Gu rains trigger widespread flooding putting displaced populations at risk

FLASH REPORT

Situation

As Somalia welcomes the Gu rainy season, significant flooding since April 19th threatens nearly 770,000 individuals across 22 districts, intensifying the hardships in a nation battling severe climate adversity and conflict.

Beletweyne was severely hit by floods in 2023 and the new rains have submerged key facilities, including the main hospital, road and market and disrupting services. Expected Shabelle river overflow poses significant health risks within IDP sites, exacerbating the ongoing cholera outbreak as residents resort to drinking from compromised sources and open defecation due to damaged latrines. Damage to shelters in IDP sites further heightens the vulnerability of displaced populations including risk of gender-based violence.

In Baidoa, heavy rainfall caused significant disruptions at DRC-managed IDP sites, where water entered bush shelters, damaging food, households' items, and sleeping materials, significantly heightening the vulnerability of the displaced population. The muddy putrid or the conditions in these areas, exacerbated by loamy soil typical of former farming zones, have severely hindered vehicle access.

Snapshot of flood impact

According to our rapid needs assessments and interviews with CCCM committees in Baidoa and Beletweyne:

- **57 DRC managed sites hosting 7,653 households are affected.**
- **26 DRC managed sites IDP sites have reported over 50% of shelters have been damaged.**
- **28 sites have reported water sources being damaged.**
- **24 latrines have been reported partially damaged.**
- 18 sites in Beletweyne have indicated that the majority of its population is planning to relocate to a nearby site, an evacuation site or another district.
- 19 nearby nutrition facilities have been affected.
- 13 nearby health facilities have been affected.
- 6 safety incidents have been reported in Baidoa including violence against women and girls.
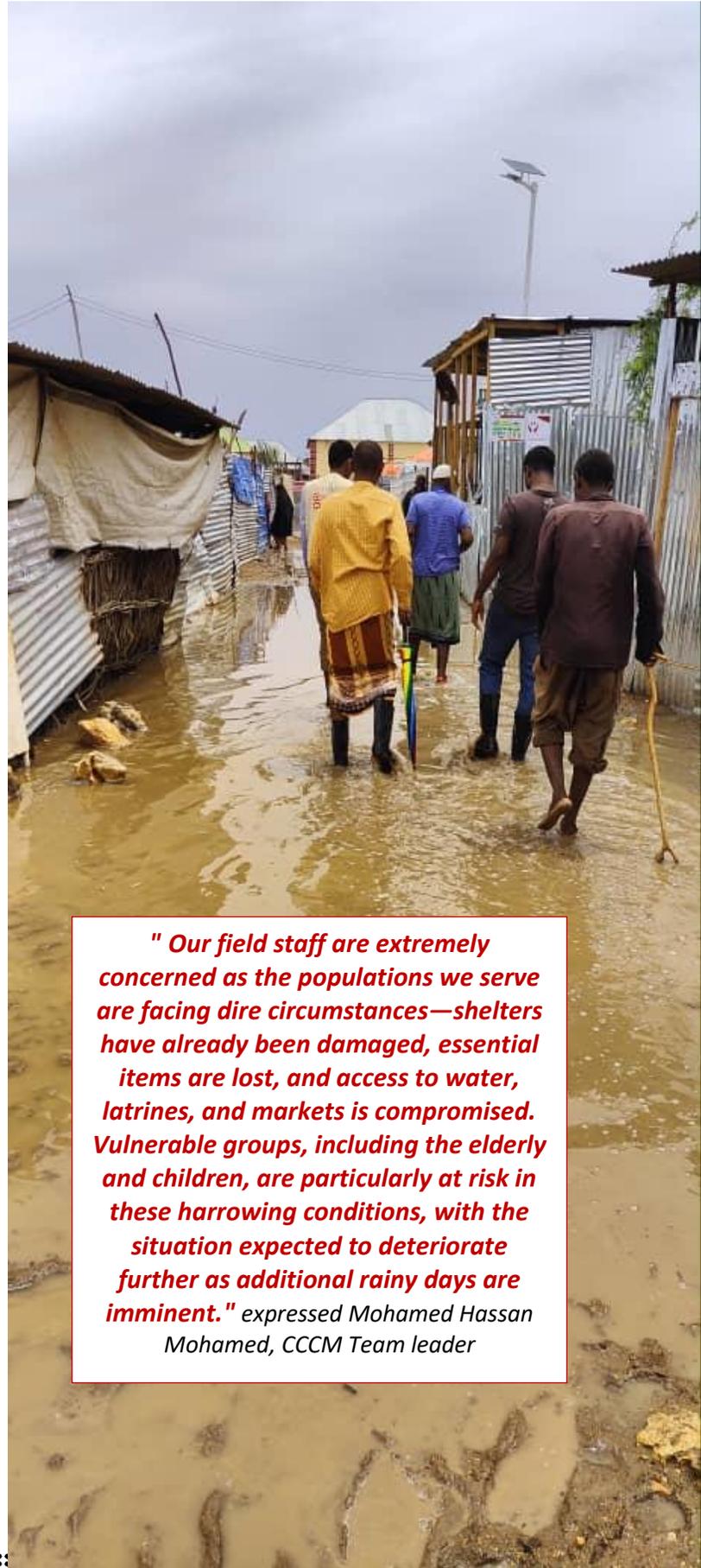
" Our field staff are extremely concerned as the populations we serve are facing dire circumstances—shelters have already been damaged, essential items are lost, and access to water, latrines, and markets is compromised. Vulnerable groups, including the elderly and children, are particularly at risk in these harrowing conditions, with the situation expected to deteriorate further as additional rainy days are imminent." expressed Mohamed Hassan Mohamed, CCCM Team leader

Response & Coordination

In response to the flooding, DRC has been actively monitoring flood alerts, disseminating early warning messages, and conducting rapid assessments to evaluate impacts and pinpoint urgent needs.

As anticipatory measures, DRC is carrying out registration exercises to provide multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) and essential core relief items to affected populations. As part of DRC disaster preparedness approach, in collaboration with IOM, and funding from the European Union, 900 households have been profiled and identified to receive MPCA based on triggers, high river water levels or forecasted torrential rain, in Beletweyne.

In the IDP sites, protection desks work closely with community-based protection networks to monitor and address protection risks through referrals, and individual protection assistance.

Over the next 21 days, DRC plans hygiene promotion initiatives combined with 40,000 litres of emergency water distribution on a daily basis to help prevent disease outbreaks.

Together with partners, DRC is prioritizing coordination efforts at the subnational level through the flood response task force and through Area Based Coordination (ABC).