



**JOINT RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT ON
FLOOD DISPLACED POPULATION IN BALCAD- JUNE 2016**



<u>Assessment period</u>	25 th June, 2016
<u>Assessment Location</u>	Balcad district
<u>Target Group</u>	Floods affected population in Balcad
<u>Assessment team</u>	PAH, Vision Aid, WOCCA and Shardo

1. Introduction

Polish Humanitarian Action in collaboration with other humanitarian actors from Middle Shabelle - **WOCCA, Aid Vision and SHARDO** conducted an initial rapid need assessment at villages in Balcad district recently affected by floods; to understand flood impact, assess the existing affected communities' capacity and give recommendation on the immediate humanitarian response aimed to support communities needs and to avert further loss of communal assets and lives.

2. Executive summary

Seasonal floods which hits riverine areas in Middle Shabelle triggers large scale humanitarian crisis twice every year, low lying areas in the region considerably riverine villages remain vulnerable to flash floods.

The recent 'Gu' rains resulted river Shabelle to burst its banks due to shallow depth of the river and the fact that the embankments remain with the same height limiting its capacity to hold excess water causing both over flow and breakage at several points submerging entire villages and farmlands in its path.

Several villages between Balcad and Jowhar districts are among settlements recently affected by flood caused by breakage at Bey-xawo village near Jowhar town, causing displacement of hundreds of people most of them farmers and fishing communities who lost hectares of farmlands and farm products in granaries reserved for future consumption and for sale leaving affected families with no alternative means of livelihood.

Hit by the floods late at night most families were caught off-guard hence not prepared for response and as a result people lost their shelters and households assets washed away forcing population to seek refuge in areas of higher grounds but left behind their shelters inundated by water, households' belongings washed away, farm products and crops destroyed leaving hundreds of families without shelter hence forced to sleep on bare ground surrounded by stagnant and contaminated water which could soon trigger WASH related diseases.

3. Affected groups

Partners conducting the assessment targeted villages between Balcad and Jowhar hit by floods. The floods caused displacement of population after people's shelters were submerged by water, household belongings washed away and livelihood sources were destroyed.

People, who lost their houses are currently camping at higher ground areas still engulfed by water. Most affected are agro-pastoral communities. Currently they are not able to do any farming or fishing activities, in consequence the already fragile food security situation is projected to worsen if there is no humanitarian intervention. Overcrowding at limited higher ground spaces and poor sanitary conditions raise fear of renewed cases of water borne diseases since there is limited communal knowledge on safe hygiene coupled with highly risk practices observed which could trigger large scale outbreak of water borne diseases.

Summary on affected households

No	Settlement	Location	GPS coordinates	Pop (HH)	Families who lost HH assets	% of HHs with no assets	Contact
1	Yaqlow	Balcad	2.470747N,045.472796 E	40	28	70%	0615132643
2	Bula-Raqay	Balcad		55	33	60%	0615216368
3	Seydir	Balcad	-	50	31	62%	0615334733
4	Goley	Balcad	-	100	56	56%	0615334733
5	Damaley	Balcad	-	90	63	70%	0615654823
6	Far-barako	Balcad	-	200	4	2%	0615654820
7	Jameco	Balcad	-	140	140	100%	0615807892
8	Muke-dhere (Barwaqo)	Balcad	2.473397N,045.476477E	90	37	41%	0618014435
	Total displaced Pop	-		765 HHs	392 HHs		-

4. Objectives of the assessment and methodology

- Assess the impact of the flood in the affected settlements and understand current situation of displaced population.
- Identify the existing community capacity in regard to flood impact mitigation measures.
- Identify the immediate needs of the affected population and give recommendation to relevant partners.
- Coordinate and plan immediate response measures with other partners based on the assessment findings

Assessment team utilized visual observation to understand the exact impact of the disaster. As not all of the affected villages were accessible also interviews with key informants – community leaders and local authorities were conducted.

5. General findings

All of the assessed villages were flooded and stagnant water is remaining which forces the majority of residents to move to high grounds and away from the river banks. Most of them live in temporary structures made of tree branches, old worn out clothing and mats. During the assessment conditions of the submerged shelters were observed, floating households' belongings seen by assessment team while at areas currently accommodating displaced families people using tins as cooking utensils were witnessed giving clear indication of how households lost their assets in the floods.

Assessment team reported to have witnessed families struggling to erect temporary shelters made from sticks and rugs whereas others slept under shades on the bare ground un-protected from cold weather,

sanitary condition is dire and with no sanitation facilities, open defecation is commonly practiced while highly turbid, contaminated and un-treated stagnant water remains the immediate reach by affected families increasing the possibilities of outbreak of water borne diseases.

Community leaders from the affected settlements reported to have witnessed a total disruption of community's way of life after floods submerged 95 % of all shelters in the affected villages and washed away families' belongings and livelihoods including fishing nets impacting severely local economy as fishing, which was one of the main available means of livelihoods is now completely disrupted.

The residents depend on the river water for all their domestic needs and household chores. They do not use any kind of water purification measures. With most of the residents confirming that they drink water directly from the river despite the river being muddy during the floods.

The general sanitation status of the villages is poor with most of the residents practicing open defecation; the few households that constructed pit latrines have their latrines flooded and collapsed. Leaders confirmed cases of water borne diseases already experienced in the areas covered by stagnant water due to community consumption of contaminated water and other un-safe hygiene practices.

Affected villages are cut off from rest of the region as a highways are flooded making movement of goods and people impossible this continues to worsen the food security condition which is destroyed as a result of the flash flood.

According to the informants there are no NGOs whether national or international currently working towards the improvement of the health and hygiene status of the affected population.

a. WASH

- Affected population have no access to safe water, flood water suspected to be highly contaminated remains only available water.
- Having lost household assets most families are left with usually no more than one jerry-can now use for water collection, storage containers are not available.
- Members of the community reported to drink un-treated water since large scale water treatment options are not available, use of household treatment methods like boiling is impossible because families lost their utensils.
- Poor sanitary condition in the settlements and lack of community hygiene education accelerates possibilities of diseases outbreak.
- Few existing latrines have been flooded and collapsed, open defecation if practiced in massive scale
- Over-crowding at limited high grounds could trigger the outbreak of water-borne diseases.
- Huge numbers of flies and mosquitos, many of them feared carrying malaria, can be observed as stagnant water creates perfect breeding environment and families do not have means to protect themselves

b. Shelter

- Affected population have left behind their shelters after they were submerged by water forcing people camp under shades.

- Roughly 392 of the affected population have lost household belongings after their assets were washed away
- Limited cooking pots, plates and kettles observed – some families are using tins as cooking utensils. Most of the residents do not have soaps, sleeping mats, mosquito nets and blankets
- Displaced population with no shelter are vulnerable to cold weather with no protective clothing to cover themselves or to sleep on.
- Pregnant women and children under five years constitute a significant group of the displaced population and are susceptible to malaria because they lack treated nets to use at night.
- Temporary shelter constructed are made from sticks and rugs which cannot protect users from rains since they lacked proper roofing.

c. FSL

- Families have lost means of livelihoods/income opportunities as their crops and farms products have been destroyed by floods.
- Loss of income reduces purchasing power of farmers to buy (vegetable) seeds
- Farming and fishing are two means livelihood activities and with farms submerged by water and fishing tools washed away by flood affected families are left with no means to catch fish and farm.
- Villages are economically obstructed since they are cut off from the rest of the region as floods made access by road impossible shipment of goods including food can be made only using low capacity and speed boats, this means loss of income in the short term but also inaccessibility of a variety of basic goods
- Accessibility to food among the displaced population is extremely difficult as engulfed villages have no access to major towns to receive supplies from and having no productive activities like fishing and farming ongoing these villages are food insecure.
- Irrigation canals have been flooded, losing capacity and therefore reduced area that can be irrigated

6. Assessment challenges

- Logistical constraint hindered assessment team from reaching all the affected villages, cut off by floods most locations were accessible by use small boats. Only one engine powered boat is available in the area and it was malfunctioning at the day of the assessment, some manually powered boats are available however their use severely hampers the time of the journey
- Low speed of the boats consume valuable time of the assessment team and hence caused limited coverage of the targeted locations, in such cases the team heavily relied on information from community leaders and partners staff in the affected areas.
- Interviewed people were in midst of saving people and their belongings from flood and therefore had little time for discussion.

- Unfavorable weather conditions delayed team and affected the quality of the assessment.

7. Recommendations and gaps identified

- Provision of shelter materials like plastic sheets for roofing and sleeping mats.
- Provision of basic household items – kitchen sets to restore community normal lives.
- Distribution of mosquito-nets to protect pregnant women and children from malaria spreading mosquitoes.
- Distribution of water treatment tabs to reduce chance of water borne diseases outbreak.
- Increase community awareness on safe hygiene in flood affected environment to reduce risk associated with bad practice.
- Open defecation and lack of sanitation facilities remains a big challenge which if not addressed can lead to disease outbreaks
- Provision of access to food remains a challenge as villages are cut off and existing stocks were destroyed by flood
- Local authorities are trying to address the issue of stagnant water however their capacity is very limited
- Next to emergency response a comprehensive recovery strategy should be put in place focusing on restoring community livelihoods destroyed by floods.
- Agencies willing to respond will require support in terms of logistics as items can be transported by road only to a certain point and further transport requires motor powered, big capacity boats which are not currently available – the one available engine powered boat can carry up to 70 standard hygiene kits at once
- Support in terms of food production in the form of cash or seeds and canal rehabilitation would help affected farmer households

8. Selected pictures







