

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Four national humanitarian workers were killed in three armed attacks in October, bringing the total number of aid workers killed in 2020 to 15 people.
- More than 73,000 people have been affected by *Deyr* flash floods and rainfall across the country, including 4,000 internally displaced people.
- An ongoing locust invasion has affected close to 300,000 hectares of land, mainly in the northern regions, impacting food security and livelihoods for nearly 200,000 people, according to FAO.
- Health partners vaccinated over 1.33 million children against polio including nearly 10,000 who had never been vaccinated before, as the country records 25 polio cases in 2020.



Locusts in Maxaas District, Hirshabelle. Photo: OCHA

## KEY FIGURES

<b>5.2M</b>	<b>2.6M</b>	<b>73K</b>	<b>2.1M</b>	<b>25</b>
People in need of humanitarian assistance	People displaced by conflict and natural disasters as of October 2020	People affected by <i>Deyr</i> floods since October 2020	People food insecure through December, including 849,000 acutely malnourished children	children infected by polio in 2020

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

### Attacks on humanitarian workers and access challenges hinder humanitarian operations

Security and access challenges in Somalia, including attacks on humanitarian workers, continue to limit the ability to reach people in need. Four national aid workers were killed in three separate armed attacks between 27 and 31 October in Afgooye, Banadir and Qansax Dheere districts in South West State. This brings to 15 the number of humanitarian workers killed in armed attacks in Somalia in 2020. In addition, 13 aid workers have been injured and 24 reportedly abducted this year. Threats and violations against humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities, as well as armed attacks against civilians, continue to be reported, especially in areas occupied by armed groups.

Two of those killed were implementing a polio vaccination campaign in Kaxda district of Banadir region. [UNICEF](#) condemned the killing of the two health workers who had risked their lives to provide critical health services to vulnerable Somali children at a time when 25 polio cases have been reported in 2020. Somalia is among the high-risk polio outbreak countries because of its fragile and vulnerable population that includes nomads, displaced people and those living in rural and slum areas.

UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock [condemned](#) the killings of aid workers in Somalia and several other countries, stating that, "Attacks directed against humanitarians are a violation of international humanitarian law and an obscene act against people working hard, often in extraordinarily difficult circumstances, to help vulnerable people." The

UN chief has called governments and authorities in control of affected areas to uphold the principles of international humanitarian law and protection of civilians and investigating such attacks and bring those responsible to face the law.

The recent increase in attacks against aid workers comes at a time that Somalia is grappling with increased humanitarian needs due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (4,300 cases with 107 deaths since March), desert locust invasions, protracted conflict, political and economic instability, and recurrent climatic shocks. An estimated 5.2 million people need humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian community has targeted three million people in accessible areas, leaving millions of others without assistance due to insecurity and other constraints. More than 2.6 million are internally displaced due to conflict and climatic shocks, the majority living in 2,300 congested settlements, often at risk of eviction by landlords in violation of their right to housing and property.

An estimated 1.6 million people have been affected by floods in 2020, including 35 killed and 840,000 displaced, according to protection monitoring partners. The desert locust infestation has affected around 685,000 persons mainly in Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug, impacting food security for at least 200,000 people, according to FAO. Overall, more than 2.1 million people are forecast to experience acute food insecurity through December; a situation that is expected to deteriorate due to poor rains and socio-economic challenges.

The humanitarian situation is reportedly dire in rural areas of districts where the security situation and presence of armed groups does not allow road movement of humanitarian supplies or personnel. Commercial flights to some affected areas remain limited partly due to COVID-19 restrictions on movement, leaving thousands of people without access to assistance. Humanitarian partners have highlighted gaps in nutrition interventions among other needs in the affected areas.

Explosives remnants of war (ERW) also continue to pose a threat to civilian lives as well as livestock. Five boys were killed and three others injured after unidentified objects exploded in two separate incidents in Cabudwaaq District in Galmudug State in October.

Amid the security constraints and other operational and logistical challenges, humanitarian partners have been able to reach an average of 1.5 million people per month with assistance. With humanitarian needs on the rise, continued advocacy is required to guarantee security and humanitarian access and ensure that people affected by crisis are able to receive much-needed assistance.

### **Over 73,000 people affected by *Deyr* floods, with over 13,000 displaced across the country**

Flash floods triggered by *Deyr* (October-December) seasonal rains have affected over 73,000 people, mostly in Banadir region – especially the capital of Mogadishu, as well as Jubaland, Galmudug and South West states. At least 13,000 people have been displaced by the floods across the country. Local authorities have reported massive damage to infrastructure including roads, residential areas and buildings.

In South West State, overflowing water from River Shabelle has reportedly inundated six villages in Afgooye area, affecting 8,000 people, of whom 3,500 are displaced. In Baidoa, the *Deyr* rains have affected some 12,690 IDPs, displacing the families from 33 IDP settlements in Hanano 2, ADC and Towfiq zones. Several houses and latrines have been destroyed.

Heavy flooding in Hirshabelle State has worsened the condition of the roads connecting Mogadishu to Central Somalia, particularly to Jowhar, and Jowhar to Belet Weyne, and temporarily closed Belet Weyne airstrip from 26 to 31 October. According to WFP, the destruction of the roads delayed transport services from Mogadishu port to downstream markets, triggering increased transportation costs and delaying the delivery of humanitarian supplies and goods. In Jubaland State, roads in Kismayo were impassable following flash floods; made worse by poor drainage in the city.

In South West State, authorities and partners reported the destruction by floods of a culvert bridge at Warmaxan along the road between Afgooye and Wanla Weyn in Lower Shabelle region. Over 50 vehicles carrying commercial



*Flooded streets in Afgooye. Photo: OCHA*

commodities have been stranded in the area due to floods. In Lower Juba region, the *Deyr* rains have affected at least 2,000 IDPs in Dhobley's Danwadaag settlement in Afmadow District. Stagnant pools of water in the affected areas pose a risk of water borne diseases. Major challenges facing local partners include limited supplies already prepositioned in the regions as roads become partially impassable and humanitarian flights limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. In Dhobley, flights to the area were suspended for a week after the airstrip became flooded. According to partners, the major needs for affected communities include shelter, food and non-food items.

Local authorities report that the floods have destroyed about 10,000 hectares of farmland in Jubaland and South West State. Water overflow from River Shabelle resulted in river breakages, inundating 5,000 hectares of farmland in six villages in South West State, while in Jubaland, overflow from River Dawa flooded 5,000 hectares of farmland and affected about 10,000 people in Dollow and Belet Xaawo districts.

The *Deyr* floods followed the *Hagaa* season (June-September) riverine and flash floods, which affected over 545,000 people in Hirshabelle, South West and Jubaland states as well as Sanaag and Banadir regions, including 363,000 displaced, according to protection monitoring partners.

## Over 1.33 million children vaccinated against polio, as country records 25 cases in 2020

One case of Circulating Vaccine Derived Polio Virus (cVDPV) was reported in Banadir during the week ending 21 October, bringing to 25 the number of cases reported since the outbreak in 2018, according to WHO.

The Federal Ministry of Health and Human Services (FMOH) of Somalia, WHO and UNICEF supported the final round of monovalent house-to-house oral polio vaccine type 2 in the central and south regions of the country from 25 to 28 October. Preliminary results suggest that 96.1 per cent (1,337,974) of the target population was reached with vaccines. This included 9,792 children who had never received a polio vaccine previously.

The health response has been complicated by the impact and restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disrupted polio surveillance and eradication programs and outbreak controls. Since the start of the year, polio health teams have joined the fight against COVID-19 in Somalia, providing support in tracing, tracking and following up on suspected and confirmed cases. Although health workers were forced to pause regular health services to attend to the COVID-19 pandemic, in the last month, Somalia has taken bold steps to resume regular health activities, including conducting immunization campaigns to stop the spread of the polio virus.

According to WHO, some of the main challenges Somalia faces include reaching vulnerable children who are difficult to access due to security and other logistical challenges and assuring caregivers that polio vaccines are safe for newborns. The strain of polio in circulation in Somalia is different from the wild poliovirus, recently declared eradicated from Africa, but it can put communities where not enough children have been vaccinated at risk and leave children paralyzed for life.

## Second wave of desert locusts reported

Somalia is bracing for an escalation in the desert locusts infestation, as a new generation has been reported in various parts of the country, including Hiraan, Galgaduud and some parts of Somaliland (Borama and Hargeisa). According to the FAO, the breeding has been fueled by favourable weather conditions resulting from ongoing rains. The locust infestation has significantly affected the newly planted *Deyr* crops, pasture and vegetation. In Somaliland, close to 300,000 hectares of land have been affected, risking food insecurity for about 200,000 people (37,500 households). Without an immediate response, the desert locust invasion threatens to increase acute food insecurity among poor households with limited livelihoods and low capacity to cope with harvest losses.

Aerial and ground control operations are continuing, as well livelihood support distribution to the people most in need. FAO facilitated training on control in Galmudug and has stationed two aircrafts to support aerial spraying of the locusts in Puntland. The Federal Government of Somalia and FAO sprayed 39,608 hectares of affected land in Somaliland, Puntland and Galmudug with bio-pesticides from 1 August to 31 October. These control operations have protected 90,388 metric tons of staple food from desert locust damage, valued at \$27.1 million and sufficient to meet the cereal needs of 602,589 people for a year; as well as feed and pasture for 41,959 pastoral households for a year.

Overall, between January and 31 October, an estimated 183,256 metric tons of staple foods have been protected from desert locust damage, valued at over \$55 million and sufficient to feed 1,221,704 people for a year. They have further protected feed and pasture sources needed by 85,069 pastoral households to keep their livestock productive. Out of the \$56.9 million required for the locust response, \$50.4 million had been received as of 10 November.

## FUNDING UPDATE

### Somalia Humanitarian Fund: Partners express satisfaction with Fund's ability to meet urgent and critical needs

In order to support and better understand the needs and expectations of its implementing partners, the [Somalia Humanitarian Fund](#) (SHF) launched an online After-Action-Review (AAR) survey. The survey assessed SHF stakeholders' satisfaction with the management and processes related to the First Standard Allocation 2020.

The survey was carried out from 1 to 30 September, with a total of 23 responses submitted by the closure date. Respondents included SHF donors, cluster coordinators and implementing partners (UN, national NGOs and international NGOs). Responses from implementing partners were not limited to only successful applicants for the SHF First Standard Allocation, but also those whose projects were not approved to receive the funding.

Received responses overall indicate a high level of satisfaction with the fund management. Out of the 23 registered entries, 100 per cent provided feedback on SHF's ability to successfully respond to the most urgent and critical humanitarian needs and priorities at the time of launching the First Standard Allocation. About 74 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the Fund's efficiency in addressing the needs and priorities, 22 per cent remained neutral and 4 per cent of the respondents did not know.

Most respondents – more than 60 per cent – testified that SHF core principles (inclusiveness, flexibility and efficiency) have been met in the First Standard Allocation, whereas 45 per cent strongly agreed or agreed with the promotion of a timely response. The result of the survey demonstrates the added value and comparative advantages of the SHF in the humanitarian response in Somalia. Not only does the Fund provide flexible and timely resources to respond to priority humanitarian needs, but also strengthens the capacity of the implementing partners and contributes to the overall effectiveness and accountability of the humanitarian response in the country.

The respondents recommended to improve some areas, such as communication and transparency in allocation, timelines of the prioritization processes, and the need for trainings on project management, accountability to affected populations, protection, gender and disability, and other cross-cutting issues. To strengthen open and transparent dialogue with its stakeholders, some measures are already being taken. The lessons learned will be incorporated to improve and strengthen the Fund's performance.

### Sustained funding required for humanitarian operations in late 2020 and early 2021

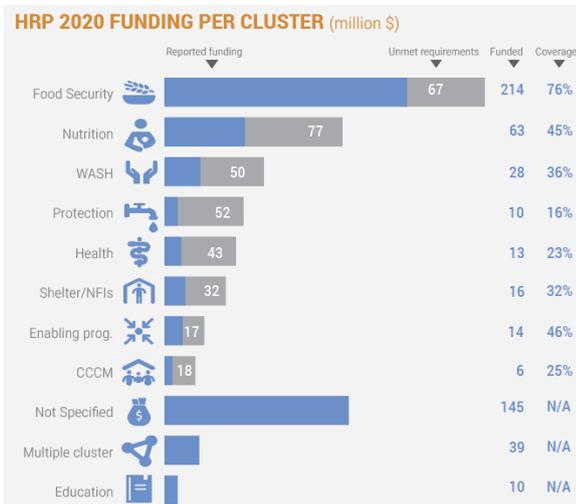
As of 29 October, the 2020 \$1.01 billion Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) had received \$623 million. With an additional \$196 million received for activities outside the Plan, the Somalia operation has received \$819 million in total. Critical clusters remain underfunded despite continuous donor support. The Health cluster is only 23 per cent funded, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) cluster is below 40 per cent.

The Protection cluster is the most underfunded (16 per cent), yet it is a crucial for the prevention of gender-based violence, which has been on the rise due to compromised living conditions. Humanitarian needs are likely to increase in 2021, due to potential drought as a result of below average 2020 *Deyr* rains, a harsh 2021 dry *Jilaa* (January to March) season and a possible delay and/or poor performance of the 2021 *Gu* (April to June) rainy season.

## IN BRIEF

### Education Cluster partners ensure learning for children in Jubaland Region

Living in an internally displaced settlement away from home remains a major challenge for many children displaced by either conflict or climatic shocks. Across Somalia, protracted insecurity and climatic shocks, including drought and floods, remain the key drivers for increased school dropouts.



Data as of 29 October 2020. Source: OCHA

Qasim Salad, a 17-year-old youth, has spent the better part of his life in an IDP settlement in Gedo region. Despite the challenges that come with displacement, Qasim and other children affected by crisis remain determined to make a progressive life for themselves, including achieving the highest level of education like other children living in non-crisis environment.

“I am very happy to be ranked among the top 100 students out of more than 33,000 students who sat for the 2019/2020 Secondary Schools final examinations in mid-August,” said Qasim.

Qasim’s family was displaced from their home in Kansahdera village – some 280km from Garbahaarey town – by drought that affected the area nine years ago. “We were searching for a better life and food. Education was not a priority then, but I still held my hopes high that one day I would go to school. I used to support my father in the farm,” he explained.

With the help of Education Cluster partners, including Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Qasim and other children have been able to access quality education in emergency. “To access school, I had to cross a valley and during the rainy season I had to wade through water. In dry season, I had to navigate through sharp rocks,” said Qasim.

The socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of schools for five months has exacerbated the risk of school children, particularly boys, being recruited into armed groups, and girls being subjected to early marriages in Gedo area. “Girls are the most vulnerable to the pandemic restrictions as many of them dropped out and got married,” said Mohamed Hassan, primary school head teacher in Garbahaarey.

Najma Mohamed, a female student in Gedo region, is another success story of resilience. She scored an average 89.5 per cent in the 2019/2020 examinations and was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> nationally. “I never expected to reach this level, but now I have realized that I can succeed despite my circumstances,” she said.

Najma wants to be an administrator or a business manager and believes that she can help the Garbahaarey community by introducing new business ideas. Qasim on the other hand wants to study engineering to help his community construct shallow wells, roads and other infrastructure to foster development. Qasim has six siblings and he hopes to inspire them.

Ordinarily the top 100 students receive government scholarships to study a subject of their choice at university and both are hopeful to pursue higher education.

Members of the regional Education Cluster including CARE international, Save the Children, Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council and NCA are supporting more than 60 teachers in Gedo region. NCA has supported 56 primary schools and five secondary schools through incentives to teachers, construction and rehabilitation of school facilities, provision of learning materials, school feeding programs and capacity-building for teachers and Community Education Committees. In 2018, Lutheran World Federation supported the state Ministry of Education to establish the Jubaland Teacher’s Training College, which has so far trained more than 300 teachers. The Education Cluster supports the state Ministry of Education to improve on access and quality of education despite funding challenges.

## Somalia names new Humanitarian Affairs Minister

Somalia’s new Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble has appointed Ms Khadija Mohamed Dirie as the new Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management for Somalia. Previously, Ms Dirie oversaw the Environment, Human Rights and Protection and later Sports and Youth Affairs Ministries.

Ms Dirie will work closely with the humanitarian community to address the humanitarian concerns in the country, including impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, cumulative climatic shocks resulting in floods and drought, desert locusts and protracted displacement.



*Federal Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Ms. Khadija M. Dirie. Courtesy photo.*

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