

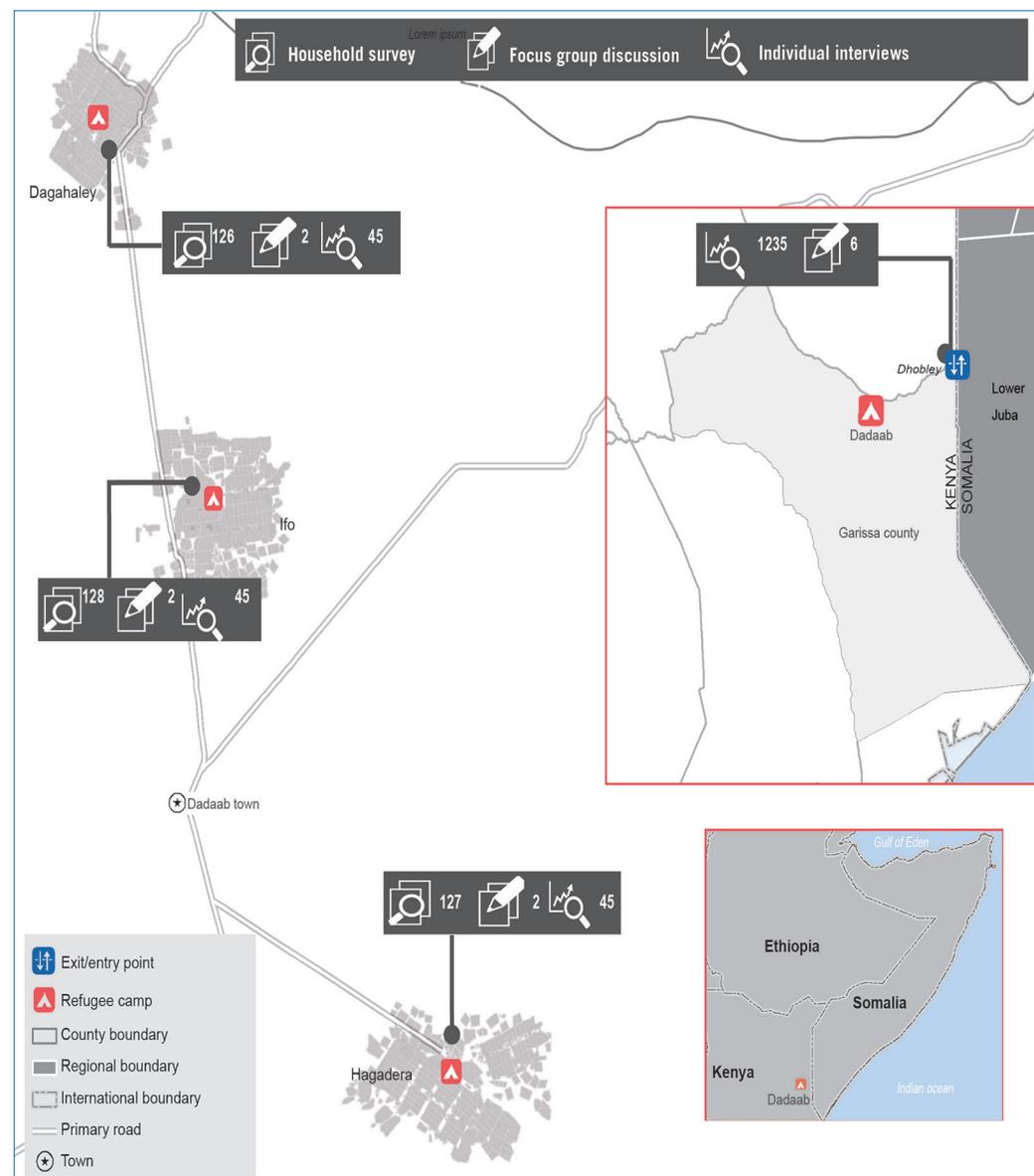
Background

As of January 2019, a total of 209,979¹ mostly Somali refugees reside in Dadaab camps. Since May 2017, REACH has worked in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and in support of camp management and operational partners to provide secondary information and guidance on developing tools and methodologies for data collection in Dadaab refugee complex (Dagahaley, Hagadera and Ifo) and along the Kenya-Somalia border. Despite the ongoing voluntary repatriation programme by the Government of Kenya with support from UNHCR, there were reported 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. This situation overview presents findings from the second round of this assessment, with the first round having been conducted between 6th and 15th of November 2018.

Key findings

- 46% of the households in Dadaab said they will not return to their Country of origin. Only 6% 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 access to 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 availability of income opportunities.
- Focus group discussion (FGD) participants in Dadaab said a key factor for not returning to Somalia at this time was to allow their children to continue to access education. Other factors mentioned were insecurity and lack of property in Somalia.
- Individual interviews at the border points revealed mixed reasons for choosing Dadaab as a destination, including presence of law and order and availability of security.
- 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 it was a temporary return.
- Amongst individual interview respondents, 89% in Dadaab and 77% at border points reported traveling 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 with money from the sale of humanitarian assistance items.
- 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 children traveling alone.

Map 1. Data collection locations



1. UNHCR Statistics package, January 2019; 2. REACH Intentions monitoring, July and November 2018.



Methodology

The assessment used a mixed methods approach with both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Household interviews were conducted in Dadaab refugee complex between 11 and 18 February 2019. 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 1,235 individual interviews were conducted between 10 and 16 February 2019 at 3 border crossing points (Dhobley, Degelema and Tuula-Barwaqo). In Dadaab refugee complex, 135 individual interviews were conducted between 14 and 18 February 2019 at 3 bus termini³ across the three camps in Dadaab complex (Hagadera bus terminus, Ifo main bus terminus and Dagahaley main bus terminus). Data collection took place during the day. In addition, six FGDs were conducted with refugees in Dadaab camps between 14 and 18 February 2019. 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	45	2	126
Kenya-Dadaab	Hagadera	45	2	127
Kenya-Dadaab	Ifo	45	2	128
Somalia	Dhobley	416	2	-
Somalia	Degelema	413	2	-
Somalia	Tuula-Barwaqo	406	2	-
TOTAL		1370	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 Ethiopia and Uganda. According to the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)⁵, in January 2019, a total of 23,396 cross border movements were recorded in all of the country. This represents a slight decrease in comparison with December 2018, when 25,884 movements were observed. However, two border entry points (Cabudwaaq and Dhobley) recorded an increase in movements.

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 (82%) reporting that they were in transit with their household members, either all or some of them. At the bus termini in Dadaab, only 18% 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-two percent of the individuals interviewed at the bus termini, and who were traveling alone, were males. Most individuals interviewed at the bus termini in Dadaab (90%) and at border points in Somalia (77%) 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, the majority of households in Dadaab refugee complex (62%) reported that they left their areas of origin due to conflict and insecurity. Another 61%⁶ left due to fear of conflict in their communities or surrounding areas, while 36% cited lack of access to education services as a reason for leaving their areas of origin. 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. Lack of education and health services were also mentioned as push factors by FGD participants in Dadaab. From the individual interviews at the border points in Somalia, the majority of the people moving into Somalia (87%) had come from Dadaab, where lack of livelihoods, lack of essential services and temporary family visit were reported as the main reasons for movement.

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. Others came to Dadaab to access education services or to attain refugee or asylum status and access health services. FGD participants in Dadaab largely mentioned availability of security and access to education as the main pull factors for coming to Dadaab. Individual interviews at the border points revealed mixed reasons for choosing Dadaab as a destination, including presence of law and order and availability of security. Others revealed during individual interviews at the border points that they wanted to be in proximity to friends and family members, while others stated that they came to Dadaab to access income opportunities and attain refugee status.

3. These are designated locations in the camps where there are vehicles that take people to Somalia

4. UNHCR: <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/dadaab-refugee-complex>

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

- Actual conflict in community
- Fear of conflict
- Lack of access to education services
- Drought
- Lack of livelihood opportunities

- ①
- ②
- ③
- ④
- ⑤

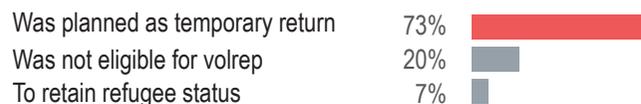
Pull factors to Dadaab

- No conflict in Dadaab
- Law and order
- Availability of aid
- Access to education services
- Availability of income opportunities

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 (99%) 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 the voluntary repatriation process is perceived to take too long.

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

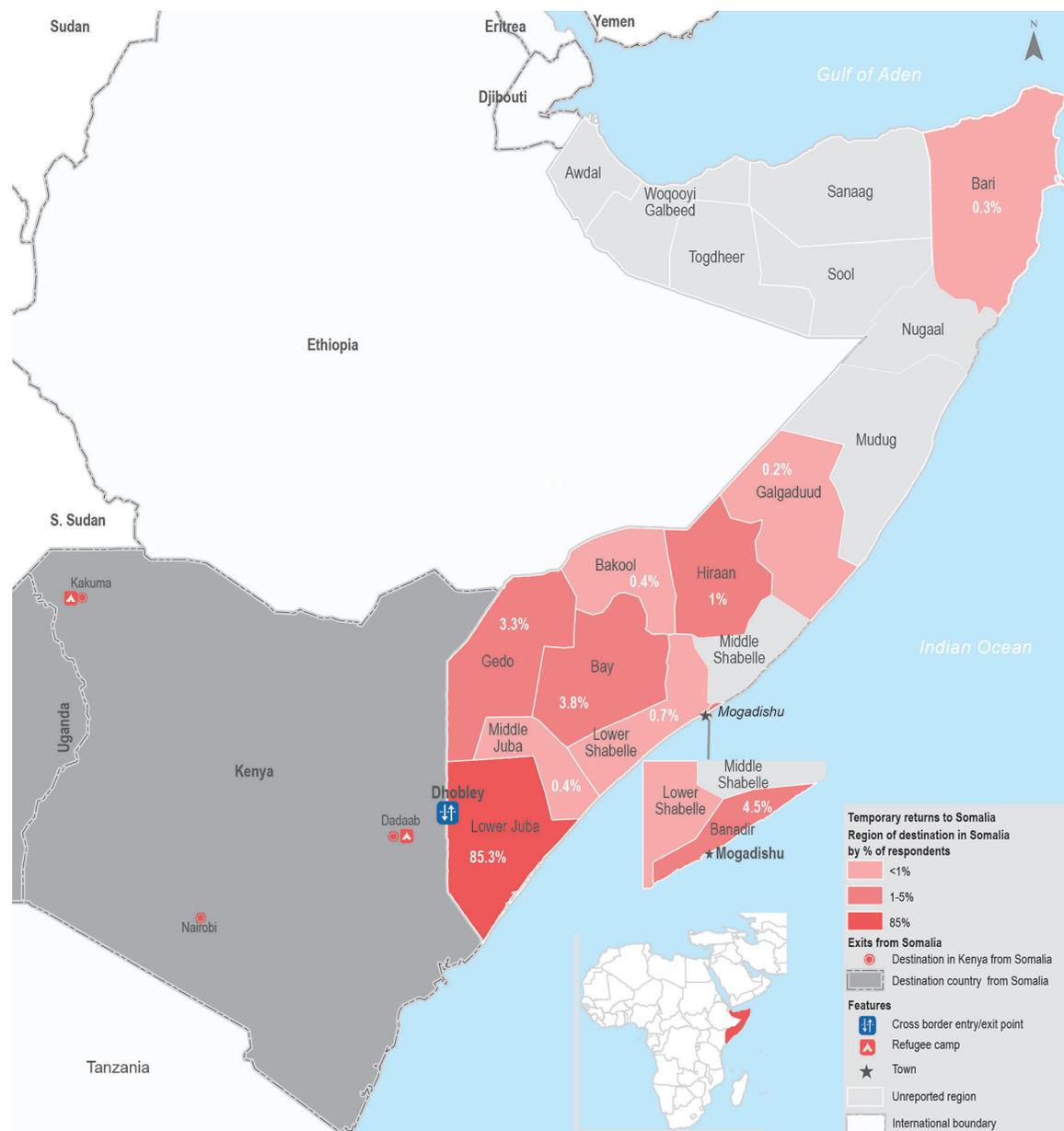


Key transit and border-crossing points

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 and availability of transportation. 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.

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 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. These termini are located inside the camps, making it easier for passengers to access them. Participants in FGDs in Dadaab said most refugees prefer using these termini for temporary and spontaneous return.



A bus picking passengers at Dagahaley Bus Terminus.

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 or private cars sold items received from humanitarian aid to fund their journey, while others used their own money and some used borrowed money. For the respondents that used trucks or lorries, they mostly used borrowed money or their own money. FGDs in Dadaab revealed that some travelers exchange their humanitarian aid with traders, who give them money to facilitate their travel.

Source of money for transport by means of transport used by individual interview respondents⁸

	Air	Bus or Mini-Bus	Private Car	Truck or Lorry
Borrowed Money	0%	6%	21%	61%
Borrowed Vehicle	0%	0%	2%	2%
Sale of Humanitarian aid	0%	83%	46%	21%
Own Money	100%	11%	32%	32%

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 on site. Participants in FGDs in Dadaab said that persons in transit face restrictions and sometimes arrest by security officers. 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 such 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, high cost of transportation and lack of vehicles for transport.

Protection risks and vulnerabilities en route

Participants in FGDs in Dadaab reported cases of kidnapping and sexual and gender-based violence during transit. In particular, FGD participants in Dhobley and in Dadaab reported cases of women being raped while in transit, with some being subjected to sexual exploitation by the drivers, in order to be transported for free to Somalia. In addition, FGD participants cited rumors of unaccompanied children in transit being smuggled to Libya, where they are held hostage. 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.

Other FGD participants in Dadaab reported incidents related to family separation, with assistance received in these cases, especially from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). 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 go back to Somalia. Children going to Somalia during school holidays were also seen traveling alone. Individual interview respondents reported traveling with different vulnerable people too, including elderly persons, pregnant and lactating mothers, malnourished children, as well as critically ill persons.

Top 5 vulnerabilities in transit reported by individual interview respondents⁹

Vulnerabilities at border points in Somalia	Vulnerabilities at Bus termini in Dadaab
Elderly persons	1 Elderly persons
Malnourished children	2 Pregnant and lactating mothers
Pregnant and lactating mothers	3 Mentally disabled persons
Critically ill persons	4 Physically disabled persons
Single parents	5 Critically ill persons

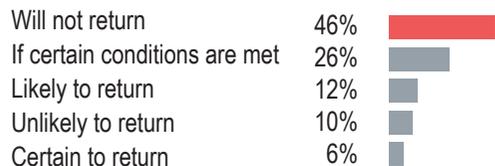
8. Respondents could select multiple answers

9. 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 6% of the assessed households in Dadaab were certain to return to their countries of origin, with another 46% stating unwillingness to return. Twenty-six 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 countries of origin, 39% stated they would do so due to concerns of the potential closure of Dadaab camp. Another 24% said they were considering to return due to conflict within the refugee camps. 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, to have freedom of movement and due to potential closure of Dadaab camp as well. The majority of interviewed persons 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 countries 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. Other women would return to Somalia to join their husbands. Most youths would return to Somalia to get married or search for jobs.

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



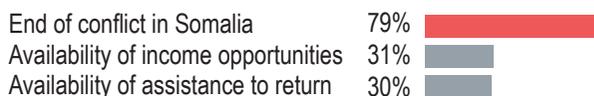
Barriers to considering return

Continued conflict and instability in Somalia was the main reason why a majority of households in Dadaab (79%) is not considering to return to their country of origin. Participants in FGDs in Dadaab mentioned fear of conflict in Somalia as the main barrier preventing them to return. In addition, some FGD participants said they would not return so that their children could continue accessing education in Dadaab.

Future return intentions

End of conflict in Somalia, availability of income opportunities and availability of an assistance package to return were the top reported factors that would encourage future return intentions for households in Dadaab. Some FGD participants reported that if a household planned to return in the 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. Some FGD participants in Dadaab said members of the same household would return all at the same time, in order to receive the return package as a household. FGD participants in Dadaab cited unwillingness to register for voluntary repatriation if they were to return in the future, mainly because the process normally takes too long.

Main reported factors that would increase willingness to return for HHs in Dadaab:¹⁰



Information about potential areas of return

Below half of the households in Dadaab reported receiving information about potential areas of return, mainly through radio and television. The most common types of information received by households included access to shelter, access to education and access to livelihoods. FGD participants in Dadaab mentioned availability of basic services, access to education, access to healthcare, the security situation, as well as the political situation in Somalia as the most important information they needed. These participants said that they would want to receive this information from UNHCR and government officials, as it would inform their decisions of future return to 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. People on the move are often faced with various challenges, including lack of proper documentation as well as lack of food and other basic services while in 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 returned to Somalia temporarily. Most men returned to check on their spouses in Somalia, while women returned mainly to visit their families.

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 the situation in Somalia, especially potential areas of return for refugees in Dadaab camps, in order to inform decisions of repatriation of refugees.

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](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).

10. Households could select multiple answers