

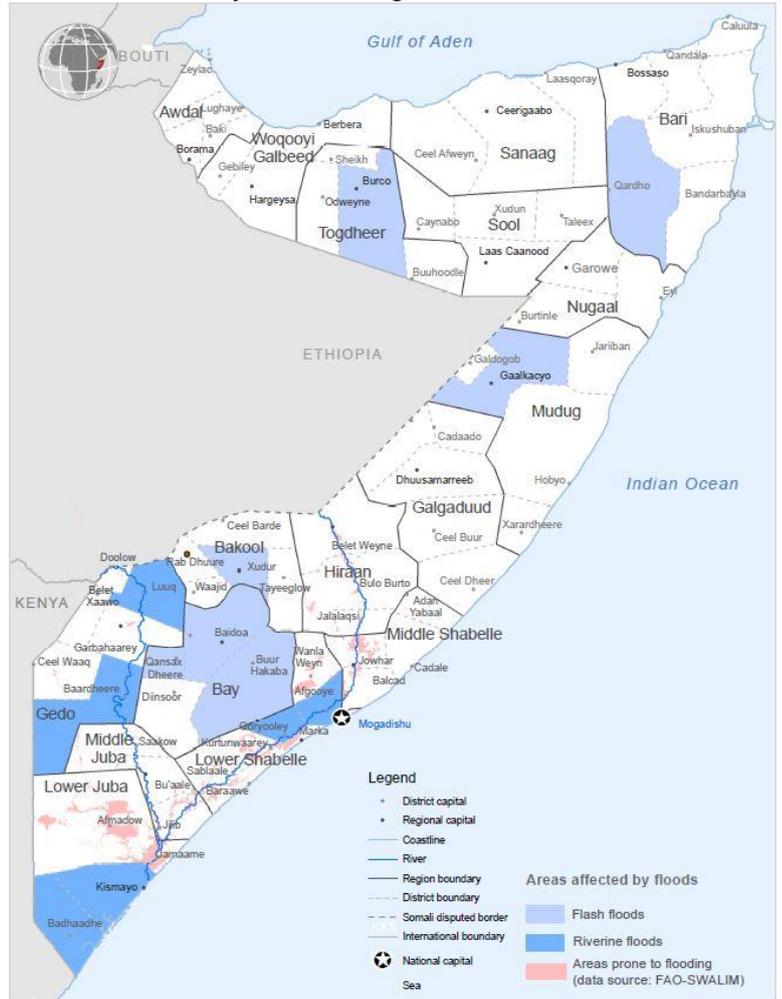
### Situation Overview

The 2020 *Gu'* rains (April-June) intensified in the Ethiopian highlands and across Somalia, triggering flash flooding in several regions and along the Juba and Shabelle river valleys where water levels rose sharply. In Bari region of Puntland State, six people reportedly died in Qhardo town during flash flooding caused by a heavy downpour on 27 April. Across Somalia, thousands of people, including IDPs, have lost their homes and farms. This year's flooding comes at a time when Somalia is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 500 confirmed cases and 28 dead. In addition, Somalia is currently burdened by the worst desert locust infestation in 25 years, constituting a 'Triple Threat' on top of an already large humanitarian case load and inadequate funding of the response plan

According to FAO/Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM), rainfall increased significantly in most parts of Somalia and the eastern Ethiopian highlands from 25-27 April. The rains caused a drastic increase in water levels along the Shabelle River. In Belet Weyne and surrounding areas, river levels rose sharply to 6 m which is only 0.50 m below the moderate flood risk level. Water levels have also risen down river in Bulo Burto and Jowhar.

The Juba river level also rose leading to flooding in Dollow town. Floods were also reported north of Dollow town where the Dawa and Juba rivers converge, and in Luuq town. Around Bardheere in Gedo, river levels surpassed the high-risk flood level. Flooding in the area has continued since 23 April. Middle Juba and Lower Juba regions are also experiencing high river levels with flooding reported.

More rains are forecasted for many parts of Somalia with flash flooding likely to occur in the northern regions especially Bari and Nugal regions, and low-lying areas of Bay and Bakool. The River levels along the Shabelle River which increased sharply in the last few days are expected to remain high, with a high likelihood of flooding. During the 2019 *Deyr* (October-November) rains, riverine flooding inundated most parts of Somalia affecting over half a million people.



### Heavy rains, floods and needs in various locations

Rising river levels and flooding affected various states in different ways: destruction of IDP shelters; inundated farmlands, and damaged roads.

**Somaliland:** SWALIM reported on 27 April that more than 10 stations in Woqooyi Galbeed and Togdheer regions recorded heavy rains of more than 50 mm to 100 mm cumulatively. Heavy rains in Burao on the night of 27 April caused severe flash floods leading to massive destruction of properties and loss of lives.

**Puntland State:** This is currently the most affected state. Heavy storms in Qardho town, Bari region, reportedly left six people dead following a heavy downpour on 27 April. The floods also displaced an estimated over 21,000 people among them 6,000 IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers living in the town. Initial reports estimate that 80 per cent of shops in the town have been damaged. Some affected people have reportedly moved to higher grounds and other residential areas after the flooding damaged their settlements.

**Galmudug State:** Authorities and humanitarian partners in south Gaalkacyo reported heavy rain on 27 April and again on 29 April, inundating IDP settlements, the market and some roads. Five IDP settlements hosting over 6,700 people including: Bullo Jawan settlement (250 households); Ceelgaab (300 households); Danyar (150 households), Qoraxey (250 households) and Kulmiye (180 households). Houses have been damaged, latrines destroyed and property of unknown value damaged

**Hirshabelle State:** The Shabelle river level rose sharply this week. There are unconfirmed reports from the upper stream towns that the river has burst its banks at Qalafe and Mustaxil town, about 90 km north of Belet Weyne town. In Jowhar town flooding may occur sooner than expected due to the existence of river breakage points and silted riverbeds.

**South West State:** On 27 April, partners reported that Shabelle river flooded three villages in Afgooye: Mushani, Wagadi and Majabto villages. An estimated 12,000 people have lost property and crops; another 2,000 have fled to higher ground. On 24 April, heavy rains and floods displaced 300 people in Qooryoley, Lower Shabelle. Houses were reportedly damaged in Degaay Beere and Taleh villages of Halane district, forcing people to move to other areas. Heavy rains have also flooded IDP settlements in Bur Hakaba, Baardale, Huddur and Qansadheere districts.



A flooded street in Qardho town, Bari region. Photo credit: OCHA

**Jubaland:** Heavy rains were reported in Gedo, Lower and Middle Juba regions. On 26 April, approximately 400 farms in Luuq and Buurdhuubo districts were flooded. More than 11,800 displaced families are estimated to be affected, of whom 1,500 are displaced while 1,500 shelters and 1,200 latrines were damaged. On 29 April, torrential rains were reported in the remote islands of Raskamboni, Kudhaa, Burgaabo and Madhawa in Badhadhe district in Lower Juba. There are initial reports of injuries as well as damage to shelters.

## Humanitarian coordination and response

Somalia is facing a confluence of disasters of potential catastrophic proportions. In the face of the already devastating impact COVID-19 on the population and economy, Somalia is bracing itself for another infestation of locusts, as floods continue across many parts of the country. This is at a time where the humanitarian response remains woefully underfunded. Currently, the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan is only 18 per cent funded (US\$186.6 million out of \$1.045 billion). Moreover, COVID-19 restrictions necessary to stem the spread of the disease have prompted humanitarian agencies to reduce their footprint in the field and find new and innovative ways to stay in deliver, which requires additional resources.

At the national level, the Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia appointed an inter-ministerial emergency committee to coordinate the response to the floods with relevant member states. The committee will be chaired by the Minister of Interior and Federal Affairs.

In Puntland, the President supported by the Ministry of Interior (MoI), and the Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Agency (HADMA) and humanitarian partners, are in Qardho town to oversee the initial assessment and response to the floods. In the meantime, partners and Government have started providing initial live-saving assistance in terms of food, WASH, health and shelter. As agreed in the joint meeting of 29 April, the MoI and HADMA are leading the inter-agency assessment taking into consideration COVID-19 protocols

In Galmudug state, authorities have appealed for urgent humanitarian interventions specifically in terms of shelter, food and WASH. Meetings of the Food Security and WASH Clusters are scheduled for 30 April.

The Governor of Hiraaan region, Hirshabelle State, called a meeting on 27 April to discuss urgent actions to mitigate the imminent floods and reduce the risks to the communities living along the Shabelle river. Plans are in place to de-silt the Waraabole canal which has been blocked by sand and trees, strengthen the existing weak river embankments in Belet Weyne, and to activate the flood early warning systems to alert the communities.

The CCCM Cluster in South West State conducted a rapid assessment of the impact of the rains on IDP sites in Baidoa. Local organisations have also conducted assessments in Qoryooley, Lower Shabelle, Bakool and in Afgooye, Lower Shabelle. The WASH Cluster in Baidoa is targeting 1,751 families with hygiene kits and 617 families with communal latrines. The Shelter Cluster plans to distribute 5,420 non-food items (NFI) kits to the most affected IDPs. IOM plans to distribute 300 shelter kits. In addition, the ACF WASH team that is responding to COVID-19 in Ceel Barde, Waajid and Xudur, is scaling up interventions to include flood responses in Bakool.

In Jubaland, the roads connecting Kismayo to other parts of the state are already impassable due to ongoing rains. Potentially, prices of commodities that were already affected by COVID-19 restrictions will likely increase. UNHCR is planning to distribute non-food items (NFI) kits to 700 displaced households in Kismayo to enable them to cope with the situation.

The Banadir regional administration completed work on water reservoirs in the flood prone areas such as Siigaale and KM4 to prevent flash flooding. The drainage channels have been cleared and garbage removed.

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