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HIGHLIGHTS

- The current funding to respond to humanitarian needs in Somalia is the worst in six years. At mid-year, partners can barely meet the basic needs of nearly half of Somalia's total population.
- Poor 2021 *Gu'* rains are likely to lead to a low crop harvest in July/August and a rapid deterioration of vegetation. With no rains expected until October, reports indicate that moderate to severe drought conditions may occur from July to September.
- More than 523,000 people have been forced to flee their homes in Somalia since January; 347,000 (66 per cent) due to conflict/insecurity including close to 207,000 people in Mogadishu who were temporarily displaced by elections-related violence in April.
- Since 12 June, the humanitarian community has been utilizing a UNHAS air caravan for joint assessment and monitoring missions. Seven missions have been conducted involving clusters, UN agencies, INGOs and government authorities to Gaalkacyo, Dhuusamarreeb, Hudur, Cabudwaaq, Berdale, Hobyo and Afmadow.



Humanitarian supplies arriving to Hudur. Photo: UNHAS

KEY FIGURES

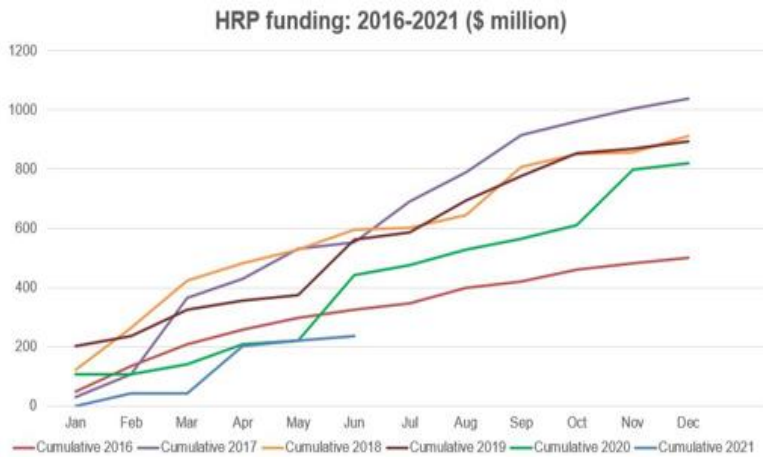
5.9M	2.9M	523K	2.8M	14.9K	146.8K
People in need of humanitarian and protection assistance.	People displaced by conflict and natural disasters across the country.	People displaced by conflict in the country since January 2021.	People projected to face acute food insecurity by September 2021.	Cases of COVID-19 reported since March 2020.	People who received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

WORST HUMANITARIAN FUNDING IN SIX YEARS

Partners can barely meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable

Half-way through 2021, nearly half of all the 12.3 million Somali children, women and men are at risk of losing access to some or all of the life-saving and protection services they desperately need due to funding shortages. As of 11 July, the [2021 Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is only 26 per cent funded with US\$281.5 million provided out of \$1.09 billion required. "Humanitarian needs have increased significantly in 2021 but the funding to respond to these needs is the worst in six years," Mr. Adam Abdelmoula, the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia said in a 28 June [statement](#). "Humanitarian partners can barely meet the basic needs of hungry families, desperate communities and displaced women and children."

This year, an estimated 5.9 million people need humanitarian assistance in Somalia, of whom 2.9 million people are displaced from their homes. The humanitarian situation has been worsened by a recent double climate disaster - drought in two thirds of the country and flooding in other areas - and the impact of political tensions, COVID-19 and the worst



lead to extreme food insecurity in the worst-case scenario of rainfall failure, hence the need to scale up food, water and livelihoods support to prevent a crisis.

Without additional funding, three million people will not have access to essential health care services, 1.2 million people will face acute water shortage by end of July in 20 districts, and 250,000 children will face potentially life-threatening malnutrition. Only 1.7 million people will receive food assistance while one million with acute food needs will miss out from a target of four million people. In Banadir region, over 50 schools for displaced children will close permanently in August 2021, meaning that more than 12,000 children will miss an education. In view of limited funding, inter-cluster partners are identifying critical activities and immediate requirements to inform reprioritization. Three-month implementation plans focusing on lifesaving/first line responses and with a clear overview of what can or cannot be done, are being reviewed. In addition, resource mobilization activities are being scaled up including collective advocacy and outreach by clusters, agencies and NGOs. "We rely on the generosity of our donors to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable Somalis are addressed," said the Humanitarian Coordinator in his statement. "I implore donors to stand with families in Somalia and avert a disaster by fully funding the humanitarian response."

POOR GU' HARVEST EXPECTED DUE TO SUBPAR RAINS

No rains are expected until October which may worsen drought conditions

The 2021 *Gu'* rainy season performance varied across Somalia with many places recording average to below average rainfall. The seasonal rains which started in late April lasted for three weeks and came to an early end during the first week of May. The heavy rains led to flash floods in the northern parts of the country. The southern regions recorded below normal seasonal rains, leaving many places under water stress. This followed poor rainfall performance during the 2020 *Deyr* (October-December) season which led to moderate drought conditions that lasted till late April 2021.

The poor and erratic seasonal rains, according to FAO², have severely affected farming activity in the main crop producing areas, including the key maize Lower Shabelle Region, the "sorghum belt" of Bay Region and the "cowpea belt" in Middle Shabelle, Galgadud and Mudug regions. Preliminary forecasts by FAO indicate that the 2021 *Gu'* output is expected to be 20 to 40 per cent below average. With no rains expected until October, moderate to severe drought conditions may occur during the July to September season. The situation is aggravated by the ongoing locust infestation. FAO³ reports that aerial and ground operations have reduced locust infestations on the coast, escarpment, and plateaus in Somaliland where very few swarms were recently seen. There has, however, been a recent increase in swarm sightings in adjacent areas of Ethiopia and Djibouti. While some of this may be due to local breeding, it may also be the first signs of the expected migration towards northeast Ethiopia.

¹ FEWSNET, FSNAU: Somalia Food Security Outlook. January 2021 to January 2022.

² FAO: GIEWS Country Brief, Somalia. 9 July 2021.

³ FAO. Desert Locust situation update. 2 July 2021

CONFLICT HAS DISPLACED FAMILIES INTO HARDSHIP

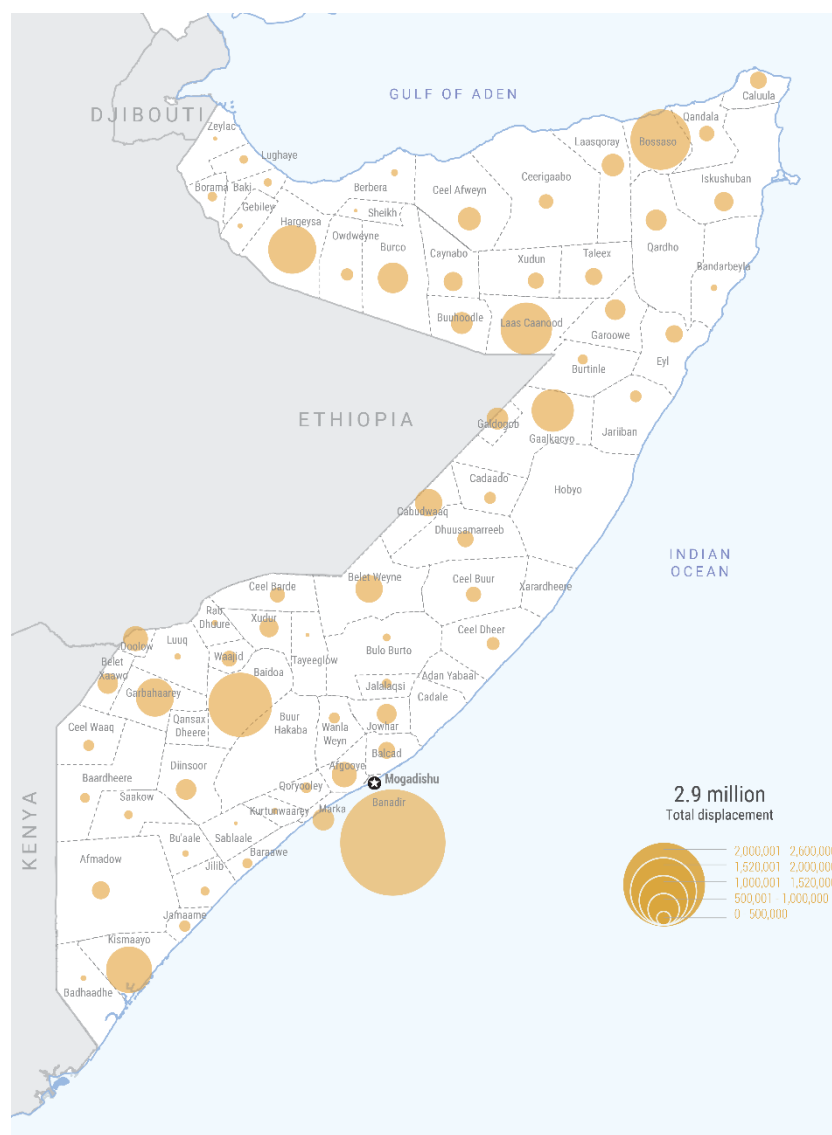
Most of the displaced are in extreme need of assistance

Displacement due to conflict has pushed thousands of families into hardship across Somalia. This year, more than 523,000 people have been forced to flee their homes, including 347,000 people (66 per cent) who have been displaced by conflict/insecurity, including close to 207,000 people in the capital, Mogadishu, who were temporarily displaced by elections-related violence in April. In Middle Shabelle, some of the 9,000 people who were displaced in June by military operations ended up in sites in Daynille district, Banadir, where they live mostly in makeshift shelters made of cardboard and local materials.

A joint mission coordinated by [OCHA](#) and including [IOM](#) and [UNICEF](#), visited one site, Dahran, on 29 June and found that the IDPs urgently need water, sanitation, latrines, food, health services and nutritional support. The mission, which was the first to Daynille in two years due to security concerns and access challenges, found neither a health center nor school for children. During the rainy season, the site floods, yet there is no proper drainage. Only one local NGO operates in the area, providing unconditional cash support to some households, sanitation and hygiene awareness training, and GBV training. In addition, the IDPs often face the risk of eviction from their sites by land owners.

On 22 May, over 11,600 people were evicted from 18 IDP settlements in Tabelaha village, Garasbalay, Banadir region⁴. They moved to new sites where their vulnerability and exposure to protection risks has increased. The new site lacks electricity, formal schools and tenure for the land. In Jubaland, more than 3,700 IDPs were told to vacate their sites in Kismayo by a landowner. Earlier in June, more than 600 IDPs were evicted from another site in Kismayo. Authorities are identifying alternative relocation sites while partners are providing assistance, including unconditional cash.

Reports from Galmudug State indicate that more than half of the 12,078 people who were displaced from Wisil town and surrounding villages since 27 June when the town was attacked, who were trying to move to areas beyond Wisil, are stranded due to a spike in transport costs. Destinations that used to cost US\$ 30 to reach Gaalkacyo now cost \$90. The IDPs, mostly women, children and the elderly, are currently in Xero dhagaxley, Ceeldibir, Balicade, Bare-uubad, Shiila madow, Hayo, Baliboocle, Hobyo and Gaalkacyo. Local authorities in the towns and villages where the IDPs are stranded have imposed movement restrictions citing insecurity, which is raising protection concerns for unaccompanied minors and women. One 15-year-old girl spent the night in the outskirts of Gaalkacyo after being denied entry into the town. Restrictions have also been imposed on movement along Wisil-Hobyo road due to fear of land mines and other explosive hazards. Local



Key areas of displacement in Somalia. Source: OCHA

⁴ Rapid Assessment Report: Garasbalay Evictions. NRC, Protection Cluster, UNHCR. 30 May 2021.

authorities in Xero dhagaxley have appealed for shelter, NFIs, food and WASH interventions amid reports that the IDPs have not received any assistance.

In South West State, an estimated 29,700 people who fled their homes since late May to Hudur town, were unable to take their belongings and other essential assets after being directed by an armed group to vacate 42 villages. A significant portion of the affected population are older persons, children, pregnant and lactating women, as well as persons with disabilities, and were observed mainly arriving on foot or by donkey. Due to protracted conflict between local communities and the non-state armed actors, Hudur is “militarily encircled” and all roads leading towards the main towns of Baidoa, Mogadishu and Belet Weyne are blockaded, which has led to scarcity of goods and increased prices of food and water.

RISK OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HAS INCREASED

At least 1.7 million people need gender-based violence services across Somalia.

Humanitarian crises in Somalia have triggered and exacerbated Gender-based Violence (GBV) as millions of people are forced to flee their homes in search of food, health and protection. According to the [2021 Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan](#), 1.7 million people are in need of gender-based violence programmes and services across Somalia. Increase in GBV incidents is more likely as women and young girls are exposed to risks when they travel long distances to collect water, use toilets or seek casual jobs for survival. According to [UNFPA](#), it is also imminent if no action is undertaken to mitigate potential risks and exposure due to a lack of physical and community protection, lack of privacy in toilets, inadequate shelter and reduced mobility for women to seek income to support their families,

“Women in Somalia have reported increased awareness of sexual and gender-based violence in the community through community mobilization and sensitization on protection risks and available response /reporting mechanisms in IDP sites,” said Madhumita Sarkar, Senior GenCap Advisor, Somalia. “Men are also suffering in silence, and we are always leaving them out. There is a need to work with them.”



Drought conditions expose girls and women to increased risk of abuse and harassment. Photo: Mursal Ahmed/OCHA

Conflicts over scarce resources increase during droughts and resource scarcities create tensions in the home which increases the risk of domestic violence and early marriages. In Gedo, the February 2021 draft Gender Based Violence Information Management Systems report indicates an increase from four to six per cent for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). About 60 per cent of reported GBV incidents are due to physical assault and 22 per cent due to sexual violence and an increase in reported rape incidents accounting for 12 per cent of incidents compared to nine per cent in the last quarter of 2020.

Puntland State took a first step towards banning FGM in June by approving a bill to be submitted to the state parliament that would criminalize the practice. Earlier in 2019, the federal parliament approved the Sexual Offences bill and sent it to parliament for endorsement, but this is yet to happen. GBV-related bills are overshadowed by mixed perceptions from different parts of the Somali society due to cultural sensitivity. The UN, NGOs,

women rights activists and civil society organizations continue to call for the immediate passage into law of the Sexual Offences Bill, which is pending adoption by the Parliament. The law will be vital in preventing and criminalizing all sexual offences.

AIR CARAVAN ENABLING ACCESS TO HARD-TO-REACH AREAS

Within days of the visit to Hudur, NFIs, food and WASH supplies were flown in

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to place strain on operations and intensifies needs across Somalia, the limitations on movement stemming from the absence of accessible transportation tailored for humanitarian operations places further strain on timely and effective humanitarian response, including the ability to conduct short term assessment and monitoring missions. In order to reinvigorate and support access to communities in need, implementing partners in the field and local authorities, and following advocacy by OCHA, the Humanitarian Country Team directed that the humanitarian community be given access to a [UN Humanitarian Air Service](#) (UNHAS) air caravan in order to conduct joint assessment and monitoring missions.

Since 12 June, seven missions have already been conducted involving agencies (both humanitarian and development), Clusters, international NGOs and government authorities to Gaalkacyo, Dhuusamarreeb, Hudur, Cabudwaaq, Afmadow, Berdale and Hobyo. The latter being the first visit by programme staff since before May 2020 when a humanitarian cargo aircraft was shot down while landing at Berdale, killing all six crew members on board.

Following months in which members of the missions had been working from home, or restricted within 'bubbles' in Mogadishu and elsewhere, the opportunity to engage in the field is enlightening and enabling. Within days of the visit to Hudur, previously unreported issues were addressed. Spares for the repair of a borehole, Non-Food Items, food and WASH supplies were, with the support of the Logistics Cluster, flown in at short notice.

The ability to understand at first hand the information gap on (actual) market functionality, accessibility and its (actual) impact on populations and to be able to visualize the needs have all proved invaluable. A standout deduction from across the different locations is the generosity and resilience of the Somali communities as they embrace those who have been displaced and support them with the little they have. The urgent need for an integrated humanitarian response for both IDP sites and host communities alike has been clear.

"The caravan mission provided the opportunity to test assumptions and beliefs about how various responses were being implemented in field locations. Seeing firsthand some of the limitations of the current response and clear opportunities to strengthen approaches allowed for us to spend the weeks following caravan trips to work on micro-level details of how the current response could be improved."

Benjamin Conner /CCCM-IOM

"For a long time, we had challenges accessing Afmadow since routine flights are not available and chartering a plane is costly and not sustainable. The caravan gave me an opportunity to visit some project sites and appreciate what other partners are doing in Afmadow. It was also a great experience meeting and learning from other humanitarian colleagues and the Government who were on board."

Iddle Salat, Save the Children.

The use of the UNHAS air asset has enhanced cooperation between agencies and partners, provided valuable ground truth and is ensuring continuous engagement at field level, providing understanding of needs, constraints and opportunities. It is proving to be instrumental to humanitarian operations, including from a nexus perspective. The humanitarian community is grateful to UNHAS for supporting this to work.

SOMALI WOMEN WORKING FOR A MINE-FREE FUTURE

Deminers clear hazardous areas and provide explosive risk education to communities

The Ogaden war of 1977-1978 left Somalia's border with Ethiopia littered with explosive ordnances, including anti-personnel and anti-vehicle landmines. Despite that war ending over 40 years ago, its legacy lives on underground. Landmines and other unexploded ordnances lie untouched in rural areas along the border, posing a silent threat to communities. Although boys make up the highest proportion of mine victims, women and girls are more vulnerable to the indirect impact of landmines - economically, socially and emotionally.

Now, mothers along the border are working alongside fathers to clear the remnants of war and provide a safe, secure and mine-free future for themselves and generations to come. Through their employment with the [HALO Trust](#), deminers clear hazardous areas and provide explosive risk education to communities in South West State, Hirshabelle, Galmudug and Puntland. One such woman, Fowsio, joined the Halo Trust in 2015 and worked her way up to become Team Leader for one of HALO's Weapons and Ammunition Disposal Teams. She is responsible for negotiating the handover of weapons and explosive ordnances from communities and conducting the demolition, so these items no longer pose a threat to communities. Fowsio was one of only two female deminers among a group of 90 males when she began. Today, she is trained in explosive ordnance disposal and can conduct non-technical surveys. She plays a critical role in achieving operational efficiency across clan borders along the Ethiopian-Somali border. In 2020, Fowsio successfully negotiated the handover of seven private stockpiles from local men who were storing these explosive items in their homes. She further led her team to destroy 504 items of explosive remnants of war from a collapsed police station. Fowsio has become a wife and a mother to a healthy girl but continues to lead her team proving that becoming a mother does not stop her from doing her work or waver her commitment to helping Somalia to become a safer place for future generations.

Another mother of one, Farhia, joined HALO Trust in December 2020 and works as a deminer in Puntland; helping to make her community safe from landmines and other unexploded ordnances. "You leave the house, and you do not know if everyone is going to return; it's a scary thought but one that we live with every day," she said. Farhia grew up surrounded by the dangers of landmines, which affected her ability to play, visit family and go to school. As a farmer's daughter, her family was constantly aware of the dangers hidden under the ground. Community members were injured or killed and lost livestock to landmines while grazing. Access to education was impeded. A mine accident along the road to school kept Farhia and her siblings out of school for a year. Landmines are a threat and the trauma of not knowing if an area is safe or not impedes economic and social activities, leaving communities living in constant fear.



Explosive remnants of war cleared in Mudug by a demining team. Photo: HALO TRUST

"Before HALO started clearance, we were scared to walk on the roads, but now we know that we can travel safely and it is safe for our animals," Farhia said. The work has empowered herself and those around her. As a breadwinner, she is able to pay school fees for her child and support family expenses. Through the hard work and dedication of people like Fowsio and Farhia, HALO is getting rid of explosive ordnances in Somalia, one at a time.

#Story courtesy of The Halo Trust. *All names have been changed for security purposes.

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