

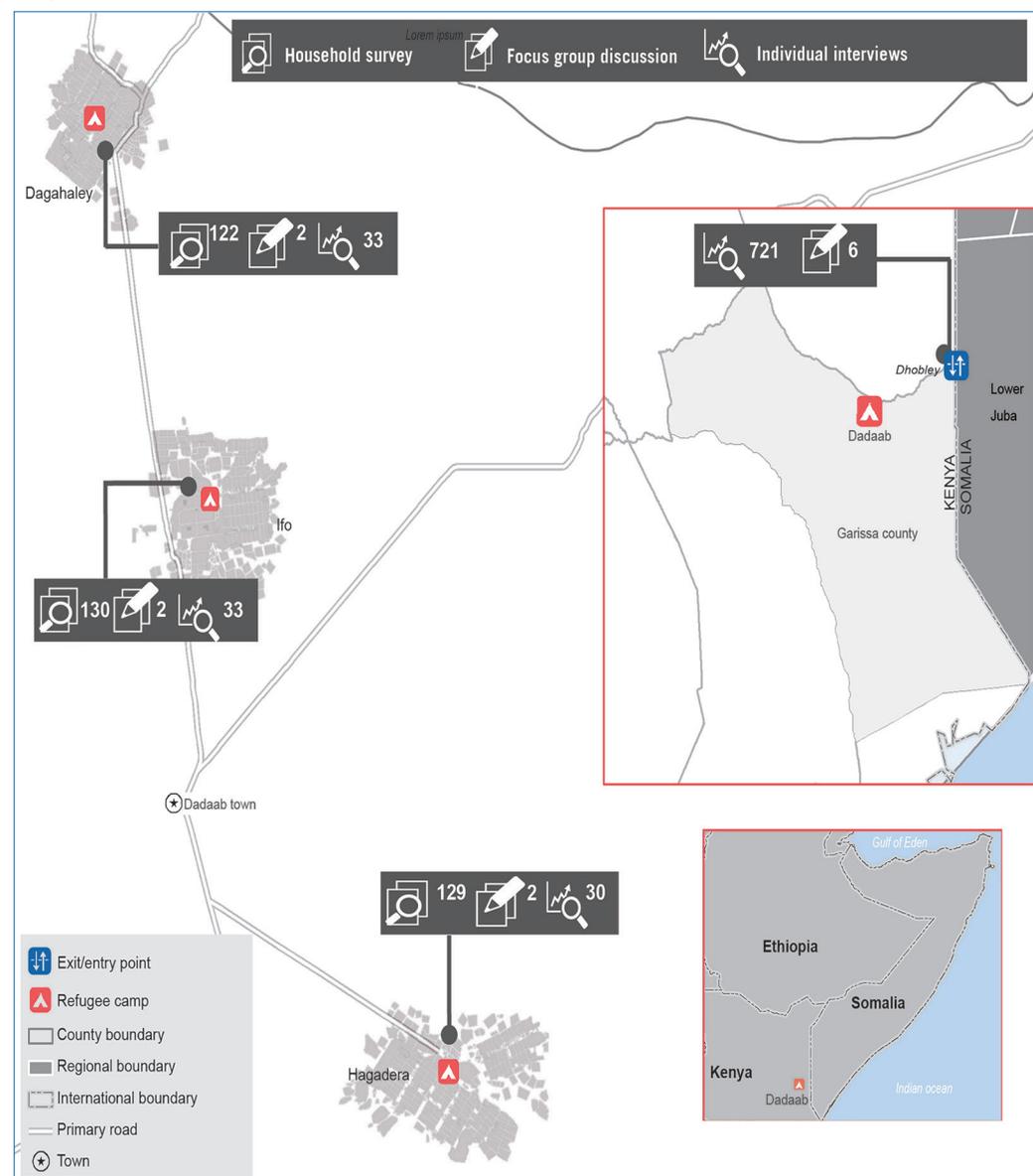
Background

As of October 2018, a total of 208,550¹ mostly Somali refugees reside in Dadaab camps. Since May 2017, REACH has worked with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on developing tools and methodologies for data collection in the three camps in Dadaab refugee complex (Dagahaley, Hagadera and Ifo). Despite the ongoing voluntary repatriation program set by the Government of Kenya with support from UNHCR, there were reported pockets of spontaneous returns to Somalia and re-returns to Dadaab.² With continued conflict, instability and drought causing new displacement in Somalia, and reduced humanitarian funding in Dadaab, there is a need to strengthen the knowledge of future return intentions and movement patterns of the refugee population in Dadaab and along the Kenya-Somalia border. It is in this context that REACH, in partnership with NRC, conducted a comprehensive intentions and cross-border monitoring survey both in Dadaab refugee complex and at the Kenya-Somalia border.

Key findings

- 35% of the households in Dadaab said they will not return to their area of origin. Only 8% said that they were certain to return within the next six months.
- The main push factors from Somalia reported by households in Dadaab include conflict and insecurity in Somalia, drought and lack of education services. The main reported pull factors to Dadaab were lack of conflict in Dadaab, law and order, availability of aid, access to education and access to refugee status.
- Individual interviews at the Kenya-Somalia border revealed mixed reasons for choosing Dadaab as a destination, including freedom of movement and availability of income generating opportunities, and proximity to friends and family members.
- The majority of the households in Dadaab who reported having members that had returned to Somalia said that these returnees did not register for voluntary repatriation with UNHCR or authorities in Kenya.
- FGDs with refugees in Dadaab and at the border points revealed that most of the men who returned to Somalia temporarily did so to check on their assets, visit their spouses or to do farming, while women returned permanently to their families following separation from their spouses in Dadaab or temporarily to visit their other family members.
- 68% and 79% of individual interview respondents, in Dadaab and at the border points respectively, reported travelling with different vulnerable people, including elderly persons, lactating mothers, pregnant women as well as malnourished children.
- The most commonly used means of transport for spontaneous returns to Somalia include buses, private cars and lorries. Most people using these means fund their journey from their own money, while others use borrowed money or money from humanitarian aid.
- FGD participants at the border points and in Dadaab reported various protection issues experienced by persons in transit, including kidnappings, sexual and gender-based violence, separated individuals and attacks by wild animals.

Map 1. Data collection locations



1. UNHCR Statistics package, September 2018; 2. REACH Intentions monitoring, November 2017 and July 2018. 3. These are designated locations in the camps where there are vehicles that take people to Somalia



Methodology

The assessment used a mixed methods approach with both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Household interviews were conducted in Dadaab refugee complex between 14 and 16 November 2018. Households (HHs) were randomly sampled to a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error at the Dadaab level. A total of 381 HHs were interviewed. To monitor critical displacement trends along the Kenya-Somalia border and at transit centers in Dadaab refugee complex, individual interviews were conducted with purposively sampled people in transit at the Kenya-Somalia border and in Dadaab refugee camps. At the Kenya-Somalia border, a total of 721 individual interviews were conducted between 11 and 16 November 2018 at 3 border crossing points (Dhobley, Degelema and Tuula-Barwaqo). In Dadaab refugee complex, 96 individual interviews were conducted between 19 and 21 November 2018 at 4 bus termini³ across the three camps in Dadaab complex (Hagadera bus terminus, Ifo main bus terminus, Dagahaley main bus terminus and Hagadera-Kismayo bus terminus). Data collection took place during the day. In addition, six focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with refugees in Dadaab camps between 14 and 16 November 2018. Two FGDs were conducted in each camp, one with women and one with men. In the three border points in Somalia, two FGDs (one with men and another with women) were also conducted in each border point, with community leaders and government authority staff managing these border points.

Table 1. Primary data

| Country | Location | Individual interviews | Focus Group discussions | Household Surveys |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Kenya-Dadaab | Dagahaley | 33 | 2 | 122 |
| Kenya-Dadaab | Hagadera | 30 | 2 | 129 |
| Kenya-Dadaab | Ifo | 33 | 2 | 130 |
| Somalia | Dhobley | 176 | 2 | - |
| Somalia | Degelema | 272 | 2 | - |
| Somalia | Tuula-Barwaqo | 273 | 2 | - |
| TOTAL | | 817 | 12 | 381 |

Population movement and displacement

The first major displacement from Somalia to Dadaab refugee complex was in 1991, when refugees fleeing the civil war in Somalia started to cross the border into Kenya. A second large influx occurred in 2011, when some 130,000⁴ refugees arrived, fleeing drought and famine in southern Somalia. Since then, there have been pockets of displacement into Dadaab refugee complex from Somalia as well as cyclical movements, where returnees come back after previously returning to Somalia. At the assessed border points in Somalia, where individual interviews were conducted, most of the persons interviewed were Somali and were entering the country mainly from Kenya, with a few individuals [Somali or not] coming from Eritrea, Djibouti, Uganda and Yemen. According to the displacement tracking matrix (DTM)⁵, in October 2018, a total of 29,558 cross border movements were recorded in all of the country. This represents a slight increase in comparison with September 2018, when 26,212 movements were observed. Specifically, five border entry points recorded an increase in movements (Bossasso, Buuhoodle, Harirad, Dhobley, and Cabudwaaq).

People on the move

FGD participants at the border points in Somalia reported that most people in transit move as households with a few traveling alone. Individual interview respondents at the border in Somalia confirmed this trend with a majority of them (73%) reporting that they were in transit with their household members, either all or some of them. At the bus termini in Dadaab, only 22% of the interviewed individuals reported to be in transit with their household members. FGD participants in Dadaab reported that mostly men and young men returned to Somalia on a temporary basis, while women tended to travel more with their children on a permanent basis. Seventy-five percent of the individuals interviewed at the bus termini, and who were travelling alone, were males. Most individuals interviewed at the bus termini in Dadaab (88%) and at border points in Somalia (58%) reported to have documentation. The main type of documentation possessed was an Alien ID card issued by the Government of Kenya.

Push and pull factors

From the household level survey, a majority of the assessed households in Dadaab (71%) reported that they left their areas of origin due to conflict and insecurity. Another 55%⁶ left due to fear of conflict in their communities or surrounding areas. A similar trend was reported by the individual interview respondents in Dadaab, where actual conflict and fear of conflict were the major push factors, especially from Somalia. Participants in FGDs in Dadaab refugee complex reported security incidents as their main reason for departing from Somalia. One FGD participant in Dadaab cited being held hostage by an armed group for three months, hence choosing to leave his/her country of origin. Another FGD participant in Dadaab said *“My land was taken away by other people of higher authority, so I feared to stay there.”* From the individual interviews at the border points in Somalia, the majority of the people moving into Somalia had come from Dadaab, where personal threats, intimidation and forceful evictions were reported as the main push factors. Reported push factors from other countries (Eritrea, Djibouti, Uganda and Yemen) were quite similar to those reported by people coming from Somalia. During HH level assessments in Dadaab, most HHs reported lack of conflict, availability of law and order and availability of aid as major factors that pulled them to Dadaab from their areas of origin. A few others came to Dadaab to access education services or to attain refugee or asylum status. Individual interviews at the border points revealed mixed reasons for choosing Dadaab as a destination, including freedom of movement and availability of income generating opportunities. Others revealed during individual interviews at the border points that they wanted to be in proximity to friends and family members. Major pull factors for refugees returning to Somalia, reported by individual interview respondents in Dadaab, included being with family and friends, returning to their original areas of origin as well as going to check on their assets in Somalia.

4. UNHCR

5. DTM by International Organization for Migration monitors population movement at 12 border crossing locations between Somalia and neighbouring countries: https://migration.iom.int/system/tdf/reports/2018_10_Flow%20Monitoring-%20October%202018.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=4622

6. Households could select multiple answers

Dadaab intentions and cross-border movement monitoring

Top 5 push and pull factors for displaced HHs in Dadaab refugee complex⁷

Push factors from Area of origin

- 1 Actual conflict in community
- 2 Fear of conflict
- 3 Drought
- 4 Lack of education
- 5 Arrival of armed groups

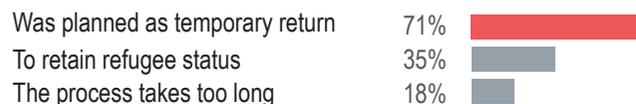
Pull factors to Dadaab

- 1 No conflict in Dadaab
- 2 Law and order
- 3 Availability of aid
- 4 Access education services
- 5 Access refugee status

Spontaneous returns to Somalia

The majority of the households in Dadaab who reported having members that had returned to Somalia said that these returnees did not register for voluntary repatriation with UNHCR or authorities in Kenya mainly because they had planned it as a temporary return. Individual interviews at the bus termini in Dadaab concurred with this, as the majority of people leaving Dadaab had not registered for voluntary repatriation. Most of these spontaneous returns are planned as temporary, with many of these returnees citing plans to come back to Dadaab. FGDs with refugees in Dadaab and at the border points revealed that most men returned to Somalia temporarily to check on their assets, visit their spouses or to do farming. As revealed in the FGDs in Dadaab, most spontaneous returnees do not wish to register for repatriation since they are only planning for a temporary return (often to attend to an emergency issue in the area of origin), do not want to lose their refugee status, or because the process takes too long.

Top reported reasons for returning members not registering for voluntary repatriation reported by HHs in Dadaab:⁷

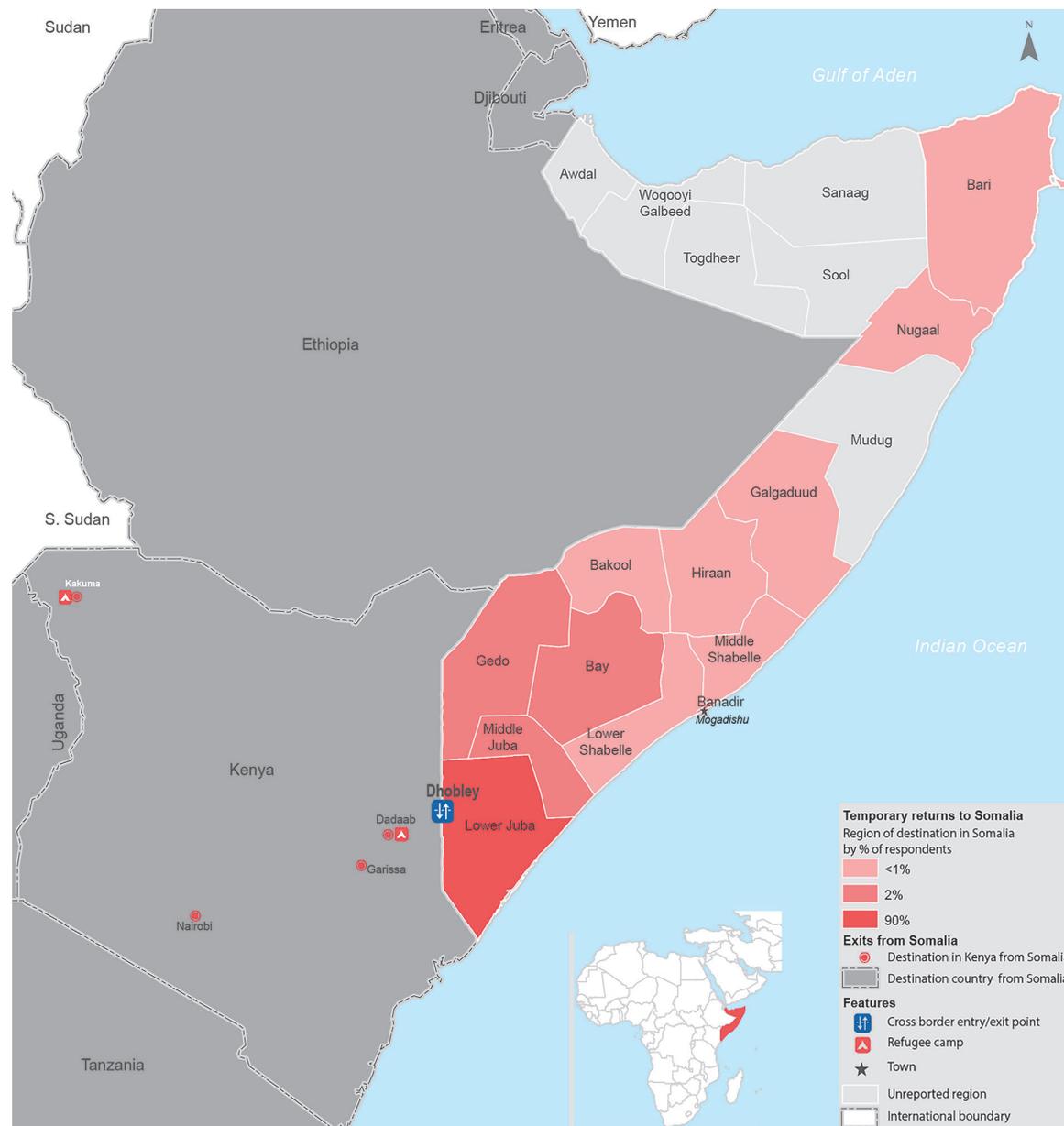


Key transit and border-crossing points

Dhobley, Somalia

Dhobley, Somalia is a strategic and major border crossing point between Kenya and Somalia. It is located along the Kenya-Somalia border 245 km from the port town of Kismayo and 90 km from the Dadaab refugee camps. FGDs with the community leaders at the border points revealed that the town is a major transit point between Kenya and Somalia and many people transiting between the two countries prefer Dhobley. In Dadaab, FGD participants mentioned Dhobley as the most preferred transit point due to its closeness to Dadaab camps. Participants reported that there are cheap flights from Dhobley to other locations in Somalia as well as other means of transport including buses and lorries. The presence of humanitarian agencies, including UNHCR, also makes it a preferred transit point for most people. Some FGD participants said Dhobley is preferred because there are many NGOs to facilitate movement and provide assistance for persons in transit.

Map 2. Cross-border movements and destination locations



7. Households could select multiple answers

Bus termini, Dadaab

There are at least six bus termini inside the Dadaab refugee complex, where returnees to Somalia and to Dadaab are transported using buses, lorries and private cars. Some of the vehicles at the termini take people to locations inside Somalia, including Kismayo, Mogadishu and Doolow. Other vehicles only reach the Kenya-Somalia border at Dhobley, where some of the travelers use flights to go to other locations in Somalia. Participants in FGDs in Dadaab said most refugees prefer using these termini for temporary and spontaneous return since there is no control or prohibition from government authorities. FGDs also revealed that there are business people, both from the refugee community and from other parts of Kenya, who use these termini to go to Somalia and then eventually return. In addition to these spontaneous and temporary returns, the termini are also used by returnees who do not wish to return permanently through voluntary repatriation.

Conditions of movement

Means of Transport

Buses and mini-buses are the main means of transport at the border points in Somalia and at the bus termini in Dadaab. FGDs at both locations revealed a high reliance on these means since they were deemed cheap by the people in transit. The vehicles that leave the bus termini in Dadaab take travelers to border crossing points, including Dhobley. At Dhobley most people continue their journey by road transport, though a few people reported planning to use internal flights from Dhobley to continue their journey. The sources of funds for transport vary according to the means of transport used. Most people using buses have their journey facilitated by humanitarian agencies, while others use their own money and some use borrowed money. For the respondents that used private vehicles or trucks or lorries, they mostly used borrowed money or their own money.

Challenges in Transit

FGD participants both in Dadaab and at the border points in Somalia cited different challenges experienced by people in transit. Lack of documentation was cited as a challenge by some of the individual interview respondents at the border points, which often led to harassment and intimidation by security officers at these points. FGDs in Dadaab concurred with this as they cited harassment by police as one of the challenges their household members who were in transit faced. A few respondents of individual interviews at the border points reported that they experienced beating, as well as sexual and gender-based violence while in transit. There was a number of these respondents who cited experiencing some challenges in transit but were not willing to talk about it. Lack of food and other basic services in transit were also cited by FGD participants at the border points, along with mechanical breakdown of vehicles, poor road conditions during the rainy season, and attacks by wild animals.



A bus picking passengers at Dagahaley Bus Terminus.

Source of money for transport by means of transport used by individual interview respondents

| | Air | Bus or Mini-Bus | Private Car | Truck or Lorry |
|------------------|-----|-----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Borrowed Money | 10% | 20% | 49% | 56% |
| Borrowed Vehicle | 0% | 2% | 3% | 1% |
| Humanitarian aid | 50% | 52% | 2% | 12% |
| Own Money | 40% | 26% | 46% | 32% |

Protection risks and vulnerabilities en route

Participants in FGDs in Dadaab reported cases of kidnapping and sexual and gender-based violence during transit. *“Children are kidnapped by Al-Shabaab to serve as child soldiers”*. In addition to these cases, some FGD participants at the border points in Somalia reported witnessing persons that were separated from their families during transit. Some of the reported problems experienced by the separated members include stress, loneliness and hopelessness. *“Since some of their household members are in Kenya, they cannot communicate with them because they are not in the same network and cannot afford the call”*.

Other FGD participants in Dadaab reported incidents related to family separation with limited assistance received in these cases. *“I lost my daughter and no help at all”*. Other participants who reported family separation cases said they had received assistance for family reunification. *“My husband and I were separated during transit and I am getting help from UNHCR through Voluntary repatriation programme”*. FGD participants in Dadaab and at the border points also reported cases of children under 18 years of age traveling alone at the transit points. These children were either separated from their families during displacement or chose to travel alone to search for refuge in Somalia. FGD participants at the border points in Somalia also reported cases of children being separated from their families due to domestic issues. *“A boy child who fought with his parents decided to leave Dadaab and try to live alone”*. Individual interview respondents reported traveling with different vulnerable people too, including elderly persons, lactating mothers, pregnant women as well as malnourished children.

Top 5 vulnerabilities in transit reported by individual interview respondents⁸

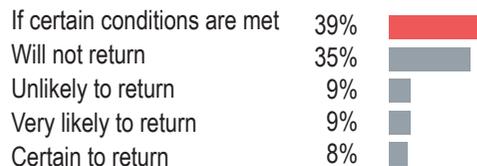
| Vulnerabilities at border points in Somalia | | Vulnerabilities at Bus termini in Dadaab |
|---|---|--|
| Elderly persons | ① | Elderly persons |
| Lactating mothers | ② | Pregnant women |
| Pregnant women | ③ | Single parents |
| Critically ill persons | ④ | Lactating mothers |
| Malnourished children | ⑤ | Physically disabled persons |

8. This question was asked to individual interview respondents that said they were in transit with their other household members.

Movement Intentions

Likelihood of return

Only 8% of the assessed households in Dadaab were certain to return to their areas of origin, with another 35% stating unwillingness to return. Thirty-nine percent stated that they would return if certain conditions were met. These conditions include availability of assistance, stability in Somalia and availability of income opportunities in Somalia.



Reasons for return

For the assessed households that said they were likely or certain to return to their areas of origin, 45% stated they would do so due to conflict and violence within the refugee camps. Another 35% said they were considering to return due to the availability of a return facilitation package. For the households considering to return, most were considering to do so within the next year following the assessment. FGD participants in Dadaab reported that most members considering to return would do so due to a desire to go back to their home country. The majority of persons interviewed at the bus termini in Dadaab said that they were returning to Somalia on a temporary basis. FGDs in Dadaab and at the border points also revealed different reasons between men, women and youth for returning to areas of origin. Most men would return to do farming, while others would return to check on their other spouses living in their areas of origin. FGDs also revealed that some women, particularly those who are married to Kenyan host community members, would return temporarily to Somalia to visit their other family members.

% of HHs that are very likely or certain to return to their area of origin in the following timelines:



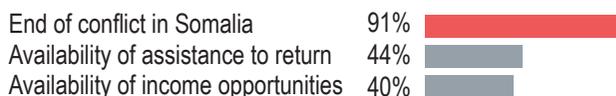
Barriers to considering return

Continued conflict and instability in Somalia was the main reason why a majority of the assessed households in Dadaab (72%) are not considering to return to their area of origin. Another 39%⁹ said they were not considering to return in order for their children to continue accessing free education in Dadaab. Participants in FGDs in Dadaab mentioned fear of conflict in Somalia as the main barrier preventing them to return.

Future return intentions

A majority of the assessed households in Dadaab (80%) said that if they returned in the future, they would not do so through voluntary repatriation, mainly due to fear of losing their refugee status. Others would not register for voluntary repatriation because they would plan for a temporary visit either to check on assets or to attend to some family issues. FGD participants reported that if a household planned to return in future, not all household members would return at the same time. Youth that are still in school would be left behind to complete their studies, while heads of households would return to look for livelihoods and shelter. The end of conflict in Somalia, the availability of an assistance package to return and of income opportunities in Somalia would increase willingness of households in Dadaab to return to Somalia.

Main reported factors that would increase willingness to return for assessed HHs in Dadaab:⁹



Information about potential areas of return

More than half of the assessed households in Dadaab reported receiving information about potential areas of return and they trust the source of this information. Households reported receiving this information mainly through radio and television, UNHCR, NGOs, friends who live in the area and household members who have visited the area and come back to Dadaab. The most common types of information received by households include access to shelter, access to education and access to livelihoods. FGD participants in Dadaab mentioned the economic situation in Somalia, access to healthcare, and the security situation as the most common information they need from their areas of origin.

Conclusion

With continued conflict and instability in Somalia, the majority of refugees of Somali origin residing in Dadaab refugee complex are currently not willing to return to Somalia on a permanent basis, according to household assessments in Dadaab. Findings from this assessment demonstrate an ongoing cyclical movement pattern between Dadaab and Somalia, with most people in transit going back to Somalia temporarily. Most assessed households prefer returning to Somalia spontaneously as opposed to returning through the voluntary repatriation programme, as the return is planned as temporary and they do not want to lose their refugee status. People on the move are often faced with various challenges, including attacks by wild animals, harassment by police due to lack of proper documentation, as well as lack of food and other basic services while on transit. In addition to these, there are several protection issues affecting people in transit. Findings show a large number of people traveling with various vulnerable persons, including the elderly, lactating mothers, pregnant women and critically ill persons. There were reported cases of persons who were separated from their families during transit, as well as children traveling alone at the transit points. Findings from FGDs display different conditions under which women and men would return to Somalia. Most men returned to check on assets or cultivate their lands, while women returned mainly to visit their families in Somalia, following temporal separation with their spouses in Dadaab. Findings from this assessment display the need for a further understanding of the protection concerns during transit and a more comprehensive analysis of the people moving spontaneously versus those moving through the voluntary repatriation programme. There is also the need to monitor refugees' intentions of movement in Dadaab refugee complex on a regular basis in relation to access to basic services and livelihoods in the camps.

ABOUT REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts.

REACH activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information, please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter @REACH_info.

9. Households could select multiple answers