

SOMAID Food security and livelihood assessment:

SOMAID organization conducted food security and livelihood assessment on the impacts of drought, insecurity, inflation and recent floods on the livelihood, housing conditions, health, education and security of the population living in Hirshabelle regions of Hiraan and middle shabelle.

SOMAID organization has conducted this rapid food security and livelihood needs assessment in IDPs and other hard-hit locations in Hirshabelle state in order to better understand the needs of the affected populations and the current gaps in health and nutrition, food security and water and sanitation situation.

Objective of the assessment

- To quantify the nutritional status of children 6-59 months based on Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurements
- To quantify the nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women (PLW) based on MUAC measurements and observations.
- To collect basic additional information needed to make recommendations for future programming
- Inform the national and the regional food security and nutrition clusters about the most urgent humanitarian needs/gaps in the area.

Core Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the needs of the affected population?
- 2) What are the main challenges to accessing humanitarian services?
- 3) What are the main health concerns within the assessed communities

Between 1st July -8th July 2023 SOMALI MISSION AID (SOMAID) conducted food security and livelihood needs assessment in Hirshabelle state especially Beledweyne, Bulaburte, Jalalaqsi, Jowhar and Balcad districts to get a clear understanding of the impact of the situation caused by the extreme weather conditions that have affected different parts of the world including Hiiran and lower shabelle region of Somalia. Samples from 100 community members were selected for this assessment. In each of the five districts the assessment was conducted in Beledweyne, Jalalaqsi , Bulaburte, Jowhar and Balcad districts. All the respondents were community members above 18 years in the target areas.

The results show that the waterborne diseases are increasing, with reported hygiene and sanitation problems. Pastoralists have experienced loss of livestock and strain on pastoral livelihoods due to the previous drought conditions and the most recent floods, this will worsen in the coming months while market prices for basic food commodities have started rising and it has already been reported that some households have not been able to meet their food needs. Population movements from Bakool and others parts of Hiraan to Beledweyne and other major urban settlements have also reportedly been increasing. To prevent large-scale displacement, early response is required to support households faced with challenges of food security and livelihoods in form of cash-based

assistance or food distributions. Livelihood support should also be prioritized to protect household assets including provision of livestock fodder and veterinary service. This assessment report did not include the other major humanitarian factors such as COVID-19, food security situation and conflict, which impact the lives of the Hiran and middle shabelle regions as a whole.

Food security situation

The prolonged and recurring droughts and the most recent floods are the major drivers of acute food insecurity in Hirshabelle, compounded by other major drivers such as desert locust infestation, disease outbreaks, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and more recently, the fuel crisis linked to the conflict in Ukraine. The situation, which has already reached historic levels, is expected to further deteriorate in the coming months if the anticipated ELNINO and the incoming Deyr season crops and livestock production fail due to the impending effects of Elnino which is expected in mid-October 2023.

IDP situation (conditions and new arrivals)

New influxes of IDPs are reaching Beledweyne and Jowhar towns at a rapid pace. SOMAID recently visited IDP camps located in Beledweyne and Jowhar towns where new arrivals have settled. Majority of the displaced were pastoralist and agro-pastorals having previously lost livestock d to the recent drought and floods which destroyed their means of livelihood including their farming activities due to crop failure as a result of lack of enough rains, forcing them to flee from their rural villages and homes and look for humanitarian assistance in Beledweyne and Jowhar town. Most of them spend days on their way to Beledweyne town before settling at IDP camps with little belongings.





Below are SOMAID findings on the situation of visited IDP camps

- Lack of shelter, most people live in makeshift shelters with no proper structure.
- Lack of food for all people including old IDPs in the camps. Need to scale up immediate and applicable interventions
- No enough and adequate latrines to accommodate the new arrivals
- Most of the new arrivals are sick; we urge organizations working on health and ministry of health to respond with immediate effect.
- The local authority needs to appeal to Hirshabelle ministry of disaster and management and humanitarian agencies to send immediate response to the people fleeing from rural areas and settling urban areas as IDPs
- Presence of many Malnourished children and pregnant and lactating mothers with serious conditions bearing the scars of hungers

SOMAID organization visited the below IDP camps in Jowhar and Beledweyne district for the food security assessment

Region	District	Name of IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Tawakal sigalow IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Shabellow FDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Xamiir Gaab IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Cadiley IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Janawakey IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Daryel IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Alabari IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Damalow .
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Alle suge IDP

Hiraan	Beledweyne	Jabanjibilow IDP/FDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Qalaafe IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Kunaso IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Wabi shable IDP
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Daanyeere
Hiraan	Beledweyne	Rajo2 IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Baarey 1 IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Baarey 2 IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Biyaso IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Bula Hajji IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Isnai IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Jiliyale IDP
Middle Shabelle	Jowhar	Sheikh Oyaaye 1 IDP

Nutrition and health status

The findings of the assessment show that the GAM rate for children 6-59 months is high. More case of oedema was detected. The assessment data indicates that the younger children are more affected with acute malnutrition than the older children.

Child health indicators are poor with a high percentage of preceding morbidity, especially diarrhea in the project areas showed that more than half of the interviewed population expects their primary water source quality to deteriorate, with this an increase in hygiene related health problems can be expected which, like the assessment showed, is closely related to child malnutrition. The need assessment found that diseases and food insecurity which are the two immediate causes of malnutrition are both present in the community. According to the observations made during the survey the underlying causes of both disease and food insecurity were quite pronounced and included inadequate health facilities, health seeking behavior, household food insecurity, poor infant and young child feeding practice, lack of adequate knowledge of mothers and poor sanitation. Equally their food security outlook for the coming rainy season and the anticipated ELNINO looks concerning.

Malnutrition was the main context in which children, specifically the under-5 age group, were discussed in this current assessment. With Critical levels of GAM and SAM prevalence in some of the assessed locations, many children are in a heightened state of vulnerability, in terms of not only physical health and development but psychosocial well-being, as well. Child protection must be integrated into the humanitarian response to the malnutrition crisis in order to ensure that the broader, underlying context of children and their families is fully understood and accounted for in nutrition programming, reduce harm to children in nutrition programming and address protection risks that exacerbate the consequences of malnutrition and food insecurity existing protection risks,.

Given the developmental delays and childhood disabilities linked to acute and chronic malnutrition, it can be expected that the demand for these kinds of services will only increase going forward, as food security situation deepens and drags on as it is predicted to do.

The assessment's key findings are as follows;

- Most communities assessed are fully aware of the impending ELNINO with majority of community members directly experiencing the changes in weather. By the time of the assessment, there had not been any form assistance provided to communities and many communities were not aware of any form humanitarian assistance available to them.
- Availability of water is low but with reported cases of conflict over water in various communities. The conflict is amongst water users at water points. Women and girls have been observed to walk long distance to fetch for water. Diarrheal cases amongst the under-five have been reported in most of the households assessed. MUAC measurements show that up to 43% of the children assessed are malnourished.
- Market prices for basic food commodities been rising since 2022 and it has already been reported that some households have not been able meet their food needs. Prices for food and basic staple commodities will continue to rise in the coming days.
- In Beledweyne and Bulaburte increased movement of people out of their communities moving to other communities in search for food, livelihood opportunities and pasture for feeding their animals have been reported. The movements are attributed mainly to search for livelihood, food and fleeing from conflict. These displacements will lead to creation of IDP camps with limited access to basic services.
- Lack of shelter, most people live in makeshift shelters with no proper structure.
- Lack of food for all people including old IDPs in the camps. Need to scale up immediate and applicable interventions and there are no enough and adequate latrines to accommodate the new arrivals
- Schools and hospital are under-equipped and requires rehabilitation since most schools shelters were destroyed by the recent devastating floods.

SOMAID Recommendation

1. Overall, recovery and emergency response should focus on disaster management triggered by water scarcity, through a set of sectorial humanitarian response and recovery actions focusing on ensuring drought affected people and livestock get adequate water, food, fodder/feed, and sanitation-health services as well as income support through cash transfers and cash for work programs is needed to support the communities, that are already affected by the escalated conflict and impacts of COVID19, drought and floods to prevent or mitigate further displacement and be able to cope and adopt to the situation. Each target locations require a different set of response stressing that “one response doesn't fit all” location this demands rapid assessments prior to conducting interventions.

2. To prevent large-scale displacement and intra-provincial movements among the vulnerable families who are food and income insecure: SOMAID strongly recommends early response to support vulnerable households faced with challenges of food security and livelihoods in form of Cash and voucher assistance (CVA) for food in arid areas and drought hotspots. Community-based livelihood support should be prioritized to protect household assets, including provision of livestock fodder and veterinary services, cash for agriculture inputs (e.g., drought-resilient seeds, efficient irrigation facilities), and cash for work interventions, etc.
3. Rehabilitation of existing water points (e.g., small water dams, canal cleaning, etc.) and or construction of new ones should be prioritized before the drought hits hard to increase water availability and access challenges for the communities. Water point rehabilitation is needed to reduce the number of households that are using unsafe and unprotected water point sources
4. To ensure children under the age of five are protected private referrals for treatment, offering community-based management of acute malnutrition for both from acute malnutrition, there is urgent need to conduct awareness, screening to those hard-to-reach areas.
5. Distribution of water treatment kits as well as hygiene kits supplemented by community level hygiene promotion emphasizing the importance of water, food hygiene and environmental hygiene to stop diarrheal related diseases amongst the children. Households should also be sensitized to on the proper disposal of human excreta to prevent an outbreak of diarrheal diseases. Protection monitoring services are urgently needed to mitigate the impacts drought. Interventions supporting social protection of the individual and gender-based risks at the communities where people start to prioritize/make decision on their children over other needs or a protection right (e.g., early marriage, education, etc.) should be stressed
6. Lifesaving services in existing camps which are expected to receive lots of drought affected IDPs should be prioritized so that they can accommodate incoming displaced people
7. Provide medical supplies and consumables to supported facilities, including nutrition supplies such as RUTF and RUSF
8. Identify vulnerable demographics such as pregnant/lactating women, children under 5 years, people with disabilities, and geriatric patients and tailoring services to meet the needs of those most vulnerable to the effects of malnutrition, including illness and arrested growth development in children Programming
9. Map out coverage gaps for health and nutrition services – consider mobile health teams for hard-to reach villages beyond these survey
10. Train healthcare workers, staff and volunteers on MUAC assessments for rapid screening for malnutrition
11. Conduct mass malnutrition screening campaigns monthly to ensure any new cases are detected and screened as early as possible.
12. Provide Food Aid / Cash for Work programs to target those households vulnerable to food insecurity, especially if there are poor harvests later in 2022.
13. Provide cash and agricultural inputs to small-holder farmers whose harvests were impacted in order to meet their food needs and have access to the necessary agricultural inputs
14. Provide conditional cash transfer through cash for work initiatives that support households rehabilitate critical community infrastructure and increase their income.

