



**Hirshabelle Drought Assessment Report  
(December 2021)**



**Conducted by:** Hirshabelle local authority for Middle Shabelle and Hiraan, Aid Vision, STS, Kardo aid, SHARDO, ARD, SOCDO, WISE, ORDO, SAACID, WARDI, PAH, JIRDO, AVORD, AADSOM, SYPD, Samrado, CESVI, AFR, HIWA, SCI, Agrocare, Mercy USA, GELO, Somrelief, DAN, Somdevsom, Bardo, STS, HORSEED, SOMPLAN, CRDO, Direct Aid, HIDIG, Citizen, Haba, DRC, Juba foundation, Technoplan, JRD, IRS and SORD; CESDO, SPL, GSA, STA, RRP

**Supported with logistics:** in Hiraan assessment the following NGOs provided transport: SCI, DRC, AADSOM, SAMRAADO, DIRECT AID, CITIZEN, HORSEED, IRS, DAN, CESDO, WARDI, GELO, MERCY USA, SYPD and RRP and AFR

In Middle Shabelle, the NGOs of ORDO, STS, SOCDO, PAH, WISE, ARD, SAACID, AID VISION

## Supported by OCHA

## Executive Summary

- The intensifying drought has led to water shortages, crop failures, and high levels of livestock migration and deaths.
  - Population displacement in search of food, water and pasture is on the increase, with reports of new arrivals and departures including in the last one month.
  - 28 out of 40 locations assessed (72%), the communities in Hirshabelle reported the arrivals of displaced persons in the last weeks.
  - 15 out of 40 locations (37%), people had departed in the last 4 weeks.
  - The main reason for displacement in the last weeks across nearly all (93%) locations was drought.
  - Access to water remains very limited. The available berkedes and shallow wells in most locations have dried up due to the worsening drought.
    - *Out of 40 communities assessed, 12 have berkedes, 12 have boreholes, 22 have shallow wells, 13 communities reported that they receive water trucking.*
    - **Berkedes:** 67% of all berkedes are reported to be depleted, and 33% less half than full.
    - **Water trucking:** Out of the 13 communities that receive water trucking, 77% receive water on a daily basis, and 8% on a weekly basis. Two thirds of these communities rely on private water suppliers (69%), and one third on humanitarian agencies.
  - As a coping mechanism, communities have reduced the frequency and quantity of meals as many families have lost their means of livelihood and commodity prices have increased and are not affordable for most people.
  - Almost all (98%) of all assessed communities reported a lack of pasture due to a lack of rain, 78% of communities expressed concerns over the lack of water for livestock, 65% of communities cited a loss of livestock, and 60 and 58% respectively raised the issue of shortage of fodder and livestock disease.
  - 35 out of 40 of the assessed communities (88%) estimated that due to the current poor *Deyr* rain, most of the pasture has dried up. It should, however, be noted that even dried pastures can still provide grazing opportunities for livestock.
  - 31 out of 40 assessed communities estimated they could only feed their livestock for less than one month with their current available fodder stock.
  - As for the projection and estimation of the impact of the lack of the current *Deyr* rain on crop production, 33 out of the 40 communities estimated that more than 80% of the production had been affected.
  - A large majority of assessed communities (92%) reported an increase in acute malnutrition of children or pregnant and lactating women. At the same time, only 35% of assessed communities reported access to nutrition centers/facilities where people can get nutrition programs
  - Out of the 14 locations that reported access to a nutrition centre, 3 communities reported that the centre was over 5 km away from their location.
  - Two thirds (68%) of all assessed communities reported an increase in waterborne diseases in the last four weeks.
  - 25 out of 40 communities reported that a health facility was at least 5km away from their location
  - Top priority of assessed communities (50%) in Hirshabelle reported food as their first priority, with water and health needs mentioned as top priorities as well.
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## 1. Context and Objective of the Assessment

Drought has worsened significantly across Somalia following three consecutive below-average rainy seasons. According to FAO/SWALIM, drought conditions are expected to worsen in December 2021 and the first quarter of 2022, leading to a similar situation witnessed in 2017. The intensifying drought has led to water shortages, crop failures, and high levels of livestock migration and deaths. This comes only two years after a devastating drought that impacted hundreds of thousands of lives, placed additional strain on communities, stretched the humanitarian response and displaced over 300,000 people.

Given the high risk of intensified drought conditions in the coming months, humanitarian partners in collaboration with OCHA and the authorities in the state conducted a rapid assessment to evaluate the status of the water shortage/water scarcity and its impact, and verify the reported needs on the ground.

## 2. Methodology

- This was a community-level assessment with key informants (community/traditional leaders, affected populations, and the elders), using a common tool initially developed for the drought response in January 2021, which was subsequently amended to integrate elements of the Somalia Rapid Needs Assessment (SRNA).
- Under the leadership of OCHA, 12 teams were formed based on operational presence to collect data from accessible areas under Jowhar, Cadale, Balcad, Belet Weyne, Bulo Burto and Jalalaqsi districts. OCHA served as a lead, and one NGO was designated as a focal point for each district to coordinate the data collection with other NGOs and relevant Government institutions. The division of work was as follows:

District/location	Lead	Focal point	NGOs
Jowhar	OCHA	PAH	PAH, WARDI, JIRDO, WISE, GSA, ARD
Balcad	OCHA	STS	STS, AID VISION, KARDO AID
Cadale	OCHA	ORDO	ORDO, SAACID, SOCDO, SHARDO
Belet Weyne	OCHA	DAN, DRC, and Local authority	SCI, AADSOM, CESDO, WARDI, SAMRADO, AVORD, CESVI, AFR, HIWA, SYPD, GEELO, AGROCARE, IRS, Somrelief, SPL, DAN, Somdevsom, Bardo, STS, Horseed, SOMPLAN, CRDO, STA, Direct Aid, HIDIG, Citizen, Haba, DRC, JUBO foundation, SORD and Local authority rep.
Bulo Burto	OCHA	WARDI and Mercy USA	Local authority, Mercy USA and WARDI
Jalalaqsi	OCHA	AADSOM	AADSOM, Mercy USA, RRP, WARDI, JRD, AFR, TECHNOPLAN

- 40 locations (towns/villages and IDP sites) were purposively selected in consultation with local authorities, such as the district offices, based on the reported severity of the water shortage.

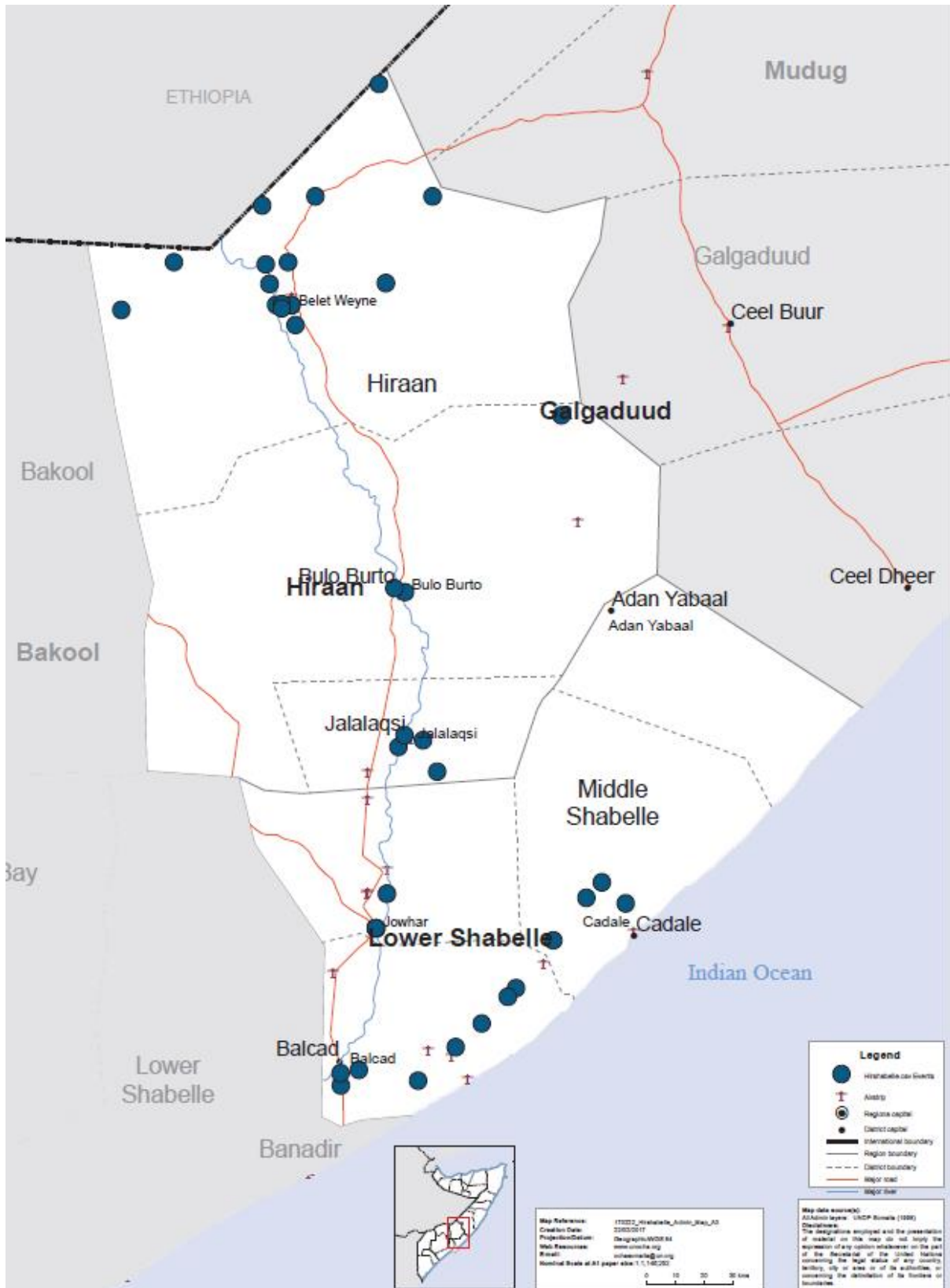
<b>Region/Districts</b>	<b>Number of locations assessed</b>
<b>Hiraan</b>	23
Belet Weyne	16
Bulo Burto	3
Jalalaqsi	4
<b>Middle Shabelle</b>	17
Balcad	6
Cadale	6
Jowhar	5

- Purposively sampled, community-level findings are indicative, and the results of the assessment are not statistically representative for each district.
- For some indicators, not all communities provided an answer. This explains variance in the total number of assessed communities across several indicators.
- All data was collected via Kobo Collect by participants based in each region. The enumerators received their briefing and training on 4 of December 2021 and collected data on the ground. Collected data was sent to the central Kobo server, and OCHA provided technical support for data cleaning.

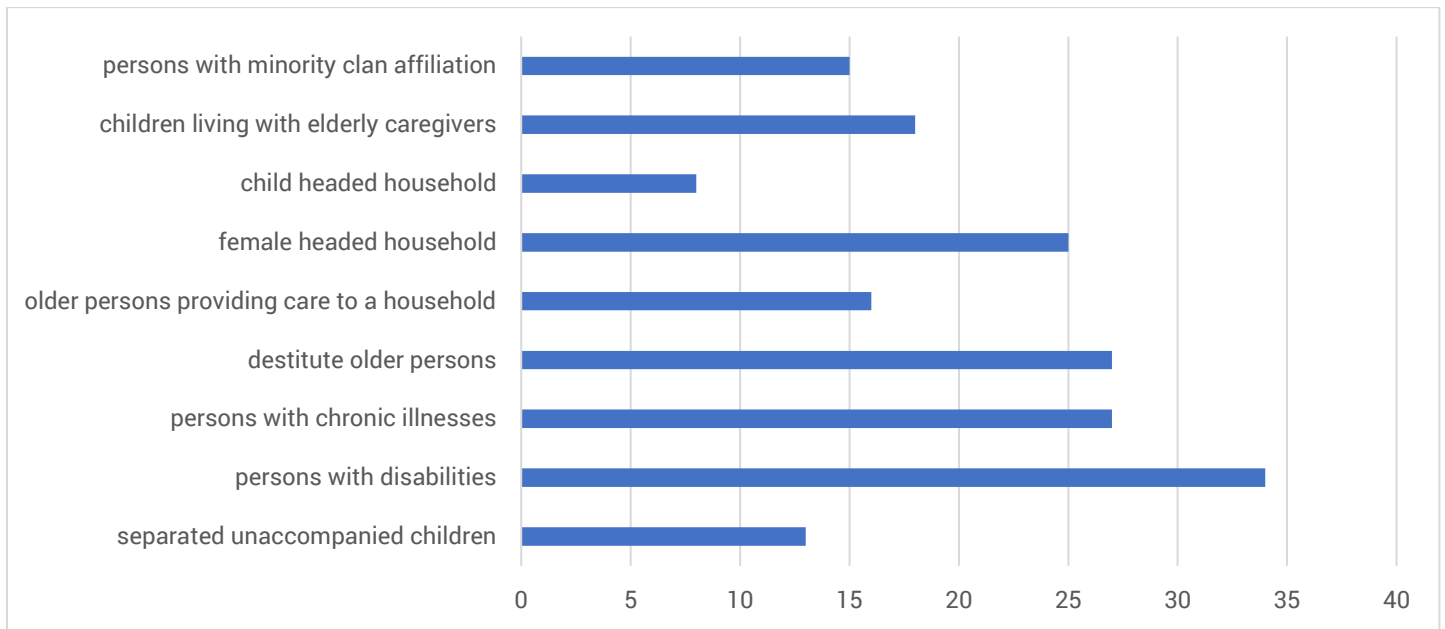
### 3. Results

#### (1) General information

##### Map of the assessed locations

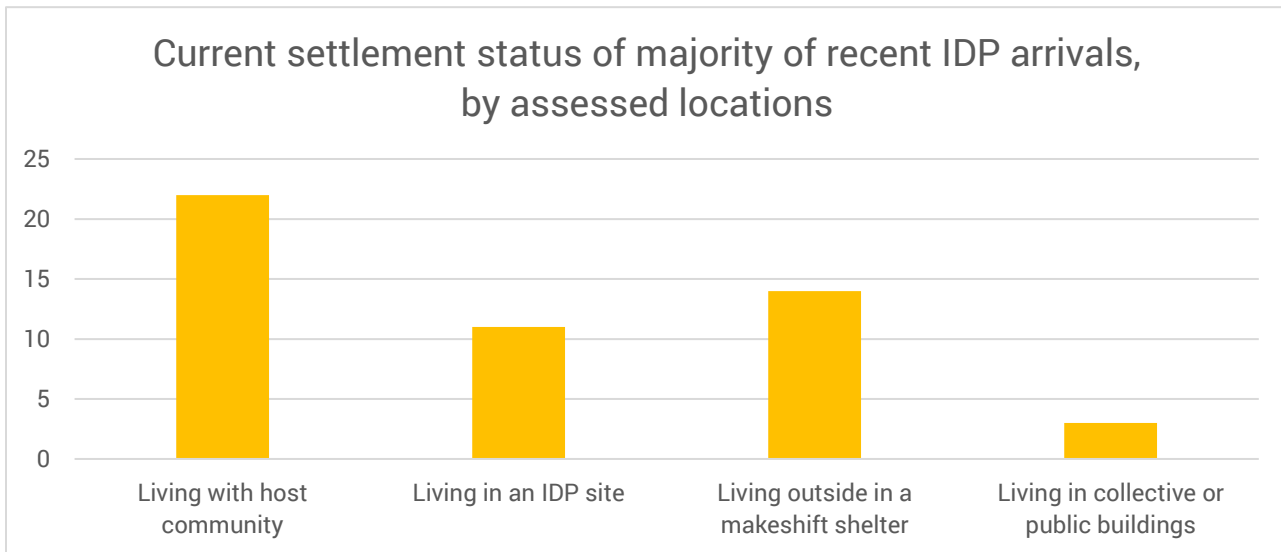


**Figure: Presence of vulnerable populations, by locations assessed**



**(2) Displacement due to drought**

- In 28 out of 40 locations assessed (72%), the communities reported the arrivals of displaced persons in the last weeks to their location, while in 15 out of 40 locations (37%), people had departed in the last 4 weeks.
- The main reason for displacement in the last weeks across nearly all (93%) locations was drought.
- Most recent IDP arrivals are residing with the host community and family, as well as outside in makeshift shelters (see graphic below).



- **The trend of displacement:**  
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**(3) Access to water**



According to the WASH cluster partner and the authorities, most of the boreholes in Hirshabelle state reduced yield due to droughts, including high pressure from multiple users and long hours of operations. Some of them have been reported and identified as unfit for human consumption and only for watering livestock due to high saline water. There are about 10 boreholes that have broken and require immediate repair. An estimated 90% of Hirshabelle population rely on surface water (rivers, shallow wells, rain harvesting berkets). In terms of rain harvesting water catchment and berkets have dried up or about to dry due to lack of rain in the past 3 consecutive rainy seasons. Thus, the rural population began emergency water trucking two months ago, with selling many livestock, donations from the local authority, politicians for election campaign, diaspora and businesspeople and well-wishers. Currently, the river level is 1.72 meters high and continue to decrease on daily with the water changing colour, odour, and taste which is unsuitable for use and eventually dries up. At this point, the situation will be critical and only deep ground water will be available that is expensive and most of the people wouldn't able to purchase.

In terms of the findings of the assessment:

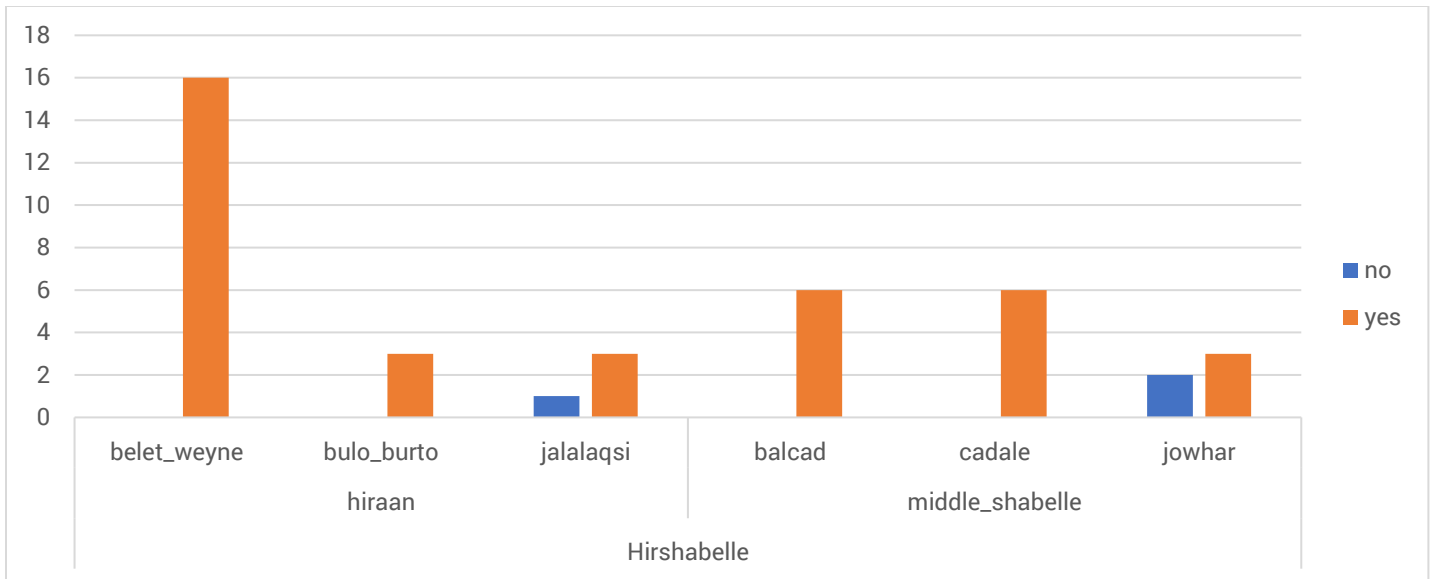
- **Water source:**
  - *Out of 40 communities assessed, 12 have berkedes, 12 have boreholes, 22 have shallow wells, 13 communities reported that they receive water trucking.*
  - **Berkeds:** *67% of all berkedes are reported to be depleted, and 33% less half than full.*
  - **Water trucking:** *Out of the 13 communities that receive water trucking, 77% receive water on a daily basis, and 8% on a weekly basis. Two thirds of these communities rely on private water suppliers (69%), and one third on humanitarian agencies.*



Borehole in Comad village, Hiraan region on pressure with many pastoralists and broken berket caused by lack of water due to drought

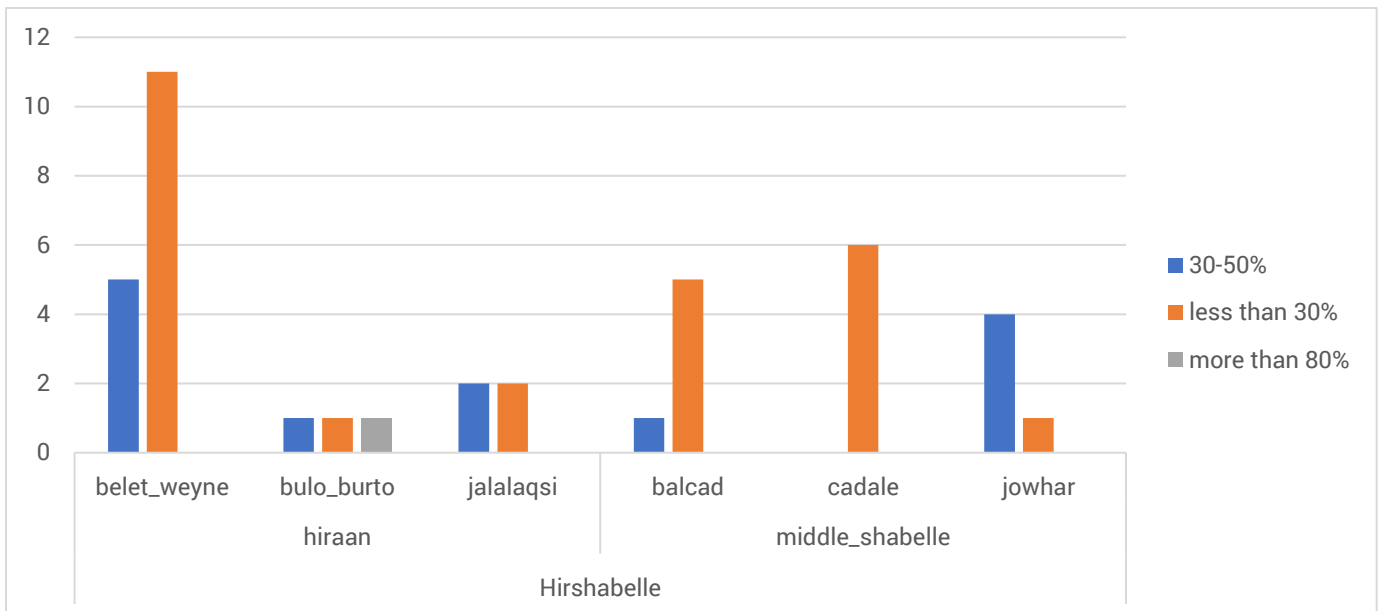
- **Consumption of water:** 37 out of 40 assessed communities (93%) reported that the majority of community members reduced water consumption due to water shortages/scarcity in the last 4 weeks.

**Figure: Number of communities who reported that the majority of community members reduced water consumption in last 4 weeks**



- Possession of water facilities (jerricans and barrels):** In nearly all communities (97%) less than 50% of the households in the community owned jerricans or barrels to store water. In 65% of all communities less than 30% of all households were reported to own jerricans or barrels.

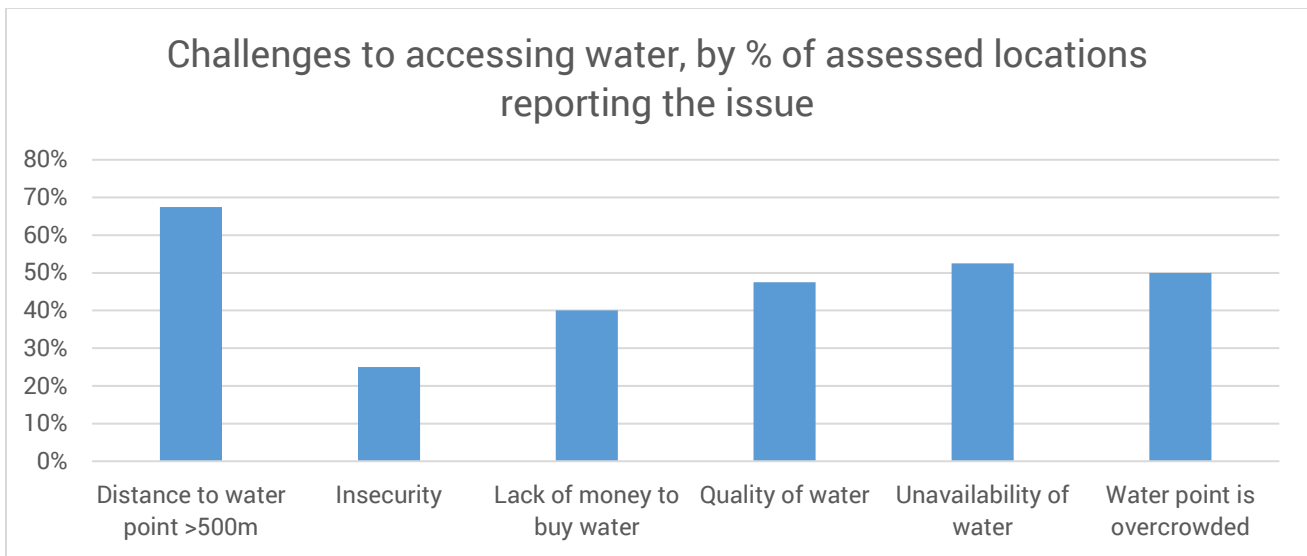
**Table: Estimation of % of households in community with jerricans and barrels, by number of assessed locations**



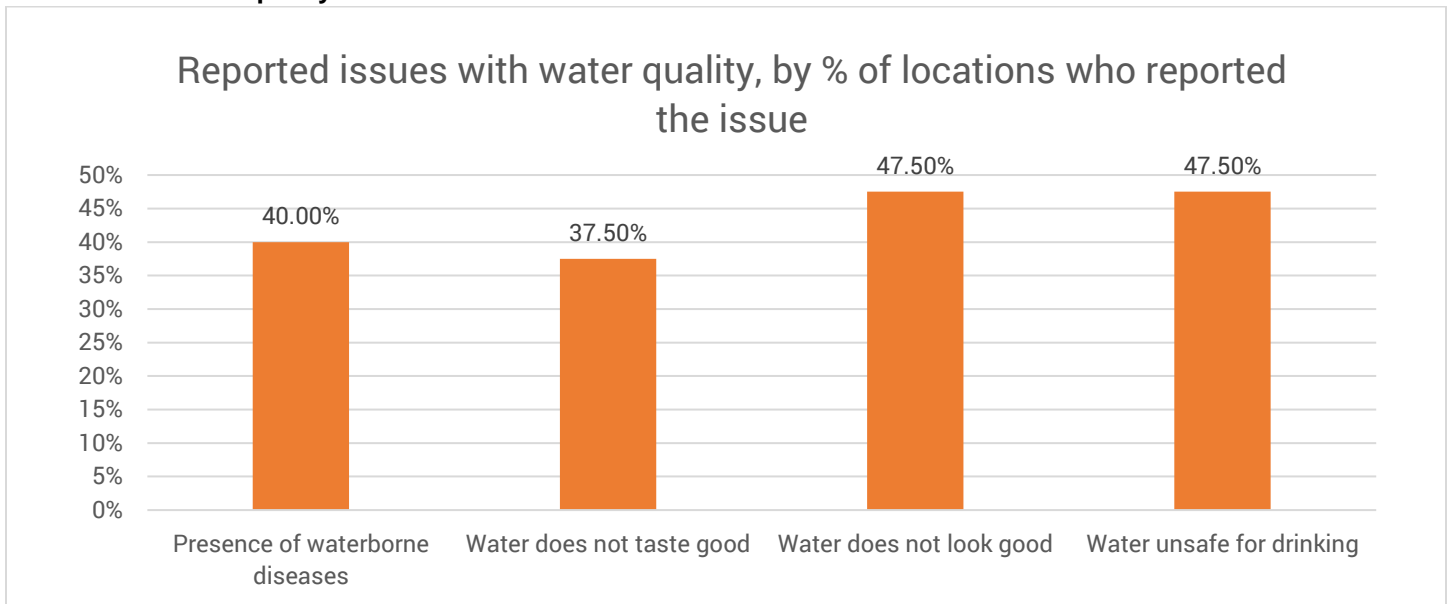
- The major challenges faced in accessing water** were distance to the water point, lack of money, unavailability of water, overcrowded water points, and the quality of water.

**Table and figure: Main challenges faced by the community in accessing water (multiple-choice question)**





- **Concerns over the quality of water:**



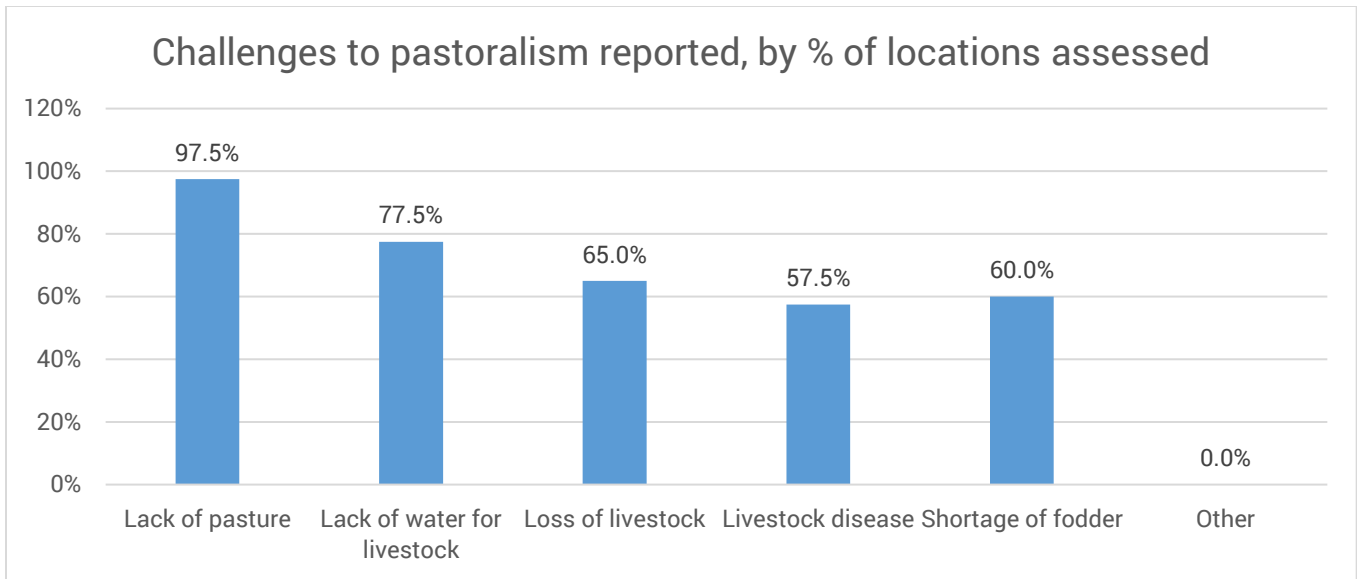
*\*Multiple choice question*

- **Water management committee:** 40% of all assessed communities reported to have WASH/water management committees
- **Water treatment:** Only 10% of all locations reported to be treating their drinking water.

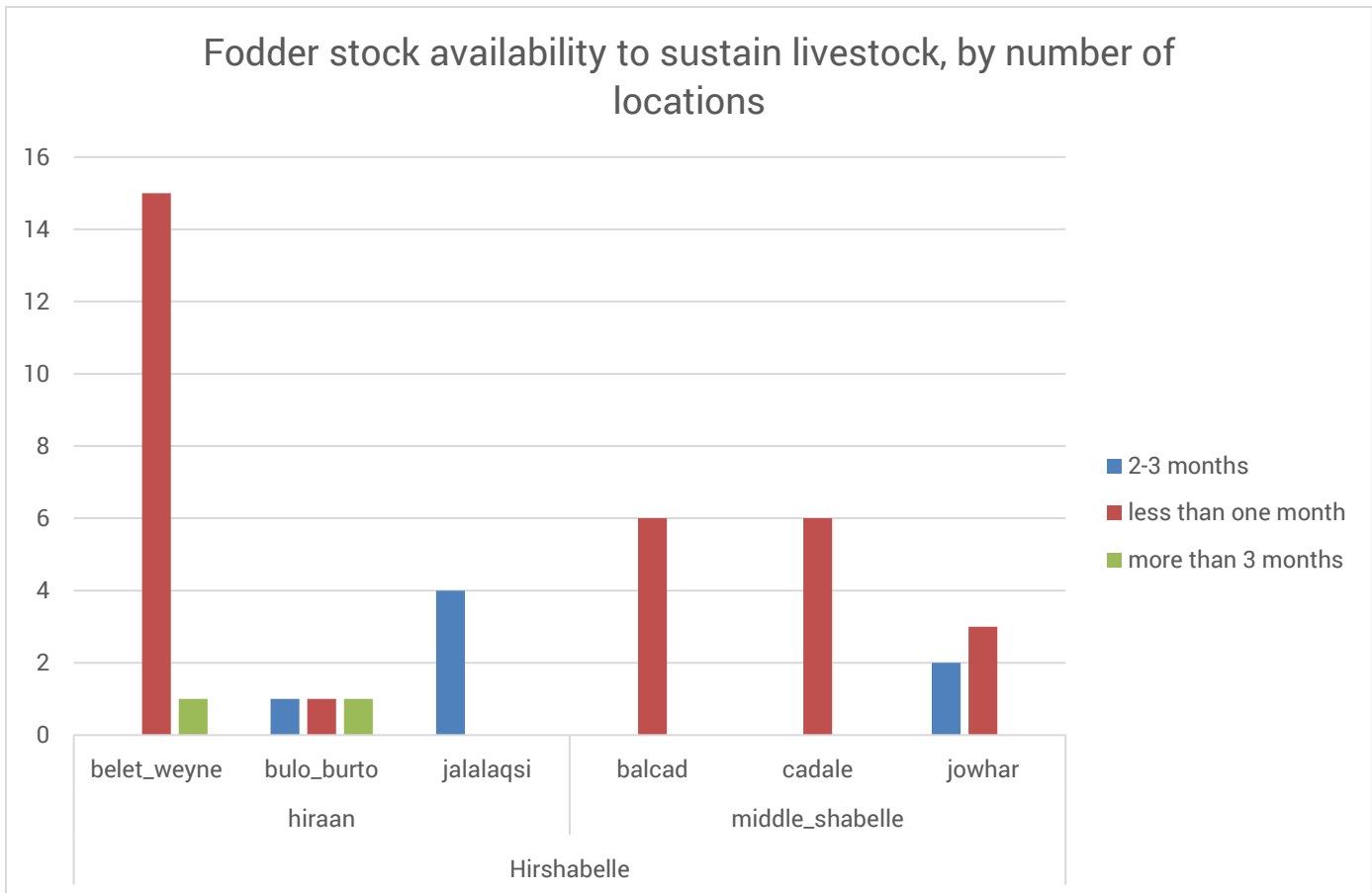
#### **(4) Food Security and Livelihood**

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- **The impact of the lack of rain on pastoralism and livestock:** Almost all (98%) of all assessed communities reported a lack of pasture due to a lack of rain, 78% of communities expressed concerns over the lack of water for livestock, 65% of communities cited a loss of livestock, and 60 and 58% respectively raised the issue of shortage of fodder and livestock disease.



- **Impact on pasture:** 35 out of 40 of the assessed communities (88%) estimated that due to the current poor *Deyr* rain, most of the pasture has dried up. It should, however, be noted that even dried pastures can still provide grazing opportunities for livestock.
- **Fodder stock:** 31 out of 40 assessed communities estimated they could only feed their livestock for less than one month with their current available fodder stock.

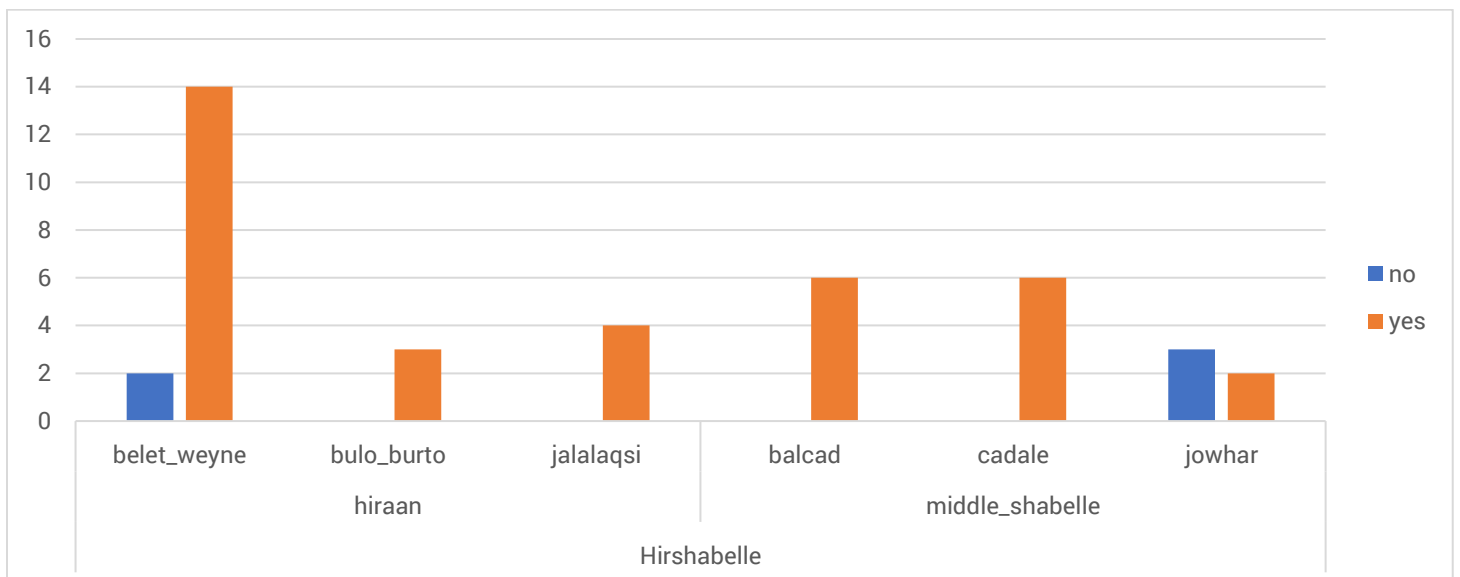




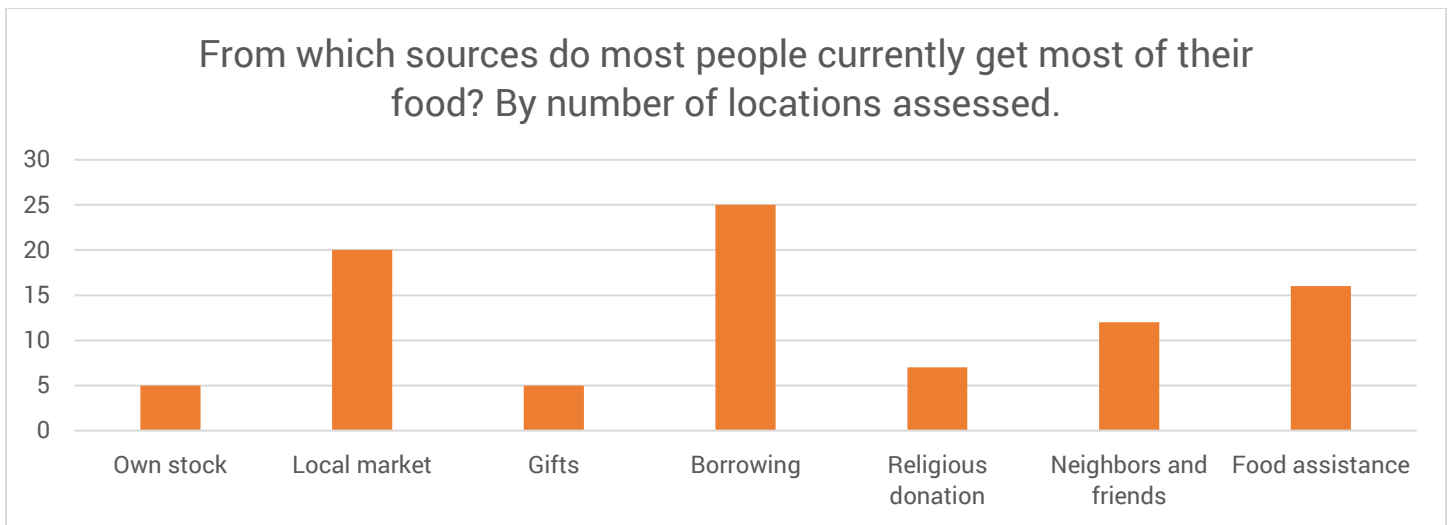
Weak camel due to poor pasture for browsing caused by the drought and Berkets without enough water for three seasons

- **Crop production:** As for the projection and estimation of the impact of the lack of the current *Deyr* rain on crop production, 33 out of the 40 communities estimated that more than 80% of the production had been affected.
- **Food as priority concern:** 50% of all assessed communities in Hirshabelle reported food as their top priority need.
- **Food consumption strategies in last 30 days:** Out of 40 communities, 35 reported that the majority of children in their community have been reducing the frequency and quantity of their meals in the last 4 weeks, and 36 communities reported that adults were reducing their meals.

**Table: Locations where children have reduced their food consumption in the last 4 weeks, by # of communities**



- **Sources of food:** The main sources of food reported by communities were the local market, borrowing, neighbors and friends and food assistance. Only a small minority of locations reported to have access to their own stock of food.



## **(5) Nutrition**

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- A large majority of assessed communities (92%) reported an increase in acute malnutrition of children or pregnant and lactating women. At the same time, only 35% of assessed communities reported access to nutrition centers/facilities where people can get nutrition programs
- Out of the 14 locations that reported access to a nutrition centre, 3 communities reported that the centre was over 5 km away from their location.

## **(6) Health**

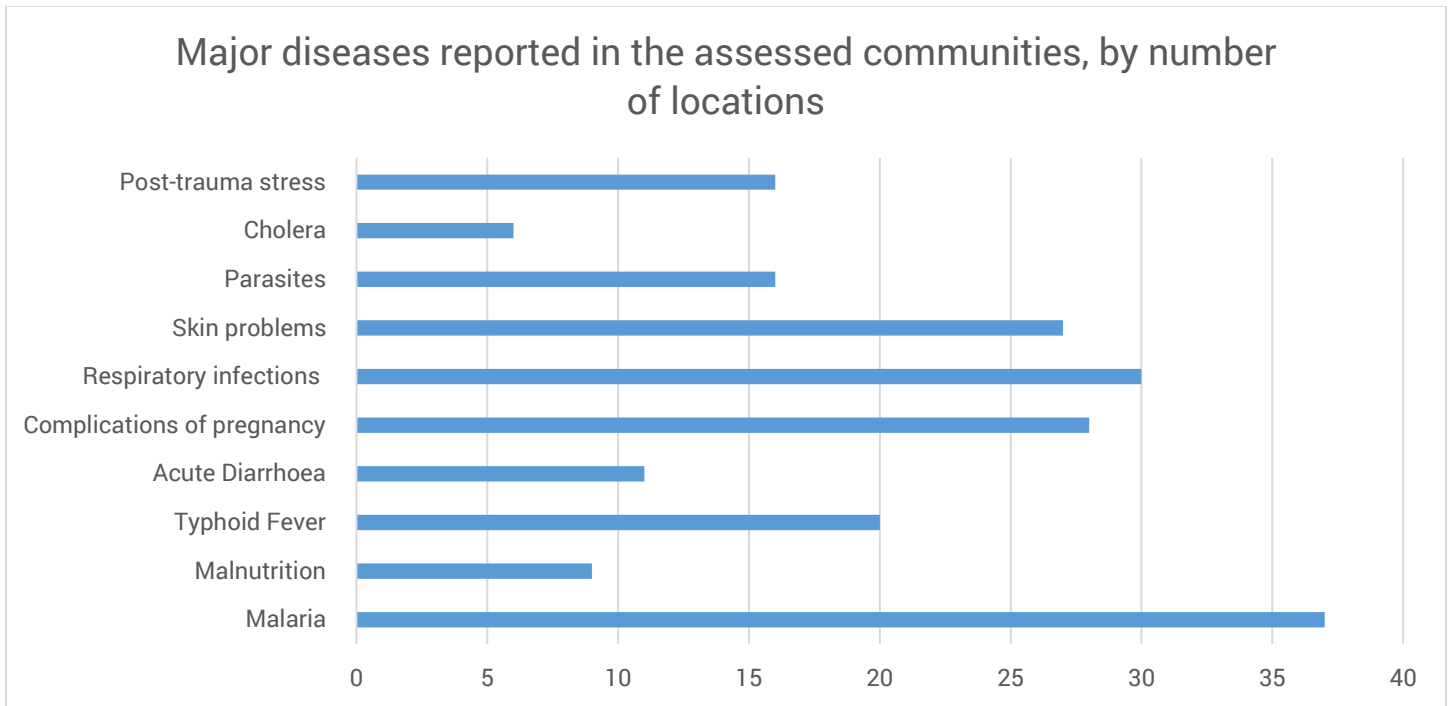
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According to the health partners, several districts and most rural communities in the state do not have access to quality health services. The poor service delivery and health status of these communities are only stressed more due to the current drought situation. The assessment team discovered that the communities's access to clean safe drinking water was among health concern, as most sources of drinking water were suspected to be contaminated. There were cases of water-borne or water related diseases such as Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD)/cholera. Measles and other respiratory infections have also increased due to dry conditions and overcrowding in IDP settlements. Malaria, measles, AWD/Cholera and other water-borne diseases are likely to spread further since there are not enough latrines in rural areas and IDPs. Additionally, the Shabelle river decreased and this will exacerbate the situation of the districts it passes through.

In terms of the assessment findings with regard to health;

- Two thirds (68%) of all assessed communities reported an increase in waterborne diseases in the last four weeks.
  - 25 out of 40 communities reported that a health facility was at least 5km away from their location
- The main major diseases reported in the assessed locations in Hirshabelle were as follows:

**Figure: Major diseases reported in the assessed communities in Hirshabelle in the last 4 weeks**



## (7) Top Priority Needs

The majority of assessed communities (50%) in Hirshabelle reported food as their first priority, with water and health needs mentioned as top priorities as well.

**Table: Top priority needs, by % of assessed locations in Hirshabelle**

	Food	Water	Health	Other
1st priority	50%	33%	8%	10%
2nd priority	38%	30%	28%	5%
3rd priority	8%	25%	50%	18%

## 4. Recommendations

### (1) General recommendations

- Primary focus on providing urgent life-saving water, distribution of food aid, cash and voucher assistance, nutrition and health services in the hotspot locations. As outlined in the Drought Response Plan, there is a need for the immediate implementation of an integrated response of WASH, health, nutrition and food assistance in these prioritized areas.
- Prioritization of rural areas to prevent large-scale displacement and movements among vulnerable rural families who are food and water insecure. In addition, vulnerable IDP sites and urban areas receiving high caseloads of displaced people are already overstretched and require prioritization.
- To prevent further deterioration of the drought situation, the scale up of delivery of humanitarian assistance to those most in need must be frontloaded.

• For a detailed overview of sectoral recommendations, see the recently released Somalia [Drought Response Plan](#).