Mobility Tracking and Multi Sectoral Location Assessment Garissa County, 2023

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

From the People of Japan

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Background

In September 2021, the Government of Kenya declared a drought emergency as conditions in the affected counties worsened due to the severe, prolonged drought from 2020 to 2022. By January 2023, Garissa County had experienced no rainfall. From April to July 2023, reports indicated that the Early Warning Phase Category (EWPC) for Garissa County had improved to a "Normal" phase, with gradual improvements in vegetation, pasture, and browse conditions in some areas[1]. However, many pastoralist communities remained in distress as livestock health and productivity remained poor.

Despite predictions of a sixth failed rainy season and suppressed long rains, the March to May 2023 rainy season brought an unexpectedly positive outcome with above-average rainfall, which improved water and vegetation conditions. Reports from April and May 2023 classified the EWPC for Garissa County as "Recovery" and "Normal," respectively. However, many pastoralist communities in the county continued to face poor livestock health and low productivity, which were inadequate for their survival.

As of May 2024, floods were devastating approximately 33 counties in the Southern and Western regions of Kenya. As of June 2024, the floods subsided but 480,000 were displaced because of the intense rains[2]. Although droughts and floods are recurring issues in Kenya, the extent and impact of these environmental crises are unprecedented. There is an urgent need for data to anticipate future climate shocks and to understand past trends for better forecasting. The precarious and severe conditions across much of Kenya highlight the necessity for enhanced humanitarian aid, accurate information on the needs of affected populations, and improved planning to address the ongoing threats of drought, floods, and food insecurity.

Methodology

To assess drought-induced mobility and identify the most urgent sectoral needs experienced by the community, the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Mobility Tracking and Multi-Sectoral Location Assessment (MSLA) baseline assessment was deployed in 2022 in Garissa County. A second round of data collection for mobility tracking took place between May and June 2023 and a third round in April and May 2024.

The first round of DTM Mobility Tracking and MSLA was conducted from August 2022 to September 2022, and findings from those assessment cycles can be found here. The second round of DTM Mobility Tracking and MSLA was conducted from 29 April to 16 May 2023 and findings are presented through this report[3]. Data was collected with the generous funding of the Government of Japan and implemented by IOM in partnership with Organization for Sustainable Development Africa (OSDA). The project was conducted in coordination with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Garissa County Commissioner's Office (CCO), and the wider Garissa County government.

Mobility Tracking is a DTM methodology which aims to quantify the presence of population categories as well as the populations' reasons for displacement, length of displacement and needs. Mobility Tracking relies on key informant interviews (KIIs) to estimate the size, priorities and mobility dynamics of a given population. For more information on the DTM methodology, see the DTM Methodological Framework.

The second round of data collection was deployed to understand changes in the mobility dynamics induced by prolonged drought and the recovery phase, as well as updates on mobility trends and the most urgent sectoral needs of the target mobile population groups and host communities, to assess changes since the 2022 data collection.

1. Government of Kenya. (2023).
2. OCHA, Eastern Africa: Heavy rains and flooding Flash Update #4. 30 May 2024.
3. The dataset with information disaggregated at the sub-location level can be found here: Kenya | Displacement (iom.int).

Population Groups

As the impact of natural hazards on mobility in Kenya is not fully understood, IOM collected data on the mobility trends of five population groups in Garissa County: absentees, arrivals, returnees, foreign-nationals, and pastoralist drop-outs. Operational definitions of these population groups used in this report are as follows:

Absentees are people who originated from the sub-location but who left their settlement permanently or semi-permenantly. Often they left because of effects of the drought (for example, death of animals, lack of food, lack of water or search for services), resource-based conflict, ethnic tensions or conflict, and flash floods or seasonal floods. This population category provides insight into the areas that were most devastated by drought and had few resources for the local population, some of whom were subsequently forced to migrate.

Arrivals are Kenyan nationals who left their places of origin and arrived at the assessed sub-locations. Often they move because of effects of the drought (for example, death of animals, lack of food, lack of water, or search for services), resource-based conflict, ethnic tensions or conflicts, and flash floods or seasonal floods.

Returnees are Kenyan nationals that left the sub-location because of the impacts of the drought and settled at a temporary site (in Kenya or in another country) but returned to the sub-location. They may have returned because they did not find assistance, sought to rejoin their family, and/or returned with assistance.

Foreign nationals are non-Kenyan nationals who arrived in the assessed sub-locations because of the effects of the drought. This group includes people who migrated via irregular routes and cannot return or continue their migration journey, in some cases because they are destitute in the location of assessment.

Pastoralist drop-outs Households who previously practiced pastoralism but "dropped out" and chose another livelihood within the past three years preceding data collection.

Sampling

For the assessments, 150 key informants were interviewed, representing all 150 sub-locations within Garissa County and a total of 838 settlements[4] in Garissa County. Data was collected between 30 April and 16 May 2023. The field assessment activities for DTM Mobility Tracking and MSLA were focused on locations and sub-locations as agreed between IOM, OSDA, NDMA, CCO and the Garissa County government technical representatives. It was agreed that the data collection would take place at the sub-location level listed in the 2019 Population Census conducted by the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics. Assistant Chiefs and Village Administrators were identified as the main key informants for sub-locations to enable equal representation of the county and national government administrative structures during the data collection process. Traditional leaders and community representatives were also involved as key informants to promote a collective sharing of information on population dynamics relevant to the assessment. Key informants were identified due to their comprehensive knowledge and position of authority. However, given that most persons in positions of authority in Kenya are males, the key informants were also majority male (2% females, 98% males), thereby limiting the input and view of persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

Data were collected across all seven sub-counties of Garissa County by enumerators in 36 wards, 149 sub-locations, and 838 settlements. Forty enumerators and five team leaders (comprised of 64% males, 36% females) were deployed and carried out coordination activities with local and administrative authorities for each sub-location. As with key informants, enumerators were primarily male in order to have enumerators match the SOGIESC of the informants, to align with cultural expectations of gender in Kenya. The IOM technical team trained the local enumerators and team leaders on DTM data collection methodology, processes, and operations prior to field assignment.

4. The total of 838 settlements was mapped by DTM Kenya and may include village and sub village units identified by national and county governments. As such, the total estimate of settlements may not compare to total figures represented in national and county-level administrative dataset.

Limitations

Out of 150 sub-locations, six were not accessible due to poor road network and data were collected by interviewing key informants over mobile phones. Information obtained via phone is less preferred as the enumerator is not able to visually observe and validate the information provided.

As stated, both enumerators and key informants were primarily male. Thus, females and persons with diverse SOGIESC are underrepresented in the data and findings.

As with all DTM Mobility Tracking, information obtained relied on KIIs. As such, information is indicative. While efforts were made to ensure that informants were aware that their responses would not gain them humanitarian support, all responses were subject to social desirability bias.

To establish a baseline understanding of the mobility dynamics and the needs of the mobile and host population groups affected by natural calamities, IOM along with extended government stakeholders, identified assistant chiefs as the best-suited primary key informants. However, in some instances, assistant chiefs deemed it necessary to request that community leaders, village administrators and others participate in the interview. In total, 164 key informants (2% females, 98% males) (Including "groups" of key informants) were interviewed.

The assessment excluded refugee camps as the data on refugees are collected and maintained by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as the mandated refugee agency by the United Nations.

Key Findings

• Displacement reportedly increased by an approximate 200% in the past 4 years:

- **o 12 per cent of arrivals arrived in their location of displacement in 2020, 61 per cent arrived between 2020 and 2022 and 27 per cent arrived in 2023.**
- **o In nearly all the assessed sub-locations (99%) informants reported the presence of pastoralist dropouts. Across all the sub-locations, 88 per cent of pastoral dropouts happened before 2023, and dropout rates increased most drastically during the 2020-2022 drought period.**
- **o All arrival households (100% or 15,299 households) arrived at sub-locations that already struggled with the severe effects of drought, resource-based conflict, and ethnic clashes[5].**

• Between September 2022 and May 2023, the reported primary driver of forced displacement was drought. As of May 2024, the primary driver of displacement was floods with 23, 511 households displaced across Kenya.

• 81 per cent of returnees temporarily resided in Kenya, and 16 per cent temporarily resided in Somalia. Of those who temporarily resided in Kenya, 57 per cent were temporarily located in a location outside their immediate area of origin in Garissa County, suggesting prevalent internal migration within the county and cross-border movement dynamics.

• 10,158 child-headed households were identified in Garissa. Of these, 2,954 (29%) had no relatives or community members living near them and were separated from their legal or customary guardians and 8,181 children (81%) were reported as without permanent sources of support.

• In 33 per cent of Garissa sub-locations, shelters were reportedly not stable enough to withstand environmental hazards or security threats.

5. Household reportedly arrived in their new sublocation at the following time periods: 12 per cent before 2020, 61 per cent between 2020 and 2022 and 27 per cent in 2023.

• Key informants reported 17,568 student dropouts (22% of the estimated number of students), despite concurrent reports that educational institutions were active in 96 per cent of sub-locations. The discrepancy between these figures' warrants updated, additional investigation.

• Open defecation was reported in 66 sub-locations (44%). The most reported drivers for people to practice open defecation was the non-functionality of latrines (40%), difficulty in accessing the latrines (39%), lack of privacy as there was no reported partition for male and female cubicles (35%), and insecurity when accessing the latrines (11%).

  o Insecurity-related latrine issues were reported by key informants in Balambala (9 sub-locations), Dadaab (3 sub-locations), Lagdera (3 sub-locations) and Hulugho (1 sub-locations).

• Key informants reported that only 52% of the sublocations host a health facility. Furthermore, in 95% of the sub locations with a health facility, there was a reported absence of medicine and commodities

• Most respondents in sub-locations reported that the top three sources of drinking water were: motorized borehole (16%), rainwater (15%) and river water (10%).

Introduction

Garissa County covers 44,753 km2 in southeastern Kenya. It shares an international border with Somalia and domestic borders Wajir and Isiolo Counties to the north, Tana River County to the West and Lamu county to the South. Garissa is one of the 29 counties identified as part of the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) of Kenya[6]. The county has six sub-counties and a county headquarters in Garissa Town. The population of Garissa County accounted for 843,353 people as of the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics' 2019 census, and its main economic activities are primarily based on agriculture, livestock farming, and trade. Residents in rural areas primarily engage in pastoralism, while those in towns pursue livelihoods in trade and commerce[7].

Table 1. Summary of the Mobile Population Groups by the Sub-Counties

Sub-County	Sub-County Details	Absentees (Households)	Arrivals (Households)	Returnees (Households)	Foreign Nationals (Households)	Pastoralist Dropouts (Households)
Balambala	28 sub-locations 142 settlements	1,784	3,060	2,264	0	6,007
Dadaab	15 sub-locations 75 settlements	4,345	5,294	3,730	120	19,089
Fafi	22 sub-locations 67 settlements	1,652	1,239	1,768	0	1,554
Garissa Township	17 sub-locations 199 settlements	1,135	2,065	1,640	206	2,500
Hulugho	24 sub-locations 150 settlements	880	1,064	506	0	2,835
Ijara	26 sub-locations 171 settlements	1,768	1,197	1,520	0	10,727
Lagdera	18 sub-locations 34 settlements	1,196	1,380	4,497	350	5,314
Total	**7 sub-counties 150 sub-locations[8] 838 settlements**	**12,760**	**15,299**	**15,925**	**676**	**48,026**

Table 2. Movement of population groups and reasons of movement by population type

Type of Population Group	Movement of population groups across the County by sub-location reported by Key Informants	Reason(s) for movement, by population
Absentees	Informants **reported absentees** in **80%** of sub-locations	Informants in the **97%** of sub-locations **cited drought** as the main reason for the movement of absentees.
Arrivals	Informants **reported arrivals** in **83%** of sub-locations.	Informants in the **94%** sub-locations **cited drought** as the main reason for the arrival movement.
Returnees	Informants **reported returnees** in **89%** of sub-locations.	Informants in the **60%** of sub-locations cited the **have not found assistance** in their temporary place of residence as the main cause for return, while informants in **38%** of the sub-locations said that the returnees came back to their place of origin because they wanted/needed to rejoin their families.
Foreign Nationals	Informants **reported foreign** nationals in **7%** of sub-locations.	Informants in **80%** of the sub-locations cited **drought** as the main reason for the movement of the foreign nationals.
Pastoralist Drop-Outs	Informants **reported pastoralist drop-outs** in **99%** of sub-locations.	Informants in **86%** of the sub-locations cited **drought** to the main cause for pastoralist drop-outs

Households which included older persons and children, and those headed by women were mentioned by key informants as the most at-risk groups in this assessment due to their high risk of exposure to protection issues, such as gender-based violence and lack of access to basic social services in rural settings.Among those assessed, 48,251 households were headed by women, 35, 962 households were headed by elderly persons and 10, 158 were headed by children. During the drought, these groups were left behind with fewer or no employment opportunities, placing them in distressful situations. Of the 10,158 child-headed households, 2,954 (29%) had no relatives or community members living near them and therefore, they were separated from their legal or customary guardians, while 8,181 children (81%) were reported to be without permanent sources of support. Furthermore, no recorded livelihood assistance was provided by any agencies, and the child-headed households survived on their own.

6. Johannes, Eliza & Zulu, Leo & Kalipeni, Ezekiel. (2014).
7. The County Government of Garissa, Demographic. N.D.
8. IOM in reference to the Kenya Population and Housing Census 2019 conducted by KNBS and in coordination with the Couty Commissioner's Office and the County Government's Office mapped all the sub-locations prior to the data collection exercise and conducted a preliminary assessment in all the existing sub-locations between May and June, 2023.

Map 1. Mobility Tracking Assessment, locations of data collection

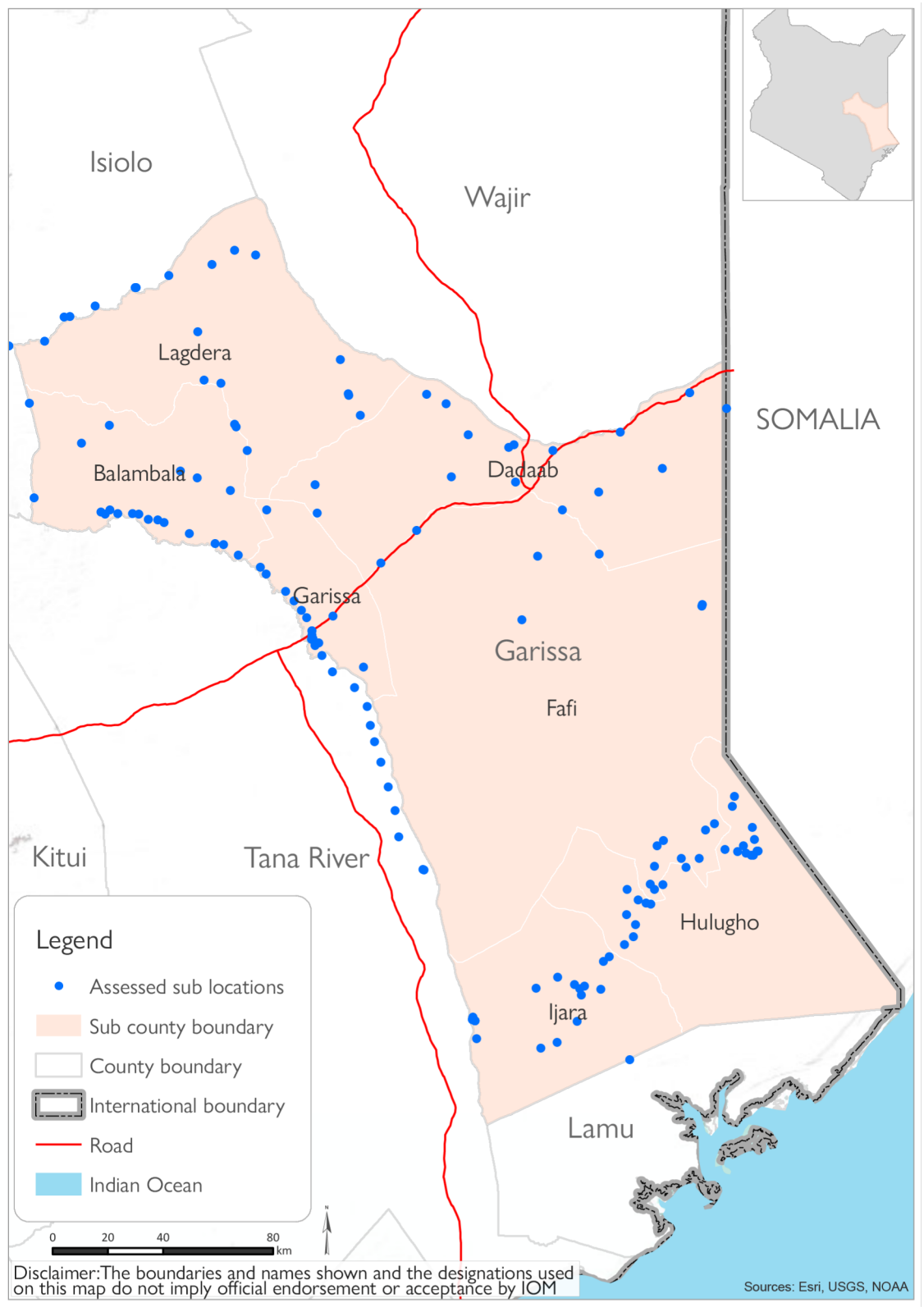
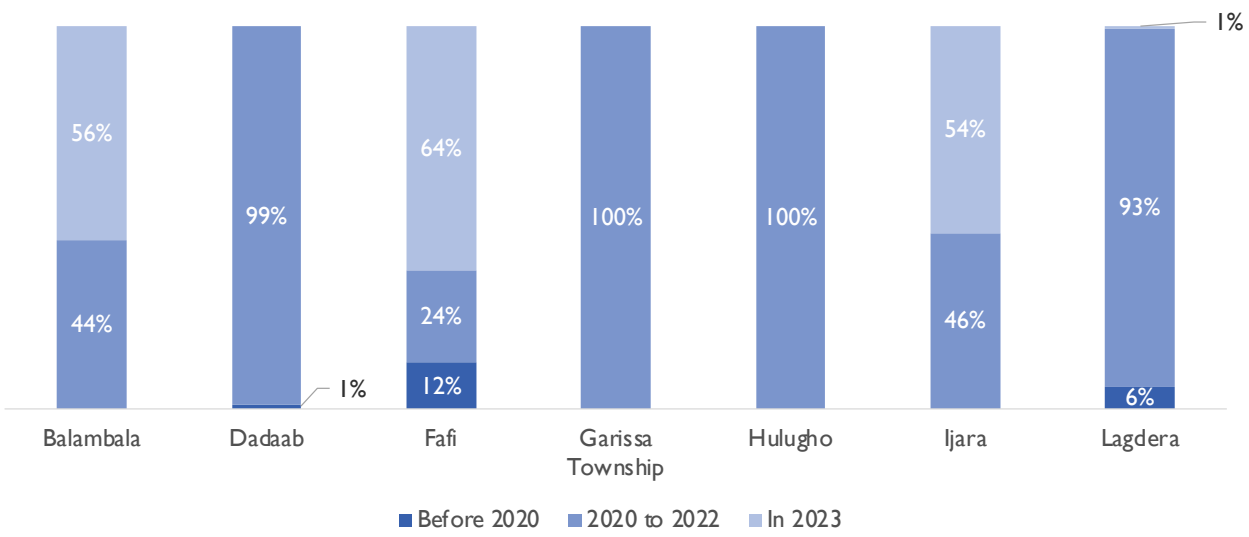


Figure 1. Key Informants reporting absentee households by period of movement (%)

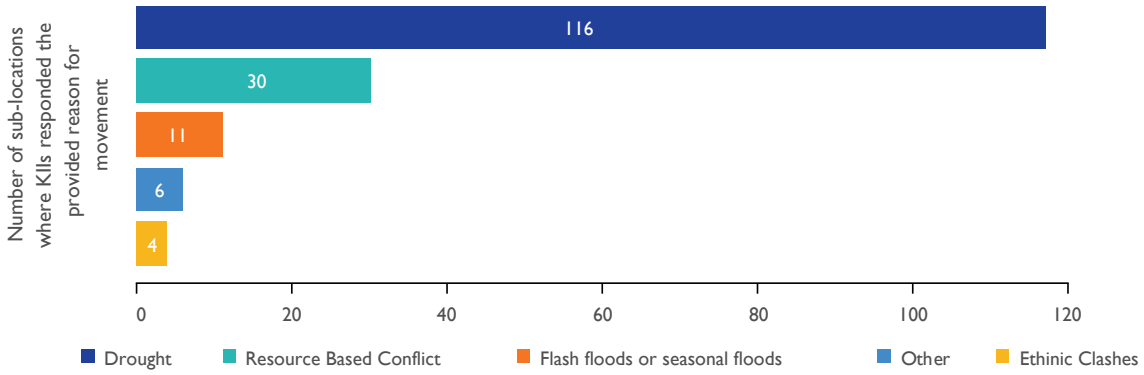


Absentees

Informants from 120 of 150 sub-locations (80%) reported absentees, which overall accounted for 12,760 households. Seventy-four per cent of all absentee households were reported to have left their places of residence between 2020 to 2022, a period when drought severely affected the county.

According to key informants, drought was the main reason for the forced movement of people in 97 per cent of the sub-locations. The second most reported reason was resource-based conflict (25%), followed by flash floods (9%). Education and "better life opportunities" were also cited as top drivers of forced movement.

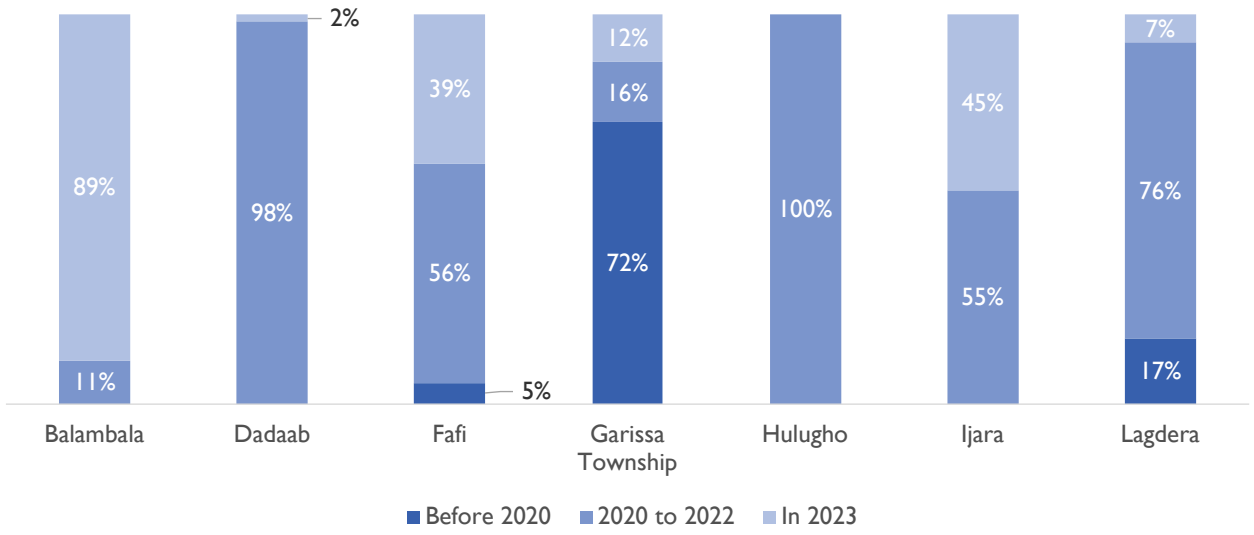
Figure 2. Reason(s) for absentee movement, reported across sub-locations[9].



9. "Other" reasons reported included: Livelihoods/employment search (n=4), search for improved living standards (n=1), and search for education opportunities (n=1).

Arrivals

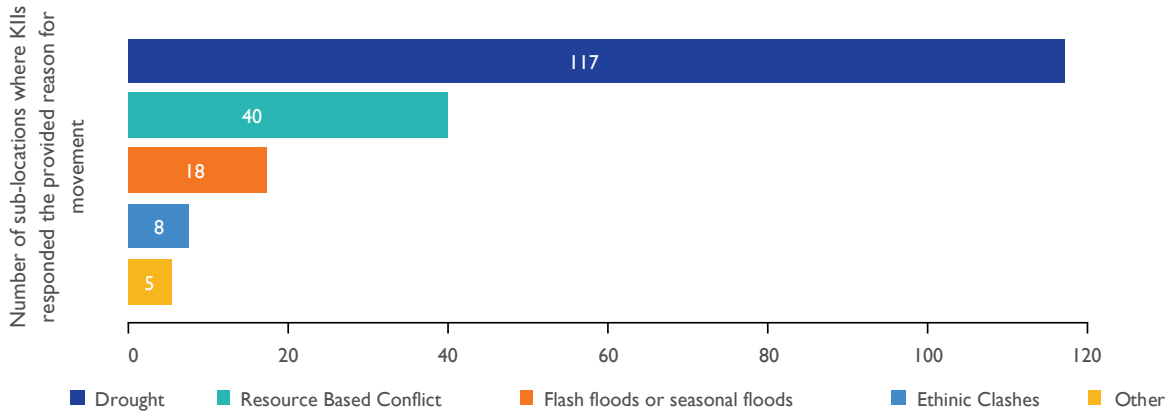
Figure 3. Key Informants reporting the arrival households by period of movement (%)



Informants from 124 of 150 sub-locations (83%) recorded arrival populations, representing 15,299 households. Sixty-one per cent of all arrival households arrived and temporarily settled at the assessment sites between 2020 to 2022, while 27 per cent arrived in 2023 and the remaining 12 per cent arrived before 2020. Thus, indicatively, the number of arrivals increased 5x from those before 2020 (and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic) to those who arrived in the two years after 2020. Furthermore, arrivals in 2023 remained higher than those prior to the pandemic, and indicate a trend of rising displacement in Garissa County.

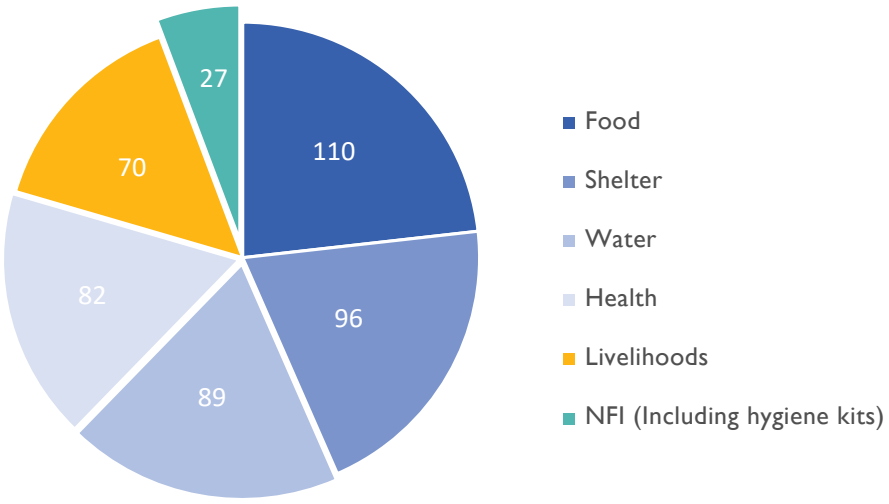
According to the key informants the majority (80%) of the newly arrived households in all assessed sub-locations moved within Kenya, and 20 per cent arrived from Somalia. Of those moving within Kenya, 50 per cent arrived at the assessment site from another sub-location in Garissa County, 31 per cent arrived from Wajir and 9 per cent arrived from Machakos County, driven by drought and resource-based conflict.

Figure 4. Reported reason(s) for arrival, by sub-locations and rounds of data collection



Informants reported that majority of the arrival households (76%) were accommodated by the host communities, while 24 per cent of the arrivals were occupying temporary spontaneous sites [10].

Figure 5. Most Urgent Needs of Arrival Households as reported by Key Informants



Food	Shelter	Water	Health	Livelihoods	NFI (Including Hygiene kits)
110 Sub-Locations	96 Sub-Locations	89 Sub-Locations	82 Sub-Locations	70 Sub-Locations	27 Sub-Locations
13,026 Households	12,412 Households	10,070 Households	10,235 Households	8,823 Households	5,547 Households

Returnees

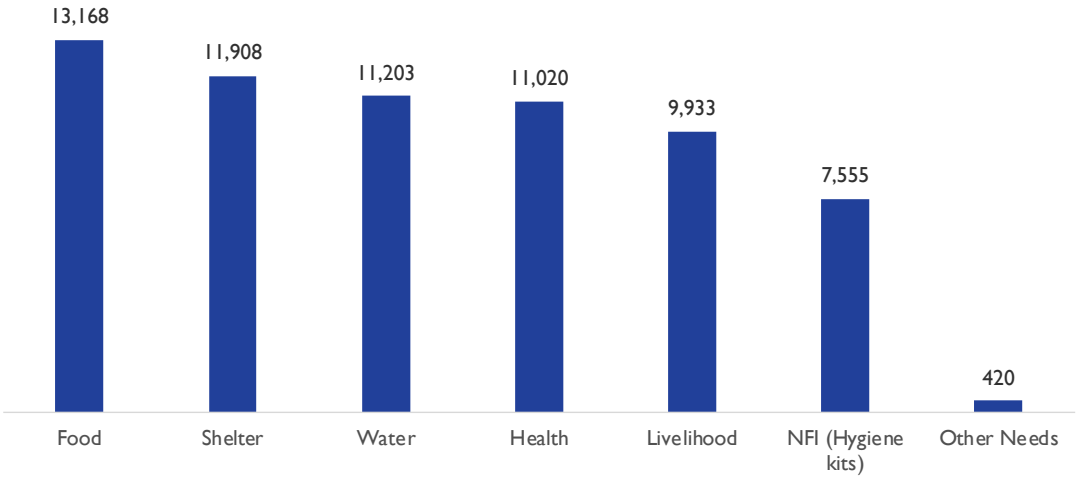
Of the 150 assessed sub-locations, key informants in 133 reported the presence of returnees (89%), amounting to 15,925 households. Overall, 64 per cent of returnees returned to their places of origin in 2023, while 35 per cent returned between 2020-2022 and 1 per cent before 2020.

According to the key informants the majority (81%) of the newly arrived households in all assessed sub-locations temporarily resided in Kenya, while 16 per cent were in Somalia and 2 per cent were in Ethiopia. Of those moving within Kenya, 57 per cent temporarily resided outside of their places of origin in Garissa, suggesting prevalent internal migration within the county. Informants also cited Tana River for 28 per cent of the returnee households as the temporary place of residence followed by Wajir (7%). Most of the returnee households (77%) were living with their communities, 22 per cent were living in spontaneous sites and less than 1 per cent lived in planned sites [11].

Informants in the 60 per cent of sub-locations cited they had not found assistance in their temporary place of residence and reported that this was their main cause for return. However, informants in 38 per cent of the sub-locations reported that the returnees came back to their place of origin because they wanted/needed to rejoin their families. Other reasons (4%) included that the situation got better in the places of origin of the returnee households, particularly as data was collected prior to the rainy season.

10. Displaced households who live collectively outside of the government designated/planned sites. These households normally stay in open spaces dwelling in makeshift shelters or tents.

Figure 7. Most Urgent Needs of Returnee Households as Cited by Key Informants (multiple choice)



Foreign Nationals

Respondents in 10 sub-locations reported the presence of foreign nationals. Of these, 84 per cent of the foreign national households were hosted since 2020, while 16 per cent of foreign nationals reportedly arrived before 2020. All the foreign nationals were reported to be Somali nationals. The key informants across sub-locations (80%) reported drought as the main reason for the forced movement among foreign national households (84%), followed by resource-based conflict (40% of sub-locations and 65% of households), flash flood (30% and 52%) and ethnic clashes (10% for both sub-locations and households). Other reasons included to pursue employment opportunities and a change in lifestyle. The households of foreign nationals predominantly resided in Lagdera sub-county (52%), Garissa township sub-county (30%) and Dadaab sub-county (18%).

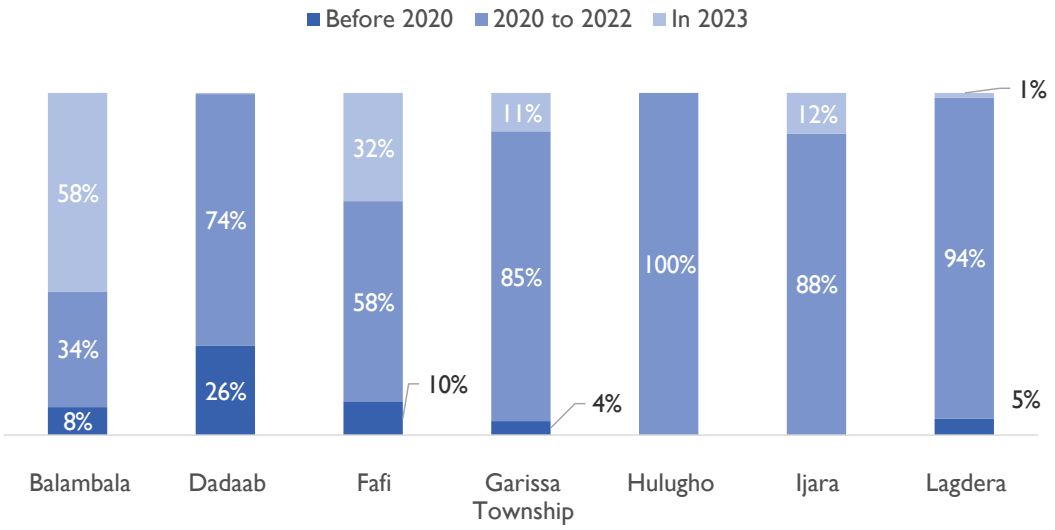
Pastoralist Dropouts

Pastoralism was recorded as the main source of livelihoods, as confirmed by key informants in 130 out of the 150 sublocations (87%). However, pastoralist drop-outs were reported among the most vulnerable groups in the county as this population depended solely on financial gains from pastoralism without any alternative means of living. Unpredictable weather patterns further exacerbated pastoralists' economic condition and vulnerability to cope with the severe impacts of climate change, including the continued deterioration of pastures, lack of food and flash floods. As a result, community members lost their livestock, or their livestock were stolen by other pastoralists to replenish the deceased animals.

In nearly all the assessed sub-locations (99%) informants reported the presence of pastoralist dropouts. Across all the sub-locations, 88 per cent of respondents reported dropouts before 2023, and dropout rates increased most drastically during the 2020-2022 drought period.

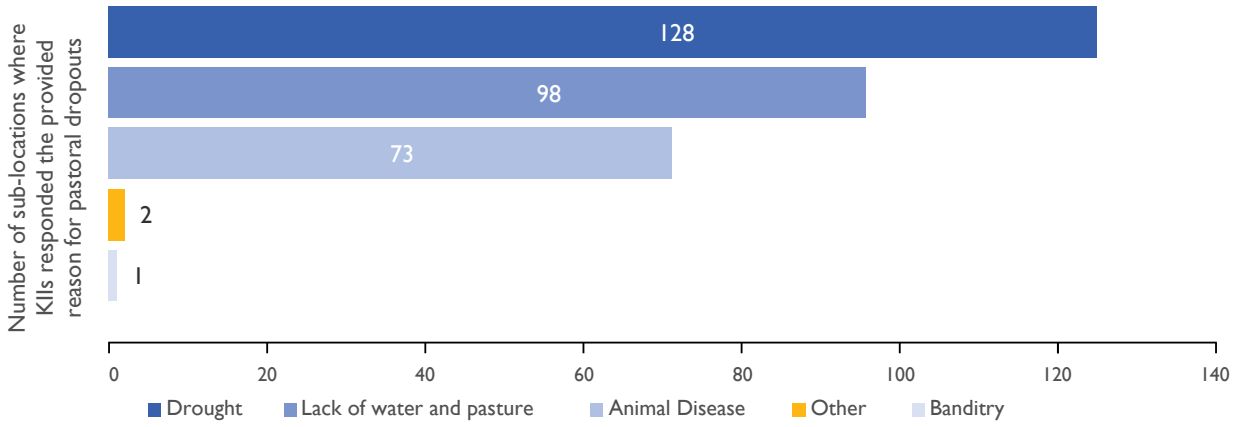
11. Figures do not equal 100 due to rounding. Vodafone. N.d.

Figure 8. Pastoral dropout households, by period reported (%)



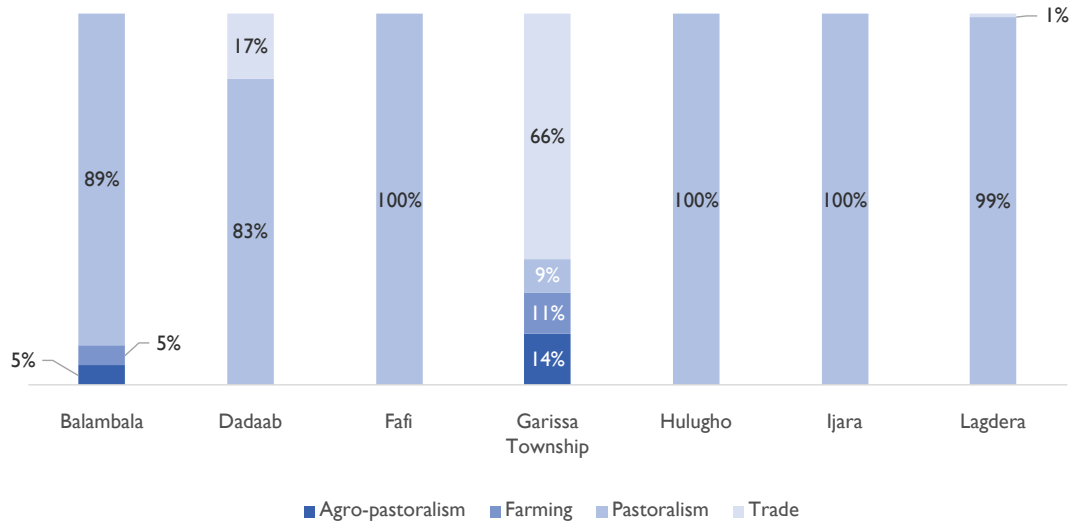
Of the 150 assessed sub-locations, key informants in 148 reported the presence of pastoralist drop-outs, amounting to 48,026 households. Overall, 76 per cent of the reported pastoralist dropout households were dropouts since 2020, 12 per cent dropped out of pastoralism in 2023 and 11 per cent dropped out of pastoralism before 2020.

Figure 9. Reported reason(s) for pastoral dropouts, across sub-locations



Livelihoods

Figure 10. Main livelihoods, as a proportion of sub-locations, reported by key informants



In 87 per cent of sub-locations and for 81 per cent of households, the primary livelihood activity was pastoralism. Key informants in 6 per cent of the assessed sub-locations reported trade as households' main source of livelihoods. Beyond these sources, respondents reported residents' reliance on local small-scale agro-pastoralism and farming.

All respondents were asked about the most common method of money exchange and business transactions among residents in their respective sub-counties. The question included pre-defined options of cash, M-PESA, and bank transactions. Of these, cash transactions via M-PESA [12] were reported as the most common way of facilitating business in Garissa County, as key informants, representing 77 per cent of sublocations reported that residents use this method. Alternatively, key informants representing 44 per cent of sub-locations reported that residents primarily used cash transactions and less than 1 per cent used bank transactions.

Challenges and Coping Mechanisms

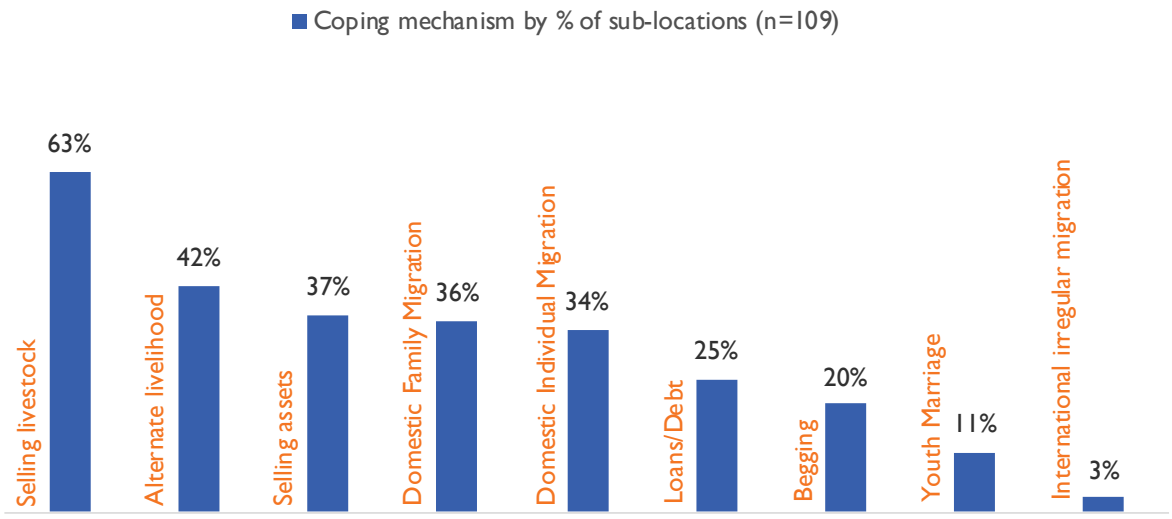
To understand the main challenges faced by the assessed communities, key informants were asked a multiple-choice question about challenges faced between 2022 and 2023 [13]. Once the challenges were reported, enumerators probed the informants for details on the communities' common coping mechanisms in response to the corresponding challenges. Lack of access to food, and environmental challenges, were reported by informants in 73 and 69 per cent of the sub-locations as the main challenges of the 1-2 years prior to the data collection. Following these challenges, loss of livelihoods was the third most-reported challenge (62% reporting). Informants listed selling livestock, alternating livelihoods, and selling assets as the top three coping mechanisms in sub locations facing environmental challenges.

12. Vodafone. N.d.
13. The multiple choices offered to respondents included the following: 1. Environmental challenges (flood, drought, locust, and other challenges), 2. Safety and security, 3. Ethnic conflicts, 4. Resource-based conflict, 5. Lack of food and water, 6. Loss of livelihood, 7. Lack of access to essential services, 8. Others (please specify).

Table 3. Reported Challenges and Related Coping Mechanisms

Reported Challenge between 2022-2023	Reported Coping Mechanism
Lack of Food and Water Cited by key informants from 109 sub-locations (73%)	When responding to insufficient food and water: a. Key informants from 63 per cent of the sub-locations (n=109) reported selling livestock as the first coping mechanism, alternating livelihoods at 42 per cent of the sub-locations (n=46), closely followed by selling assets (37%, n=40). b. Moving out with family (internally) was the fourth common adaptation strategy as reported by key informants in 36 per cent of the assessed sub-locations (n=39). c. In 34 per cent of the assessed sub-locations (n=37), respondents cited individual, internal migration as the key coping mechanism. d. Loans/dept was a key coping strategy reported in 25 per cent of sub-locations (n=27) in response to insufficient food and water.
Environmental Challenges Cited by key informants from 104 sub-locations (69%)	In response to environmental concerns: a. Key informants from 63 per cent of the sub-locations (n=66) reported selling livestock as most community members' first coping mechanism, alternating livelihoods at 54 per cent (n= 56), closely followed by selling assets (45% or 47 key informants). b. In 29 per cent of the sub-locations which experienced environmental challenges, (n=104), respondents reported that community members moved with their family members within Kenya to cope. c. Respondents in 28 per cent of the locations (n=29) chose to pursue internal, individual migration. d. Respondents in 21 per cent of the sub-locations (n=22) reported that community members pursued loans or depth to cope with environmental concerns.
Loss of Livelihood Cited by key informants from 93 sub-locations (62%)	In response to a loss of livelihoods: a. Key informants from 56 per cent of the sub-locations (n=52) reported pursuing alternate livelihoods as the first coping mechanism, and selling livestock at 47 per cent of the sub-locations (n=44) and closely followed selling assets (40% or n=37). b. Respondents in 30 per cent of sub-locations (n= 28) reported that community members looked for loans/debts. c. Respondents in 28 per cent of sub-locations reported that community members pursued internal, household migration. d. Respondents in 24 per cent of sub-locations (n=22) reported that community members asked for money from strangers (begging) in response to loss of livelihoods.

Figure 11. Coping in response to a lack of food and water, as a proportion of sub-locations reporting



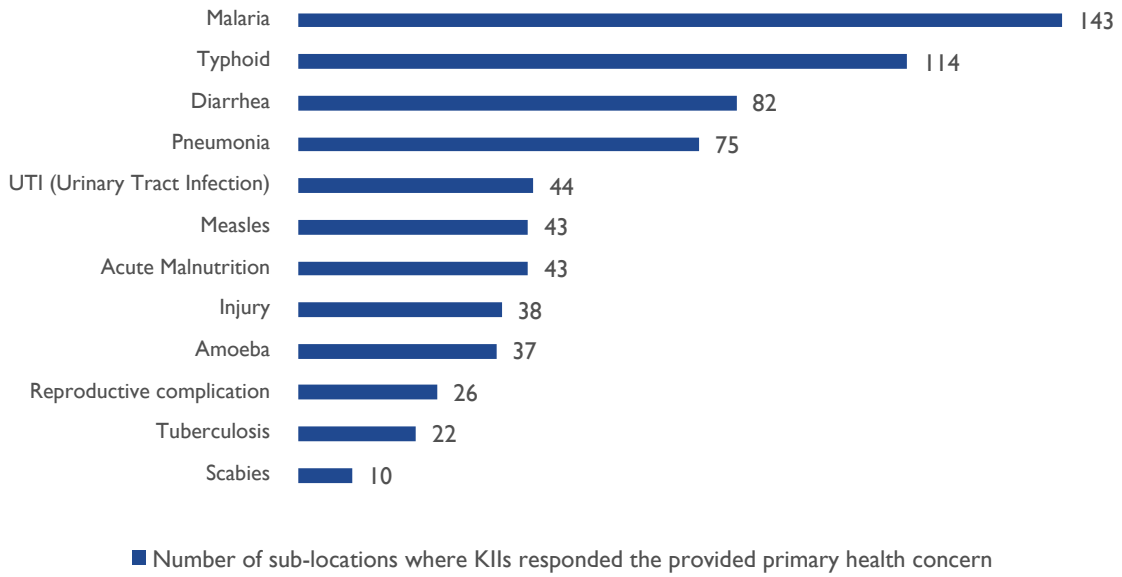
Multi-Sectoral Location Assessment

Apart from the mobility dimension of the population groups and host communities, IOM was able to assess the populations' most urgent sectoral needs in relation to health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education, shelters, and non-food items (NFIs).

Health

The most prevalent health issue reported was malaria, reported by informants in 143 of 150 (95%) sub-locations. The second and third most reported ailments were typhoid (82%) and diarrhea (64%), respectively. Waterborne diseases like diarrhea and typhoid are closely linked to unprotected and contaminated water supplies as well as a lack of sufficient water. As part of the WASH questions, 59 per cent of KIs reported that in their respective location, "About half" of community members had access to water for drinking.

Figure 12. Primary health concerns, as reported by key informants across all the sub-locations (multiple choice)

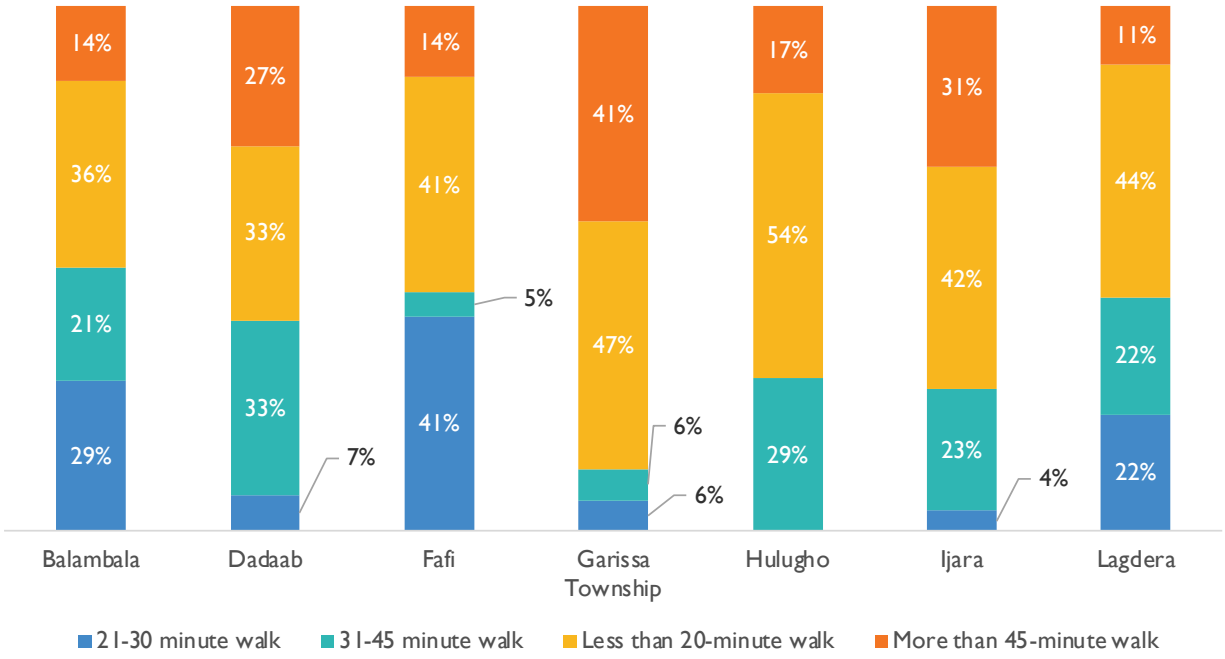


Key informants from 52 per cent of the sub-locations reported the presence of health facilities in their respective sub-location. However, the facilities reportedly suffered from the absence of medicine, (95%), inadequate number of qualified personnel (29%), no referrals (27%), lack of water (22%), distance between the community and the health facility (13%), cost of treatment (4%), insecurity along the trip to the hospital, and discrimination against the mobile population groups (3%). In 20 sub-locations, health facilities (26% of those assessed) were reportedly not open every day. Furthermore, most respondents reported that the healthcare infrastructure was damaged and in need of minor repairs (55%) or major repairs (33%) and only 12 per cent of facilities were reported to be in good condition.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Respondents reported 266 functional, potable water sources across the 150 sub-locations. Additionally, key informants from 5 sub-locations reported that they had no functional water sources. Of the 266 functional water sources, 8 were reportedly inaccessible due to the distance and unreliable water yield. To further probe the distance between the community members and their water sources, a follow up question was directed to key informants querying the most common distance between local households and their water sources. Forty-three per cent of key informants reported that less than 20 minutes on foot (one way) was required to access water. In 20 per cent of the sub-locations, key informants reported that most residents require 31-45 minutes to access water on foot and in some locations (21 per cent of those assessed) respondents reported that 45 minutes or more was required for community members to fetch water. In the remaining 16 per cent of the sub-locations, residents trekked between 21 and 30 minutes to access clean, potable water.

Figure 13. Time required to access water sources on foot, as reported the proportion of sub-locations

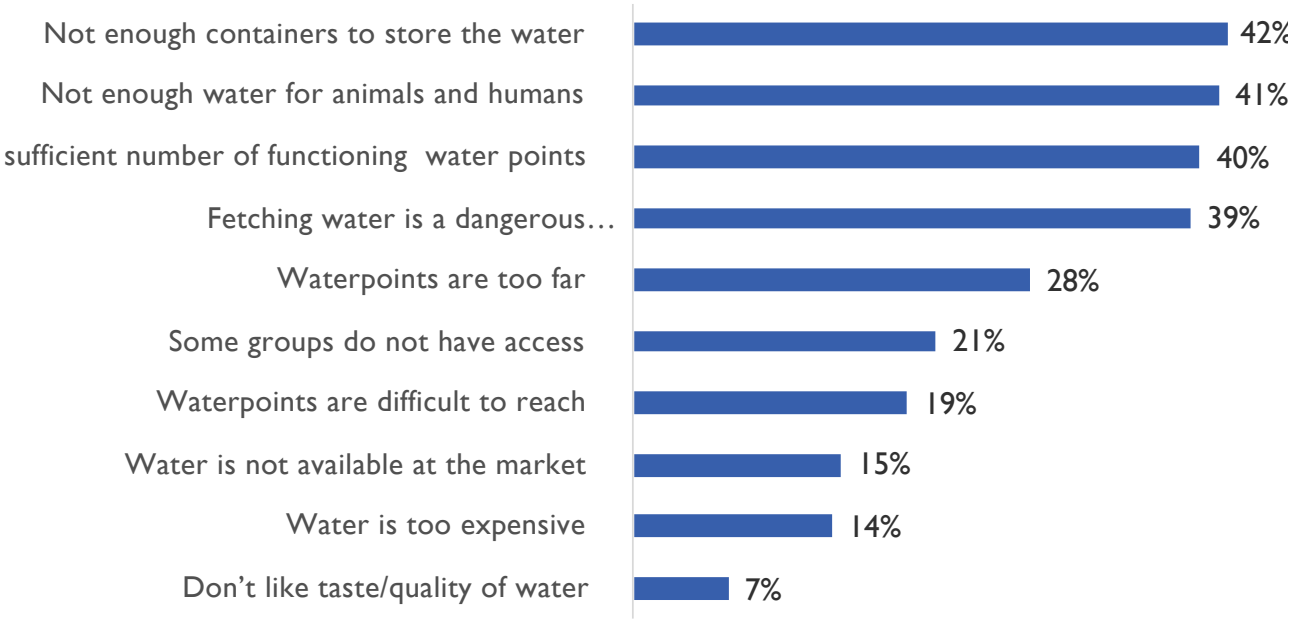


14. The sub-locations with no reported functional water sources according to the key informants were as follows (in alphabetical order): 1. Garse 2. Ilan 3. Modika, 4. Sangailu, 5. Tawakal

Respondents reported that 99 sub-locations (66%) had existing water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) committees, while 51 sub-locations reportedly did not have any WASH committees (34%). WASH committees are responsible for planning, organizing, decision-making, coordination, control and monitoring of the water facilities and schemes at the grassroots level. Technical maintenance of the water sources is also part of their mandate. The local community maintained water sources around 60 per cent of the assessed sub-locations. Some water sources were also maintained by the government and humanitarian agencies, either in full, or in partnership, with the community. In 6 sub-locations (7%), respondents reported that no structures for water management exist.

Respondents from 42 per cent of the sub-locations reported that there were not enough containers to store water, respondents in 41 per cent of the locations reported not enough water for humans and animals and 40 per cent reported insufficient number of functional water points. The lack of access to sufficient water—whether due to a lack of containers, lack of water points or simply lack of water—is a dire concern that needs to be highlighted for action.

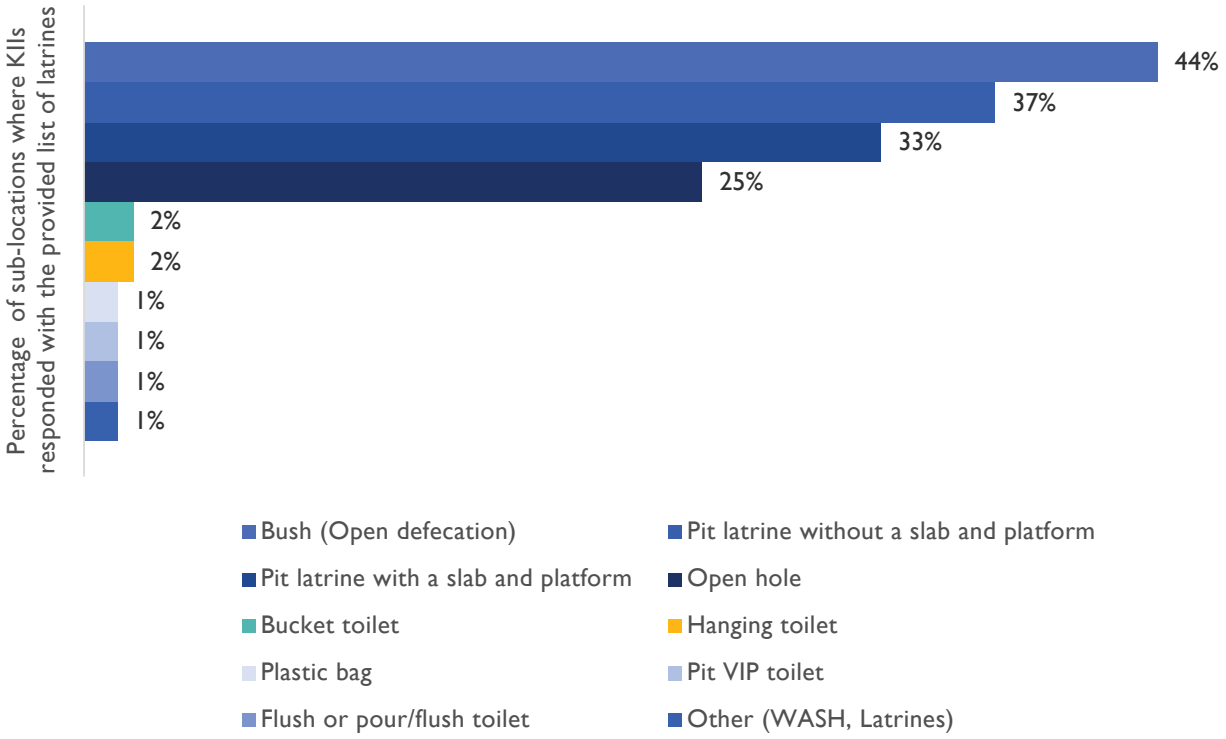
Figure 14. Issues in accessing water, reported by sub-locations



According to respondents, the drinking water supply from 55 per cent of the functional water sources were treated using disinfection products. Meanwhile, 35 per cent of the functional water sources were not treated for harmful bacteria and waterborne diseases. Respondents in 5 and 4 per cent of the sub-locations reported that water was cleaned through boiling and filtration, respectively. Open defecation was reported in 66 sub-locations (44%). The most reported drivers in the sub-locations for people to practice open defecation was the non-functionality of latrines (40%), difficulty in accessing the latrines (39%), lack of privacy as there was no reported partition for male and female cubicles (35%), and insecurity when accessing the latrines (11%). The insecurity-related latrine issues were reported by key informants in three sub-counties in decreasing order: Balambala (9 sub-locations), Dadaab (3 sub-locations), Lagdera (3 sub-locations) and Hulugho (1 sub-locations). In many cases, latrines were also cost-prohibitive, and many key informants noted that building expenses were a deterrent for latrine construction and use.

Most respondents in sub-locations reported that the top three sources of water were: motorized borehole (16%), rainwater (15%), rainwater collection (12%),river water (10%) and public tap (9%). Communities using river water are more vulnerable to health risks, as feces from open defecation and animal waste often contaminate the water, especially

Figure 15. Types of toilets/latrines used, as a proportion of respondents in sub-locations reporting



Education

Respondents in Garissa County reported active educational institutions in 96 per cent of sub-locations, while 4 per cent of respondents reported that their sub-location did not have an educational facility. Among the six sub-locations with no reported educational facilities, one in Dadaab (Liboi) – was closed due to the devastating effects of the recurrent droughts over the course of 2020 to 2023. Respondents from five sub-locations in the sub-counties of Balambala, Fafi, Hulugho, Ijara and Lagdera reported that the locations never hosted educational facilities.

There were two sub-locations identified where the nearest school was reportedly over 10 kilometers away. In one sub-location, the school was three to five kilometers away, another sub-location hosted a school one to two kilometers away, and two sub-locations hosted schools less than one kilometer away. Key informants noted a considerable number of school dropouts across all the sub-locations, amounting to approximately 17,568 students (22% of the estimated number of students).

Shelter and Non-Food Items

Most respondents in the sub-locations (51%) reported that when the mobile and local communities constructed their shelters, they sourced the materials from the surrounding bush, while 35 per cent purchased materials from nearby markets. In 42 per cent of sub-locations, the construction of a decent shelter was reportedly prohibitively expensive due to the high price of primary materials in the local market. It was also reported that, in 33 per cent of sub-locations, shelters were made of light materials and were not stable enough to withstand environmental hazards or security threats.

Respondents in most communities (43%) reported that shelters were made of mud walls and thatched roofing. Respondents in 34 per cent of the communities reported that buul/tukul shelters were made of wood frames, with cloth or plastic sheeting, while 25 per cent of respondents (representing 37 sub-locations) reported that some houses were made of brick walls and iron sheet roofing.

15. Question was offered as a multiple choice and therefore percentages do not equal to 100.
16. Unfortunately, respondents were not asked the time when students dropped out and the question was not constrained to a distinct period. Thus, child dropouts could have been interpreted as having occurred any time in the past.

Conclusion

Findings from the DTM data collection provides insights into the significant challenges confronting communities in Kenya amid the relentless onslaught of climate change-induced disasters, particularly droughts and floods. The cyclical nature of these environmental upheavals exacerbates existing vulnerabilities, leading to widespread displacement, resource scarcity, and heightened risks for affected populations.

A key revelation from the Garissa County Mobility Tracking assessments is the concentration of displaced households in areas already struggling with various challenges, including drought, resource-based conflicts, and ethnic tensions. This exacerbates pressure on resources and social cohesion, as communities already under strain must now accommodate additional populations with urgent needs.

Of particular concern are the vulnerabilities faced by children on the move, including unaccompanied and separated minors. They are not only at risk of exploitation and abuse, but also face barriers to accessing education and essential healthcare services in locations where such services are available. Unaccompanied children face specific barriers in Kenya which may include lack of documentation and identification which can limit access to essential services, distance to facilities and non-access to transport, fear and skepticism of authorities and beyond. For all children, in May 2024, the floods in Kenya closed state schools indefinitely as rains, and a possible cyclone, threaten access to roads, household-level flooding, and the safety of all persons living in locations near bodies of water. The closure of educational facilities due to meteorological shocks further compounds the challenges unique to all children and limits their opportunities for a brighter future.

The floods additionally highlighted the inadequacy of housing structures to withstand environmental hazards and underscored the urgent need for improved infrastructure and disaster preparedness measures. Without secure shelter, communities remain highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In addressing these challenges, evidence-based responses are crucial for effective humanitarian assistance and sustainable development planning. By leveraging both current data on immediate needs and historical data to discern patterns, stakeholders can allocate resources and interventions where they are most urgently required, ensuring a timely and strategic response.

Yet it is important to acknowledge that addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability and fostering resilience against future climate shocks requires investments beyond response—sustainable development, climate adaptation strategies, community empowerment, and conflict resolution are all requisite. By addressing the root drivers of vulnerability, more resilient and adaptable communities become more capable to withstand the current and future impacts of climate change.

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