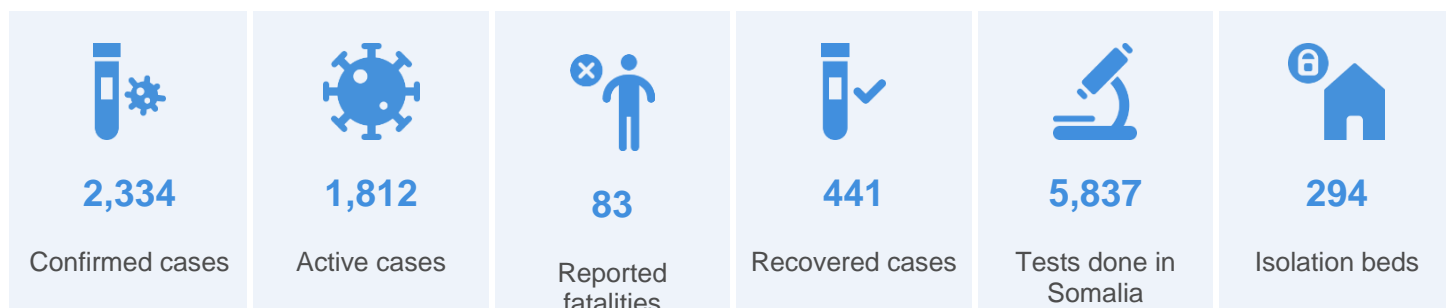


### Highlights



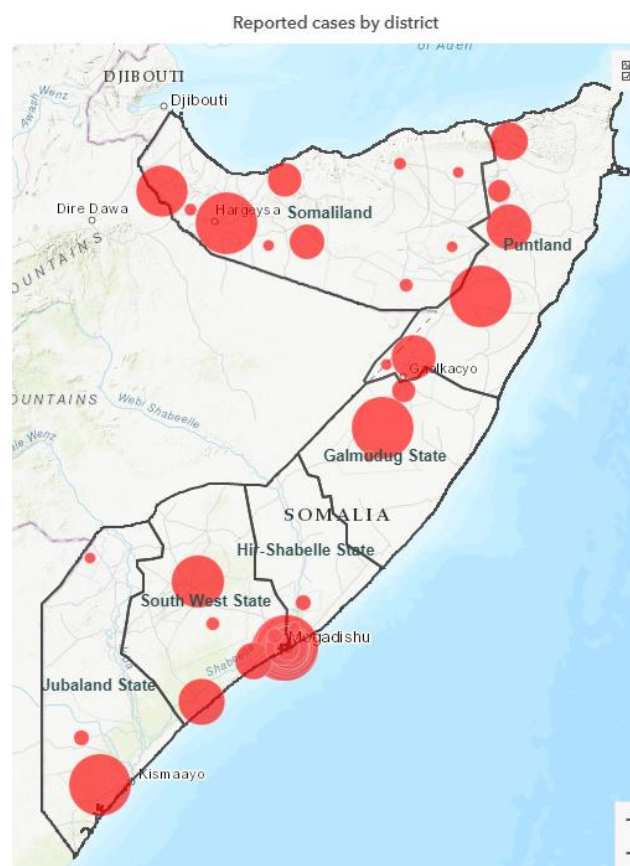
### Situation overview

Somalia's COVID-19 epidemiological curve continues to show a steady rise in confirmed cases over recent weeks. As of 8 June, the cases have reached 2,334 with 83 deaths, of which 45 cases and one death were reported over the last 24 hours. While 441 people have recovered from the virus, another 1,812 remain under medical supervision. Most new cases are a result of community transmission and men constitute nearly two-thirds of these cases. Based on limited testing, Banadir region accounts for the highest numbers, 1,329 cases with 54 deaths while Hirshabelle has the lowest reported numbers, 21 cases and one death. Across the country, 84 health workers are affected; a situation that has prompted WHO to issue [guidelines and recommendations](#) to ensure health care workers and responders at risk of infection are protected.

The virus has exacerbated existing socio-economic vulnerabilities. Due to COVID-19, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)<sup>1</sup> projected an 11 per cent decline in nominal GDP for 2020. Furthermore, WFP<sup>2</sup> has reported a reduction in remittances in Banadir, Hirshabelle and Somaliland. Other reports<sup>3</sup> indicate that an estimated 40 per cent of Somali families receive remittances from relatives and friends living abroad for their livelihood. Nationally, it is estimated that remittances will decline by as much as 50 per cent.<sup>4</sup> Funding for humanitarian operations has also lagged behind previous years with just over 30 per cent of the revised requirement of just over US\$1 billion received to date, almost halfway through the year.

### Significant decline in remittances

A UK-based NGO<sup>5</sup> study on the impact of COVID-19 on remittances noted that 89 per cent of respondents in the UK have reduced remittances to Somalia due to COVID-19 whilst 25 per cent reported that remittances have dropped to zero.



<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Socio-Economic Impact and Response Plan for COVID-19, Federal Government of Somalia, March 2020

<sup>2</sup> WFP Somalia Joint Markets and Supply Chain Weekly Update. 3-10 May 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Remittances and Vulnerability in Somalia. Rift Valley Institute. 10 September 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Somalia Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) COVID-19. April 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Impact of COVID-19 on remittances from UK to Somalia - briefing for UK Government, Anti-Tribalism Movement (ATM), May 2020

This is in line with FGS projections that inward transfers and remittances will fall by an estimated 40 per cent<sup>6</sup>. Whilst the resumption of livestock export in April 2020 has revitalized the export of livestock and provided some job opportunities in Somaliland, Puntland and Jubaland ports, the overall employment market continues to be stagnant due to COVID-19 restrictions.

To mitigate the food security implications, humanitarian partners have proactively adapted food security support in line with COVID-19 measures by providing combined two-month food rations and scaling up food assistance. However, the “triple threat” (COVID-19, Gu’ rainfall season and desert locust), along with Eid and Ramadan holidays in May led to increases in food prices across Somalia. The rains have subsided in most locations. As a result, transport services have resumed, easing up supply corridors and improving food supply flows.

### Vulnerable families are at increased risk

In May 2020, the Somalia Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU)<sup>7</sup> projected that about 3.5 million people in Somalia are expected to fall into Crisis or emergency food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or higher) from June to September 2020. FEWSNET<sup>8</sup> also reported that whilst humanitarian food assistance in April reached 1.55 million people and reduced food consumption gaps at the household level, 40 per cent of 2.7 million people in need of food assistance in Somalia were not reached due to lack of resources; indicating that more should be done to meet the food needs of vulnerable households. In particular, humanitarian assistance and livelihoods support will need to be scaled up to September.

Furthermore, the secondary social impact of COVID-19 is reversing positive gains in Education. The Education Cluster has reported that about 1 million school children are out of class due to the closure of schools. Whilst some states have initiated alternative learning through radio, TV and the internet, this is only accessible to a small part of the population due to socio-economic inequalities. In response, states have had to take tough decisions. For example, in Puntland, the Ministry of Education has postponed the final year secondary school examinations from 30 May to 27 June due to COVID-19.

Even if normal economic activities resume in coming months, recovery will likely be gradual<sup>9</sup>. FSNAU estimates that the prolonged economic impact on COVID-19 on the Somali economy and food security outcomes will persist through at least September 2020. In a country where a significant number of people depend on humanitarian assistance, the reduction in the humanitarian footprint due to COVID-19, will exacerbate vulnerabilities. Although humanitarian operations are continuing, working modalities have had to be modified leading to adjustments in programmes, presence and activities.

### Livestock herders spread coronavirus messages

*Abdisalam Ahmed Jama, a livestock herder in the rural Ballidhig area of Somaliland’s Togdher region, has taken on himself the job of sharing with others the advice he hears on the radio about the risks of coronavirus and how to curb its spread.*

*“When I realised that no one was coming to the rural areas to inform us, I chose to become a volunteer and started telling people about this disease that is spreading in our country and elsewhere in the world,” he said.*

*Abdisalam told Radio Ergo that he has a shortwave radio and regularly follows their broadcasts including reports and information about COVID-19. He then goes out and shares with others in the community, especially with the women and youth, who may not have listened to the radio.*

*“I tell the youth in the rural area to avoid going to the town, but if they must go, they should take precautions and avoid crowded places,” he said. Abdisalam first got in touch with Radio Ergo on the toll-free feedback platform last month, saying how much the information was appreciated in his remote area. They are not reached by any FM radios and rely on Radio Ergo as well as international news and current affairs from the BBC Somali service, he said.*

*Sirad Awil, a grandmother who cares for a family of more than 12 people, told Radio Ergo she knows about the coronavirus thanks to Abdisalam’s outreach efforts. “The man has informed us well. He tells us to keep a social distance, to quarantine those with symptoms, and to limit our travel to the town. He teaches us the many ways we can protect ourselves,” Sirad said.*

*She added that as a result of his awareness-raising efforts, rural women have limited their close interactions and each household now keeps a stock of soap and water for handwashing. Those who run out of soap, she said, use ash to clean their hands.*

*Ismail Ahmed, another resident in Ballidhig area, was so inspired by Abdisalam’s efforts that he and others have joined in spreading awareness information locally. “We spread the message around. Everyone who hears it tells others, so that we all know that this is a dangerous disease without a cure”, he said. One of the main targets for their information is those who travel back and forth between towns.*

*Towns depend on rural areas as a source of fresh milk, farm produce and livestock, and rural areas depend on household supplies from the towns. This continuous flow of people and goods means that the virus spreading in the towns will likely reach the rural areas as well, so efforts to curb the disease need to be extended to the countryside.*

*#Story by Radio Ergo.*

<sup>6</sup> Comprehensive Socio-Economic Impact and Response Plan for COVID-19, Federal Government of Somalia, March 2020

<sup>7</sup> Key Message Update, April 2020, East Africa, Somalia, Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit Somalia (FSNAU)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> FSNAU-FEWSNET Food Security and Nutritional Quarterly Brief. 9 May 2020.

## Impact of COVID-19 directives

Since 16 March, some 56 COVID-19 related [directives/statements](#) have been issued, either in writing or verbally by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS). These are aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19 and buttressing the socio-economic impact. As of 5 June, 53 directives are in place while three have been rescinded<sup>10</sup>. The land, trade and border restrictions have directly impacted the availability and prices of basic commodities despite directives such as that of the FGS suspending taxes on basic commodities from April-June, to mitigate possible shortages of and price surges on food items. Closure of business activities, markets, schools, hotels and restaurants, social distancing measures and decline in remittances have significantly reduced the purchasing power of many Somali families especially daily-wage workers and casual labourers.

Despite the ban on passenger flights, repatriation flights have been organized to enable stranded Somalis to return home: On 28 and 31 May, the FGS started repatriating Somali nationals from Kenya and Saudi Arabia, respectively. The first group of 100 from Saudi Arabia, mainly women and children arrived at Mogadishu on 31 May. Reportedly, more flights will be arranged to bring more Somalis back to Mogadishu in the coming weeks. During the reporting period, the Federal Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation announced that domestic flights will resume on 8 June, adding that for now only five flights will be allowed to operate daily out of Mogadishu. According to the Ministry, the immigration officials and airline operators will observe COVID-19 preventive measures and other procedures imposed by the Federal Ministry of Health. Preventive measures such as social distancing during checks, face masks, gloves, and hand sanitisers will be strictly adhered to.

Whilst humanitarians have called for a moratorium on evictions, there has been no specific directive related to ban of evictions countrywide. An NRC Briefing Note<sup>11</sup> on COVID-19 and Mogadishu's displaced population, noted that the total number of people evicted in the city in April decreased by 48 per cent to 3,324 from the 6,192 in March; an 80 per cent decrease from that of the 15,804 in February. Furthermore, the report revealed that from mid-March to mid-May 13,468 new conflict and insecurity-related displaced persons arrived in Mogadishu, indicating that the directives on border closures between states have not impeded people fleeing insecurity to access safe areas.

## Responses to COVID-19

UN agencies and partners have stepped up their support to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and member states to detect, prevent and interrupt COVID-19 transmission, providing direct support to the health and humanitarian component of the FGS's socio-economic impact and response plan for COVID-19. As of 31 May, 10.9 million people were reached through risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) while 364,400 people have benefitted from infection prevention and control activities. At least 294,300 people received essential health assistance and 33,260 received case management services. The agencies and partners have also ramped up support to the indirect but immediate humanitarian consequences of the pandemic, particularly the continuity of critical interventions in the [2020 Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#). More than 1.6 million people were reached in April with food assistance.

As part of the UN-coordinated COVID-19 RCCE responses, nearly 1,000 radio spots are being aired throughout Somalia, targeting over 10 million people. Billboards have been installed across the country, and social media channels are conveying the same messaging. UNICEF trained 586 social mobilisers and reached 189,238 people with COVID-19 messages through house-to-house visits. In addition, UNICEF distributed over 320 information, education and communication (IEC) materials, conducted 162 public addresses using mobile announcement systems and held 86 community meetings. Some 3,961 community members (1,782 female) have been engaged to reach their peers, and to support community awareness of COVID-19 prevention measures.



*Martino hospital is better prepared to handle COVID-19 cases. Photo: WHO*

<sup>10</sup> Closure of mosques in Puntland was rescinded on 26 March 2020; Curfew start time directive in Mogadishu was rescinded on 25 April; On 16 May 2020 Somaliland rescinded the suspension of Khat trade issued on 23 April 2020.

<sup>11</sup> COVID-19 and Mogadishu's displaced population: Examining secondary impacts and planning response, NRC Briefing Note, June 2020



To expand RCCE activities, COVID-19 public service announcements were aired on 28 radio stations and their associated websites, and religious figures are encouraging COVID-19 safe behaviour. UNDP is working with influential sheiks in three regions to develop new messages. In addition, religious figures have begun a new campaign with UNDP to distribute masks in all 17 districts of Mogadishu and to encourage social distancing in markets and other crowded places. At the same time, IOM and its partners are raising COVID-19 awareness at information centres, health facilities, migrant response centres and other locations, and has reached over 500,000 IDPs, migrants and host community individuals.

## Funding Update

Funding towards Somalia's triple threat of COVID-19, floods and locust infestation; remains a challenge. As of 8 June, the HRP is 31 per cent (US\$383.4 million) funded<sup>12</sup>, an improvement from the situation in recent weeks. The funding includes \$30 million reported for Somalia's COVID-19 response, representing 17 per cent of the HRP's COVID funding requirements. At country level, the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) has allocated \$2.47 million towards COVID-19 responses; IOM \$2.4 million health project including a sub-grant to UNSOS of \$400,000 (for COVID-19 treatment structure) and \$171,000 to UNDP for a health project. A number of SHF projects have been reprogrammed towards COVID-19 responses, including one cost-extension for an IOM health project, increasing overall value by an additional \$432,280.

## Sector responses to COVID-19



### Health

- IOM handed over 20 ventilators to Martino Hospital in Mogadishu, with funding from Somalia Humanitarian Fund. The agency is also rolling out training for screeners at points of entry: 775 people entering Doolow and 762 entering Dhobley were screened.
- IOM trained 40 health workers and four immigration officials in Kismayo, Baidoa and Xudur, and continues to raise awareness among migrants, reaching 1,851 people entering or exiting Somalia during the reporting time.
- UNICEF supported the training of 116 frontline health workers (61 female, 55 male) on COVID-19 related topics, such as basic triage/referral/case management and essential health service continuity. An additional 79 health staff (49 female, 30 male) were trained on COVID-19 infection prevention protocols and 116 community health workers (63 female, 53 males) on COVID-19 awareness, protection and case detection.
- In Galmudug, WHO trained and deployed 17 rapid response teams in Adado district which recently identified 47 COVID-19 confirmed cases. The teams identified 17 suspected cases and conducted contact tracing for 16 suspected cases who were advised to self-quarantine
- On 1 June, the Somaliland Durable Solutions Consortium, the European Union and its partners delivered critical medical supplies to seven health facilities and the Burco General Hospital for COVID-19 responses. The supplies included of face masks, face shields, clean gloves, heavy-duty gloves, hand sanitizers, sodium hydrochloride solution, liquid anti-bacterial soap, protective goggles and gowns.



### Logistics

- The Logistics Cluster, jointly with WFP's Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), has been supporting the transport of Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) medical teams and COVID-19 supplies to key locations. From 28 May – 4 June over 6 MT and 115 officials were transported to Doolow, Belet Weyne, Afmadow, Bardera, Kismayo, Gaalkacyo, Bulo Burto, Dhuusamarreeb, Xudur and Garbaharey.
- Over 25 MT have been dispatched to Dhuusamarreeb, Kismayo, Baidoa, Jowar, Hargeyeisa, Belet Weyne, Garowe and Baaraawe on behalf of the FMoH as of 26 May. The cargo included hospital beds and other medical supplies.
- On behalf of the OPM, the Cluster is coordinating the airlift of two ventilators from Mogadishu to Garowe. Coordination support is also being provided for the airlift of an oxygen plant from Nairobi to Mogadishu.
- The installation of a mobile storage unit for FMoH's medical equipment in Mogadishu was done on 3 June.

<sup>12</sup> The 2020 HRP is currently under review and overall requirements will reduce.

## WASH

- UNICEF reached approximately 617,200 people with essential WASH supplies across Somalia. Over the last two weeks, 57,450 people were reached with WASH emergency kits in Middle Shabelle, Bay and Gedo regions.
- UNICEF is continuing to provide emergency water to 75,500 people in Bay and Lower Shabelle regions who have been receiving water since the beginning of the pandemic to meet basic needs and practice hygiene practices.
- UNDP and the Ministry of Justice supported the provision of water tanks and hygiene kits for two prisons in Somaliland. UNDP continues to advocate for humanitarian prisoner releases.

## Education

- The Federal Government Ministry of Education is developing online content to ensure some children from grades 1 to 12 access distance learning until schools re-open.
- UNICEF reports that 96,505 children and youth are accessing quality formal or non-formal primary education including distance learning.
- The ministries of education in Somaliland and Puntland have scaled up remote learning through radio, TV, and online learning platforms. In Somaliland, lessons are being broadcast via radio, TV and online for grades 7 to 12. Sign language tools for children with hearing impairments have been developed and adopted for TV lessons.
- Since schools closed on 2 June, the Puntland Ministry of Education with support from the Education cluster partners launched the Puntland Learning Passport - a platform that allows learners to access education materials and continue learning through online channels. The platform targets over 5000 children from grade 8 to 12 preparing for 2020 final exams.



## Protection

- UNICEF reports that 8,204 children are participating in community-based mental health and psychosocial support activities, including child friendly spaces. Some 821 survivors of gender-based (GBV) violence are accessing a package of GBV services (medical, legal, mental health, psychosocial support and materials).
- In Somaliland, UNICEF community outreach activities reached 60 people (35 females and 15 males). Orientation sessions were also conducted for partners on the recent Child Protection COVID-19 toolkit and related training materials.
- UNICEF trained 40 social workers have been assigned to 17 locations in Puntland to reinforce COVID-19 awareness, child protection and GBV case management, service referrals, alternative care. According to UNICEF, a 24/7 helpline for child protection and GBV referral and information-sharing is operational, supported with trained social workers.



Useful information on the COVID-19 pandemic is available at: <https://covid19som-ochasom.hub.arcgis.com/>

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