? The rains will start pounding down in the fall, but before any crops will grow, disease will bloom. Malaria, cholera, typhoid and measles will sweep through immune-suppressed populations, aid agencies say, killing countless malnourished people.”

As they view the images and text, have students jot down reactions in their notebooks. Afterward, lead a brief discussion. Ask students to share the reactions. Had they been aware of what has been going on in Somalia? What do they already know about Somalia? What questions do they have after viewing these photos and hearing a little about the situation there? Record ideas and questions on the board.

Activity | Start by having students pair up and read through the entire overview on the Times Topics page and the C.I.A. World Factbook entry about Somalia, highlighting key information.

They should also find working definitions from reliable resources for the following terms: Al Shabab, African Union (AU), famine, insurgent, integrated food security phase classification (IPC), internally displaced people (IDP), malnutrition, transitional federal government (TFG)

Next, each pair should create **word clouds**, employing a free tool like Wordle, Tagxedo, Tag Crowd and using articles about the crisis in Somalia. When all word clouds are complete, display each pair's creation. What similarities are there? What differences? What did students learn from looking at the language used to talk about the crisis in Somalia?

Write **informative captions** for the photographs they looked at during the warm-up activity, drawing on what they read. Pairs can post their captions next to the photos for their classmates to view. The whole class can compare the captions written by various pairs. Once students are familiar with Somalia and the issues there, split the class into two groups, with half the pairs from the first part of the activity in one group and the other half in the other group. Tell them that they will work in these larger groups to delve deeper into one aspect of the situation: Group 1 on the Somalia famine itself; and Group 2 on the international response and press coverage.

Group 1: The Somalia Famine

Group 1's task is to investigate the role that politics and violence as well as natural disasters have played in the current famine and humanitarian crisis, which has resulted in the suffering of millions across East Africa. Questions to consider include the following:

- There are many environmental factors contributing to the famine, but what role do political factors play in affecting the situation? The Somali government? Al Shabab?
- Mogadishu is the capital of Somalia, and should be a safe zone for the Somali people. What are some of the problems Somalis face upon entering the capital? Foreigners also face risks — what are they?
- Somalis are finding refuge by fleeing to neighboring countries and settling into refugee camps. What is the situation within the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya?

Group 2: The International Response and Press Coverage

Group 2's task is to find out how the international community has been responding to the famine, including what the challenges are in addressing the humanitarian crisis, how aid is reaching the people affected by the famine and what keeps aid from reaching its intended destination. Questions to consider include the following:

- What organizations and nations have contributed aid?
- What factors have slowed contributions to aid for Somalia?

When group work is finished, have each group present their findings to the other. Then come together and discuss the following questions: Why do you think there was a delay in getting the public's attention? How are the United States and other countries trying to help Somalis affected by the famine? Why have organizations been unable to raise sufficient funds to end the famine? What obstacles are presented to aid organizations? Can you think of any other ways that money can be raised, or ensure that food aid reaches those most in need?

Refugee Define

Tell students that of the 65 million people who have been displaced around the world for a variety of reasons, some—according to the United Nations—deserve special protection. They are designated as refugees.

Have students begin to fill out a K-W-L chart. Start with the “K” and “W” columns (save the “L” column for the end of the activity). Ask:

- What do you **K**now about what a refugee is or about what makes someone a refugee?
 - What do you **W**ant to know about what a refugee is or about what makes someone a refugee?
- You might also compile a class K-W-L chart on the board, asking students to volunteer to share statements and questions they listed in the “K” and “W” columns of their individual charts.

Next, introduce the video clip *The Definition of a Refugee* by telling students that for over half a century, the international community has struggled to help millions of displaced persons who fear for their safety. The term *refugee* is not a casual designation; it is a word that applies under very specific circumstances. In the clip, Ambassador Power discusses the factors that lead a person to be designated as a refugee. After watching the clip, students should write down the factors they heard.

Link to clip:

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/definition-refugee>

The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), or UN Refugee Agency, further clarifies the meaning of *refugee* by distinguishing it from the term *migrant*. Examining the relationship between these two terms can help to clarify their meanings. Introduce and discuss the UNHCR’s definitions page, “Refugee” or “Migrant”—Which is right?, to help deepen students’ understanding of who is classified as a refugee and why that classification is important. Drawing a Venn diagram on the board to illustrate the relationship between these terms might be useful.

Students should then complete the “L” column of their K-W-L chart (“What did you Learn?”), which may be used as an assessment. Finally, in pairs or groups, have students decide which questions they raised in the “W” column of their chart remain unanswered.

K-W-L Charts

K-W-L charts are graphic organizers that help students organize information before, during, and after a unit or a lesson. They can be used to engage students in a new topic, activate prior knowledge, share unit objectives, and monitor students' learning.

Procedure

Pass out the accompanying handout to students. Alternatively, you can distribute a blank sheet of paper and ask students to create their own chart.

1. **Complete Column 1** Have students respond to the first prompt in column 1: What do you Know about this topic? Students can do this individually or in small groups. Often, teachers create a master list of all students' responses. One question that frequently emerges for teachers is how to address misconceptions students share. Sometimes it is appropriate to correct false information at this point in the process. Other times, you might want to leave the misconceptions so that students can correct them on their own as they learn new material.
2. **Complete Column 2** Have students respond to the prompt in column 2: What do you Want to know about this topic? Some students may not know where to begin if they don't have much background knowledge on the topic. Therefore, it can be helpful to put the six questions of journalism on the board as prompts (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?). We suggest that students' responses and questions be used to direct the course of study. As students share what they want to learn, this step provides an opportunity for teachers to present what they hope students will learn in the unit.
3. **Complete Column 3 and Review Columns 1 and 2** Throughout the unit, students can review their K-W-L charts by adding to column 3: What did you Learn? Some teachers have students add to their charts at the end of each lesson, while others have students add to their charts at the end of the week or the end of the unit. As students record what they have learned, they can review the questions in column 2, checking off any questions that they can now answer. They can also add new questions. Students should also review Column 1 so they can identify any misconceptions they may have held before beginning the unit.

K-W-L Chart

K-W-L Chart Assess what you know about a particular topic before and after you have engaged with it. Fill the columns below with what you Know about the topic, what you Want to know, and what you've Learned.

K—What do you know about the topic?	W– What do you want to know about the topic?	L— What did you learn?

UNHCR VIEWPOINT: 'REFUGEE' OR 'MIGRANT' – WHICH IS RIGHT

BY UNHCR | 11 JULY 2016

The two terms have distinct and different meanings, and confusing them leads to problems

With more than 65 million people forcibly displaced globally and boat crossings of the Mediterranean still regularly in the headlines, the terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' are frequently used interchangeably in media and public discourse. But is there a difference between the two, and does it matter?

Yes, there is a difference, and it does matter. The two terms have distinct and different meanings, and confusing them leads to problems for both populations. Here's why:

Refugees are persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution. There were 21.3 million of them worldwide at the end of 2015. Their situation is often so perilous and intolerable that they cross national borders to seek safety in nearby countries, and thus become internationally recognized as "refugees" with access to assistance from States, UNHCR, and other organizations. They are so recognized precisely because it is too dangerous for them to return home, and they need sanctuary elsewhere. These are people for whom denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequences.

Refugees are defined and protected in international law. The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol as well as other legal texts, such as the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention, remain the cornerstone of modern refugee protection. The legal principles they enshrine have permeated into countless other international, regional, and national laws and practices. The 1951 Convention defines who is a refugee and outlines the basic rights which States should afford to refugees. One of the most fundamental principles laid down in international law is that refugees should not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom would be under threat.

The protection of refugees has many aspects. These include safety from being returned to the dangers they have fled; access to asylum procedures that are fair and efficient; and measures to ensure that their basic human rights are respected to allow them to live in dignity and safety while helping them to find a longer-term solution. States bear the primary responsibility for this protection. UNHCR therefore works closely with governments, advising and supporting them as needed to implement their responsibilities.

Migrants choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons. Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return. If they choose to return home, they will continue to receive the protection of their government.

For individual governments, this distinction is important. Countries deal with migrants under their own immigration laws and processes. Countries deal with refugees through norms of refugee protection and asylum that are defined in both national legislation and international law. Countries have specific responsibilities towards anyone seeking asylum on their territories or at their borders. UNHCR helps countries deal with their asylum and refugee protection responsibilities.

Politics has a way of intervening in such debates. Conflating refugees and migrants can have serious consequences for the lives and safety of refugees. Blurring the two terms takes attention away from the specific legal protections refugees require. It can undermine public support for refugees and the institution of asylum at a time when more refugees need such protection than ever before. We need to treat all human beings with respect and dignity. We need to ensure that the human rights of migrants are

respected. At the same time, we also need to provide an appropriate legal response for refugees, because of their particular predicament. So, back to Europe and the large numbers of people arriving in recent years by boats in Greece, Italy and elsewhere. Which are they? Refugees or migrants?

In fact, they happen to be both. The majority of people arriving in Italy and Greece especially have been from countries mired in war or which otherwise are considered to be 'refugee-producing' and for whom international protection is needed. However, a smaller proportion is from elsewhere, and for many of these individuals, the term 'migrant' would be correct.

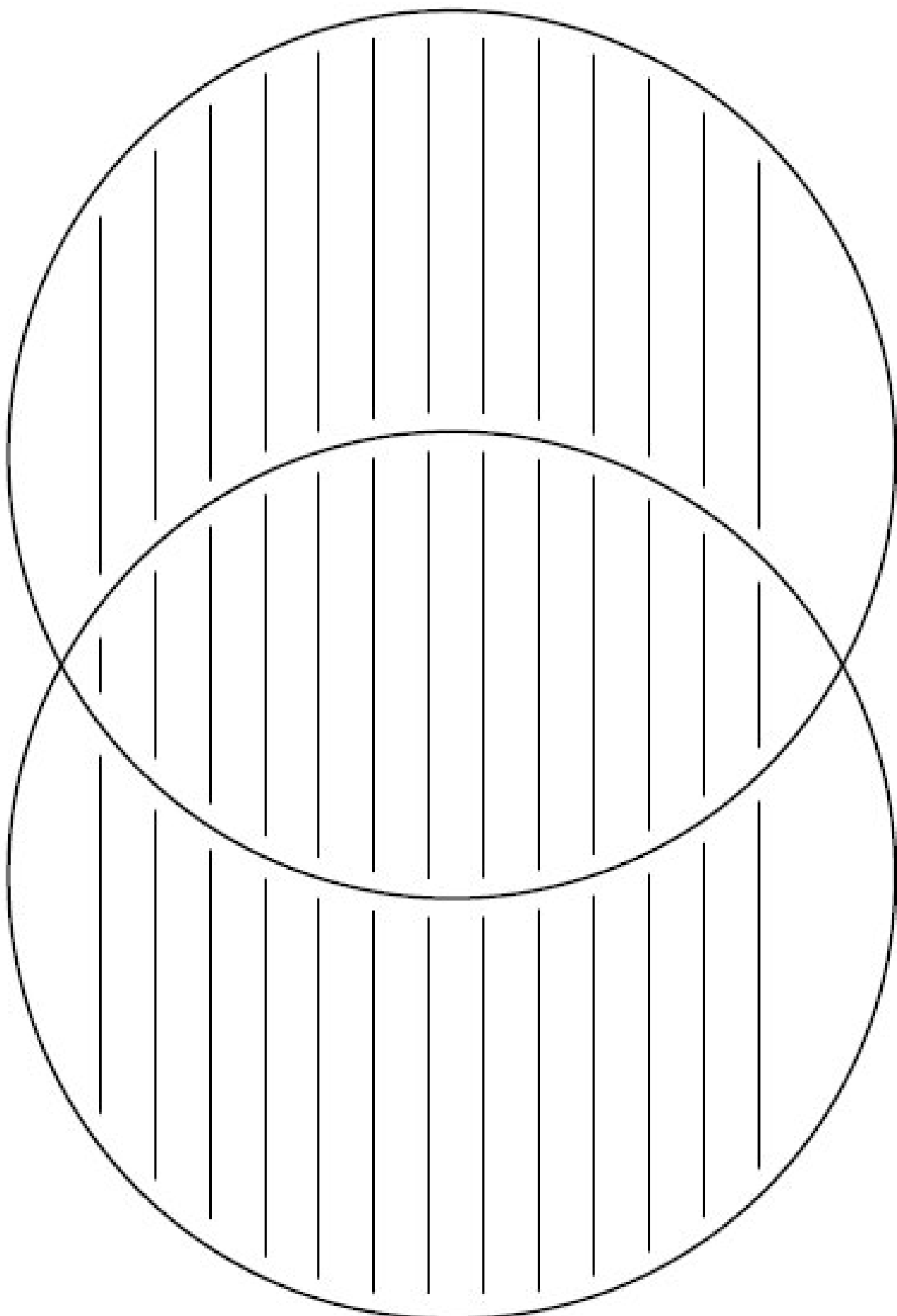
So, at UNHCR we say 'refugees and migrants' when referring to movements of people by sea or in other circumstances where we think both groups may be present – boat movements in Southeast Asia are another example. We say 'refugees' when we mean people fleeing war or persecution across an international border. And we say 'migrants' when we mean people moving for reasons not included in the legal definition of a refugee. We hope that others will give thought to doing the same. Choices about words do matter.

By Adrian Edwards, Geneva

This article was originally published on 27 August 2015. It has been updated to reflect more current figures.

Name : _____

Venn Diagram



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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