

Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM): Key Findings

May 2025 | Somalia

KEY MESSAGES

- **Displacement from hard-to-reach districts appears to be largely driven by insufficient food and income, coupled with conflict and insecurity.** KIIs in majority of the assessed settlements reported that people had moved out within the 30 days prior to data collection. The most commonly cited drivers were lack of sufficient food, lack of sufficient income and ongoing conflict/insecurity.
- Food insecurity remains widespread in hard-to-reach districts. **In the majority of assessed settlements, at least one in four households reportedly lacked sufficient food.** Rising food and water prices were also reported in most settlements, further constraining availability and affordability of food for populations living in hard-to-reach settlements.
- **Healthcare services in hard-to-reach districts are severely constrained.** KIIs in the majority of the assessed settlements (70%) reported that households had to travel more than 30 minutes away using the most common mode of transportation to reach the nearest health facility.

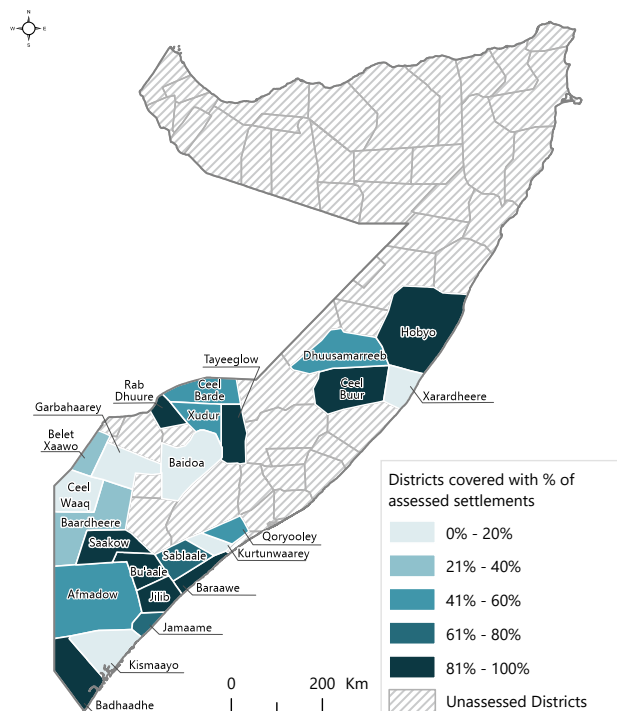
77%

of assessed settlements where at least one in four households (26-100%) reportedly did not have enough food.

Coverage Map, May 2025.

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

The humanitarian situation in Somalia has continued to deteriorate amid declining global humanitarian funding. The 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan projects that 5.98 million people will require humanitarian assistance¹, with an estimated 4.6 million expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between April and June². Recurring climate shocks, such as floods, have destroyed schools and infrastructure, while limited healthcare access has heightened the risk of cholera and AWD outbreaks³. These challenges have triggered widespread displacement, further compounded by insecurity that restricts access to essential services and aid. Despite ongoing efforts, humanitarian access remains constrained by security risks, underscoring the urgent need for coordinated interventions to address the complex and overlapping vulnerabilities faced by affected populations, particularly those in hard-to-reach areas.

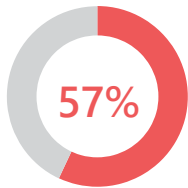


i. An internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in Baidoa, Somalia. Photo by Mohamed Hussein Adam.

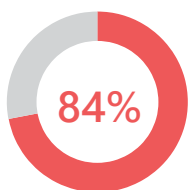
* SHOCKS AND ACCESS

A Prolonged lack of rain and insecurity are driving community needs for food, healthcare and drinking water. Prolonged lack of rain during the Gu and Deyr rain seasons was the most commonly reported shock in the year prior to data collection (57%), followed by prolonged lack of rain during the dry season (52%) and conflict (51%). Key informants (KIs) reported that roads were either unsafe or inaccessible by vehicle in most of the assessed settlements (84%). This aligns with the Somalia Logistics Cluster reporting indicates that roads in hard-to-reach districts remain largely impassable⁴.

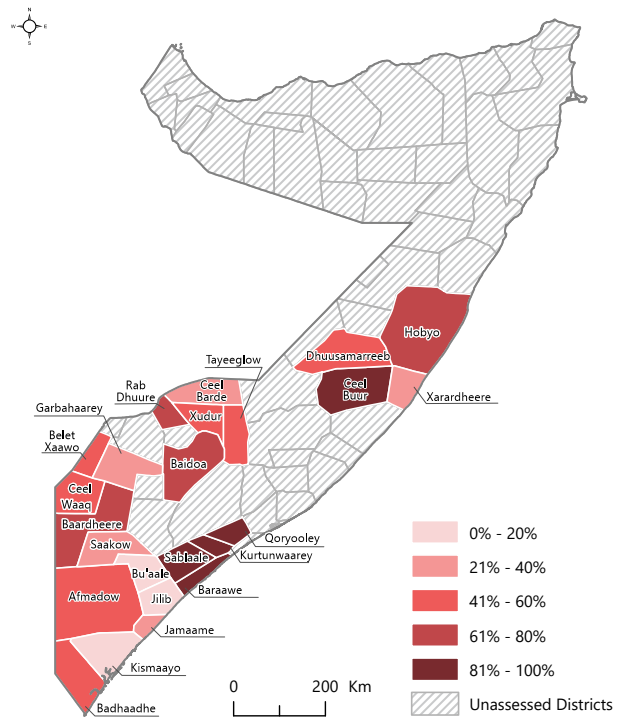
% of assessed settlements where KIs reported prolonged lack of rain during the rain season (Gu or Deyr) as a shock in the year prior to data collection.



% of assessed settlements where roads were reportedly unsafe and/or inaccessible by vehicle at the time of data collection.



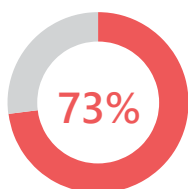
% of assessed settlements where KIs reported prolonged lack of rain during the rain season as a shock in the 12 months prior to data collection.



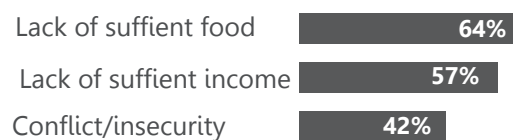
DISPLACEMENT

Lack of sufficient food and income coupled with conflict and insecurity are driving displacements from hard-to-reach districts. Majority of the KIs in assessed settlements reported that people had moved out within the 30 days prior to data collection (73%). Lack of sufficient food (64%), lack of sufficient income (57%) and conflict/insecurity (42%), were reportedly the drivers behind these displacements out of the settlements where people reportedly moved out. Findings further indicate that there were individuals who wanted to leave but could not do so, primarily due to physical disabilities and age in most assessed settlements (75%). The population groups who were reported by the most settlements as unable to move but wanting to do so were people with disabilities (55%) and the elderly (50% elderly men, 48% elderly women). This could suggest that the most vulnerable individuals in hard-to-reach districts may be the least able to physically access support elsewhere.

% of assessed settlements where some people reportedly had moved away in the 30 days prior to data collection.



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

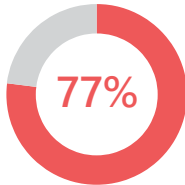


*KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.

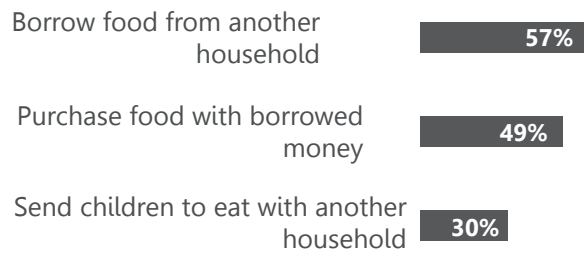
FOOD SECURITY

Food insecurity remains widespread in hard-to-reach districts. At least one in four households in the majority of the assessed settlements reportedly did not have enough food to eat (77%). This finding aligns with the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, which estimates that nearly 4.6 million people in Somalia are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above)⁵. The most common coping strategies for dealing with food insecurity include borrowing food from another household (57%), purchasing food with borrowed money (49%), and sending children to eat with another household (30%). Limited road access, ongoing conflicts, and rising food prices are likely key drivers of food insecurity in these areas.

% of assessed settlements where at least one in four households reportedly did not have enough food to eat at the time of data collection.



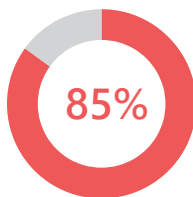
% of assessed settlements where KIs reported that some households in the settlement resorted to using the below strategies to cope with lack of food or money to buy food at the time of data collection:*



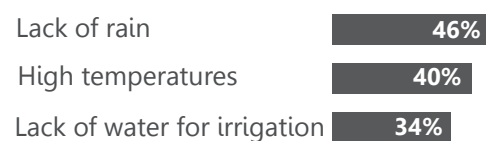
LIVELIHOODS

The main livelihoods in hard-to-reach districts are reportedly farming and livestock herding (37% farming and livestock, 29% farming, 22% livestock). However, climate conditions, including lack of rain and high temperatures, appear to be constraining the primary livelihoods of agriculture and livestock in hard-to-reach settlements and could be contributing to less access to food in the assessed hard-to-reach areas. KIs in almost all assessed settlements reported crop losses during the recent harvest (86%). The most commonly reported reasons for crop loss were lack of rain (46%), high temperatures (40%) and lack of water for irrigation (34%). With the upcoming 2025 deyr season forecast to be below average, the third consecutive poor rainfall season in parts of central and northern Somalia⁶, crop yields are expected to decline further, particularly in agropastoral zones already facing reduced harvests due to poor gu rains, pests, and conflict disruptions.

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



Most commonly reported reasons for crop loss, by % of assessed settlements where crop loss was experienced during the most recent harvest season (87%):*



* KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.

** Note: Crop loss estimates from KIs for most households during the recent harvest season are included in this finding, regardless of the reported level of crop loss.

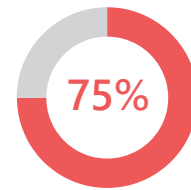
ACCESS TO MARKETPLACES

Hard-to-reach districts continue to face challenges in accessing markets, which could be driving food insecurity and limiting households' ability to obtain essential goods and services. KIs in nearly half of the assessed settlements (42%) reported that markets were only accessible on some days, with 90% of these settlements indicating access was limited to just 1 to 4 days per week. The most commonly reported barriers included caregiving responsibilities for children and the elderly (32%), restrictions imposed by families (25%), and limitations set by local or traditional authorities (17%). These barriers not only reduce the frequency of market visits but also restrict the supply of goods and services, leading to price hikes. Most KIs reported that the cost of food (75%) and water (38%) had risen in the three months preceding data collection. This finding is consistent with FAO reports highlighting rising food prices in Somalia⁷, which are likely to further exacerbate food insecurity in hard-to-reach areas.

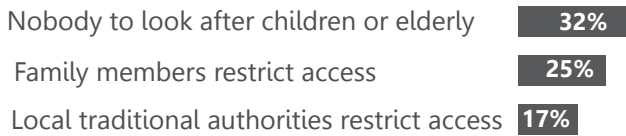
% of assessed settlements where there was a functioning marketplace, but access was limited to only some days at the time of data collection.



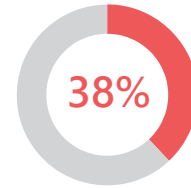
% of assessed settlements where KIs reported increased food prices in the three months prior to data collection.



Top three reported barriers to accessing marketplaces, by % of settlements.*



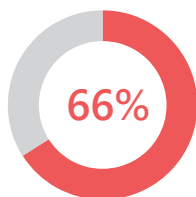
% of assessed settlements where KIs reported increased water prices in the three months prior to data collection.



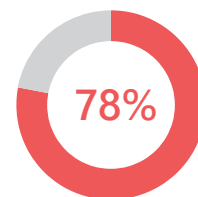
ACCESS TO WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Hard-to-reach districts face challenges in accessing clean water and improved sanitation facilities. KIs in most of the assessed settlements (78%) reported that some households occasionally relied on surface water sources for drinking. KIs in the majority of the assessed settlements (66%) reportedly rely on the use of unimproved sanitation facilities, while the practice of open defecation in some of the assessed settlements (39%) could reflect a lack of access to sanitation facilities and increase exposure to infectious diseases. Distant water points (51%), inaccessibility for people with a disability (45%) and insufficient number of containers to store water (28%) were the most commonly reported barriers to accessing water. These conditions heighten the risk of cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) outbreaks⁸, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach settlements where healthcare services are already constrained.

% of assessed settlements where KIs reported that households relied on unimproved sanitation facilities at the time of data collection.



% of assessed settlements where KIs reported that some households used surface water for drinking at the time of data collection.



39% of assessed settlements where open defecation was practiced by the majority households at the time of data collection.

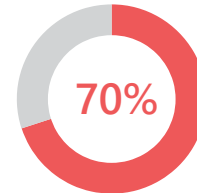
* KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Healthcare services in hard-to-reach districts are severely constrained. KIs in the majority of the assessed settlements (70%) reported that households had to travel more than 30 minutes away using the most common mode of transportation to reach the nearest health facility. Additionally, KIs in most of the assessed settlements (74%) reported that neither healthcare nor nutrition services had been provided in the month prior to data collection.

74% of assessed settlements where neither healthcare nor nutrition services had been provided in the month before data collection.

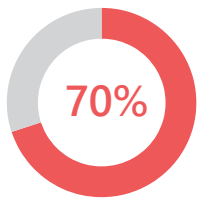
70% of assessed settlements with reported access to a health facility that was more than 30 minutes away using the most common mode of transportation at the time of data collection.



ACCESS TO EDUCATION

In hard-to-reach districts, the lack of learning facilities remains a major challenge, with the majority of the assessed settlements (70%) reportedly having no educational facilities within their settlement. This has contributed to low school attendance, as many KIs reported that school-aged children had not been attending school regularly (at least four days per week) in the six months prior to data collection (69% of boys and 69% of girls aged 5–12 years, and 77% of boys and 77% of girls aged 13–17 years). These findings are consistent with the ECW report, which highlights that more than half of Somalia’s school-aged children (4.5 million)⁹ are out of school. The most commonly reported barriers include the absence of learning facilities, or long distance to the nearest school.

70% of assessed settlements indicated a lack of learning facilities at the time of data collection.



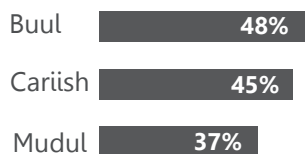
Barriers to accessing education for primary and secondary school-aged children (5 -17), by % of assessed settlements:*

	Boys (5-12)	Girls (5-12)	Boys (13-17)	Girls (13-17)
No school in the settlement	65%	64%	71%	71%
High school fees	22%	21%	17%	16%
Security concern	17%	15%	14%	15%

ACCESS TO ADEQUATE SHELTER

Hard-to-reach districts face shelter challenges, with many households in the assessed settlements relying on inadequate shelter types such as Buul (48%), Cariish (45%), and Mudul (37%). Access to these shelter types is even more limited for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, and women, leaving them at heightened risk of exposure to harsh environmental conditions.

Three most commonly reported inadequate shelter types, by % of assessed settlements.**



% of assessed settlements by the most reported population groups who did not have equal access to the same shelter types*



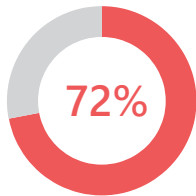
*Buul (timber structure with plastic sheet). *Mudul (hut). *Cariish (mud and stick wall and grass roof)

**KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.

PROTECTION

Protection risks are prevalent in hard-to-reach districts, with 72% of assessed settlements reporting at least one protection risk at the time of data collection. The most commonly reported risks included threats of violence (24%), forced marriage (23%), and robbery (20%). These findings are consistent with UNHCR report, which link widespread displacement and heightened protection risks¹⁰ to ongoing conflict and recurring shocks, underscoring the broader insecurity in these areas.

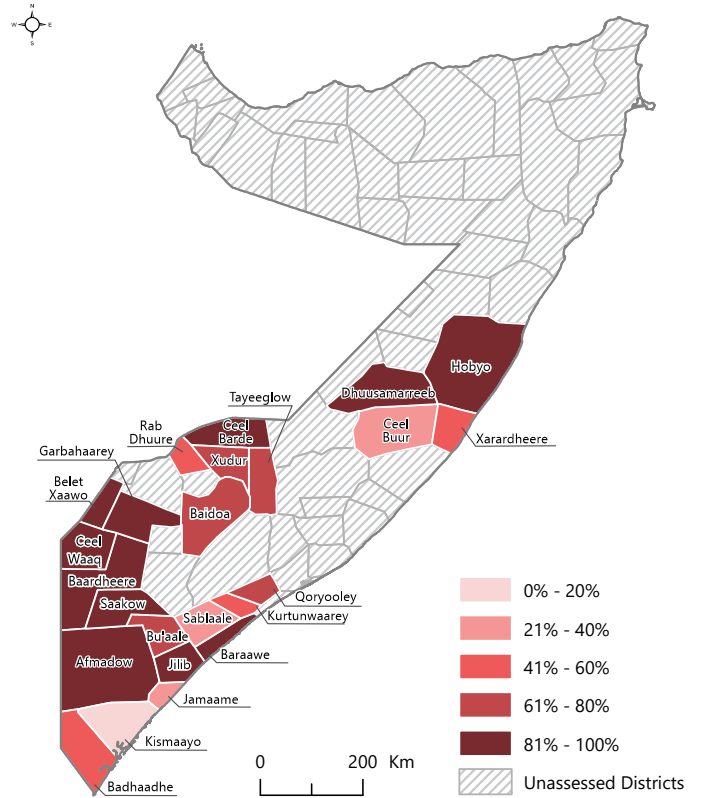
% of assessed settlements where at least one protection risk was reported at the time of data collection.



The five most commonly reported protection risks in the assessed settlements at the time of data collection:*

Being threatened with violence	24%
Female Genital Mutilation	23%
Being forcibly married	20%
Being recruited by armed groups	19%
Suffering from verbal harassment	18%

% of assessed settlements reporting protection risks at the time of data collection, per district.



*KIs could select multiple answers, thus findings might exceed 100%.

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

This assessment was based on an Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology, which relies on key informant (KI) quantitative interviews to provide an indicative overview of hard-to-reach areas in Somalia. When possible, enumerators interviewed KIs who were living in hard-to-reach areas at the time of data collection by mobile phone. Where mobile phone interview was not possible, then face-to-face interviews were conducted in the accessible areas. Accessible areas included Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) sites and markets among others. The (KIs) were selected if they were members of the assessed settlement and were knowledgeable enough to report on the

settlement with regards to basic services, markets, livelihoods, and sectoral needs. Data collection took place between 27 May 2025 and 12 June 2025. Respondents were identified via snowballing through the KIs interviewed. Data was collected at the settlement level, i.e., the questionnaire related to site-level humanitarian needs, not individual needs. A total of 1866 key informant interviews across 1866 settlements in operational zones categorized as Very Heavy Restrictions by the Access Working Group in 24 districts. One KII was conducted at each settlement. The analysis and findings in this brief are indicative and not statistically representative of the assessed districts. For more information, please see the [Methodology Note](#).

ENDNOTES

1. UNHCR Somalia, retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/unhcr-somalia-operational-update-may-2025>
2. Somalia faces worsening food insecurity, retrieved from: <https://sooha.org/en/2025/04/02/somalia-faces-worsening-food-insecurity-with-over-4-6-mln-in-hunger/>
3. [Somalia cholera: Simplified early action protocol](#)
4. Somalia logistic cluster, retrieved from: <https://shorturl.at/IEldz>
5. IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analysis, retrieved from: <https://sooha.org/en/2025/04/02/somalia-faces-worsening-food-insecurity-with-over-4-6-mln-in-hunger/>
6. FEWS NET: Forecasted below-average October-December rains, retrieved from: <https://fews.net/east-africa/somalia/key-message-update/july-2025>
7. FOA Somalia: Drought, conflict and high food prices risk pushing 4.4 million people into hunger, retrieved from: <https://www.fao.org/somalia/news/detail-events/en/c/1733980/>
8. NRC: Disease spreads in Somalia, retrieved from: <https://www.zawya.com/en/press-release/africa-press-releases/disease-spreads-in-somalia-as-funding-cuts-leave-300-000-without-safe-water-w1e1l1sb>
9. Somalia, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), retrieved from: <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/news-stories/press-releases/education-cannot-wait-scales-funding-education-in-somalia-us17-million>
10. UNHCR, Protection and conflict sensitive analysis in Somalia, retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/protection-and-conflict-sensitive-analysis-somalia>

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