

CASE STUDIES

SRCS Drought Assessment in Somaliland – March 2025

Introduction

An assessment carried out by the SRCS Hargeisa Coordination office with IFRC support from March 1-6, 2025. The Regions covered were Awdal, Sahil and Togdheer.

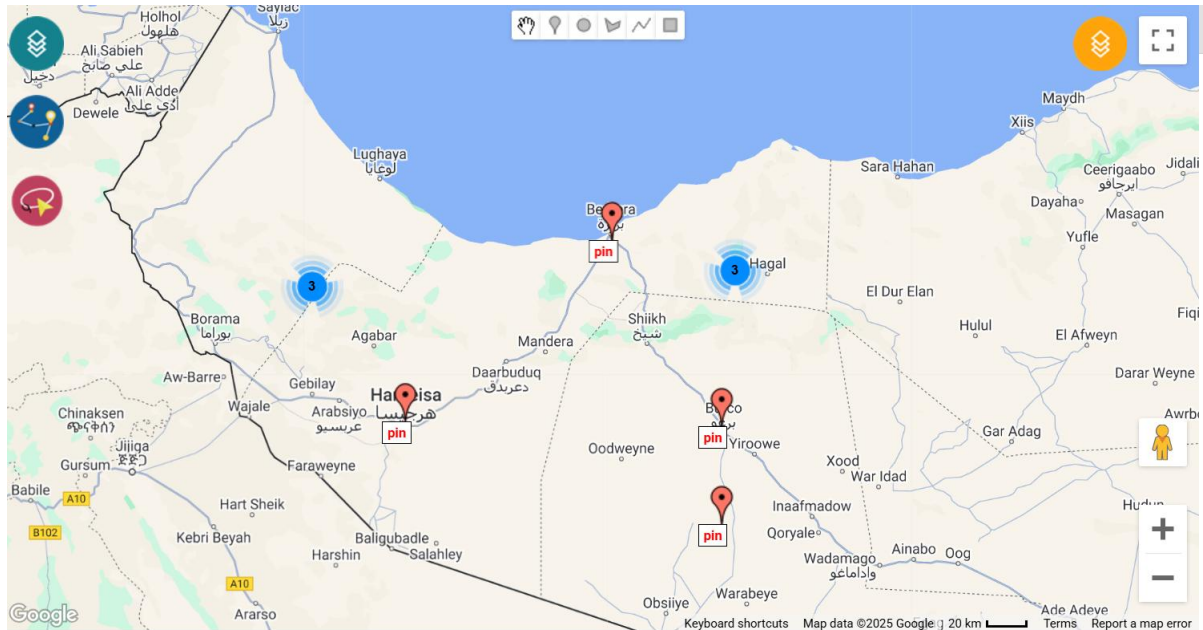


Fig 1: A map of regions of Somaliland where the assessment was carried out (Awdal Region: *Il Hagar, Gargaara and Garbo Dadar*; Sahil Region: *Robo Robo and Agarey, Ximan villages*, and Togdheer Region: *Burco and Geed Abokor IDP camp*).

The assessment team was composed of:

- Ahmed Abdi Ahmed – SRCS – FbF Project Manager
- Xamse Caabdi Ahmed – SRCS – Protocol Driver
- Muhiyadin Abdilahi Ali – SRCS seconded to IFRC – Operations Officer
- Caali Muse Hassan – SRCS Borama Branch – Resilience Officer
- Warsame Daahir Ducaale – SRCS Borama Branch – DRM Officer
- Carafad Haasan Muhumed – SRCS Berbera Branch – DRM Officer
- Cabdilaahi Mohamed Hashi – SRCS Berbera Branch – Resilience Officer
- Khadar Mohamed Awil – SRCS Burco Branch – Branch Coordinator
- Abdicasiis Abdirahman Adan – SRCS Burao Branch – Finance Officer
- Gemechissa Mustefa – IFRC – WASH Delegate
- Timothy Maina – IFRC – Communications Officer

Methodology

This assessment used the following methods:

- Field visits to drought-affected regions (Awdal, Sahil, Togdheer).

- Stakeholder consultations with government officials, community leaders, and SRCS staff and volunteers.
- Data collection tools: key informant interviews and direct observations.
- Sectoral analysis covering health, WASH, food security, livelihoods, and protection, gender and inclusion (PGI).

Key findings

- Health & Nutrition: Collapsing healthcare systems, increasing disease outbreak risk (acute-watery diarrhoea, dengue fever), and alarming malnutrition rates.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH): Critical water shortages, contaminated sources, and poor sanitation increasing disease risks.
- Food Security: Crop failures, plummeting livestock productivity/livestock diseases, and soaring food prices pushing households into extreme poverty.
- Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) & population movement: Women and girls are exposed to increased risks, including gender-based violence, due to the long distances required to access water. Additionally, people living with disabilities may face challenges in making such treks. Mass displacement further strains already limited resources.

Priority Interventions recommended by the stakeholders

1. Urgent WASH solutions (rehabilitate water points, emergency trucking).
2. Immediate food/cash voucher assistance (CVA) and livelihoods support (drought-resistant seeds, livestock aid).
3. Restore health services (mobile clinics, malnutrition treatment).
4. Strengthen PGI and safe water access for all.

1. Il-Hagar village, Lughaya District, Awdal region



The last remaining shallow well in Il-Hagar village, located in the Lughaya District of the Awdal region, serves as the sole water source for over 300 families. However, the community has reported a steady decline in water levels, raising concerns about how long the well will continue to meet their daily needs.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- **Mako Rooble Mataan**, a 45-year-old mother and head of her household in Il-Hagar, Lughaya, Awdal, shares the severe challenges faced by her village, including unpredictable climate, water scarcity, and depletion of shallow wells due to consecutive failed rainy seasons.
- The community relies heavily on pastoral livelihoods and has about 300 households affected.
- *"Where can we even go?" Mako quips. "With this drought and these harsh conditions, there's no better place to turn to right now."*
- The community's priority needs are water, health, and livelihood support.

2. Gargaara-Baki village, Lughaya district, Awdal region



A camel herder tends to his animals at Gargaara-Baki village in the Lughaya District of the Awdal region. As drought conditions worsen, the herders are being forced to travel increasingly longer distances in search of water and pasture. This comes amid declining water levels and the depletion of shallow wells, further straining both communities and their animals.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- In Gargaara-Baki village, Lughaya district, Awdal region, three perspectives were discussed regarding the challenges faced by the community. The community also hosts climate-affected internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- **Abdinassir Hassan Haji**, a 40-year-old father of eleven, described how delayed rains and drought have ravaged his community—wiping out livestock, spreading animal diseases, and triggering deadly human outbreaks of cholera, measles, and acute malnutrition as families scramble for scarce food and contaminated water.
- He emphasized the need for livelihood support and health support due to the closure of the only functioning health facility, the maternity, and children hospital (MCH).
- **Xalimo Abdilahi Mohamed**, a 48-year-old head of household with seven children, emphasized the adverse effects of climate change, the unavailability of animal fodder/pasture, and limited purchasing power of the community due to the decline of livelihood activities. She shared that they formed a working women's group within the community to pool and share resources to help everyone withstand the challenges and stresses they face. Her priority needs were food, livelihoods, health support due to the MCH closure, and shelter and WASH NFIs for the IDPs.
- Finally, **Abdi Ali**, a camel herder at the Gargaara water point, observed the dwindling of camel herds due to the drought and water scarcity, stating that his priority needs were water, pasture, and livelihoods.

3. Garbo Dadar District, Awdal region



The Garbo Dadar District Mayor is concerned about the town's broken water source, constructed seven years ago in response to Cyclone Storm Sagar in 2018. The pump is no longer operational, and water levels have dried up due to prolonged drought and shifting weather seasons. Residents are forced to seek alternative sources far from the town, further exacerbating their daily struggles.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- **Mayor Jamaal Muumin Caare:** Garbo Dadar District's mayor, reported a population of 3,500 households, primarily relying on livestock rearing and agriculture.
- The prolonged drought has disrupted livelihoods, caused food insecurity and water shortages.
- The community established a hospital and a technical and vocational education and training (TVET) center to improve livelihoods. The TVET center provides vocational and business training, while the hospital creates healthcare jobs - both strengthening community resilience.
- The priority needs of the community include food, livelihood support, water point rehabilitation, health, agriculture, and TVET center capacity building.
- **Dr. Ahmed Saeed**, the Doctor-in-charge at Garbo Dadar Community Hospital, highlighted the hospital's lack of an operating theatre and staff shortages. He emphasized the need for outpatient department (OPD) kits, essential medical supplies, an operating theatre (OT), more specialized staff, and staff salaries.
- **Caali Muse Hassan**, a Resilience Officer from the SRCS Borama Branch, shared the devastating impact of the drought on people, livestock, and farms, particularly in the coastal district of Lughaya. The situation is even more dire for the displaced communities, who are already vulnerable and struggle to cope with the compounding challenges.

4. Robo Robo Village, Sheekh District, Sahil Region



Aadan Ali Nur, a 65-year-old agropastoralist and head of a 15-member household in Robo Robo village, Sheekh District, Sahil Region, shares the challenges his community faces due to increasingly unpredictable rainfall patterns. To cope, the village has resorted to constructing household-level berkeds (traditional water reservoirs) lined with tarpaulin and trucking water from sources nearly 40 kilometers away to meet their daily needs.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- **Aadan Ali Nur**, a 65-year-old agropastoralist and head of a household of 15 in Robo Robo village, Sheekh District, Sahil Region, shares the challenges faced by the community due to unpredictable rainfall patterns.
- *"Water is scarce, forcing us to travel long distances to fetch it. At times, we come together as a community to pool our resources for water trucking, but the costs are incredibly high and place a heavy burden on us,"* Nur stated.
- The community has experienced severe water scarcity due to dried-up water points, forcing them to rely on water trucking. The high costs of water trucking and diminished animal fodder further exacerbate the situation.
- The community has tilled their land in anticipation of rain but has no seeds—even drought-resistant varieties are unavailable.
- Nur's village priority needs include water, healthcare, and livelihood support.

5. Agarey Village, Sheekh District, Sahil Region



A community member in Agarey village closes the lid of a now-dry berked (traditional water reservoir). With their local water sources depleted, the community has no choice but to rely on water trucking from distant locations to meet their daily needs, as well as those of their livestock.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- In Agarey village, Sahil Region, we met with **Ali Omar Ahmed**, a 56-year-old agropastoralist. Speaking as a community member near the Barked, which was rehabilitated in 2023 by SRCS with IFRC support, he described the challenges faced by the 700 households in the agropastoral community.
- He highlighted the impact of water scarcity, low crop production, reduced pasture and low-quality animal fodder, and disease outbreaks. *"During this drought, we're using water very sparingly, as what little we have must also sustain the next flock,"* he explained. *"Despite the scarcity, we're doing our best to conserve water and maintain hygiene to prevent the spread of diseases. There are no hospitals here, and the nearest one is in Burco, which is far away. Without vehicles, our only options are to walk or hope for a rare passing car to give us a ride."*
- The community's priority are water, food security and livelihoods support, and health.

6. Ximan village, Sheekh District, Sahil Region



An SRCS team conducting a drought assessment engages in a conversation with the community in Xamin village. The community fears their only remaining berked (traditional water reservoir) will not last through the Ramadan season. With all other wells dried up and no pasture left for their livestock, the situation grows increasingly dire.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- Ximan Village in Sahil Region has experienced severe drought, causing water scarcity, erratic rainfall, and loss of pastureland.
- **Muse Hayan Elmi**, a 65-year-old agropastoralist, expressed concerns about the water stored in their only reservoir, which could not last through the Ramadan season.
- To conserve water, he took his camels to distant sources while allowing goats and calves to drink closer to home.
- **Daa'uud Warsame Wayi**, a 55-year-old community member, emphasized the critical water situation, noting that out of six berkedes, only one still has water from the last rainy season.
- The sand dam has dried up, and the community will soon have to start water trucking to meet their basic water needs.
- Priorities for the communities include water, livelihoods, food security support, and health.

7. Geed Abokor IDP Camp, Odweine District, Togdheer Region



A water truck arrives at the Geed Abokor IDP camp to refill the berked (traditional water reservoir) with fresh water. The community, displaced by the impacts of climate change, pools household contributions to fund this weekly necessity, as there are no other viable water sources nearby. Compounding their challenges, the camp lacks a health center, forcing residents to rely on medical outreaches by humanitarian organizations or travel over 20 kilometers to Burco town in search of healthcare services.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- Geed Abokor IDP camp in Burco, Togdheer Region, is facing dire conditions due to a recurrent drought. The camp, home to 1,000 households, relies on a single berked for water, which now requires water trucking.
- The lack of a health facility, inadequate latrines, and poor camp management are among the issues faced by the residents.
- The camp hosts a displaced pastoral community, and each household must contribute financially to buy water through trucking services.
- **Dahir Noor**, a mother of six, like many other families in the camp, faces a severe water crisis and relies on the arrival of weekly water tankers. To cope, they collect water from rural areas, transport it by donkey, and distribute it equally among households in need.
- Dahir stated: *“We don’t have water. We’ve gathered here today, waiting for the water tankers to arrive. If they don’t come, we’ll have no choice but to travel to the smaller town nearby [to look for water]. However, we can’t overburden its limited resources. Instead, we’ll collect whatever water we can find in the rural areas of the district, transport it on our donkeys, and then distribute it equally among the households in need.”*
- Priority needs for the residents include water, food, health, and livelihoods support.

8. Burco District, Togdheer Region



The Governor of Togdheer, Abdirahman Ramaah (wearing a black hat), poses for a photo with the SRCS team outside his office in Burco town. During their meeting, he emphasized the region's most pressing needs: water, food, health, and livelihoods.

Photo: IFRC/Timothy Maina

- In Burco, Togdheer Region, we met with **H.E. Abdirahman Ramaah**, the 55-year-old Governor of Togdheer Region.
- He painted a picture of a region in crisis, where worsening food and nutrition insecurity demands urgent action, scaled-up humanitarian aid, and improved coordination for effective preparedness and mitigation. "Food and nutrition insecurity across the region is deteriorating, necessitating immediate action," he stated.
- *"There is an urgent need to scale up humanitarian assistance to address critical needs. Improved coordination is essential for better preparedness and mitigation efforts,"* Abdirahman stated.
- The region's priority needs were water, food, health, and livelihoods.