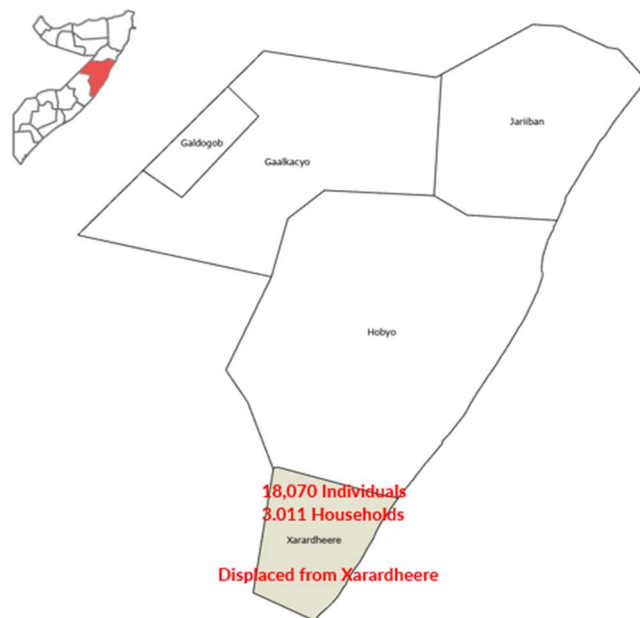


## DISPLACEMENT IN XARARDHERE DISTRICT OF GALMUDUG REGION

### Highlights:

- At least 18,070 people fled to Qoriley, Dhagax Madow, Koradhi, Baraag Maxamed Daa'uud, and Sirgo, Ilbir, Tuula Cadaad, Shegow, Galcad, Carfuda, Wadarig, Karordhere and Cali Yabaal
- 7 children reportedly separated from their caregivers/families.
- 2 children were reportedly killed, and many people were reportedly injured.
- 33 cases of waterborne diseases.



### Overview:

From 11 to 27 February 2024, the Somali government and its allies launched a military offensive against the Al-Shabab armed group in the Xarardhere District of the Mudug region. This offensive had a significant impact on Camara and the surrounding villages. By 27 February, a total of 18,070 people<sup>1</sup> had been displaced to Qoriley, Dhagax Madow, Koradhi, Baraag Maxamed Daa'uud, and Sirgo from Xarardhere and Ceel Dheer districts. Moreover, the security situation in the area remains unstable, which increases the risk of further displacement occurring in nearby villages. From 22-25 February, military operations in the Ceel Dheer districts have displaced an estimated 10,000 individuals. These individuals have been displaced to the following locations: Ilbir, Tuula Cadaad, Shegow, Galcad, Carfuda, Wadarig, Karordhere, and Cali Yabaal.<sup>2</sup>

As of 27 February 2024, two (2) deaths, along with the injury of two (2) children and many people from the same community, were reported to PRMN monitors from Camara villages targeted by the air and ground bombardment.

The families who have been recently displaced are facing a shortage of essential services, such as food, healthcare, protection, water and sanitation, and education. There have also been reports of various health issues, including measles, fever, and acute watery diarrhea. While the district currently has a limited humanitarian presence. Local authorities are calling for urgent humanitarian needs assessment in the locations affected by the influxes of internally displaced persons.

<sup>1</sup> Out of 18,070, PRMN data collection tool verified 749 people and the verification still ongoing in different villages.

<sup>2</sup> Flash Report on Camara Crisis: New Wave of the Displaced due to Insurgents' Attacks. Federal Government of Somalia, Galmudug State of Somalia. Galmudug Commission for Refugee and IDPs.

## Key Protection Risks

### **Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, services and/or humanitarian access:**

The data from PRMN indicates that children and women from the displaced population are facing challenges in accessing safe spaces. The challenges of displacement have resulted in many of them squatting under trees and in the open air without shelter. Previous displacements have shown that the lack of secure shelters can expose them to numerous protection risks, including gender-based violence and exploitation. There have been reports of a lack of access to adequate sanitation facilities and food. Due to the military offensive, fewer organizations have been able to access the areas at the time of writing this report. Villages around Camara were previously controlled by non-state actors who would harass and intimidate the field staff whenever they provided services in the area. This has resulted in a decrease in services being offered by some humanitarian organizations. The local authorities of the Galmudug region are working on options to engage humanitarian organizations to conduct an initial rapid assessment to identify the needs of the displaced and host populations.

**Psychological Distress and Deterioration of Mental Wellbeing:** As a result of displacement, civilians continue to experience psychological distress due to exposure to violence, political instability, poor living conditions, lack of livelihood activities, and widespread damage and destruction. The military offensive significantly affected the displaced population, especially children, highlighting their difficult situation. They were exposed to violence, stress, and anxiety, which had detrimental effects on their development and caused feelings of hopelessness and anger due to multiple displacements. Moreover, they were forced to leave their homes in Camara and were displaced into a new environment with limited resources. Individuals with preexisting mental health and psychological distress/trauma will increase.

**Presence of Explosive Remnant of War:** The recent escalation left contamination of explosive remnant of war (ERW), explosive ordinance which are seen as a significant issue in Camara villages and their surrounding areas. This poses an imminent threat and danger to the lives of civilians and humanitarians. The displaced population has reported numerous instances of ERW resulting from aerial bombardment and artillery shelling by the warring parties. These ERWs may pose a hindrance to the scaling of humanitarian operations, especially during field visits and activities. When calm returns to the villages, children will be vulnerable to life loss and injuries due to their engagement and women in social spaces due to the presence of ERWs.

**Unaccompanied and Separated Children:** Due to displacement, civilians fled to various locations, resulting in reports of 7 unaccompanied and separated children (UAM/SC). There are a few cases indicating that some families became separated and may have moved in different directions. Family members were reported visiting nearby villages to search for their loved ones who were separated. The separations occurred when the military offensive began and there could be more than just few cases reported.

**Gender-based violence (GBV):** GBV remains one of the prevalent protection risks experienced by the displaced population. Reports from the displaced population show that there is constant

violence against women and girls. This highly visible situation demands services, as the situation is made worse by the living conditions experienced by families. The IDPs are currently living in an open space without any layer of protection, exposing women and girls to further risks.

## **Urgent Humanitarian Needs:**

**Psychosocial Support (PSS) and Psychological First Aid (PFA):** Considering the mental wellbeing of people affected whenever exposed to conflict, there is a need to provide assistance and psychological symptoms should be treated. There is a need to provide immediate PFA, structured PSS, and age and gender appropriate individual or groups interventions.

**Mine Risk Education and Assistance to ERW Survivors:** Mine Action and partners should consider conducting Mine Risk Education to the local population. Priority locations are areas that experienced heavy bombardment and fighting, including Camara and its villages. Assistance options for injured survivors ERW should be assessed and considered. These victims should be identified through a protection assessment, and they should receive multidisciplinary rehabilitation.

**Food Security and Livelihood:** Food and livelihood insecurity has become a concern, and the community and the local authorities have requested urgent interventions. It is highly recommended that all partners under food security cluster should explore options of providing needed support in areas occupied by the displaced populations.

**Shelter:** Reports indicate that most IDPs are sheltering under trees in an open area. It is highly recommended that Shelter Cluster should verify this situation and respond as required. IDPs living in open areas/spaces are exposed to all forms of violence, including gender-based violence. Temporary shelters are highly recommended.

**Potable Water and Sanitation:** The findings of PRMN monitors suggest the need for safe drinking water and latrines. The rainy season will start soon, possibly exposing the displaced population to waterborne and other diseases.

**Child Protection Services:** Child Protection Case Management and Best Interest Procedures should be implemented, including in the identification and documentation of children reportedly separated from their primary caregivers during the plight. So far, few cases have been reported, but it is believed that more children's whereabouts are unknown.

**GBV response:** GBV partners should implement the minimum service package for GBV responses, such as awareness sessions, case management and psychosocial support. While there is also a need for dignity kits and other related supplies. This is urgently required for the young girls and women, particularly as they remain without proper shelter.

**Methodology:** This Flash Alert has been prepared based on data collected by PRMN field monitors. The data was primarily obtained through interviews with affected displaced communities and key informants. Additionally, information from Galmudug State Flash Alert on Camara and the surrounding villages was also taken into account.

The Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN) is a project funded by UNHCR and implemented by NRC and its partners. It aims to identify and report on displacements, as well as protection risks and incidents that contribute to these population movements. In Somalia, the field partners in the South-Central regions, Puntland, and Somaliland undertake data gathering primarily through interviews with affected communities and key informants. They also conduct monitoring at strategic locations. For statistical analysis on protection monitoring and displacement, please refer to interactive portal <https://prmn-somalia.unhcr.org>

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