

ZOOM-IN: Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) in Bulo Burto District, Somalia

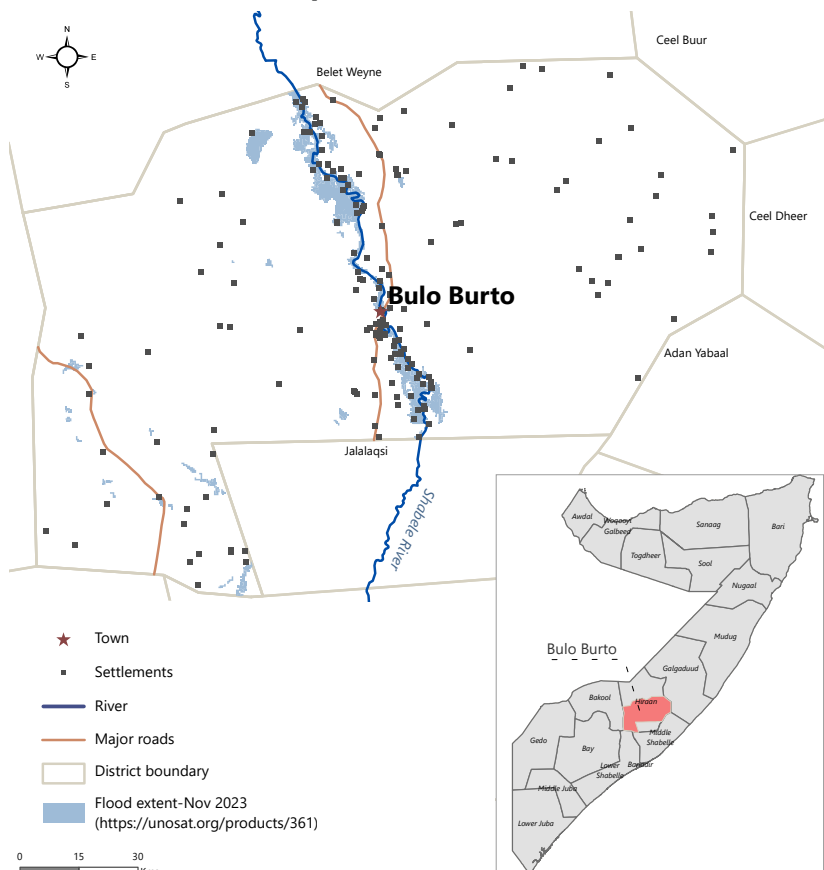
December, 2023

Bulo Burto District, Somalia

KEY MESSAGES

- Flooding and conflict/insecurity have driven significant displacement for those (boys, girls and adult women) who were able to leave the settlements, while those who were unable to do so (the elderly and people with disabilities) remained behind. Anticipated Gu flooding could particularly affect the populations who could not leave the settlements.
- The combination of flooding, conflict/insecurity, limited road access - hampering transportation and relief efforts - and disruptions in crop production have led to food scarcity and financial hardships, forcing households to rely heavily on coping strategies until they are exhausted.
- Extensive flooding in Bulo Burto district has rendered roads largely inaccessible, impeding access to services such as water and healthcare. Reported outbreak of cholera and acute watery diarrhea (AWD) could also be attributed to the lack of sanitation facilities and the practice of open defecation in the assessed settlements.

Bulo Burto District Map



CONTEXT & RATIONALE

The floods during the Deyr season, from November 2023 to December 2023, had a significant impact on Bulo Burto District in Somalia. The heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding caused extensive damage to infrastructure, homes, and agricultural lands in the region. The district, which is located in a flood-prone area, experienced severe consequences due to inadequate drainage systems and vulnerable housing structures.

In Bulo Burto, the floods led to the displacement of communities as homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. The livelihoods of many residents, primarily dependent on agriculture and livestock, were severely disrupted, resulting in economic losses and food insecurity. Crops and agricultural fields were inundated, leading to the destruction of crops such as maize, sorghum, and beans. Livestock, a crucial source of income and sustenance for many families, also faced significant threats due to the floods.

Floods in Bulo Burto, also reportedly led to more reliance on contaminated water sources and increased water-borne diseases - including cholera¹¹. Bulo Burto is categorized as Severity 4 in terms of Protection needs severity.¹ Additionally, the post-Deyr 2023 IPC analysis indicates that the riverine areas in Bulo Burto are in a crisis condition, classified as IPC 3, and in Critical Acute Malnutrition conditions (IPC 4).² The district has been identified as a hotspot for anticipated Gu flooding.

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This factsheet presents the findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted during the December 2023 round of the multi-district HSM assessment, focusing on the settlements in the Bulo Burto district. The assessment encompassed 15% of the settlements in Bulo Burto, involving a total of 87 KIIs. It is important to note that the findings are indicative and cannot be generalized to the entire population. See [page 5 for details](#).

✱ SHOCKS AND ACCESS

Amid extensive flooding across Bulo Burto district, roads were largely inaccessible. KIs reported that roads were not accessible by vehicle in almost all of the assessed settlements (81%). In addition, all assessed settlements had reportedly been affected by flooding in the year prior to data collection (100%). These findings align with OCHA reporting of widespread Deyr flooding in Bulo Burto, and with Somalia Logistics Cluster mapping which categorises roads surrounding Bulo Burto as Not Passable.^{3, 4} Flooding has restricted access, which has then influenced displacement patterns, healthcare and food security in flood-affected districts across Somalia. Noting the high reporting of flooding and low reporting of roads accessible by vehicle in Bulo Burto, findings suggest that changes in displacement, food security, livelihoods, healthcare and WASH could be particularly acute in Bulo Burto. Gu rains, estimated to start in March 2024 and to have a high impact particularly in Bulo Burto, could drive further displacements and exacerbate existing humanitarian needs in-district.

100% Of assessed settlements where KIs reported flooding as a shock in the year prior to December 2023.

% of assessed settlements by the most commonly reported three shocks that affected the settlement in the year prior to December 2023⁵



➔ DISPLACEMENT

Flooding and conflict/insecurity have driven significant displacement, with those able to do so (boys, girls and adult women) largely relocating to another district (97%). KIs in all assessed settlements reported people had moved away in the 30 days prior to data collection, with KIs reporting Flooding (94%) and Conflict/Insecurity (77%) as the most common reasons for this movement. This complements findings from the Protection & Return Monitoring Network (PRMN) - which reported 5,567 new IDPs between 01 November 2024 - 31 December 2024 from Bulo Burto district, with flooding as the most common reason for displacement.⁶ The majority of KIs in assessed settlements further reported that the majority of households in the settlement intend to relocate to another IDP in-district in the near future (87%).

Elderly (elderly men reported in 97% of settlements and elderly women in 100%) and people with disabilities (87%) were the population groups most commonly reported as wanting to leave but unable to do so. These findings may suggest that the most vulnerable remain behind, and may be unable to move if anticipated Gu rains flood these settlements.

100% Of assessed settlements where some people reportedly had moved away in the 30 days prior to data collection in December 2023.

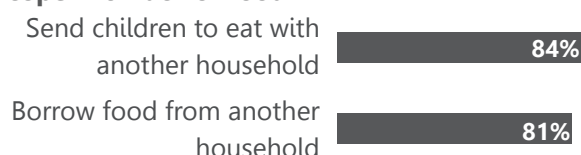
Three most commonly reported reasons why people moved out of their settlements within the 30 days prior to data collection, by % of assessed settlements⁵



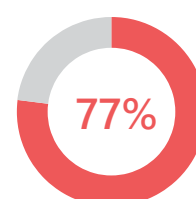
🌾 FOOD SECURITY

Flooding and conflict/insecurity, coupled with limited road accessibility and disruptions in local crop production, could be driving a strong reliance on coping strategies due to the lack of food or money to buy food.⁷ KIs in the majority of settlements (84%) reported that some households were resorting to sending children to eat with other households, indicating a communal sharing of resources. In over two-thirds of the assessed settlements, some households reportedly could not use their usual coping strategies due to exhaustion. The settlements may face worsening conditions in the near future with the impending Gu floods and projected Critical Acute Malnutrition (IPC 4).⁸

% of assessed settlements where KIs reported that some households in the settlement resorted to using the below strategies to cope with lack of food⁵



% of assessed settlements where at least a few households were reportedly unable to resort to any coping strategies because they were no longer available to them.



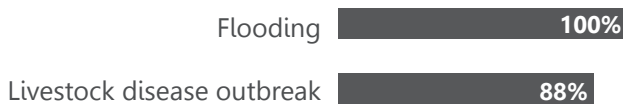
LIVELIHOODS

Flooding reportedly led to crop loss and decrease in livestock ownership - which are the primary livelihoods of most households in the assessed settlements in Bulu Burto. Findings further suggest that this negative influence of flooding on livelihoods was widespread - KIs reported crop loss for most households in almost all of the assessed settlements (94%) during the most recent harvest season. These livelihood losses could increase both food insecurity and economic fragility ahead of the Gu rain season - particularly for the vulnerable populations (elderly, people with disabilities) in Bulu Burto who are unable to move but would like to do so. Findings complement OCHA Somalia situation reporting that floods have caused extensive damage to crops and loss of animal life.⁹

Most commonly reported reasons for crop loss, by % of assessed settlements where crop loss was experienced during the most recent harvest season (94%)⁵



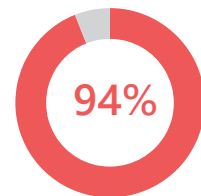
Most commonly reported reasons for decreased livestock ownership, by % of assessed settlements where livestock ownership reportedly decreased in the three months prior to data collection (23%)⁵



74%

% of assessed settlements where both farming and livestock were the main sources of income for most households.

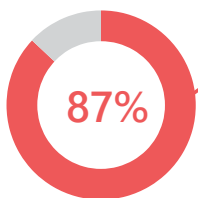
% of assessed settlements where crop loss was reported for most households during the most recent harvest season.



ACCESS TO MARKETS

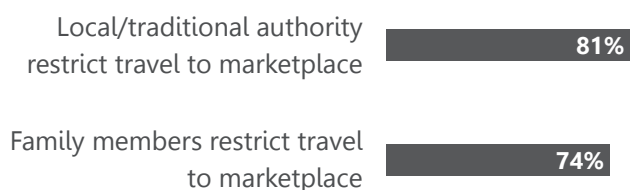
Most households in the assessed settlements faced market access challenges, including the unavailability of key items such as farm inputs and construction materials, while also experiencing fluctuations in the prices of food and water.

% of assessed settlements where there was a functioning marketplace but access was limited to only some days.



90% of those settlements where access to marketplace was limited to only three to four days a week.

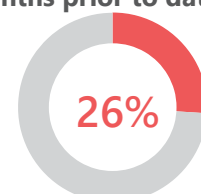
% of assessed settlements by most commonly reported two main barriers to accessing marketplace for most households in the settlement⁵



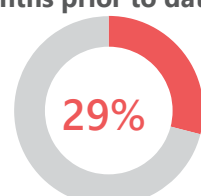
% of assessed settlements, by most commonly reported items that were not available in the marketplaces that most households use⁵



% of assessed settlements where KIs reported increased food prices in the three months prior to data collection.



% of assessed settlements where KIs reported increased water prices in the three months prior to data collection.

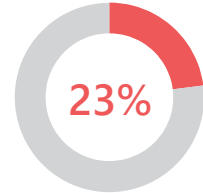


ACCESS TO WATER

Flooding exacerbates water and sanitation challenges in the assessed settlements, including limited access to clean drinking water sources, difficulties in accessing water due to distance and safety concerns and widespread lack of sanitation facilities leading to open defecation.¹⁰

77% of assessed settlements where KIs reported that most households did not have any sanitation facilities and practiced open defecation.

% of assessed settlements where KIs reported that some households used surface water for drinking in December 2023ⁱ

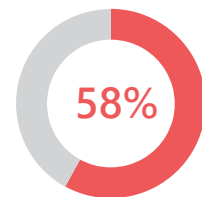


ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

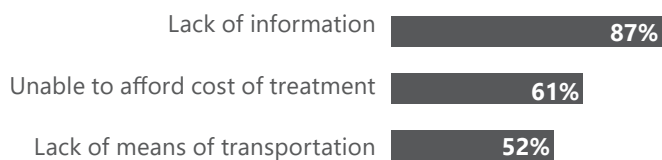
Flooding exacerbates healthcare access challenges in the assessed settlements, including reliance on traditional healers due to distant health facilities, limited access to information about health services, financial barriers to treatment, lack of transportation means and infrequent provision of basic health services by healthcare workers.

Furthermore, the situation in Bulo Burto district is aggravated by a significant surge in reported cholera cases in early January 2024, which have been attributed to the devastating floods during the Deyr 2023 season.¹¹

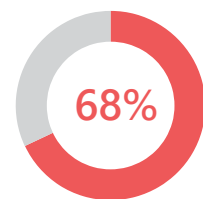
% of assessed settlements with reported access to a health facility that was more than one hour away using the most common mode of transportation.ⁱⁱⁱ



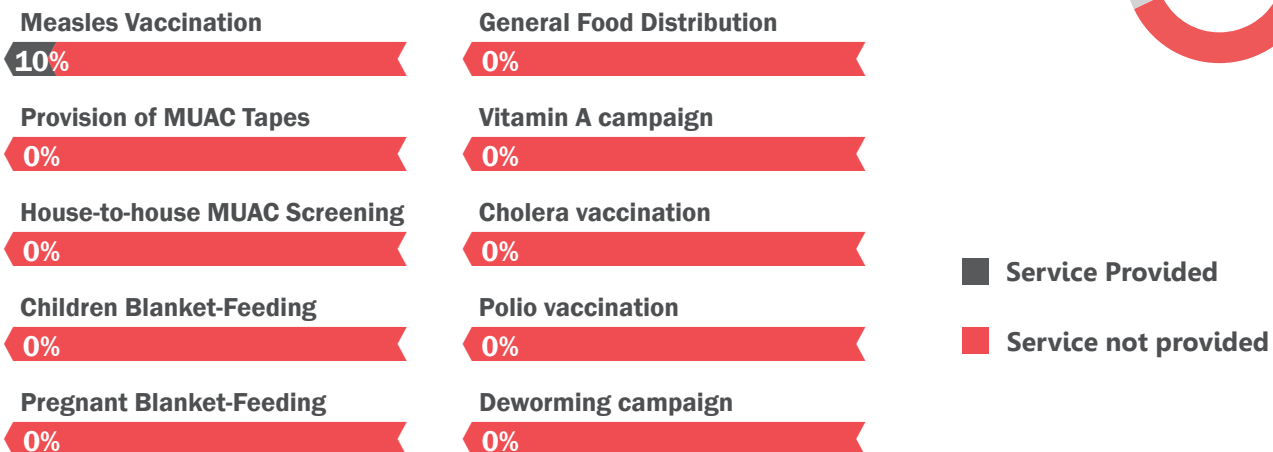
% of assessed settlements by the three most commonly reported barriers to healthcare in December 2023⁵



% of assessed settlements where most households resorted to traditional healers within the settlement for healthcare services.



% of assessed settlements where the following healthcare, nutrition and food services had been provided in the 30 days prior to data collection in December 2023ⁱⁱ



i. However, none of the assessed settlements reported this as the primary source of water for most households.

ii. KIs reporting on 77% of the assessed settlements expressed a lack of knowledge regarding the provision of the services. Results are for the 23% of settlements where KIs had this information.

iii. KIs in 55% of settlements reported that the nearest health facility was half a day away or more using the most common mode of transportation

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

This Hard to Reach (H2R) assessment is based on an Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology which relies on key informants (KIs) quantitative interviews to provide an indicative overview of the situation in the hard-to-reach district of Bulo Burto, Somalia. The KIs were selected if they were members of the local community living in the target settlement, traveling frequently in and out of the target settlement or recently displaced from the target settlement and were knowledgeable enough to report on the settlement with regards to displacement, basic services, livelihoods, humanitarian access and markets.

This factsheet focuses on settlements under Bulo Burto district; which is a hard-to-reach district

according to the November 2022 and September 2023 Access Working Group (AWG) access severity matrix.¹²

This factsheet presents the findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted during the December 2023 round of the multi-district HSM assessment, focusing on hard-to-reach settlements in the Bulo Burto district. The assessment encompassed 15% of the settlements in Bulo Burto, involving a total of 87 KIIs. The data was collected between 24 December 2023 and 8 January 2024. The interviews aimed at gathering insights into the humanitarian conditions and needs of populations living in hard-to-reach districts. It is important to note that the findings are indicative and cannot be generalized to the entire population. For more information on the methodology, see the linked [Methodology note](#).

ENDNOTES

- 1 Somalia protection response strategy, 2024, retrieved from: [Somalia Protection Cluster 2024 Response Strategy](#)
- 2 IPC Somalia AFI and AMN, January 2024, retrieved from: <https://fsnau.org/downloads/IPC-Somalia-Acute-Food-Insecurity-Malnutrition-Jan-Jun-2024-Report.pdf>
- 3 Somalia Situation Report, 26 Dec 2023, retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-26-dec-2023>
- 4 Somalia Logistics cluster mapping, retrieved from: <https://logie.logcluster.org/?op=som&role=embed>
- 5 KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.
- 6 Somalia Situation Report, 26 Dec 2023, retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-26-dec-2023>
- 7 Somalia PRMN, retrieved from: <https://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org/>
- 8 IPC Somalia AFI and AMN, January 2024, retrieved from: <https://fsnau.org/downloads/IPC-Somalia-Acute-Food-Insecurity-Malnutrition-Jan-Jun-2024-Report.pdf>
- 9 Somalia Situation Report, 26 Dec 2023, retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-26-dec-2023>
- 10 Somalia Situation Report, 26 Dec 2023, retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-situation-report-26-dec-2023>
- 11 Somalia Weekly Cholera/AWD Situation Report, January 2024, retrieved from: <https://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/somalia/Cholera-Week-2-2024.pdf>
- 12 Somalia Humanitarian Access Severity 2023, retrieved from: <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/somalia-humanitarian-access>

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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