

UNDERSTANDING THE KEY DRIVERS OF DISPLACEMENT IN SOMALIA

DURING THE 2021/22 DROUGHT



September 2022

Prepared By Gist Research

Partnered With Laasfort Consulting

For the International Organization for Migration





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1. SUMMARY

Somalia is in a state of severe humanitarian crisis. Amidst global and regional turmoil, drought is biting after prolonged political instability. It threatens to repeat the severe drought crisis of 2017, from which IOM and partners extrapolate where to deploy resources for emergency relief. Yet, between 2021 and the beginning of 2022 displacement patterns have differed starkly from 2017. Fewer than one in five persons displaced from Bay region migrated to Baidoa, instead of more than four in five persons in 2017. Approaching the middle of the year, this trend inversed, leaving consistently high numbers of arrivals in Benadir, but markedly less displacement to Dollow, and much more to Baidoa. IOM contracted GIST to investigate why this is the case, and how individuals and households make decisions.

The study is based on a comprehensive literature review and the deployment of two trained researchers collecting a total of 40 key informant interviews and four focus group discussions, with nine key stakeholders interviewed remotely by the lead researcher. The qualitative study design aims at exploring a question hitherto not asked systematically: *how do households facing displacement decide where to go?* Given the lack of structured data relevant to this question, qualitative methods are appropriate to first discern key aspects of the process of decision-making. Qualitative methods help with theory building, which is required for quantitative registration and survey methods to yield coherent data and insight. Internal quality control and do no harm measures were applied.

1.A. FINDINGS

One humanitarian staff member interviewed during the design phase for this study summarized the central problem succinctly: humanitarian actors work in reaction to past and present displacement patterns, whereas displaced persons state upon arrival that they came because of the humanitarian assistance available on site. It is a hen and egg problem: which comes first and guides the other?

The central finding of this study is that the availability of humanitarian assistance – the presence of programs in different locations – guides displacement. Displaced persons reach out to their social networks to learn where humanitarian aid is available or receive calls from relatives and friends in locations where emergency relief programs roll out.

Overall findings are:

1. Displacement is not an event but is part of Somalia's socio-political fabric.
2. Preparation for displacement differs dependent on household wealth and social ties.
3. Members of communities marginalized in urban centers are more likely to be displaced in settlements, because kinship determines whether individuals become displaced or join host communities.
4. Households seek information on two questions: what immediate support will be available in a location (for example food, water, shelter), and what are the long-term opportunities?
5. During droughts, men stay behind to guard property and livestock.
6. Women and children go first for two reasons: they are seen as more vulnerable to hardship but more likely to receive emergency relief than men; and they are tasked to prepare shelter and communicate conditions before men join them.
7. Households and individuals do not see aid as a permanent feature of any location. They know it is projectized and enquire where aid is currently distributed.

8. Secondary displacement could form a crucial part of survival strategies, in the absence of long-term perspectives.
9. Humanitarian agencies are key employers and important pillars of local economies.
10. Humanitarian assistance is the primary concern, whereas infrastructure, governance, and security are modifiers rather than secondary factors, and all are mediated by kinship.
11. Politics is only perceived as salient if it directly affects access to aid and opportunity.
12. Most households consult relatives and friends already or previously in settlements or living in potential destinations.
13. Relatives and friends in or near settlements call rural relatives and acquaintances to inform them when humanitarian relief projects are starting.
14. In most cases, men decide, but women's voices can and have been amplified.
15. The unexpected movement to Dollow coincided with a cash-based emergency relief program, while no comparable support was available in Baidoa.
16. The most likely reason for the shift of displacement towards Baidoa, and the one most frequently invoked by key informants, is the major Minimum Response Package (MRP) incepted in Baidoa in April and May 2022, in which IOM are also involved.

1.B. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider humanitarian assistance and emergency relief an integral part of Somalia's socio-political and economic fabric that shapes how towns develop and where people move, intended or not.

1.B.I. FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

2. Because displaced populations go where aid is delivered, IOM can shift the focus from flexible response to proactively building infrastructure and delivering relief where it is safe and sustainable for displaced households to move.
3. Build vital infrastructure also in secondary locations when preparing for emergencies.
4. IOM and partners should explore kinship-based social safety nets for their potential to prevent displacement in the lead-up to slow-onset crises, such as droughts.
5. IOM and partners should consider supporting those family members who stay behind with livestock or assets to retain the option of return, and even localized build-up.
6. Gender-mainstream resilience investments, link to further opportunities for education and livelihoods, and design interventions with intersectional lenses.

1.B.II. FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

7. IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into how IDPs relaying information about humanitarian assistance can be incorporated into communication strategies.
8. IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into how IDPs explore and consider medium to long-term opportunities when choosing a destination.
9. IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into the trajectories of displaced households that merge into host communities to understand the potential

impact upon integration and urban development, but also how humanitarian programs do or do not factor into this process.

10. IOM and partners should reassess the planning of cash-based assistance in light of the pull-factor for displacement.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.A. BACKGROUND

Somalia is in the midst of a severe drought that has precipitated a major humanitarian crisis. Four consecutive rain seasons with poor rainfall coincide with regional and global conflict. This conjunction drives up commodity prices, especially for food for humans and livestock, and simultaneously undercuts the soil and structural basis for livestock rearing and agriculture, Somalia's two most important economic sectors. Livestock herds have reduced and livestock prices are falling, which diminishes especially rural households' ability to sustain themselves. As a result, almost half of Somalia's population is in need of emergency relief and tens of thousands are leaving their homes to find support.

The residents of Bay and Bakool regions suffer disproportionately from recurrent droughts and crises. This is compounded by the South West State's (SWS) comparatively low capacity to support them – compared to other state governments and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), which nonetheless lack resources and capacity to mount a comprehensive response.¹ Instead, government actors operate under a tenuous and contested political settlement. They face both regional instability and a significant violent extremist insurgency that limits government access to major towns.

These major towns are also the principal destinations for internally displaced persons (IDPs). Their arrival contributes to the growth of informal settlements and quasi-slum suburbs around Somalia's rapidly urbanizing centers. However, during the current crisis, the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) did not initially observe movements to the nearest urban center – Baidoa, the seat of the SWS administration and most infrastructurally consolidated urban center in Bay and Bakool. Instead, the newly deployed Emergency Trend Tracker (ETT) as well as the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster's New Arrivals Tracking (NAT) Tool noted that a majority of IDPs chose the longer and historically more perilous routes towards Dollow in Gedo region and several districts in Benadir, the region that is congruent with the federal capital of Mogadishu.

2.B. RESEARCH PURPOSE

These movements are counter-intuitive for several reasons, and the middle of the year saw a shift towards Baidoa, with somewhat constant high numbers of arrivals in the Benadir districts of Daynile (more so) and Kaxda (less so). They defied expectations carried over from the 2017 drought, which have guided the planning among international partners in response to the unfolding crisis. IOM has therefore commissioned GIST Research Ltd. in partnership with Laasfort Consulting to investigate the displacement patterns between Bay, Gedo, and Benadir region during the 2021/22 drought thus far. The main purpose of this research is two-fold:

1. to provide a more nuanced understanding of the change in displacement patterns, most evident in the drop of displaced persons who remained in Bay region dropping

¹ Based on annual state-level monitoring and reporting for the Somalia Stability Fund, on file with the author. The Mirifle community has historically been disadvantaged in access to political office, as well as with regards to their position in Somalia's regional commerce routes. This manifests in limited access to global diaspora, a significant source of income in Somalia (in 2020, 31% of recorded GDP) and fewer sources of revenue for want of major ports and airports, and it plays a smaller role in the regional livestock trade, Somalia's principal export. As a result, levels of education (including English language capacity), financial assets, and social networks tend to be more limited than in other state governments. Respondents for this study interviewed in Baidoa indeed tended to be less educated and more likely to follow other displaced persons from their area, rather than leveraging own networks. For GDP, see: FGS (2021). *Aid Flows in Somalia*. Federal Government of Somalia, World Bank, UN.

from 85% in 2017 to 16% during the onset of the 2021/22 drought, as well as the shift towards Baidoa in mid-2022.

2. to indicate how individuals and households about to be displaced consider different possible routes and destinations.

The core of the study explores how households and individuals among now displaced communicate prior to their displacement, obtain information on potential destinations, and deliberate which route to take. This aspect is prioritized because it sets out the conceptual framework necessary to discuss movement patterns during the current crisis. This focus also seeks to establish entry-points and frameworks for further research into the decision-making process in Somalia, as well as into the position of international actors therein. The study hopes to lay the foundations for discussions towards more nuanced anticipation of future displacement patterns and thereby the more effective deployment of humanitarian resources prior to arrival. The primary research questions with which this study conceptualizes this complexity are:

Table 1: Key Research Questions

Serial	Overarching question	Detailed Information Requirement
1.	What push, pull, and identity factors have influenced the displacement patterns for displaced persons originating in Bay region?	
2.	How do individuals and households approach the decision on which destination to aim for?	
3.	How do individuals and households access information when preparing to move?	
4.	What drives separated displacements (women and children arriving first)?	
4.	Have coping strategies changed with displacement patterns?	

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on qualitative primary data collection in the main destination that has received displaced households and individuals throughout – Benadir (Dhaynile/Kaxda) – and the main destinations in Gedo and Bay: Dollow and Baidoa. This approach has been accompanied by a comprehensive review of available secondary quantitative and qualitative data, including knowledge products by IOM and partners, as well as relevant academic and grey literature. Finally, the research team conducted several interviews with humanitarian staff, within IOM and with partner organizations.

3.A. KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

The research design centers upon key informant interviews (KIs) are the most appropriate tool to obtain data that is both sensitive for the key informant given likely personal trauma and distress and in the context of limited aid provision and severe humanitarian, but also political and conflict-related, crisis. This is because the experienced researchers conducting the interviews can build personal rapport with respondents, tailor questions to their individual experience, and adjust the interview should respondents show signs of distress in order to prioritize the safety and health of the respondent. Furthermore, KIs permit open-ended investigation, which is pivotal for the main purposes of this study: explain what has not been captured by quantitative surveys (and thus existing conceptual frameworks and evidence-bases) and lay the foundation for a new conceptual framework that can then be operationalized.

Table 2: Key Informant Categories

Key Informant Category
Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)
Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)
Community Leader/Elder
Settlement Manager
Humanitarian Agency/Organization Staff (non-IOM)
Female Young Displaced Person
Displaced Person living with Host Community

3.B. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The individual interviews were supplemented with focus group discussions (FGDs) in order to enable the researchers to observe potential disagreements or dynamics within displaced communities on the issues in question. This aids the research team in the analysis and interpretation of divergences within interview data and captures a wider range of voices.

Table 3: Focus Group Demographics

Focus Groups
Young women (18-30, mixed clan background)

Men (18-65, minority clan or marginalized group background)

3.C. SAMPLE AND LOCATIONS

The primary data for this study comprises a total of 40 key informant interviews, 4 focus group discussions, and 9 stakeholder consultations.

Table 4: Research Locations

District	Region	KIIs	FGDs
Daynile/Kaxda (Mogadishu)	Benadir	20	2
Dollow	Gedo	10	1
Baidoa	Bay	10	1

3.D. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND DATA ANALYSIS

The researchers on site worked closely with IOM staff to identify suitable respondents and ensure that interviews and focus group can be conducted safely and in confidence. Respondents were informed of the research purpose and research ethics, and interviews only commenced upon qualified consent. Where respondents consented, interviews were recorded for accuracy of notes taken after the completion of the interview. This allowed the researchers to focus on respondents during interviews and produce notes faithfully afterwards. The Lead Researcher reviewed the notes, provided feedback and requested additions where quality standards were not met, and discussed the findings during extensive debriefs with researchers. The notes were stored on a password-protected repository by GIST and coded via Atlas.ti.

3.E. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

- Delays in Access.** The research team faced delays in accessing sites as local staff was busy with emergency response and settlement managers insisted on direct requests from partner staff. This delayed both the collection of primary data and the submission of notes.
- Confusion among respondents.** Due to the close collaboration between the research team and IOM, many respondents mistook the researchers as humanitarian staff and initially eschewed questions, instead detailing requests for support. The researchers extended the initial phases of the interviews to ensure that the research purpose was fully understood.
- Limitation/Finding:** This challenge indicates that respondents consider any international or partner staff a potential pathway to support – understandable, given their destitution and need. It should therefore be kept in mind that respondents may be hesitant with outright criticism of those responsible for distributing limited goods or providing information that could disadvantage them. For instance, respondents emphasized own need and family size, showing acute awareness of selection criteria for beneficiaries, which will be discussed below.
- Vignette.** The tools deployed a story to remove questions from the respondents' own, potentially traumatic experience. However, not all respondents fully understood the

purpose of the story and level of abstraction. Researchers in this case asked directly about the respondents' experience, with added caution as to the respondents' wellbeing.

5. **Limitation/Finding:** This was especially the case in Baidoa. As a result, interviews in Baidoa yield less generalizable information, as respondents commented mostly on their own, rather than an abstract situation.

4. KEY FINDINGS

This section lays out the principal findings from both literature review and the analysis of primary data. Because of the socio-political dimensions of displacement in Somalia, the first sub-section introduces several key norms and frameworks that shape Somali society. It is within these that displacement occurs. They therefore must be defined and explained, before more granular findings on secondary and separated displacement, as well as coping mechanisms and the factors influencing IDPs' decisions can be unpacked. The second, shorter part of this section applies these insights onto the seemingly erratic movement patterns in 2021/22. Coupled with a concluding discussion that provides further context, this second sub-section sets the stage for recommendations, after a final discussion towards the end of this report.

4.A. DECISION-MAKING DURING DISPLACEMENT

Pre-consultations with humanitarian staff, donor staff, and researchers for the design of this study indicated that no robust evidence base exists based upon which humanitarian actors can understand and unpack how households and individuals facing displacement decide on where to go. Most international staff professed little understanding,² whereas Somali staff members confidently explained the process, but their explanations differed.³ All acknowledged the lack of systematic evidence.

Key Finding 1: Displacement is not an event but is part of Somalia's socio-political fabric.

The explanations informants and focus group discussants for this study provided point to the need for a more holistic approach, understanding displacement not merely as a crisis response, as related to an event. Most respondents listed the various steps individuals and households took to prepare for the journey and consider locations as part of social routines, even providing proverbs to illustrate how they are part and parcel of how wider families operate. Put differently, despite many interviewees' visible destitution and their emphasis on psychological preparation for an arduous journey beset with privations, they did not depict the process as one of panic or improvisation, but as one of navigating pathways that are constant and at the heart of Somali society.⁴

"[First], getting suitcases to pack the family's clothes and the small things that can be packed easily. Then, the second thing is to get money for transporting the family to the envisaged destination. The third thing is locating a relative who resides in that area and who will be willing to take them in once they arrive at the destination. The fourth thing is to think of ways to financially support themselves while they are staying with the relative, so that they do not overburden their host."⁵

"The most valuable thing that affects their decision is information."⁶

Mobility underpins Somalia's traditional norms and frameworks, from social identity to conflict resolution and political processes. Clan or tribal identities permeate the current political settlement but are perhaps better described as kinship ties and obligations. Cabinet positions,

² STAKE01, STAKE02, STAKE07, STAKE09

³ STAKE03, STAKE04, STAKE05, STAKE06, STAKE08

⁴ Virtually all key informants opened the interviews this way.

⁵ DO307

⁶ DA104

judicial oversight, and shares of parliaments and district councils at all levels are allocated on the basis of clan (*tol*).⁷ Whereas this seems to imply fixed clan belonging, the everyday negotiations between members of different communities, especially in the interaction between new arrivals to an area and host communities, are more granular. It follows specific elements of kinship obligations (*tolnimo*) within a clan, as well as obligations for hosts and guests, how to treat guests and how to behave as guests. Arrivals from the same clan that already inhabits the area do not constitute guests, but enjoy the support *tolnimo* requires from local clan members.⁸ Key informants explicitly referred to *inda adeer*⁹ – kinship ties via a father's ancestry – as the principle on which clan members will support and accommodate new arrivals of the same clan.

“Clan plays a big role during preparation because, if one is from a ‘laandhere’ (a major clan), one will get any support one needs during the move. The clan will raise funds for its vulnerable members. This is the opposite for a ‘langaab’ (a minor clan). They will not get helping hands.”¹⁰

Movement between rain and dry seasons according to the availability of water has been, in a sense, the *raison d’être* for Somali kinship structures and the customary norms that predate Islamic norms (see box). They include protection arrangements between locally weaker and stronger communities (*shegad/magan*) and differ in the more sedentary, agricultural south where new arrivals can fully join a community. Among the traditionally nomadic pastoralist communities, there is no provision for such full adoption.¹¹ Absent other reliable and robust social safety nets, *tolnimo* remains central to all socio-economic interactions, from security to hospitality¹² – all the more so for displaced communities reliant on support.

Customary Treaties between Hosts and Guests

The customary peacebuilding and peacekeeping framework that has stood in as main justice provider since state collapse in 1991, the Xeer (literally: ‘there is an agreement between us’) comprises both general guidelines for and a multitude of locally negotiated and re-negotiated agreements between clans that regulate access to clan and sub-clan ‘homelands’ (*deegaan*) centered on water sources and pasture. They set out obligations for both hosts (*guri*) and guests (*galti*), as well as a shari’ah-based catalogue of compensation measures in cases of violations or transgressions.

One respondent summarized this dependence on local kinship ties with a proverb: “Walaal kaa guuray dagan waa sahan kaga.” – ‘Your brother or sister who has moved to and settled in a place is your guide to that place.’¹³

For most, the loss of support from one’s kin would spell doom in personal emergencies or other disasters for want of other options. This is somewhat mediated by access to financial assets. Those with diaspora background, higher levels of education, mobility across borders, access

⁷ Menkhaus, Ken (2018). *Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Somalia Case Study*. DFID Stabilisation Unit.

⁸ Cassanelli (2015). *Hosts and Guests*.

⁹ BA204, DO307, DOFGD, debrief with researcher

¹⁰ DO302

¹¹ Mushtag, Najum (2018). *Traditional Justice and State Security: a Conflict Assessment and Analysis of the Security and Justice Sector in Seven Districts in Jubaland, Hirshabelle and Southwest State*. Danish Demining Group.

¹² Gundel (2021). *The Social Contract, Social Covenant, Security and Justice in the Somali Context*.

¹³ DO302

to international employment, or, simply, wealth are less dependent on family support – but they are also less likely to find themselves in displacement.¹⁴ In many instances, however, this status is mediated by kinship ties – powerful clans and sub-clans tend to have more access and opportunity, less powerful clans have less. Powerful clans can utilize government office or business ties to access resources and funds, which further widens inter-communal inequality. Displacement is embedded in these structures.¹⁵ Therefore:

Key Finding 2: Preparation for displacement differs dependent on household wealth and social ties.

The emergency situation is the same for most households about to be displaced: rapid loss of livelihood, be it eroding farmland or dying livestock; inability to convert income into sufficient resources to maintain livelihoods and feed the household; onset of malnourishment, likely privations along the journey.¹⁶ Many respondents stressed the need to prepare psychologically for the ordeal and lack of food that characterize the long movements towards sites of emergency relief.¹⁷ But not for all do they appear equally severe.

Key informants explained that household assets and family ties immediately come into play. Those with more disposable income can invest in donkey carts or even obtain a car. Those with other means of transport, such as motorcycles, can use these. And those with family members in cities can seek out their support, both financial and for direct pick-up from the location of origin. One respondent noted that if a family member lives in the city and wields sufficient income, households may bypass settlements for displaced persons entirely and simply move in with their relatives.¹⁸

Key Finding 3: Because kinship ties determine whether individuals become displaced or join host communities, members of communities marginalized in major urban centers are more likely to be displaced in settlements

In this vein, as Ken Menkhaus has cautioned, the definition of IDP in Somalia differs somewhat from other contexts because members of major clans in urban centers can seamlessly integrate into host communities, whereas less-well-represented and less-well-off clans cannot, and therefore make up the majority of registered displaced persons.¹⁹ And indeed, members of the Digil-Mirifle clan family (sometimes grouped as *Rahanweyn* – ‘the big crowd’ – for their large numbers and wide geographical spread across South West State and Jubaland) and the Somali Jareer-Bantu constitute the majority of those currently arriving in settlements for displaced persons. They wield little socio-economic power in towns other than in Baidoa, where displacement status clusters different Mirifle sub-clans.²⁰

Key informants for this study stressed that with identity come language implications.²¹ Most Digil-Mirifle and Jareer-Bantu, as well as other marginalized groups, speak dialects mutually unintelligible with the *af-Mahatiri* dialect spoken by the major clans in most urban centers. Baidoa presents an exception as home to *af-Ma'ay* speakers, the dialect most frequently

¹⁴ DA106, DA109, DOFGD, DO301, DO302, DO304, DO306, DO307, KA403, KA405

¹⁵ See: Menkhaus, Ken (2017a). *Land and Conflict in Somalia's Lower and Middle Jubba Valley*. Nairobi: USAID - OTI.; Menkhaus, Ken (2017b). *Dadaab Returnee Conflict Assessment*. Danish Demining Group.; Menkhaus (2018). *Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Somalia Case Study*.

¹⁶ Virtually all interviewed members of displaced households described this starting point. The structural conditions are elaborated upon in: Majid, Nisar et al. (2022). *Another Humanitarian (and Political) Crisis in Somalia in 2022*. Working Paper. Feinstein Center at Tufts University, University College London, Centre for Humanitarian Change.

¹⁷ Almost all key informants prefaced their explanations with this.

¹⁸ DA106, DA108, DA109, DO302, DO304

¹⁹ Menkhaus (2017b). *Dadaab Returnee Conflict Assessment*.

²⁰ BRCiS (2022). *Nutrition and Mortality Monitoring in IDP Populations: Report on Round 1 – July 2022*. Building Resilient Communities in Somalia, Norwegian Refugee Council, 12 August 2022.

²¹ DA106, DO307, KA406, KA408

spoken by Digil-Mirifle and Jareer-Bantu, and constitutionally on par with *af-Mahatiri* as official language in South West State.²²

“Those coming to Dollow and did not go to Baidoa might have feared the Maay-Maay [af-Ma’ay speaking] community, because all of them, except for the few who reside along the riverbanks, are af-Mahatiri speakers of Dir or Darood lineages. They chose Dollow because those clans are the majority in Dollow. One is always safer within one’s own community, and the language barrier would pose a lot of challenges.”²³

Kinship also has implications for road security, which several respondents noted as an important information need prior to departure²⁴ – and some counselled to add weapons to clothing and food supplies for the journey.²⁵ Members of major clans, by contrast, can rely upon implicit protection: their kin might retaliate with armed force should they be harmed or use the clan’s armed militia to extract more severe compensation; political power holders of the same clan or family could intervene in cases of abuse, or *shedad* arrangements with locally powerful clans can protect them; or the clan’s overall socio-economic importance might incentivize armed actors to refrain from harassment.²⁶ This protection can even curtail threats from al Shabaab, which, despite public statements to the contrary, must navigate these clan politics – especially in Bay and Bakool, where the group has antagonized many local communities.²⁷

“If our family is powerful, we will cross the desert without drawing notice. Small families are less likely to receive government support.”²⁸

Key Finding 4: Households seek information on two questions: what immediate support will be available in a location (for example food, water, shelter), and what are the long-term opportunities?

Only a few relatively less educated, less-well connected, and less well-off respondents (all from Baidoa) stated that they simply followed the majority of people from their location, presuming that they would know where support can be obtained.²⁹ All other respondents insisted that the central concern of households about to be displaced is to obtain as much and as strong information as possible on where immediate relief could be obtained, and what further prospects in these locations might be. The focus on aid at destination was evident in the fact that the mobile huts that pastoralists traditionally carry, and which can be swiftly packed or reassembled, are reportedly left behind in anticipation of shelter upon arrival. The importance

²² Menkhaus (2017a). *Land and Conflict in Somalia’s Lower and Middle Jubba Valley*.; Menkhaus (2017b). *Dadaab Returnee Conflict Assessment*.

²³ DO307

²⁴ BE001, DA102, DA106, DA108, DA109, BA208, DO307, DO308, DO309

²⁵ KA407, KA408

²⁶ DA107, DO307: noted that *af-Ma’ay* speakers arriving in Dollow are frequently harassed by security forces and even imprisoned, whereas members of the Marehan communities usually receive support and, crucially, protection. This is consistent with other assessments. See: Mydlak, Robin (2018b). *Conflict Analysis: Displacement and Social Cohesion Dynamics in Dollow*. Danish Demining Group.

²⁷ Mydlak, Robin (2018a). *Conflict Analysis: Displacement and Social Cohesion Dynamics in Baidoa*. Danish Demining Group.

²⁸ DA105

²⁹ BAFGD, BA201, BA202, BA205

of this focus cannot be overstated, and its disaggregation into short- and medium/long-term furthermore explains two other areas of interest: separated displacement and secondary displacement.

4.A.I. SEPARATED DISPLACEMENT

The IOM DTM team's ETT for Gedo region noted that during June 2022, half of the new arrivals reported that part of their community had stayed behind, mostly to guard property, in a third of cases for lack of funds to travel.³⁰ In many cases, women and children arrived first, and men joined weeks later.

Key Finding 5: During droughts, men stay behind to guard property and livestock.

The general separation of families in this manner, just like the fact of displacement itself, does not appear unusual. Key informants and humanitarian staff stated that male family members tend to stay behind during the onset of the more severe drought and crisis to maintain property and ensure that land and homes are still available should the family return relatively soon.³¹ If they do return, those families with members having stayed tend to be better off than households returning to find themselves without a homestead. Only during outbreaks of armed violence do families leave immediately and as one.³²

Once more, this is filtered through the kind of livelihood, the amount of movable assets, and, most importantly, kinship ties. If other family members can stay behind or can rely on local authorities to ensure that property is kept, families seem more likely to leave together – but may not arrive in settlements but join relatives in urban areas directly. Some key informants explicitly proposed that households about to be displaced should reach out to local authorities to request that their property be safeguarded³³ – which, in most places, is mainly possible for those sharing kinship ties with local power holders, ties that members of more marginalized groups are unlikely to have.

Key Finding 6: Women and children go first for two reasons: they are seen as more vulnerable to hardship but more likely to receive emergency relief than men; and they are tasked to prepare shelter and communicate conditions before men join them.

Women's and children's physical ability to withstand the deprivations of drought and famine was the most frequently given reason for their departure ahead of male family members. The implication here is three-fold. First, this reflects concerns for survival when facing impending severe malnutrition and long journeys.³⁴ Second, the assumed difference between men and women reflects the patriarchal aspects of Somali society and most societies globally. Some respondents indeed argued that “this is our culture”³⁵ and explained further that women were sent ahead to prepare shelter and household in accordance with their role as domestic caretakers, whilst men look after the economic assets and liaise with political authorities.³⁶

Third, some presented this account in a slightly more pragmatic way, such as one focus group discussion in Benadir:

³⁰ IOM (2022). *Emergency Trend Tracking (ETT) – Drought Induced Displacement, Gedo Region*. International Organization for Migration, Displacement Tracking Matrix – Somalia.

³¹ BEFGD, BEFGD2 DA108, DO301, DO303, DO304, DO307, KA402, KA405, KA409

³² DO307

³³ DA104, DA106, KA409

³⁴ BEFGD, BEFGD2, BE002, DA101, DA102, DA104, DA105, KA402, KA408

³⁵ BEFGD2

³⁶ DA103, DA105, DA106, DA107, BAFGD, BA205, KA405

“There is a common tradition of movement in our clan. When moving from one place to another, we let one group lead and the other follows. The elderly, sick, women, and children leave first.”³⁷

Several key informants echoed this observation: some family members move ahead and reach out to the rest of the family to join them if conditions are accommodating.³⁸ They added that elderly, sick, women, and children are usually sent ahead because they are more vulnerable – but also because they are more likely to fit the criteria for emergency relief and receive immediate support.³⁹

“Because of the limited availability of space and items, women and children leave before the men. They are taking a risk by going first: without men to speak up for them, they may be abused and discriminated against. But the situation became so bad that the men left as well.”⁴⁰

Respondents explicitly mentioned selection criteria for beneficiaries and awareness of limited relief supplies. This could suggest that separation only becomes visible during severe crises, as otherwise male relatives otherwise stay behind for the entire duration of the crisis or move elsewhere to earn a livelihood, while family members fitting selection criteria move to sites of emergency relief efforts. That men now follow is evidence of the severity of the current crisis.⁴¹

“They [men] did not remain for longer periods of time because the drought continued, and they were unable to provide for themselves.”⁴²

4.A.II. SECONDARY DISPLACEMENT: SHORT-TERM VS. LONG-TERM

Secondary displacement – IDPs moving between settlements – remains difficult to track as long as registration databases are not synchronized across agencies and sites. In most locations, key informants argued that new arrivals would gravitate to settlements that already host members of their kinship group in search for immediate food, water, shelter, and other forms of emergency relief.⁴³ According to IOM ETT data, most arrivals also expect to stay for prolonged periods of time, with three quarters anticipating a duration of six months or more – perhaps longer than emergency relief lasts.⁴⁴ That interviewed displaced persons distinguished

³⁷ BEFGD2

³⁸ DO303, DO304, DO306

³⁹ BEFGD, DA103, DA104, DA109

⁴⁰ DA106

⁴¹ The distances covered by herders in this effort also illustrate the modalities of inter-clan relations in such situations: in a conversation with the author, a researcher and NGO director from Puntland observed that during a recent drought, the communities in the north eastern coastal town of Benderbeyla welcomed pastoralists from as far as Jubaland to share the comparably rich pastures – after all arrivals had previously and explicitly recognized the pastures as the local clans’ *deegaan* and accepted their status as *galti*.

⁴² KA408

⁴³ BEFGD, BEFGD2, BE001, BE002, DA102, DA103, DA104, DA108, DA109, BA203, DO303, DO307, DO308, KA403, KA408, KA409

⁴⁴ IOM (2022). *Emergency Trend Tracking (ETT) – Drought Induced Displacement, Gedo Region*. International Organization for Migration, Displacement Tracking Matrix – Somalia.

between short-term relief and long-term prospects could illuminate what drives secondary displacement.⁴⁵

Key Finding 7: Households and individuals do not see aid as a permanent feature of any location. They know it is projectized and enquire where aid is currently distributed.

Most key informants noted that relying on humanitarian aid is not sustainable for the health and outlook of the entire household and for the personal dignity of each member. Almost all underscored the desire for other income sources, be they employment, self-employment, farming, or livestock rearing. Above all, many professed awareness that emergency support is project-funding-based and longer-term prospects are scant, as well as dependent on social networks and educational background.⁴⁶

When asked whether they would alter their destination if they were told that no relief goods are left whilst *en route*, key informants and focus groups diverged – not on this being a major challenge, but whether to complete the journey first and verify the rumor,⁴⁷ or instead move elsewhere instantly.⁴⁸ Several stressed the importance of being among the first arrivals, especially in Benadir. They noted that they had responded to information that emergency relief was being given out but noticed many later arrivals struggling after most goods or cash had been allocated. This matches our researchers' observations, who overheard conversations among members displaced communities about where else aid is currently available or new funding is being announced.

*"The family should not change their destination. They should rest there for a short period and confirm that there is no support being offered. They should also find out where else is rumored to have donor support, so that they can later go there if it is within their means."*⁴⁹

*"Even if they are a part of the larger communities, they may not be provided for as long as the drought lasts. So, they may eventually have to leave in search of better conditions. If they are from a less powerful or less prominent community would make matters worse since they will receive no aid and will have to start their journey much earlier."*⁵⁰

Key Finding 8: Secondary displacement could form a crucial part of survival strategies, in the absence of long-term perspectives.

It should first be noted that changing course is an option that is not necessarily open to the most destitute, who may simply not be able to afford and survive another displacement. Those who can and have not gained access to other income opportunities must weigh the risk and strain of renewed movement against the risk of remaining in a location with diminishing supplies and increasing numbers of those in need of support. Some key informants demurred and contended that members of the locally dominant clan, by contrast, could simply remain with a reasonable perspective of being supported and finding livelihood sources after emergency relief has concluded.⁵¹

⁴⁵ By "short-term", we mean decisions and actions concerning immediate survival; by "medium-term", the ability to stop and consolidate in order to transition from survival strategies to setting up new livelihoods and homes; and by "long-term", the concluded transition, allowing to settle with a somewhat predictable livelihood, be it income, pastoralism, farming, or other.

⁴⁶ BEFGD, BEFGD2, DA103, DA104, DA105, DA106, DA107, DA108, DA109, BA203, DO303, DO304, DO309, KA408

⁴⁷ DO301, DO302, DO303, DO307, KA403, KA408

⁴⁸ BEFGD, BE001, DA104, DA106, DA108, DOFGD, DO306, KA401, KA405, KA409

⁴⁹ DO303

⁵⁰ DA106

⁵¹ DA104, DO302, DO304, DO306, DO307, DO308,

Although some respondents mentioned proximity as a factor to consider when moving,⁵² they never did so independently, but only as an added consideration between locations that are primarily assessed for the availability of aid and opportunities. Respondents generally favored moving wherever aid is available over the proximity of urban centers. This suggests that even though Baidoa is the most infrastructurally developed urban location in Bay and Bakool, IDPs do not necessarily view it as the most likely source of emergency aid upon arrival. It offers most opportunities, but these are not the most immediate priority. The presence of humanitarian assistance is.

Security, Gender and al Shabaab

Only one key informant noted the gender-specific security concerns and attendant risk that women and children face by going first and alone.¹ Our researcher observed that displaced persons often travel relatively safely because they are largely ignored by armed actors, but other studies also suggest that displaced persons are extorted by military units and therefore prefer to travel through al Shabaab territory, where they pay road tax only once and can present the receipt for free passage at other roadblocks.¹

Similarly, interviewed stakeholders noted that displaced persons from rural areas often had little engagement with governments and harbor little trust for government-affiliated security and justice actors. Instead, Baidoa's displaced communities reportedly take their disputes to the al Shabaab court in Buro Fuley.¹ This is consistent with al Shabaab's courts apparatus (*Qadaha*) as a resort for plaintiffs with little hope of prevailing in state courts marked by clannist politics and corruption, or in customary proceedings against more powerful clans.¹

Where other respondents argued that al Shabaab cared little about displaced persons, one stakeholder and one researcher noted that displaced persons often need to obtain permission to leave from local al Shabaab cells and know that members of al Shabaab can move freely in most major towns,¹ with the exception of Dollow and Kismayo.¹ This is also important for the 'do no harm' aspect of due diligence during humanitarian interventions, as one key informant noted that IDPs could be targeted for accepting international assistance when travelling – and therefore tend to remove donor logos from supplies or shift them to different containers. If they are found with donor items by al Shabaab, they risk violent retribution.¹

“I came with my wife and children only. We had 53 goats. Except for 11, all died. I had no relatives to support me. I started asking my friends where to go, and they directed me here. It was a very difficult journey: no money, no transport, no food for the children. My main focus was on Mogadishu, because this is where my friend told me to come. I was told I will get shelter, food, and money in Mogadishu.”

DA105

“I came here expecting a better life than in Jeebay in Marka. I sold my last five goats to survive and pay for transportation. We were told that we will get food, shelter, and health care here in Mogadishu. I would consider other locations if we can have our needs met there. My children are sick, so I have no other priorities. My only priority is survival. If I could find work somewhere else, I would not be here.”

DA107

⁵² BEFGD, BE002, DA108, DO308

4.A.III.COPING STRATEGIES

Coping strategies in new locations do not change *per se*, as long as the stay is considered as a short stop-gap with return to the location of origin. Given Somalia's current severity of consecutive crises and rate of urbanization, this prospect is becoming increasingly unlikely for more and more IDPs. Key informants noted that some IDPs do prefer to remain on the fringes of towns and look to work on farms or with livestock,⁵³ but many also considered educational opportunities for their children.⁵⁴ They did so in reference to their own educational background limiting their prospects of sustainable urbanized livelihoods. Key informants consistently stressed that younger people with education from urban areas or even abroad had significantly greater access to opportunity, be it existing or self-created, than them.

"The difference between someone who has no clan backing or education and someone that has them is notable."⁵⁵

"Those in the family who are educated, particularly the father and brother, are more likely to find jobs. Women have fewer opportunities because they will be left to care for their homes."⁵⁶

Key informants diverged on whether men are more likely than women to find income sources, but they virtually all concurred on what types of opportunities would be available to each: men looking to farms, herding, and construction; women to housekeeping or setting up small businesses. Once more, most respondents described clan affiliation and level of education as key modifiers.

It is far from a new insight of this study that employment – even in international organizations – is filtered by clan. A recent study into the security sector found that any wage earners – both male and female – are expected to financially contribute to their wider families' general expenses and their clan's compensation payments for xeer violations, and to help relatives get access to paid positions if in any way possible.⁵⁷ And a paper by several of the leading observers of famines in Somalia warning of inadequacies of the current response highlight that the humanitarian sector remains inadequately or too passively attuned to the social biases and social stratification inherent in their own teams and in settlements.⁵⁸

⁵³ BEFGD, BEFGD2, DA109, DO307

⁵⁴ BEFGD; BA201, BA202, DO301, DO302, DO304, DO307, DO309

⁵⁵ BEFGD

⁵⁶ DA106

⁵⁷ Peterson, Brenton & Manar Zaki (2021). *A Research Report to inform Area-based Problem Driven Security and Justice Programming in Somalia*. UNOPS, First Call Partners, Consilient Research.; also: DO307

⁵⁸ See: Majid et al. (2022). *Another Humanitarian (and Political) Crisis in Somalia in 2022*.; This is reflected in the fact that most respondents interviewed in settlements in Dollow were members of the regionally dominant Darood-Marehan clan, but the interviewed settlement manager hailed from the Reer Ahmed-Reer Samatar sub-clan that controls most key positions in the Dollow administration, militia forces, and economy. The interviewed displaced persons were members of other sub-clans. On Dollow clan politics, see: Mydlak, Robin (2018b). *Conflict Analysis: Displacement and Social Cohesion Dynamics in Dollow*. Danish Demining Group.

Key Finding 9: Humanitarian agencies are key employers and important pillars of local economies.

Several respondents asserted that settlement managers and humanitarian staff are among the coveted positions for entire families, able to provide significant income that can sustain wider families.⁵⁹ This underscores that interventions are not external and momentary events and international partners not external actors, but that both are firmly part of the long-term socio-economic fabric of each location in which they operate and of Somalia in its entirety.

Diaspora and income-earning relatives are also important support structures. One key informant led his statement on this with a proverb:

*"Qof kuu dhaaw ona fog, iyo qof kaa fog ona kuu dhaw" – 'You may have family close to you that offers no support, and family far from you who give a lot.'*⁶⁰

He echoed several other respondents in that income earners in state or federal capitals or abroad figure as a crucial financial buttress during times of crisis. One respondent estimated that, should a close family member have a high-paid position or be part of the diaspora (inferring a more stable income basis), a household may be able to weather the drought in its entirety without displacing:

*"If a family member is in the diaspora and is one that empathizes with them [a family being displaced], and then sends them money to secure their livelihood in the drought season, such a family will not move. They will just stay in their house."*⁶¹

Settlement managers (gatekeepers)

Respondents hardly mentioned settlement managers, also often referred to as 'gatekeepers' or 'black cats' (albeit with the distinction that some settlement managers act as such, whereas others act primarily as community representatives with a duty of care). Where they were discussed, this was mostly as positions with stable income or authorities with oversight over aid allocation and thus crucial lifelines for displaced persons. Only one respondent accused settlement managers as clannist, advantaging their own relatives, during registration for relief and support. Another explained that his brother is a settlement manager, so he was certain that he would have access to aid, specifically food vouchers as part of a major program in baidoa, upon arrival. Prior research has found that settlement managers can be differentiated into two groups: those who act as community leaders with genuine concern for the displaced persons in their care, and those engaging in aid diversion and land prospecting with idps on their land to attract investment and supplies.

4.A.IV. ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Key informants consistently ranked access to emergency support, shelter, water, and food as the central concern when choosing a destination for their displacement.⁶² Based on recent assessments of both malnutrition and health concerns among arrivals as well as available infrastructure in destinations, these concerns both respond to acute need and insufficient

⁵⁹ Most explicit in: DO307, KA408; but touched upon in the majority of interviews

⁶⁰ DO302

⁶¹ BA203

⁶² Virtually all key informants did so.

infrastructure.⁶³ In short, the demand for such aid is greater than current supply. To ensure survival, households must carefully weigh their options rather than moving to the nearest urban center and hoping for support.

Key Finding 10: Humanitarian assistance is the primary concern, whereas infrastructure, governance, and security are modifiers rather than secondary factors, and all are mediated by kinship.

Amidst limited economic opportunities, low government capacity, and a 'limited access order' for resources, humanitarian support is vital for an increasing number of households trapped in constant emergency and need. It would therefore be imprecise to depict infrastructure, governance, and security as secondary concerns to humanitarian assistance. Rather than being 'equal' goals or purposes, they function as modifiers: the level or stability of security, infrastructure, and governance renders it more or less likely that IDPs can access humanitarian assistance, and that this assistance is substantive. For those displaced by drought, these other factors play a facilitatory role, rather than a determining one.

Many respondents mentioned infrastructure⁶⁴ and security⁶⁵ alongside humanitarian assistance but did not do so as consistently or as uniformly as they noted humanitarian aid itself. When speaking about their own situations and those like their own, respondents tended to consider government successes in expanding security as important because they permit the expansion of infrastructure, which enables the expansion of services and assistance. Although safety from harm is a ubiquitous and immediate need, in situations of acute drought and famine, it crucially ensures more reliable delivery of immediate aid.

This fits the wider perceptions of government and governance in Somalia. Research into informal taxation⁶⁶ indicates that residents do not necessarily expect administrations to provide public services directly, but to provide security so that international and private sector actors can build infrastructure and invest resources to maintain service provision. Where this is achieved, it is credited to government actors and improves their legitimacy among their communities.⁶⁷

"We had heard of the organization's assistance in this location through other IDPs and a family friend, and the location was convenient in terms of transportation and security."⁶⁸

Key Finding 11: Politics is only perceived as salient if it directly affects access to aid and opportunity.

Access to security and infrastructure is, in turn, mediated by clan, with direct implications for access to aid. The clan affiliation of local power holders, settlement managers, field staff, and security forces can, in locations without other accountability measures, facilitate or restrict

⁶³ BRCiS (2022). *Nutrition and Mortality Monitoring in IDP Populations: Report on Round 1 – July 2022*. Building Resilient Communities in Somalia, Norwegian Refugee Council, 12 August 2022.

⁶⁴ BEFGD, BEFGD2, DA103, DA104, DA107, BA203, KA402, KA403, KA409

⁶⁵ BEFGD, BE001, BE002, DA102, DA108, DA109, DO303, KA403, KA408, STAKE05

⁶⁶ Communities raise a significant portion of the funds needed for projects or new infrastructure or buildings. These are then matched by organizations or agencies, be it in equal parts or asymmetrically (communities pay 30-40%, or vice versa, depending on communities' access to resources, assets, and financial support, e.g. via diaspora).

⁶⁷ van den Boogaard, Vanessa & Fabrizio Santoro (2019). *DIALOGUE in Somalia through Resource Mobilization: Endline Research Report*. International Centre for Tax and Development & Somalia Stability Fund.; van den Boogaard, Vanessa & Fabrizio Santoro (2021). *Co-Financing Community-Driven Development Through Informal Taxation: Experimental Evidence from South-Central Somalia*. ICTD Working Paper 126. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, University of Sussex Institute for Development Studies, Somalia Stability Fund.; see also: Mydlak, Robin (2017). *End-line Evaluation of the Danwadaag Project*. Danish Refugee Council/Danish Demining Group.; Somalia Stability Fund Base-, Mid-, and Endline Evaluations, on file.

⁶⁸ DA106

access to support, and even render presence dangerous.⁶⁹ The presence of capable security forces can enable more efficient and more far-reaching provision of aid, but it can also present a threat to displaced persons whose clans are currently in conflict with those prevalent among security forces, or who lack the protection of a locally powerful community.⁷⁰ Indeed, when asked whether clan background matters for displaced communities during the opening of the interviews and focus group discussions, almost all respondents answered that it does not.⁷¹ When probed on what regulates access to assistance, opportunity, and information, or determines degrees of safety and ability to move between locations, almost all respondents equally confidently pointed to clan, via social connections, safety nets, and common languages.⁷²

In a similar vein, informants argued that those with better education or direct connections to government or humanitarian actors as relatives or friends were almost guaranteed to receive support.⁷³ Those without would be required to arrive early during the inception of aid interventions and aptly navigate local dynamics. Access to education is linked to financial capacity or supporters among diaspora and more stable urban communities – which, just as social relations to power holders, are linked to clan. This is the case because the payment of school fees, as well as other support, depends not merely on the nuclear family, but on the wider kinship network, as outlined above.⁷⁴ More powerful, well-connected clan groups are more likely to be able to support their relatives in pursuing education and finding a job.

“Because individuals who live in the area [with investments in development] are able to get all of the essential commodities, fewer people have moved to humanitarian camps. Previously, these people would have moved to other locations in search of these things.”⁷⁵

⁶⁹ See, for instance: Bryld, Erik, Christine Kamau & Dina Sinigallia (2013). *Gatekeepers in Mogadishu*. TANA Copenhagen & iDC, commissioned by the Somalia Cash Consortium.; Bryld, Erik & Christine Kamau (2018). *Accountability in Informal Settlements (AIS): Kismayo and Bossasso*. Tana Copenhagen, IAAAP.; TANA (2018a). *Accountability in informal settlements in Somalia*. Policy Brief May 2018.; McCullough, Aoife & Muhyadin Saed (2017). *Gatekeepers, elders and accountability in Somalia*. Mott Macdonald, commissioned by IAAAD & ODI.; Mydlak (2018a). *Conflict Analysis: Displacement and Social Cohesion Dynamics in Baidoa*.; Mydlak (2018b). *Conflict Analysis: Displacement and Social Cohesion Dynamics in Dollow*.; Menkhaus, Ken (2016). *Non-State Security Providers and Political Formation in Somalia*. CSG Paper No. 5, Gerda Henkel Stiftung.

⁷⁰ See, for instance: OCV (2016). *District Conflict and Security Assessment Report*. Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention, available at: [http://ocvp.org/docs/2015/Wave6/Dollow2016%20\(1\).pdf](http://ocvp.org/docs/2015/Wave6/Dollow2016%20(1).pdf), p. 14.

⁷¹ Especially pronounced in: BEFGD2, DA101, DA103, DO303, DO304, DO306

⁷² Especially pronounced in: BEFGD, BEFGD2, BE001, BE002, DA101, DA104, DA105, DA106, DA107, DA108, DA109, DOFGD, DO301, DO302, DO304, DO306, DO307, DO308, DO309, KA403, KA405, KA408,

⁷³ See above.

⁷⁴ See: Peterson & Zaki (2021). *A Research Report to inform Area-based Problem Driven Security and Justice Programming in Somalia*.

⁷⁵ DA104

Example: Clan Politics and Displacement in Baidoa

For instance, although the majority of displaced persons hail from the Digil-Mirifle clan family, this does not necessarily mean that they are considered as 'belonging' to Baidoa, the *de facto* capital of the Mirifle clan. Prior to the current SWS President's election, government in Baidoa was predicated upon a power-sharing arrangement between the Leysan and Hariin sub-clans, alongside the Hadamo of Xudur the politically and militarily strongest sub-clans under the Mirifle umbrella.

This arrangement was upended by the election of a Hariin federal minister to the SWS Presidency, hitherto the province of the Leysan. It was also accompanied by reproachment from the Elay community in Buurhakaba, who claim that Leysan and Hariin had wrested Baidoa from them by force. Paired with land disputes in the rural surrounds between the two main powerful sub-clans and Elay and Boqol Hore communities. In the lead up to the 2018/19 state election, reports surfaced of Leysan and Hariin security personnel targeting, wounding, and even killing displaced persons from other Mirifle sub-clans. All af-Ma'ay speakers, but where one clan family is cohesive, clan politics over the allocation of resources move to the next sub-clan level and displaced communities must navigate these like everyone else, including humanitarian agency teams – but with greater vulnerability.¹

In sum, respondents tend to view governance as good as far as it provides a secure context for infrastructure to be built and maintained. It is of little importance whether this is done by governmental or non-governmental actors. Important is that it secures and facilitates the provision of services, again not necessarily by governmental actors. Kinship regulates access both directly and indirectly: security provision, levels of support from diaspora, and access to education all depend on clan ties. For displaced persons, the priority is that these all determine access to immediate assistance, as well as the likelihood of finding medium to long-term opportunities.

4.A.V. INFORMATION ON ACCESS AND PROSPECTS

Assessments of information ecosystems in Somalia consistently list three findings:⁷⁶

1. The level of mobile phone coverage in Somalia is high.
2. Radio is the most widely consumed form of media.
3. Teachers and religious leaders – often the same person – are the most trusted source of information.

Key informants and focus groups echoed these trends. Only very few respondents mentioned online resources as part of information gathering,⁷⁷ and added that while smartphones⁷⁸ and access to the internet constitute an advantage, they are also markers of privilege, direct through possession or indirect through relatives with such equipment and the education and

⁷⁶ See, inter alia: Nemeth, Balint & Robin Mydlak (2019). *Empowering Youth through Information: Trends in Information Consumption among Urban Youth in Five IDP Camps in Somalia*. Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRCiS Consortium) led by Norwegian Refugee Council.

⁷⁷ DA103, DA105, DA107, DA108, KA405

⁷⁸ DA106, BA202, DO302, DO307, KA407, KA408

finances to use them. Television is rarer, and word of mouth often facilitated by phone conversations.⁷⁹

Key Finding 12: Most households consult relatives and friends already or previously in settlements or living in potential destinations.

Key informants, focus groups, and humanitarian staff all stressed that after so many consecutive droughts, almost all those facing imminent displacement have relatives and friends across most destinations and settlements. If not direct relations and acquaintances, they are able to obtain information on the conditions in potential target sites via contacts of contacts. The accuracy and reliability vary, especially along the filters of kinship, wealth, and education. But before starting a journey, all respondents concurred, households should gather as much information as possible about where they can expect what levels of support.⁸⁰

Key Finding 13: Relatives and friends in or near settlements call rural relatives and acquaintances to inform them when humanitarian relief projects are starting.

Some respondents even went so far as to deem this a cultural norm: if family members of friends already live in or near a settlement, they should inform their relations of assistance opportunities and support them, if possible, in reaching the location. One researcher observed that even for rural communities not in immediate peril, such support programs, be they in-kind or cash transfers, present a significant source of income or assets amidst otherwise uncertain livelihoods. In this vein, relatives in destinations would be negligent if they did not inform relatives in need, whether urgent or persistent, of such opportunities.

“Displaced persons receiving aid call their relatives and friends to inform them of all the things they got and advise them to go to those locations as well.”⁸¹

Relatives and friends in and around IDP settlements and sites where humanitarian assistance is provided are thus the by far most used and most important information sources when households decide where to go. Other findings on the information gathering during this process can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Religious leaders and teachers – often the same person – are sought out as most trusted sources of advice.** They are presumed to genuinely care about the wellbeing of each household,⁸² along with elders,⁸³ but even more so. Several respondents contended that religious teachers' insight into the state of humanitarian assistance comes from their frequent participation in humanitarian communication efforts.
- 2. Humanitarian communication helps swifter departures and can help reduce harm.** These information campaigns, some respondents noted, have value in and of themselves.⁸⁴ They added that prospective IDPs are grateful to hear from agencies directly where support is available, because it shortens the time needed to collect information from informal social networks while household members are already going hungry.

⁷⁹ STAKE06, debrief with researcher

⁸⁰ Most pronounced in: STAKE03, STAKE04, STAKE05, STAKE08, BEFGD2, BE001, DA101, DA103, DA104, DA106, DA108, DA109, BA209, DO301, DO303, DO304, DO306, DO307, DO308, KA401, KA402, KA403, KA405, KA407, KA408, KA409, debrief with researchers

⁸¹ DO301

⁸² BEFGD, BE001, BE002, DA101, DA102, DA104, DA105, DA109, KA402, KA404, KA409

⁸³ BEFGD, BE001, BE002, DA102, DA103, DA108, DA109, KA403, KA408, KA409

⁸⁴ BE002, DA101, DA104, DO308, KA403, KA409

3. **Connections in office, city, and abroad can help to obtain more varied and accurate information.** Information is the core of preparation for displacement. The more information and the more accurate information households have, the better their chances to obtain lifesaving or life-improving assistance. This includes having access to members of administrations and local political leaders,⁸⁵ who can also assist in safeguarding property or assessing road security – another major information need. They can advise with more precision on what is available in other locations by talking to local authorities there and even facilitate support if relations are good. They can also give advice on regions and cities that about-to-be-displaced households may be less familiar with.⁸⁶ This also applies to siblings, male or female, in cities or abroad, who can marshal online searches and better understanding of urban structures to support family members and friends.
4. **Knowledge of politics is only relevant if it limits or widens access to humanitarian assistance and is largely the province of male family members.** Respondents in Dollow, where local politics are heavily securitized, most vocally rejected the importance of politics for their predicament.⁸⁷ In Benadir, by contrast, respondents considered politics not as a crucial piece of information, but as useful to know, especially as far as it shapes security provision and medium- to long-term prospects. Some respondents in Dollow concurred.⁸⁸ Male family members were considered far more likely to be informed⁸⁹ because they engage in the Somali tradition of discussing politics over shared tea and coffee whilst collectively listening to the radio – *fadhi ku dirir*.⁹⁰

Key Findings 14: In most cases, men decide, but women's voices can and have been amplified.

Respondents most frequently considered fathers to make the final decision on where a household goes when facing displacement.⁹¹ Explanations ranged from greater supposed capacity for reasoning to simple tradition. Other respondents stressed that the entire the household is actively involved in gathering information and discussing options,⁹² even if fathers make the final decision, or together with their wives.⁹³ Yet, traditions are not unchangeable, and, as an ample body of literature has indicated over the past years, women's roles are in flux.⁹⁴ One respondent indeed argued that women's ever more frequent dual role as breadwinner and housekeeper has rendered female household heads the final deciders. Once more, economic status and education were described as key modifiers, both for decisions as for women's general participation, be they mothers or daughters.

⁸⁵ BEFGD, DA103, DA104, KA407, KA408

⁸⁶ Reasons given for outreach to political leaders in interviews cited in the previous footnote.

⁸⁷ BA208, DO303, DO304, DO306

⁸⁸ BEFGD, BE001, DA102, DA104, DA105, DA106, DA107, DA108, DA109, DOFGD, DO301, DO302, KA405, KA409

⁸⁹ BEFGD, BEFGD2, BE001, DA101, DA106, DA109, DOFGD, DO307, DO308, KA403, KA407

⁹⁰ Aidid, Safia (2018). *The Cafe Talkers of Somalia*. Popula, available at: <https://popula.com/2018/08/01/the-cafe-talkers-of-somalia/>

⁹¹ BEFGD, BE001, DA102, DA106, DA108, BA209, DO301, DO308, KA408

⁹² DO303, DO304, DO306, DO307

⁹³ DA103, DOFGD (multiple discussants, including a female discussant reporting that she and her partner decide together)

⁹⁴ See, for instance: Gardner, Judith (2018a). *Women, conflict and peace: Learning from Kismayo*. Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct & Somali Women Solidarity Organization.; Gardner, Judith (2018b). *Women, conflict and peace: Learning from Kismayo – Life Stories*. Life & Peace Institute, Peace Direct & Somali Women Solidarity Organization.; el-Bushra, Judy & Judith Gardner (2016). The impact of war on Somali men: feminist analysis of masculinities and gender relations in a fragile context. *Gender & Development*, 24(3), 443-458.; Hoehne, Markus V. & Mohamed Haji Ingiriis (2013). The Impact of Civil War and State Collapse on the Roles of Somali Women: A Blessing in Disguise. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 7(2), 314-333.; Bendaña, Alejandro & Tanja Chopra (2013). Women's Rights, State-Centric Rule of Law, and Legal Pluralism in Somaliland. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 5, 44-73.; Brown, Clare (2021). *Paper Six: Evidence from gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) interventions in Somalia*. Literature Review. UNOPS, First Call Partners.

“These days, women’s voices are heard much more than those of men. Times have changed. Women are more reliable and loyal to their families. ... Even if she is far from her family, she will still do everything in her power to support her family in times of need.”⁹⁵

4.B. CURRENT DROUGHT: BETWEEN BAY, GEDO & BENADIR

The current humanitarian crisis is on track to match major famines of 2011 and 2017 after four consecutively poor rain seasons and amidst a global economic crisis of disrupted supply chains and rising energy and food prices, as well as protracted regional and national political conflict. IOM and partners use previous famines to model and anticipate movements of those most vulnerable and in need during their displacement, and then to deploy resources according to where analysts expect the most arrivals. In 2017, however, the IOM DTM team observed that more than 80% of those displaced in Bay region moved to the regional hub, Baidoa. In early 2022, only 18% of displaced persons from Bay went to Baidoa.⁹⁶

The current crisis is unfolding in an unstable and uneven political and economic environment. It began in a year in which the sitting President’s attempt to extend his term by two years ended in a stand-off between military and police units aligned with the incumbent administration and the main opposition leaders in Mogadishu.⁹⁷ This walk on the edge of civil war was followed by the return of the Sufi organization Alu Sunna Wal Jama’a (ASWJ), which was met with an overwhelming response by FGS special forces. The crisis intensified when one of the world’s major exporters of grain, fertilizer, and cooking oil was invaded by one of the world’s other major exporters of grain, fertilizer, and gas – a nuclear power that proceeded to block grain exports and trigger skyrocketing energy prices. During this time, Somalia’s neighbor Ethiopia has found itself in a protracted civil war.

These circumstances have imposed major strains on donor policies and rendered their global engagement less predictable. This risks intensifying and even prolonging Somalia’s humanitarian crisis. The previous sections have mapped out the factors influencing decisions, the process whereby they are made, and the sources of information households facing displacement tap into. It has outlined how IDPs consider kinship, security, proximity, and infrastructure not as pull-factors in their own right, but as determinants of how well they are going to be able to gain access to the two most important pull-factors: access to immediate humanitarian assistance and prospects for medium- to long-term economic livelihoods. The following discussion of movement patterns in 2022 situates itself in this framework.

4.B.I. GEDO AND BENADIR

The movement towards especially Dollow appears counterintuitive.⁹⁸ Dollow is located at the triangle border crossing between Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Although Dollow town is highly securitized and secure, Gedo region retains a significant al Shabaab presence and has been the site of fighting between militia forces aligned with the former Dollow District Commissioner and later Jubaland Minister for Internal Security, Abdirashid ‘Janan’ and FGS military units. Their stand-off also crystallizes Gedo regional and Jubaland state politics: then-President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed ‘Farmajo’'s Darood-Marehan-Reer Dini sub-clan is also the main opposition to ex-Minister ‘Janan’ and Jubaland State President Ahmed Mohamed Islam

⁹⁵ DO309

⁹⁶ IOM (2022). *Emergency Trend Tracking (ETT) – Drought Induced Displacement, Gedo Region*. International Organization for Migration, Displacement Tracking Matrix – Somalia. See also: IOM CCCM New Arrivals Tracking (NAT) Dashboard.

⁹⁷ Mahmood, Omar (2021). *Why Somalia’s Electoral Crisis Has Tipped into Violence*. International Crisis Group Africa Briefing, April 27 2021.

⁹⁸ STAKE09

'Madobe'.⁹⁹ Moreover, these clans are predominantly *af-Mahatiri*-speakers, whereas the *af-Ma'ay* speaking Mirifle communities mostly inhabit rural surrounds, riverine farmlands, and the town of Luuq. The explanation for this seemingly erratic movement is three-fold:

1. **Dollow was the site of aid efforts when Baidoa was not.** Several key informants and stakeholders¹⁰⁰ noted that Baidoa had little consolidated humanitarian activity during the time at which these movement patterns were observed, whereas Dollow was host to a major program. Many key informants interviewed in Dollow described the hand-outs of SIM cards for cash transfer and how they were informed of this opportunity by relatives and acquaintances already in Dollow. In short, there was support in Dollow that was not available in Baidoa, so displaced persons came.
2. **Dollow offers a securitized environment.** Although this comes with some peril for new arrivals with little protection from abuse by security forces,¹⁰¹ it does offer some predictability. In addition, armed clashes and casualties have declined over since 2017, providing safety for members of local majority clans.¹⁰² The presence of Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and local militia fighters keeps al Shabaab largely at bay, and rural fighting is unlikely to enter Dollow town and its immediate vicinity as long as Ethiopia's civil war remains in the north of the country and the administration in Addis Ababa considers Dollow key to its national security.
3. **Many displaced persons in Dollow hail from Marehan communities in Bakool.** Although largely an area of Mirifle sub-clans, several Darood-Marehan sub-clans live in Bakool, especially around another border stronghold in Ceel Barde.¹⁰³ Many of the displaced persons our researcher encountered in Dollow were of Marehan lineage and spoke *af-Mahatiri*, and did consider that access to support and integration into the community would be significantly more difficult for *af-Ma'ay* speakers without local communal protection.¹⁰⁴

*"The security in Baidoa is not conducive for IDPs as compared to Dollow, because women in Dollow can go collect firewood to sale way into the jungle and come back unharmed, while in Baidoa women wont dare go far because of the fear of getting raped."*¹⁰⁵

*"Most IDPs go to where they hear there is more support being offered, especially if cash is part of the support. They might have head of something along those lines starting in those regions."*¹⁰⁶

Key Finding 15: The unexpected movement to Dollow coincided with a cash-based emergency relief program, while no comparable support was available in Baidoa.

Movements to Benadir do not appear as straightforward. Key informants did not invoke aid programs with comparable specificity. Instead, several interviewees there expressed relief that they arrived early during the distribution of aid and observed that later arrivals now are

⁹⁹ Mydlak (2018b). *Conflict Analysis: Displacement and Social Cohesion Dynamics in Dollow*. It should be noted here that where this study and author speak of political clan positioning or inter-clan relations, this should not be taken to denote the entire membership of a clan acting as a monolithic entity, but as pertaining to political and traditional leaders of clans and sub-clans acting as such, and clan members – especially those who are part of paramilitary and military forces – navigating the implications.

¹⁰⁰ STAKE03, STAKE04, STAKE05, DO301, DO302, DO304, DO307,

¹⁰¹ See: OCPV (2016). *District Conflict and Security Assessment Report*, p. 14.

¹⁰² See the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data project: Raleigh, Clionadh; Linke, Andrew; Hegre, Håvard & Karlsen, Joakim (2010). Introducing ACLED-Armed Conflict Location and Event Data. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47 (5), pp. 651-660.

¹⁰³ DO306 came from El Wak to Dollow because her uncle lived there, and because Dollow offered better infrastructure than her hometown. Together, she hoped that her relations and infrastructure would furnish her with support or employment.

¹⁰⁴ In addition to the above quoted interviewee stating as much, STAKE03 and one researcher noted that most IDPs in Dollow who were in the sites selected by IOM staff for interviews were members of the Marehan sub-clan of the Darood clan family.

¹⁰⁵ DO301

¹⁰⁶ BA208

struggling, which points to aid programs incepting during the peak of arrivals in early 2022 that key informants were unable to define. Many professed to rely upon advice from family members, and in Dollow key informants appeared largely unable to distinguish IOM from its local and international partners.¹⁰⁷

Just as now, many arrivals in Mogadishu hailed from Lower and Middle Shabelle, following long-established corridors. Upon hearing that following April and May more displaced persons were moving towards Baidoa, key informants who had arrived more recently or those whose support had run out did indicate that because they were unable to tap into Mogadishu's infrastructure for more long-term opportunities stated some regret of not going to Baidoa given the support that must now be available. Yet, they concluded that, at the time of displacement, their information had pointed to relief in Benadir.

4.B.II. RETURN TO BAIDOA

The increase in displaced persons arriving at Baidoa coincided with Somalia's delayed elections. This led especially interviewed stakeholders to speculate about political and security reasons for the altered pattern. Under the previous government, drought response could not be a priority as long as the prospect of a peaceful transfer of power remained tenuous. One stakeholder noted that the current SWS administration and the Farmajo government in Mogadishu were less experienced in and focused on emergency relief than the previous FGS administration and the previous SWS President and ally of the main opposition leaders, Sharif Hassan. The stakeholder surmised that the election of former President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, his reconciliation visit to SWS President Abdiiaziz Hassan Mohamed 'Laftagareen', and the appointment of the well-known Abdirahman Abdishakur Warsame as Special Drought Envoy may have instilled confidence in Baidoa as a site for humanitarian assistance.¹⁰⁸

Another possible explanation centers on the state of security in Baidoa, which is ambiguous. The clan politics of security forces in Baidoa have been discussed above, as has the animosity between major clans in Bay and Bakool and al Shabaab and the group's ability to move relatively freely within Baidoa. Al Shabaab has a record of co-opting some members of smaller sub-clans that have lost out in local power-sharing arrangements. This positioning affects displacement, as one interviewed humanitarian staff member stressed that many displaced persons coming to Baidoa start in al Shabaab-controlled environs of a town – and that they must obtain al Shabaab's permission to leave. Without it, they could face reprisals in Baidoa's settlements or streets.¹⁰⁹

At the time of displacement in question, moreover, al Shabaab and rural communities in Bay were in conflict over the group's increasing demands for child recruits. Local communities rejecting such demands as excessive is not without precedent. During the last such dispute, the local Bananey community raised a militia and received backing from the powerful Hadamo 'Spider' militia in Xudur, perhaps the community most opposed to al Shabaab across Bay and Bakool. The militias were so effective in their campaign that al Shabaab kidnapped additional elders as bargaining power to negotiate a ceasefire. This time around, local communities reportedly fled.¹¹⁰ It would be plausible that, lacking al Shabaab's permission, families from Bay moved to Dollow, inaccessible to al Shabaab. A move to Mogadishu would

¹⁰⁷ Debriefing with researcher. This may indicate that for displaced persons, the informal access pathways via kinship and other social ties are more relevant than the specific organisation that provides aid and the associated logos and branding.

¹⁰⁸ STAKE06

¹⁰⁹ STAKE05

¹¹⁰ BA210 explains that loss of livestock had rendered it impossible to pay the taxes to al Shabaab, between US\$5 and US\$23 depending of the size of farm and type of crop, as well as payments of two bags of crops for every ten bags harvested, which is why he fled. See also: HiiraanOnline (2022). *President Mohamud says Al Shabaab pushing farmers to IDP camps*. Hiiraan Online, 2 June 2022.

be less plausible because the route would lead displaced households along the Afgoye Corridor, in which al Shabaab operates prominently and freely.

Key Finding 18: The most likely reason for the shift of displacement towards Baidoa, and the one most frequently invoked by key informants, is the major minimum response package (MRP) incepted in Baidoa in April and May 2022, in which IOM are also involved.

At the time of the interviews for this study, some respondents in Dollow spoke of fellow displaced persons who were preparing for departure, because they had heard that new registrations for humanitarian relief were occurring in Baidoa, whereas none were planned for Dollow.¹¹¹ This corresponds to the inception of a substantial MRP, which several stakeholders considered a major pull-factor and reason for the shift of displacement towards Baidoa.¹¹² One added that they knew many who had already left for Baidoa.¹¹³ Another one stated that she was in the process of convincing her family to leave Dollow for Baidoa.¹¹⁴ And one respondent in Baidoa stated that he received a call from a cousin in Baidoa, informing him of food vouchers being given out and advising him to come.¹¹⁵

“Maybe the support they had had there [Dollow and Benadir] was finished or the information false to begin with – and they heard that Baidoa was better.”¹¹⁶

These key informants and one other¹¹⁷ explained that Baidoa would have offered better land and living conditions, but that at the time of their displacement, they had been informed that no significant emergency relief programs were ongoing in Baidoa, as opposed to Dollow and Benadir. After support in Dollow had reduced and water and food prices are rising, whilst still more people are arriving in settlements, many appear to reinitiate the process of their first displacement: pack necessities, leave shelter behind, and enquire where humanitarian assistance is available at scale.

¹¹¹ DOFGD, DO302

¹¹² STAKE03, STAKE04, STAKE05, STAKE07; see: UNOCHA (2022b). *Somalia: Drought response and famine prevention – Situation Report No. 9 (As of 31 July 2022)*. UN OCHA Situation Report, accessed via ReliefWeb, 2 August 2022.

¹¹³ DO302

¹¹⁴ DOFGD

¹¹⁵ BA210

¹¹⁶ BA208

¹¹⁷ DO307

The Role of Humanitarian Assistance in Somalia's Economy

It is difficult to understate how significant humanitarian assistance is for Somalia's economy and socio-political development as a federal state. For 2020, the FGS reports that Somalia has received roughly US\$ 2 billion in official development assistance (ODA), dropping to US\$ 1.2 billion in 2021 amidst global pandemic and the attendant economic strain on donor states, as well as delayed elections in Somalia. To put these numbers into perspective, the 2020 ODA levels are equivalent to 43% of Somalia's GDP¹¹⁸ and compares to Somalia's largest commercial sector, livestock, normally equivalent to 40% of GDP.¹¹⁹ Three quarters of this reported ODA come from the World Bank, the UK, the US, the EU, and Germany. Of the US\$ 1.2bn, food security, emergency shelter and non-food-items, camp coordination and management, water-sanitation-hygiene (WASH), health, and nutrition interventions made up roughly half, around US\$540m.¹²⁰ To once more compare, overall livestock exports as Somalia's principal export merchandise, came to approximately US\$500m in 2021, when the federal government's total reported revenue registered as US\$472.9m (of which US\$147m in external grants).¹²¹

It should be caveated here that measuring economic data in Somalia is notoriously difficult due to limited access and public financial management¹²² a major reform focus under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief initiative and the Public Financial Management (PFM) Act of December 2019. Although it is therefore difficult to determine the exact composition and magnitude of Somalia's economy and public finances, and all figures reported here should be read with this caution, humanitarian aid does constitute an important source of external funds and employment sector. A recent report by the World Bank is worth quoting at length:

*"Humanitarian assistance plays a major role in the provision of social protection in Somalia. As of 2018 (before the launch of Baxnaano), donor funding accounted for 100 percent of all social safety net spending in Somalia (World Bank 2018). Most humanitarian programs are initiated as short-term relief interventions. As such, these programs (a) tend to be delivered outside the government and, therefore, lack national ownership and do not support the social contract; (b) lack predictability, as their coverage and duration fluctuate significantly, depending on the availability of humanitarian aid; (c) are reactive, focusing on responding to crises rather than building resilience and promoting human capital and productivity; and (d) provide benefit levels that are not fiscally sustainable over the long run. In addition, in the absence of a national social registry to facilitate coordination across humanitarian programs, unintended overlaps and duplications of beneficiaries occur, adversely affecting coverage and impact. Developing a national social registry as a common database for the identification of the poor and vulnerable and as a tool for coordinating targeting across interventions would help increase the effectiveness of humanitarian and national safety net interventions. As Somalia moves toward peace, state building, and development, it needs to gradually transition from predominantly humanitarian aid approaches to development approaches."*¹²³

The previously cited call to action by leading experts¹²⁴ similarly notes that these activities cluster in the urban islands in which government control is consolidated and services can be provided safely. They warn that this inadvertently shapes the trajectory of Somalia's development as a society, economy, and state. In other words, by providing assistance of such magnitude, humanitarian and development actors determine where people move, be it in destitution or in pursuit of economic opportunity, and thus how Somalia's society is developing – whether this is intentional or not, and irrespective of local partnerships.

¹¹⁸ FGS (2021). *Aid Flows in Somalia*. Federal Government of Somalia, World Bank, UN.; UNSOM (2020). *Aid Flows in Somalia – 2020*. The United Nations in Somalia.

¹¹⁹ CIA (2022). *Somalia*. CIA World Factbook.

¹²⁰ UNOCHA (2022a). *Somalia Country Snapshot 2021*. UNOCHA.

¹²¹ World Bank (2022a). *Somalia Economic Update - Investing in Social Protection to Boost Resilience for Economic Growth*. The World Bank Group, June 2022.; OAG (2022). *Annual Financial Statements of the Federal Government of Somalia – 2021*. Office of the Auditor General, Federal Government of Somalia.

4.B.III. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

One interviewed humanitarian staff member depicted the central quandary of this study as a hen and egg problem: agencies deploy resources where they anticipate displaced households are likely to move to, and displaced households move to where agencies deploy resources.¹²⁵ Another stakeholder concurred but added that agencies are also bound by donor preferences. These preferences often target areas rather than movement patterns, and generally key cities. As discussed above, this inadvertently entrenches the unevenness between urban centers, smaller towns, and the rural hinterland that the above-cited expert paper warns of.¹²⁶

As opposed to choices by displaced households on where to go, choices by international partners on where to deploy large-scale relief efforts has substantial consequences for displacement patterns, local economies, and the very development of Somalia as state and society. Taken together, humanitarian relief and development programs constitute more than the equivalent of 20% of Somalia's GDP.¹²⁷ They provide an immensely important source of employment and support for extended families, and a catalyst for wider infrastructural and governmental development. The latter, in turn, are inevitably intertwined with the resources that relief efforts bring in forms of staff salaries and items diverted to markets,¹²⁸ as well as equipment and infrastructure created in and around settlements. In short, humanitarian assistance is not separate from, but an integral part of peace- and state-building in Somalia.

Crucially, investments and activities by international partners and even regional and local NGOs take on the role of public service providers in many parts of Somalia. Although this role can also be played by governments and is carried out as such in many parts of the world, many Somali citizens are cognizant that both federal and state governments lack resources to do so, and may also not be deemed as accountable as other actors.¹²⁹ Investments therefore assume a significance akin to governmental fiscal policy – albeit more difficult to coordinate, given that they are constituted from a plethora of independent actors, rather than one or a few more or less cohesive governing bodies. Nevertheless, this role subjects investments to similar considerations, both in their long-term effect leaving (ideally sustainable) infrastructure in place, but also in terms of the multiplier effect of cash injections into local and national economies, driving demand and shaping expenditure (see box below).

It is for this reason that a recent report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on climate-related security risks in Somalia¹³⁰ calls for a humanitarian-development-peace nexus among international and local partners. This is in recognition of the interrelated

¹²² See, inter alia: OAG (2019). *Audit of the Financial Statements of the Federal Government of Somalia for the Financial Year, ended 31 December, 2018*. Office of the Auditor General.; Reports of the UN Security Council Monitoring Group Panel of Experts.

¹²³ World Bank (2022). *Somalia Economic Update*, 29-30.

¹²⁴ See: Majid et al. (2022). *Another Humanitarian (and Political) Crisis in Somalia in 2022*.

¹²⁵ STAKE09

¹²⁶ See: Majid et al. (2022). *Another Humanitarian (and Political) Crisis in Somalia in 2022*.

¹²⁷ FGS (2021). *Aid Flows in Somalia*. Federal Government of Somalia, World Bank, UN.; UNOCHA (2022a). *Financial Tracking Service – Somalia 2021*. UNOCHA FTS.

¹²⁸ Some of this diversion happens directly during distribution, other diversion is done by the recipients who sell aid goods in order to purchase according to own preferences, or simply for more variety (documented in confidential and robust report for UN agency written by the author). Markets in major urban sites are awash with aid items, which are a common sight as makeshift building material, mosquito nets in homes, or snacks for students in between classes.

¹²⁹ See: van den Boogaard & Santoro (2019). *DIALOGUE in Somalia through Resource Mobilization: Endline Research Report*; van den Boogaard & Santoro (2021). *Co-Financing Community-Driven Development Through Informal Taxation: Experimental Evidence from South-Central Somalia*; Peterson & Zaki (2021). *A Research Report to inform Area-based Problem Driven Security and Justice Programming in Somalia*.

¹³⁰ Broek, Emilie & Christophe M. Hodder (2022). *Towards an Integrated Approach to Climate Security and Peacebuilding in Somalia*. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

challenges that require integrated and coordinated responses, climate-related crises first and foremost, and has been taken up in Somalia's current Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).¹³¹ It is also in recognition of not only the quantitative importance of humanitarian and development interventions within host countries' economies, but also of the core principles of conflict sensitivity. International actors working in a context can never be apart from this context, but instead should endeavor to understand their own position within it and their potential impacts upon it – choosing the one that does the least harm.

The Multiplier Effect of Cash Injections into Economies

The concept of the positive multiplier via cash-handouts (directly, via tax cuts or other fiscal instruments) has been advocated for most notably by the 20th century economist John Maynard Keynes. The idea dates back almost verbatim to the 13th century scholar Ibn Khaldun, who in his *magnum opus* 'The Muqaddimah' describes the absence of such stimulations of wider demand:

"If the ruler hoards tax revenues, or if these are lost, and he does not spend them as they should be, the amount available with his courtiers and supporters would decrease, as would also the amount that reaches through them to their employees and dependents. Their total spending would, therefore, decline. Since they constitute a significant part of the population and their spending constitutes a substantial part of the market, business will slacken and the profits of businessmen will decline, leading also to a decline in tax revenues ... Wealth tends to circulate between the people and the ruler, from him to them and from them to him. Therefore, if the ruler withholds it from spending, the people would become deprived of it."¹³²

In Somalia, humanitarian and development actors are viewed as providers of public services alongside administrations. Just as with fiscal policy, these multipliers are most likely successful if they meet economic and commercial infrastructure that can absorb them into productive activities (such as growing industrial sectors that can provide new employment and growth opportunities, including renewable energy), are aligned with the development of such sectors and wider fiscal strategies, and ensure that they reach populations likely to spend them rather than adding onto savings and assets.

With its size and technical expertise, the humanitarian response in Somalia can do much good. This study and its starting point of unexpected movement patterns may contribute to further conversations on what this wider role is. The decision on where to deploy relief programs is the main pull factor that already displaced and soon-to-be-displaced households are both informed of and react to. It is the hen – and this hen comes first.

The implications are multifold. The first is that international actors cannot escape the responsibility of affecting how Somalia develops as a society and economy, as well as of where displaced persons are moving to. The only path to avoiding this responsibility would be for international actors to withdraw or scale down immensely. This is unlikely to happen, and the need to deploy resources selectively will remain, because resources remain limited and longer-term solutions will take a while to establish.

This conclusion contradicts the expert paper's recommendation to "[d]evelop a more agile capacity to respond to acute surges in IDP numbers and disease epidemics"¹³³, unless this agility would stem from a more integrated approach and previously developed infrastructure

¹³¹ FGS & UNOCHA (2021). *Somalia: Humanitarian Response Plan 2022*. Accessible via ReliefWeb, 20 December 2021.

¹³² Khaldun, Ibn (1967). *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 286.

¹³³ See: Majid et al. (2022). *Another Humanitarian (and Political) Crisis in Somalia in 2022*, 4.

that facilitates such services. Here, this conclusion builds on SIPRI's recommendations and insights from the above cited studies by the Somalia Stability Fund and UNOPS that governments are seen as facilitators of services and can act in such a way, and that clan remains dominant for want of an alternative social safety net.¹³⁴ Households take into account all of these factors to evaluate their likely access to humanitarian assistance in destinations. Crucially, they reach out to their extended social networks via phone, family and radio, in preparation for displacement to the location most likely to offer ongoing and accessible humanitarian support.

¹³⁴ van den Boogaard & Santoro (2019). *DIALOGUE in Somalia through Resource Mobilization: Endline Research Report.*; van den Boogaard & Santoro (2021). *Co-Financing Community-Driven Development Through Informal Taxation: Experimental Evidence from South-Central Somalia.*; Peterson & Zaki (2021). *A Research Report to inform Area-based Problem Driven Security and Justice Programming in Somalia.*

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations comprise one that overarchingly addresses all actors engaged in humanitarian and especially emergency relief activities, considerations for humanitarian assistance going forward, and for potential further research. The recommendations are color-coded for their primary outlook (short/medium/long-term). Annex B provides a further roadmap, breaking each recommendation down into short, medium, and long-term steps for easier uptake.

5.A. OVERARCHING

1. **Consider humanitarian assistance and emergency relief an integral part of Somalia's socio-political and economic fabric that shapes how towns develop and where people move, whether this is intended or not (long-term).** Emergency relief, health assistance, food security, shelter, and protection programs constitute such a significant part of Somalia's economy that they cannot not shape the country's development and the shaping of Somali society. In other words, displacement under duress and economic migration necessarily overlap, because the financial investments, access to food and non-food items, salaried work as humanitarian staff, and access to resources via settlement managers and humanitarian staff are central to households' livelihoods, individual economic opportunity, and the social safety nets of wider kinship groups. Salaried staff can support relatives during schooling, with medical treatment, with movements, and in cases of customary justice procedures resulting in compensation payments. Emergency relief programs could only avoid such impact and responsibility by withdrawing entirely or scaling down to such an extent that they can no longer assist the vulnerable populations in need of their support. All of the following recommendations operate upon the premise that humanitarian actors accept this responsibility and take steps to actively coordinate with governmental and international partners that work in the realm of development, peacebuilding, governance, and urban planning. Failure to do so, but continuation of operations at the current scale, would contradict principles of conflict sensitivity.

5.B. FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

2. **Because displaced populations go where aid is delivered, IOM can shift the focus from flexible response to proactively building infrastructure and delivering relief where it is safe and sustainable for displaced households to move (medium-term).** The central question of this study was a hen-egg problem: if humanitarian actors base their activities on past and present displacement patterns, but displaced person follow the availability of humanitarian aid, what comes first? The answer is short and straightforward: deployment of humanitarian aid shapes displacement, irrespective of past patterns or proximity. This implies potential for IOM and partners to contribute to safer, more effective displacement, guiding households facing displacement to locations with shelter and opportunities available, and along roads currently deemed likely safer than others. This should be done incrementally, to ensure that contingency capacities are available should exogenous events such as sudden armed conflict force alterations to displacement patterns. Such inevitable contingencies accounted for, IOM and partners – and their donors – shape where people go, whether intentionally or not. An intentional and proactive approach appears more likely to avoid harm and ensure an effective response, if well-coordinated and informed.

3. **Build vital infrastructure also in secondary locations when preparing for emergencies (medium-term).** As noted above, secondary displacement is likely to follow a conclusion of emergency relief without medium to long-term economic opportunities. At the same time, much emergency relief is deployed in major urban centers where infrastructure is available to channel this support, including maternal and child-health clinics, but also more effective government and security institutions. This accelerates already rapid urbanization and overloads local labor markets, rendering destitution, conflict, and secondary displacement more likely. A crucial component of providing support in secondary towns would be the build-up of key infrastructure, including education and economic opportunities, but also vital health and distribution infrastructure. This would relieve pressure on major urban centers and potentially create more medium to long-term opportunities in growing secondary towns – thereby also potentially reducing secondary displacement and thus relieving pressure on emergency relief.
4. **IOM and partners should explore kinship-based social safety nets for their potential to prevent displacement in the lead-up to slow-onset crises, such as droughts (short-term)/(medium-term).** Respondents noted that relatives with a stable salary and/or assets might reinforce family members financially and thereby render their displacement unnecessary. IOM and partners could explore actively encouraging the usage of such networks and even consider infusing resources via such networks to strengthen rural communities' capacity to weather crises. This should be done with careful observation of conflict sensitivity procedures and close coordination with partners working in the peacebuilding and governance spaces to ensure that injecting resources on a kinship basis does not alter existing inter-clan equilibria and invite counter-balancing, including via armed violence. Yet, for now, kinship-based social safety nets are the only viable, universal fallback for communities. Until another is developed, whether drawing on the many religious community organizations or the non-religious fledging civil society, or even government-based social safety nets, their impact cannot be understated.
5. **IOM and partners should consider supporting those family members who stay behind with livestock or assets to retain the option of return, and even localized build-up (medium-term).** The study found that the reason why women and children often arrived ahead of men and communities split apart during displacement more than before, but then reunited, was that men stay behind to safeguard livestock and assets through the crisis. This may remain undetected, but because of the severity of the current drought, men join their households after either losing all livestock and assets, or after guarding them has become untenable. IOM and partners could consider setting up catchment areas for livestock once displacement patterns can be sufficiently tracked and – security permitting – support herders. It should be kept in mind that this could create new settlements or empower nearby ones, just as any intervention may result in, but this could relieve pressure on emergency relief efforts in destination sites, livestock restocking programs after emergencies, and socio-political dynamics in urban locations. It could also help balance existing inequalities between those with the means to join family members in host communities, potentially leveraging financial prowess or ties to influential powerholders to safeguard assets, and those without such capacity desperately attempting to guard livestock or find support.
6. Gender-mainstream resilience investments, link to further opportunities for education and livelihoods, and design interventions with intersectional lenses¹³⁵ (general). This study also assessed women's involvement in decision making and found that the more educated, well-employed, well-connected, and wealthy a woman is, the more weight her voice is likely to carry in decision-making. This is consistent with previous studies on social norms and

¹³⁵ The concept of intersectionality stems from legal analysis and posits that multiple overlapping identities can amplify privilege or compound vulnerability. See: Crenshaw, Kimberlé (2017). *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*. New York: The New Press.

vulnerabilities that also found that education, economy, wealth, status/employment, social networks, and clan background all mediate women's vulnerabilities to wider gender-based violence and specifically intimate partner violence.¹³⁶ In other words, the more independent a woman is from male partners or relatives, and the more access she can wield and support she can muster, the more likely she is to be respected by others and in decision-making. Similarly, social norms research shows that material and institutional factors co-constitute social norms and contribute to their change over time.¹³⁷ Gender mainstreaming for resilience investments should therefore entail assessments of further paths for girls and women – towards education and employment for empowerment. This should be mainstreamed throughout all recommendations listed here that concern investments in infrastructure, studies into support for creating medium and long-term opportunities, and any activities that fall under the triple nexus approach.

5.C. FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

7. **IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into how the fact that IDPs in settlements relay information about humanitarian assistance can be incorporated into communication strategies (short-term).** The most frequent reason respondents gave for choosing a destination was that they had heard about impending or ongoing relief programs from relatives or acquaintances on site. This communication system illustrates how wider families and kinship groups cope, but it also proffers potential for effective humanitarian communication via already existing channels that are both widely used and widely trusted. Further research is needed to understand what messaging IDPs and local residents are most likely to relay, how they obtain information about relief efforts, and how they can be incorporated into communication strategies in a conflict sensitive and perhaps even empowering fashion.
8. **IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into how IDPs explore and consider medium to long-term opportunities when choosing a destination (medium-term).** Respondents almost unanimously stressed the need for medium to long-term perspectives. They are aware that emergency relief programs are limited in scope and duration. Secondary displacement is a likely consequence where such perspectives do not exist and programs conclude. Another is dire poverty. A more nuanced understanding of how IDPs can transition from emergency relief to longer-term opportunities and how they assess such opportunities could help integrate emergency relief efforts with wider state building and urban planning. This could deepen the impact of support to secondary towns and provide vulnerable communities with more varied options and potentially closer, more sustainable destinations for displacement.
9. **IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into the trajectories of displaced households that merge into host communities to understand the potential impact upon urban development and integration, but also how humanitarian programs do or do not factor into this process (medium-term).** Kinship as Somalia's principal social safety net shapes the opportunities for displaced households. Respondents stressed that wealthy and educated relatives, even those on a stable salary in urban areas, could assist journeys by providing transport and take displaced relatives in where they live. That families would move to relatives in a situation of need and rely upon their support is not an unusual

¹³⁶ Peterson, & Zaki (2021). *A Research Report to inform Area-based Problem Driven Security and Justice Programming in Somalia*.

¹³⁷ See: Heise, Lori L. 1998. Violence Against Women: An Integrated, Ecological Framework. *Violence Against Women*, 4(3), 262-290.; Cislighi, Beniamino & Lori L. Heise. 2018. Theory and practice of social norms interventions: eight common pitfalls. *Globalization & Health*, 14, 83.; Cislighi, Beniamino & Robert Torrance. 2020. *Mapping Social Norms and Violence Against Women and Girls in Jubbaland State*. Asal Consulting.

phenomenon globally, but intuitive. However, a more nuanced understanding of this process is needed in Somalia because of the scale of displacement and the strong political role that kinship ties play in the political settlement and emergence of local governance institutions. Past studies have referenced the potential impact of mass displacement and high numbers of returnees from refugee camps abroad on urban and political development in places marked by unaccountable security forces, violently contested politics, and encirclement by al Shabaab, such as Kismayo.¹³⁸ To ensure conflict sensitive programming that observes do no harm principles, IOM and partners should acquire a better understanding of what high displacement entails for host communities, and coordinate with partners working on urban development and peacebuilding, such as the World Bank and the Somalia Stability Fund, on uptake of these insights.

10. **IOM and partners should reassess the planning of cash-based assistance in light of the potential pull-factor for displacement (short-term).** Cash transfers are only part of the humanitarian assistance that is the primary reason for why displaced individuals and households go to destinations with relief programs present. Somalia's rural and peri-urban communities have suffered from poverty even prior to pandemic and war in Ukraine causing global supply chain ruptures and rapid inflation of prices for basic goods, including petrol, fertilizer, cooking oil, and bread. Unconditional cash is an important part of expediting and empowering immediate relief efforts. It stimulates local economies and preserves recipients' dignities by enabling their choice of how to spend and purchase. The widespread presence of food items from emergency relief programs on Somalia's markets, and the finding of previous studies that much of this is sold on by beneficiaries to obtain a choice of what to consume,¹³⁹ is testimony of how important it is to retain self-efficacy and agency instead of fostering greater dependency. Cash-based assistance is central to this. Unconditional cash transfers also present a valuable addition to many households' livelihoods, under immediate duress or not. Given that Somalia's GDP is estimated around US\$445 per capita,¹⁴⁰ even handouts of US\$10 to US\$50 can constitute important income for many households. A potential and anecdotally observed implication could be that not acutely vulnerable households also make their way to settlements for displaced persons in order to access this support. This could have the unintended consequence of increasing primary and secondary displacement, and would further underscore the wider economic significance of cash-based programming. To establish this with confidence requires more targeted research, which should also consider alternative options. In particular, cash injections can constitute an economic multiplier by stimulating aggregate demand, consumption, and reinvestments – leading to net economic growth or increases in prosperity. For this to happen, infrastructure, productive capacity, and enforceable legal frameworks must be in place.
11. **Cash-based programs should be carried out with cognizance of their wider impact on economic development – and of their potential if accompanied by and geared towards the development of local industry and economic infrastructure.** For support to displaced populations, these potential multipliers constitute medium-term and long-term prospects. Although it is unlikely that a single emergency relief program can achieve such change, programs are important parts of Somalia's economic development and, if aligned with economic development strategies and embedded in urban development, could both foster economic development and provide displaced populations with improved prospects.

¹³⁸ Menkhaus, Ken (2017b). *Dadaab Returnee Conflict Assessment*. Danish Demining Group.

¹³⁹ Studies conducted by the author, but not shareable and proprietary.

¹⁴⁰ World Bank (2022b). *GDP per capita (current US\$) – Somalia*. The World Bank Group, Data.

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ANNEX A. – SAMPLE

Code	Location	Category	Gender	Age
BE001	Benadir	Humanitarian Agency/Organization Staff (non-IOM)	male	35
BE002	Benadir	Humanitarian Agency/Organization Staff (non-IOM)	male	31
BEFGD	Benadir	4 Male Participants, 6 Female Participants		
BEFGD2	Benadir	2 Male Participants, 8 Female Participants		
DA101	Daynile	Community Leader/Elder	male	65
DA102	Daynile	Community Leader/Elder	female	53
DA103	Daynile	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	45
DA104	Daynile	Female Young Displaced Person	female	32
DA105	Daynile	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	62
DA106	Daynile	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	30
DA107	Daynile	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	68
DA108	Daynile	Displaced Person living with Host Community	female	57
DA109	Daynile	Female Young Displaced Person	female	22
BAFGD	Baidoa	5 Female Participants		
BA201	Baidoa	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	45
BA202	Baidoa	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	33
BA203	Baidoa	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	64
BA204	Baidoa	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	45
BA205	Baidoa	Community Leader/Elder	female	28
BA206	Baidoa	Community Leader/Elder	male	46
BA207	Baidoa	Settlement Manager	male	48
BA208	Baidoa	Humanitarian Agency/Organization Staff (non-IOM)	female	28
BA209	Baidoa	Displaced Person living with Host Community	female	40
BA210	Baidoa	Displaced Person living with Host Community	male	36
DOFGD	Dollow	6 Female Participants		
DO301	Dollow	Community Leader/Elder	female	55
DO302	Dollow	Community Leader/Elder	male	40
DO303	Dollow	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	44
DO304	Dollow	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	42
DO305	Dollow	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	67
DO306	Dollow	Displaced Person living with Host Community	female	20
DO307	Dollow	Displaced Person living with Host Community	male	31
DO308	Dollow	Humanitarian Agency/Organization Staff (non-IOM)	male	38
DO309	Dollow	Settlement Manager	male	33
DO310	Dollow	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	67
KA401	Kaxda	Settlement Manager	male	70
KA402	Kaxda	Female Young Displaced Person	female	23
KA403	Kaxda	Female Young Displaced Person	male	35
KA404	Kaxda	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	40
KA405	Kaxda	Female Young Displaced Person	female	50
KA406	Kaxda	Male Displaced Person (Head of Household)	male	64
KA407	Kaxda	Displaced Person living with Host Community	female	30
KA408	Kaxda	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	30

KA409	Kaxda	Female Displaced Person (Head of Household)	female	35
STAKE01	Remote	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	female	n/a
STAKE02	Remote	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	female	n/a
STAKE03	Dollow	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	male	n/a
STAKE04	Dollow	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	male	n/a
STAKE05	Baidoa	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	male	n/a
STAKE06	Baidoa	Stakeholder (Researcher)	male	n/a
STAKE07	Nairobi	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	male	n/a
STAKE08	Benadir	Stakeholder (Researcher)	female	n/a
STAKE09	Benadir	Stakeholder (Agency/Donor Staff)	male	n/a

ANNEX B. – RECOMMENDATIONS ROADMAP

1. Consider humanitarian assistance and emergency relief an integral part of Somalia's socio-political and economic fabric that shapes how towns develop and where people move, whether this is intended or not.

- **Short-term:**¹⁴¹ Ensure that humanitarian assistance follows conflict sensitivity and durable solutions guidelines in both emergency relief and human resources protocols. Further pursue and link into existing triple-nexus forums with development and peacebuilding actors via working groups, steering committees, and knowledge-sharing initiatives. This should include support of the government's aid architecture.
- **Medium-term:** Pair emergency relief with investments in socio-economic infrastructure, in coordination with urban planners, economic support programs, local authorities, line ministries at state and federal levels, and relevant civil society actors and chambers of commerce. Continue structural assistance and coordination in between emergencies.
- **Long-term:** Pursuant the triple-nexus strategy, humanitarian and developmental assistance anticipate overall crisis and put infrastructure in place that helps communities absorb shocks and guides urbanization, reducing the need for especially secondary displacement.

2. Because displaced populations go where aid is delivered, IOM can shift the focus from flexible response to proactively building infrastructure and delivering relief where it is safe and sustainable for displaced households to move.

- **Short-term:** Consider gathering information or commissioning studies into likely safe routes for displacement and deploy resources, as possible, in destinations considered as relatively safe to reach. Consistently, resources should be retained to respond should displacement patterns not follow immediately, to avoid leaving those in need stranded.
- **Medium-term:** Ensure access to security and context updates (including atmospherics) and consider working with analysts to monitor data (including the Armed Conflict Location and Event Database, ACLED) and design a matrix that indicates safer routes and destinations at the onset of crises.
- **Long-term:** Build on linkages with government and business actors, partners, and administrations to proactively build infrastructure to help communities absorb shocks, boost resilience, and reduce the need for or guide displacement in a manner compatible with peaceful urban growth.

3. Build vital infrastructure also in secondary locations when preparing for emergencies.

- **Short-term:** Identify secondary locations and consider commissioning primary research or obtaining existing studies on potential for urban development, local socio-political and conflict dynamics, and opportunities for socio-

¹⁴¹ 'Short-term' is understood as "during or immediately after the current crisis"; 'medium-term' as "following the current crisis, over the coming years"; and 'long-term' as "having achieved objectives of short-term and medium-term recommendations, ideally presuming greater stability in Somalia's economic development and reduced levels of conflict".

economic infrastructure. Establish links with relevant urban planners, partners, and authorities.

- **Medium-term:** Continue to work with actors such as the World Bank and relevant government authorities (including local administrations or representations) to produce local development plans, securing investments also from Somali business communities (possibly via match-funding), and locate entry-points for humanitarian funding to support infrastructure that can help absorb shocks and support arrivals.
- **Long-term:** Adjust plans as needed to contextual developments, become part of urban development also in secondary locations, contributing expertise on provisions for emergency relief, support to new arrivals and durable solutions.

4. IOM and partners should explore kinship-based social safety nets for their potential to prevent displacement in the lead-up to slow-onset crises, such as droughts.

- **Short-term:** The Baxnaano program is quickly growing in significance and is geared to offset the inequality inherent in kinship-based social safety nets, given the unequal distribution of and access to resources. Given its limited scope and existing urban/rural political and access divisions, Baxnaano can only slowly replace kinship structures. What is more, funds may continue to be disbursed further to relatives without direct access to support. Humanitarian actors could begin working with Baxnaano and Hawala providers to develop strategies to support more vulnerable communities.
- **Short/Medium-term:** Commission research to assess the position and kinship ties of communities at risk from natural disasters (both sudden and slow-onset) to be able to harness informal networks quickly in the event of crises to disburse funds otherwise unavailable to rural communities for lack of humanitarian access. Consider the implications of setting in place such incentive structures and ensure observance of conflict sensitivity principles. Jointly, explore linkages and referrals with Baxnaano and Hawala providers to develop strategies to support and graduate more vulnerable communities.
- **Long-term:** Expand efforts such as Baxnaano in cooperation with Hawala providers and community elders to develop a social insurance system with reliability similar to mobile money and Hawala provision that can replace kinship-structures as the primary social safety nets and help stabilize vulnerable communities for more long-term resilience support.

5. IOM and partners should consider supporting those family members who stay behind with livestock or assets to retain the option of return, and even localized build-up.

- **Short- / Medium- / Long-term (cross-cutting):** similar to previous recommendations, with more explicit focus on a) reaching rural family members via kinship ties, b) assessing risks and potentials of providing infrastructure support to locations of possible return as well as safety of doing so given potential al Shabaab presence, and c) including locations of origin into wider development plans, ready to proceed with rehabilitation and consolidation once liberated, if currently under al Shabaab control.

6. **Gender-mainstream resilience investments, link to further opportunities for education and livelihoods, and design interventions with intersectional lenses.**¹⁴² (applies to all)

7. **IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into how the fact that IDPs in settlements relay information about humanitarian assistance can be incorporated into communication strategies.**

- **Short-term:** Information ecosystems were central to the findings of this study on what determines choices of destination and current displacement patterns. Available research into these should be consolidated and knowledge gaps identified with focus on information needed for uptake into humanitarian programming and communication strategies.
- **Medium-term:** Based on insights from knowledge consolidation and further research into identified gaps, strategies can be developed to finetune communications, ensuring conflict sensitivity and exploring possibilities for empowering messaging (sharing knowledge on resilience, good practices, permaculture, rainwater harvesting, etc.).
- **Long-term:** Transition from emergency communications to regular public service communication via established media as part of Somalia's media landscape and government communications at local, state, and federal levels.

8. **IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into how IDPs explore and consider medium to long-term opportunities when choosing a destination.**

- **Short-term:** Consolidate and commission research into how, if at all, investments into resilience and durable solutions have affected current displacement patterns, and if so, how. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these have substantially reduced the scale of displacement at the onset of the current crisis, but this has not been substantiated by robust evidence, much less unpacked in how this effect came about. Also consider commissioning longitudinal research based on panel samples to track IDPs' livelihoods and access to opportunities among those who stay in a location and those who move between settlements. This research would help to unpack findings from the IOM Local (Re)Integration Assessment (LORA) and identify current options available to IDPs.
- **Medium-term:** Link studies commissioned and durable solutions planning to more long-term economic development planning, partnering with actors under the Human Capital Development Mechanism¹⁴³ (incepted by

¹⁴² The concept of intersectionality stems from legal analysis and posits that multiple overlapping identities can amplify privilege or compound vulnerability. See: Crenshaw, Kimberlé (2017). *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*. New York: The New Press.

¹⁴³ The Human Capital Development Mechanism (HCDM) comprised a series of consultations and a subsequent roadmap with associated committees and platforms to draft and guide a human capital development strategy for the Federal Republic of Somalia. The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (HIPS) and the City University Mogadishu received a grant from the Somalia Stability Fund (Phase 2) to carry out the process and produce the strategy, which in 2019 was published and taken over into the new National Development Plan. The HCDM was intended both as a peacebuilding platform, convening different stakeholders for dialogue on mutual economic benefits that would build trust for subsequent reconciliation, and to inform the development of institutions that catalogue, guide, and support the development of Somalia's human capital, from labour market to strategic investments. Should the HCDM as part of the National Development Plan have gained traction, it would provide a relevant intersection for Baxnaano and efforts to transition recipients of emergency relief into more long-term livelihoods.

Heritage Institute and City University Mogadishu as part of the National Development Plan) and relevant government authorities under the National Development Plan and initiatives for the development of local governments (under or related to the Wadajir Framework). Assess opportunities available for investments, layering of services and graduation pathways that make use of local resources and assets, and development and humanitarian funding streams; renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, and the IT/communications sectors.

- **Long-term:** Merge investments into livelihood opportunities for IDPs into the overall socio-economic development of Somalia, assuming increased government capacity and stability, alongside reduced levels of conflict.

9. IOM and partners should consider commissioning further research into the trajectories of displaced households that merge into host communities to understand the potential impact upon urban development and integration, but also how humanitarian programs do or do not factor into this process.

- **Short-term:** Determine how IDPs having moved into host communities can be reliably identified for data collection, especially in peri-urban and urban areas in which IDP settlements merge into slums. Further determine how to clearly differentiate between common migration between and to towns and those joining relatives because of immediate need and vulnerability.
- **Medium-term:** Operationalize the findings from short-term research into studies on what support host communities require to accommodate new arrivals, what the needs of new arrivals merging into host communities are vis-à-vis those moving to settlements, on urban development/urbanization/local political and (potential) conflict dynamics. This should be complemented by research on IDPs integration and return intentions.
- **Long-term:** Integrate understanding into overall urban development efforts to ensure that infrastructure developments and investments are sensitive to needs and implications concerning integration and displacement dynamics.

10. IOM and partners should reassess the planning of cash-based assistance in light of the potential pull-factor for displacement.

- **Short-term:** Consider mapping actors working in the space of economic development in Somalia, both international and governmental partners as well as private sector actors, local and external. Also consider commissioning studies into the economic impact of cash-based humanitarian assistance on local, regional, and national economies.
- **Medium-term:** Explore options to align cash-based assistance with wider resilience programming, urban development, and strategies to support rural populations. Investigate a potential alignment with the Human Capital Development strategy and the National Development Plan could extend to linking immediate cash-assistance to further education for jobs needed in growing enterprises, start-ups, and wider industries or trades.
- **Long-term:** Should linking cash-based assistance to further training (vocational or further and higher education) prove likely to be useful or

successful in practice, consider exploring its integration into formalized social security frameworks, for which the Baxnaano program presents a first major foray, and adaption into standardized assistance programs for individuals or households in need.

GIST

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