

# KEY FINDINGS

# SOMALIA DROUGHT

## Persistent Drought

Households across Somalia face catastrophic conditions following unprecedented drought. Four consecutive failed rainy seasons have exhausted coping strategies, leading to widespread loss of livelihoods and an inability to access sufficient food and water. Over 7.1 million people are acutely food insecure and pockets where an estimated 213,000 people experience catastrophic food insecurity (IPC phase 5) are confirmed.<sup>1</sup> The country's dire humanitarian situation is set to get worse over the next months with serious concerns of increased levels of mortality.

Conditions are especially worrying in South and Central Somalia where chronic insecurity and poor governance hamper the provision of aid and essential services. To shed light on the intensifying needs in this region, REACH collected data in 600 hard-to-reach settlements between 8 May 2022 and 2 June 2022, through 1,805 key informant (KI) interviews and 12 focal group discussions (FGDs).<sup>a</sup> Findings from the assessment are presented in this brief.

## Driving Displacement and Fueling Tensions

Drought was a key driver of new displacement across assessed locations. **Water and food access were reported as the primary reasons new IDPs moved from their old locations into the assessed settlements.** PRMN<sup>b</sup> data indicate a significant increase in drought-driven displacement as of June 2022 (230% compared to May) with 112,448 newly displaced bringing the total number of people displaced by drought to an estimated 918,200 since January 2021.<sup>2</sup>

The hike in displacement suggests that drought-induced vulnerability heightened since the REACH data collection, increasing competition over scarce resources. During the reporting period, KIs in 20% of settlements reported tensions between host communities and IDP populations. **Water was also the cause of most disputes in 40% of assessed settlements where disputes between residents were reported (26%).**

**"In our place of origin, the most pressing need was food because we used to practice farming and get local produce in our farms, but the long drought and lack of rain has caused us to move here looking for a better life."**

- FGD participant from Kismayo

## Cutting Livelihoods and Further Diminishing Purchasing Power

Crop failure and livestock deaths were widely reported, resulting in large-scale production loss. This is significant as farming and livestock production were the most common livelihood sources in 68% and 36% of assessed settlements, respectively. With last season's deficits compounding, farming and pastoral populations face continued income loss.

At the same time, prices have gone up. KIs in over 80% of settlements reported that the price of water, food and non food items (NFIs) increased because of the drought. **As a result, most households in 54% of settlements with market access were reportedly unable to afford necessities.**

**"Animals died due to drought and hunger while the price of food was very high at our settlement of origin."**

- FGD participant from Baidoa

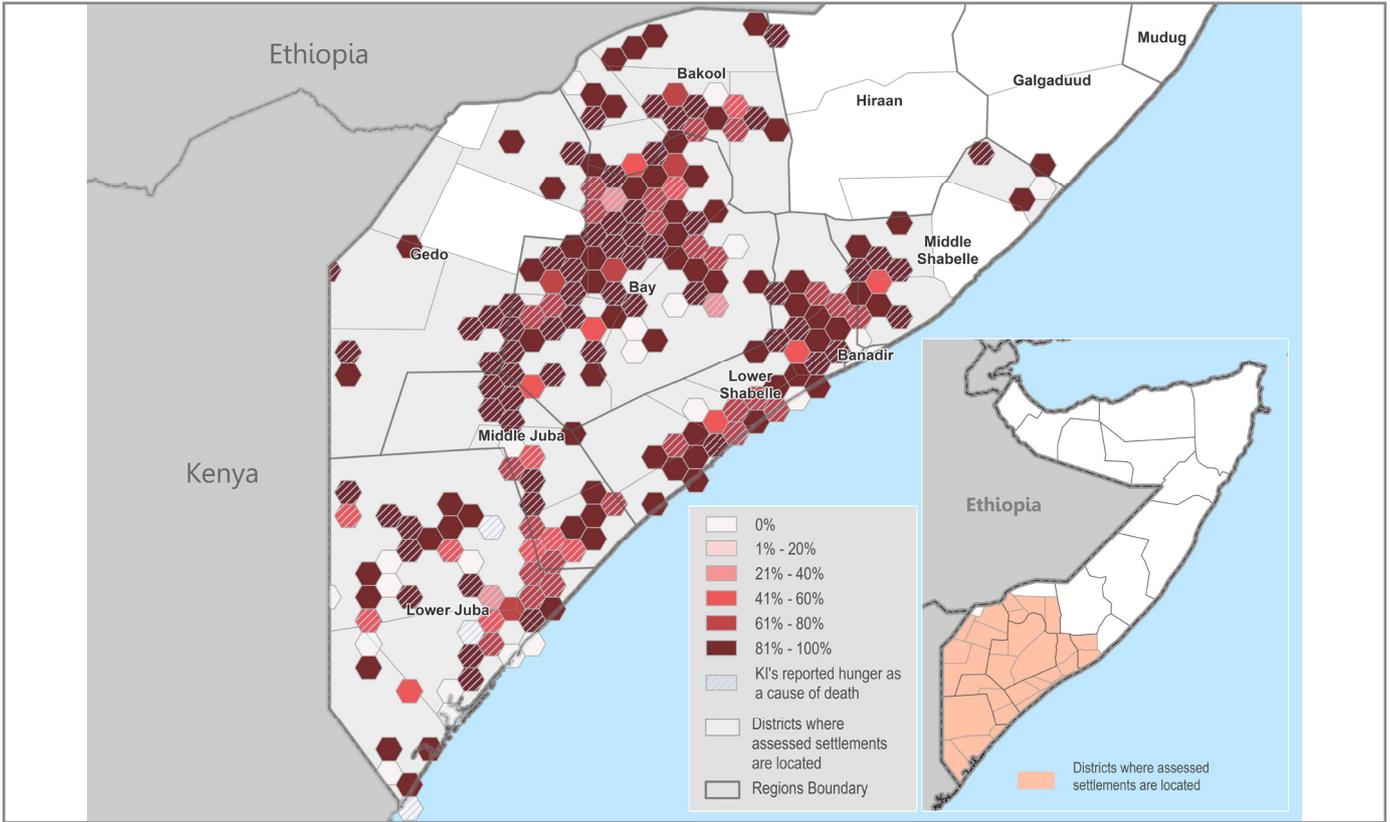
## Worsening Food and Water Access

Even if households could afford to buy items, market access was severely restricted in 75% of settlements, according to KIs. Long distances but also a lack of cash for transportation were key barriers.

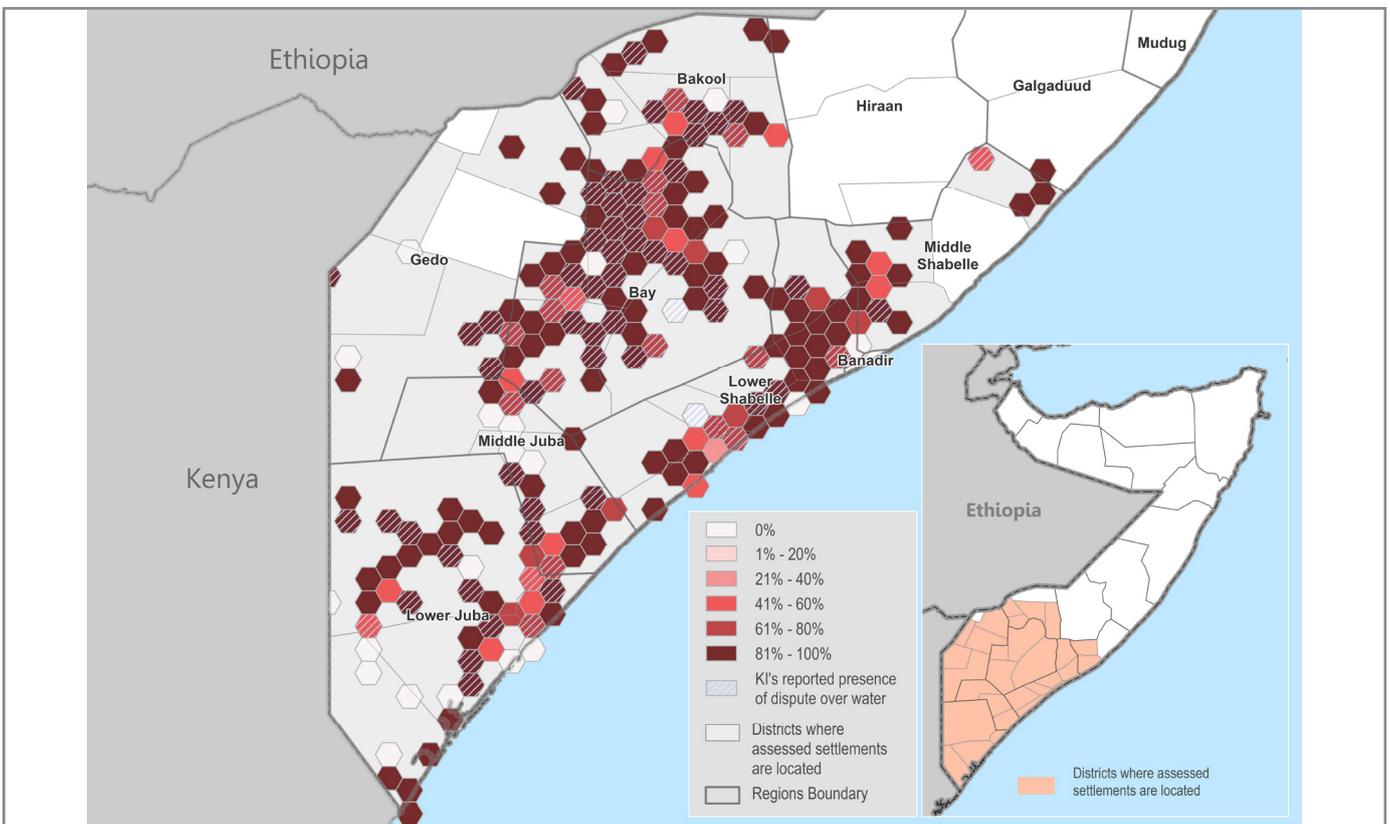
Production loss reduced food availability in markets. KIs in 65% of settlements indicated that the drought had impacted markets. **Where markets were accessible, water and food were not available in those markets for households in nearly 30% and 20% of assessed locations, respectively.**

**In over two-thirds of settlements, KIs said that the food situation worsened over the reporting period.** To find new food sources, households borrowed food or money in 70% and 57% of assessed settlements, respectively. Further, in 9% of settlements, KIs reported that households gathered wild foods, not usually part of their diet, to cope with hunger. **When sources ran out, at least a few households in 82% of settlements went as far as skipping 2 or more meals a day.** This strategy was used by many or all households in 13% of settlements, according to KIs.

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**Reported strategy of Skipping more than 2 Meals per day in % of settlements (per 397 km<sup>2</sup>) and Reported Presence of Hunger as a Cause of Death in settlements**



**Reported Insufficient Water Access in % of settlements (per 397 km<sup>2</sup>) and Reported Presence of Disputes over Water in Settlements**



**Water was also scarcely available with insufficiencies reported for at least a few households in 66% of settlements.** Low availability forced households to dedicate significant time to collecting water. Fetching water reportedly took over half a day in 35% of settlements. **Water quality is a concern as the top reported main water source was unprotected wells (reported in 28% of settlements).** Surface water was also commonly used in 11% of settlements.

## Raising Mortality Risk

The lack of sufficient water and nutritious foods, paired with poor sanitation, exposes households to significant health risks. In 40% of settlements, none of the households reportedly had access to functioning handwashing facilities with water and soap. Toilets were also not available in 58% of assessed locations. **Malnutrition was flagged by KIs as a health issue in 20% of settlements, while diarrhoea was an issue in 35% of assessed locations.**

Health impacts are exacerbated by the absence of health services. **Households in 75% of settlements did not have access to health services.** In fact, households in most settlements (94%) experienced at least some barrier to accessing healthcare – distance and high cost being the main ones.

This amounted to households not being able to find care in critical situations. KIs in 34% of settlements estimated that more people of any age died earlier than normal over the reporting period. **KIs in over a fourth of settlements said that hunger was the main cause of people dying in the settlement which was also the most commonly reported cause of death across assessed settlements.**

**“Several times we would face outbreaks like water-borne diseases, and there were several emergency cases that were nowhere to be referred to as no main hospital is available and no doctor to pay attention to such cases.”**

- FGD participant from Mogadishu

### Footnotes

a. Findings in this brief are based on REACHs H2R assessment which is based on an Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology, and provides an indicative overview of the situation in inaccessible areas of southern and central regions in Somalia. KIs were selected based on the condition that they had either been displaced from or had visited the assessed location in the 3 months prior to data collection, or where they had family/friends with whom they were in regular contact. To further triangulate KI reporting, REACH FGDs with IDPs from the assessed settlements were conducted. Findings from this round cannot be compared to previous H2R rounds due to shifts in coverage and should be considered indicative of the situation in hard-to-reach areas in the 3 months prior to data collection.

B. [Protection and Return Monitoring Network \(PRMN\)](#)

### About REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

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