Introduction
This note summarises the directives promulgated (either written or verbal) by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS) aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19; and identifies the impact of the restrictions on the general population and humanitarian operations for the period 17 - 28 May 2020. (See interactive map on https://covid19som-ochasom.hub.arcgis.com/)

Background
The FGS and the FMS continue to take necessary measures to mitigate the spread and impact of COVID-19 in Somalia. Since 16 March 2020, a total of 56 COVID-19 related directives/statements have been issued, either in writing or verbally.

As of 28 May 2020, 53 out of the 56 directives are in place while three have been rescinded: On 18 May 2020, Puntland temporarily rescinded the March and April 2020 directives on COVID-19 including that of public transportation, social gatherings and import of Khat. This temporary revocation will reportedly remain in place indefinitely. Furthermore, on 20 May 2020, Somaliland National Committee on Preparedness and Prevention of COVID-19 enforced a temporary ban from 1300hrs 22 May 2020 to 1800hrs 24 May 2020 on public and private transport across the provinces and districts of Somaliland, Eid prayer congregations and also closed public parks, this directive has not been extended to date.

Thirty-two of the active 53 directives relate to social distancing, closure of academic institutions and restriction of population movement. Five impose suspensions on international, domestic passenger flights and restrict land transportation while nine relate to border closure. Six directives impose night curfews, one direct tax exemption on basic food items, one relates to delay of school examinations and two relate to registration of burial activities and deceased persons.

Impact

Impact by location
Somaliland:
- On 17 May, the Government of Somaliland lifted the suspension of the importation of Khat into Somaliland. Since the ban, no more reports of confiscation of Khat and arrests of smuggled Khat were reported, which regularly occurred during the ban.
- On 20 May, Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) announced that the end of the academic year examinations for students from grade one to 11 will be cancelled. Instead, students will be evaluated based on their performance in the last three terms. However, the secondary school leaving examination in July 2020 with preventive measures as planned. According to MoES, school closures have affected about 30,000 small businesses in and around schools in Somaliland. All schools are in annual school break until 31 July.
- One international NGO staff member in Borama, Awdal region tested positive of COVID-19. Consequently, their Borama office has been closed since 17 May 2020 until further notice and all staff members of the organization working in Borama have been ordered to self-quarantine at home for 14 days and work remotely.
- According to House Land and Property Working Group (HLP WG) in Somaliland, 61 refugee households, mostly Ethiopians, have received shelter grants through Local NGO Legal Clinic to rent houses in Hargeisa following their eviction by the Hargeisa municipality on 18 – 20 April from the Gobanimo Market and 26 June district.

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1 Closure of mosques in Puntland was rescinded on 26 March 2020; Curfew start time directive in Mogadishu was rescinded on 25 April; On 16 May 2020 Somaliland rescinded the suspension of Khat trade issued on 23 April 2020.
municipality claimed that the April 2020 eviction was to decongest the area and part of prevention measures to apply COVID-19 social distancing. Some 200 households of the 289 households that housed street vendors and vulnerable host community families who were evicted, have been also been provided with permanent land tenure in the north-east of the Hargeisa town for relocation by the municipality.

**Puntland:**
- On 18 May, Puntland temporarily rescinded the April and March directives on importation and sale of Khat and public transportation in Puntland. The relaxed regulations only apply to sale of khat, public transport and extended family gatherings. Mosques and prayer congregations remain banned. According to WFP\(^2\), the eased public transport restrictions across the regions consequently led to uninterrupted supply flows and price reductions in some areas across the state.
- On 22 May 2020, the Puntland Ministry of Education (MoE) announced delay of the final year secondary school examinations from 30 May 2020 to 27 June 2020 due to COVID-19. The MoE is reportedly planning to put in place a system that will enable exam invigilators to observe social distancing and preventative measures to limit spread of COVID-19 during examination and have urged teachers to help pupils to cover the remainder of the school syllabus through online learning. Some 245,000 students from 650 schools including primary and secondary schools were affected by school closures since 24 March April 2020. A total of 5,404 students in Puntland are expected to sit for Ordinary-level (O-level) exams this year.

**Galmudug:**
- Education Cluster has raised concerns that some 500 private school teachers have lost their main income due to directive to close schools on 20 March 2020. Public schools' teachers are reportedly being provided teacher incentives by NGOs and UNICEF.
- According to WFP\(^3\), prices of fruits and vegetables are increasing in Gaalkacyo main market due to scarcity and delayed supply caused by COVID-19 restrictions and Gu’ rains. Bananas increased from US $0.30 to US $0.35 (16.7 per cent) and tomatoes from US $1 to US $1.2 (20 per cent) this week compared to last week. In Cadaado, retail prices of imported food items (rice, wheat flour, sugar, pasta and vegetable oil) increased by (6-50 per cent).

**Hirshabelle:**
- Ministry of Health noted that the spread of COVID-19 and application of social-distancing and COVID-19 preventative measures such as handwashing have been hampered in IDP centers hosting flood affected displaced population, raising concerns that this may increase the spread of COVID-19 in the state. Floods in Hirshabelle have affected 240,000 people to date and 11,400 people are residing in some 14 IDP sites in Belet Weyne district.

**Banadir:**
- Key informant interviews by Food Security and Livelihood Cluster in IDP sites in Kadha, Dayinillé and Dharkeynle districts has revealed that COVID-19 has seriously affected livelihoods of IDPs. For example, female IDPs who used to wash clothes for families in Mogadishu city have reportedly lost their income due to social distancing measures being applied by their employers.
- CCCM Cluster noted that due to restrictions on movement people with disabilities and elderly are among the most vulnerable groups impacted as they cannot travel for medical care and do not get specialised care needed at home due to the need to practice social distancing. There are about 82,500 persons with disabilities and elderly in 200 IDP sites, the majority residing in Kadha, Dayinillé and Dharkeynle districts.

**South West State:**
- In an OCHA survey, eleven organisations (34 per cent) of 32 organisations surveyed reported reducing physical presence in April and May 2020, this includes five organisations in Baidoa, three in Qansaxdhore, one in Berdaale, one in Afgooye, one in Buur Hakaba and one in Diinsoor. Three organisations reported reducing physical presence in IDP sites mainly in Baidoa and in Afgooye.

\(^2\) WFP Somalia Joint Markets and Supply Chain Weekly Update W2 17 May – 24 May, May 2020

\(^3\) WFP Somalia Joint Markets and Supply Chain Weekly Update W2 10 May – 17 May, May 2020
Six organisations (two international NGOs and four national NGOs) also reported closure and suspension of activities due to COVID-19 in April and May 2020. Three organisations reported closure of livelihood voucher programmes and cash for work programmes as part of business continuity decisions for COVID-19 to reduce risk to staff and to apply the work from home directives. Two organisations reported suspension of training programmes to apply the social distancing directives by the State for some 1,400 people. The activities were closed mainly in remote areas where staff travelled to conduct activities such as in Xudur, Bay area and Barawe, Qansaxdheere, Afgooye in Lower Shabelle region. These activities were cumulatively targeting some 8,500 people. Organisations have reported these activities as either delayed or re-aligning the budget to purchase medical supplies, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and hygiene kit for distribution.

**Jubaland:**

- Poor social distancing practices was noted in markets areas last week as people shopped for the Eid festivities. Furthermore, the 15 May verbal directive for mosque closure was not fully implemented as some mosques remained open in the State. There are concerns that Eid festivities may have increased COVID-19 cases as reportedly large groups of people gathered and celebrated.
- The new verbal directive in Belet Xaawo on 21 May 2020 districts for all persons to wear face masks is thought to impact on the Belet Xaawo population as majority are poor families cannot afford masks as livelihoods in the area have been impacted by the restrictions.
- According to WFP⁴, transport services leading to Elwak has been delayed and the area is running out of stock of key commodities sourced from Mandera (Kenya) due to a condition enforced by Jubaland that all drivers of cargo transporting vehicles on the Kenya-Somalia border must be screened for COVID-19.

**General across all states**

- According to Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit Somalia (FSNAU)⁵, local cereal prices increased by eight to 16 per cent and imported food such as rice, sugar and vegetable oil mild to moderate increases from four to 30 per cent in April 2020 compared to March 2020 in southern regions of Somalia due to increased demand in response to the COVID-19 related movement and trade restrictions, Ramadan and Eid festivities.

**Application of directives**

- Efforts to scale up and implement prevention measures remain a challenge due to living conditions, social practices and the socio-economic considerations associated with preventive measures.
- All 12 airports in Somalia are closed for passenger travel⁶. All airports remain open for cargo flights. As of 5 May, domestic airports in Belet Weyne and Jowhar have been temporarily opened to enable airlifting of emergency supplies and deploy personnel for the flash flood response in the area. Since 23 April, ad-hoc humanitarian flights out of Mogadishu have taken place to evacuate humanitarian personnel, however there is no agreement to allow for humanitarian personnel back to Somalia yet.
- Seven out of eight seaports are open for cargo⁷. Ports that were operational and utilised for humanitarian pipelines pre-COVID-19 such as Mogadishu, Kismayo, Berbera, and Bossaso remain operational.
- Twenty out of 21 land borders in Somalia are closed but remain porous and cross-border movement has been observed. The Government of Kenya issued a directive closing the Kenya-Somalia border on 15 May following an increase in cross-border cases. State-level restrictions have not yet had an implication on road transport across internal borders. However, efforts are under way to further restrict movement in light of increasing COVID-19 cases. WFP⁸ reported cross border trade between Somalia and neighbouring countries is ongoing with some parts such as Ethiopia is officially closed with restricted movement of essential items such as food and medical supplies. The closure of seaports and land borders for a long period presents significant loss in domestic revenue and contraction of GDP.

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⁴ WFP Somalia Joint Markets and Supply Chain Weekly Update W2 17 May – 24 May, May 2020
⁵ Market Update 2020, Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit Somalia, Food and Agriculture Organisation, May 2020
⁶ Somaliland has not issued a directive officially closing the Hargeisa airport to passenger flights from/to Addis Ababa.
⁷ Berbera seaport is closed. Zeylac, Bossaso, Eyl, Mogadishu, Kismayo and Ras Kambooni seaports are open.
⁸ WFP Somalia Joint Markets and Supply Chain Weekly Update W2 10 May – 17 May, May 2020