

Joint Protection and Shelter Frontline Response Kismaayo & Afmadow Districts, Jubaland State

Background:

In July 2024, fighting between Jubaland forces - with the support of the Somali National Army (SNA) - and Al-Shabaab (AS) took place in the villages of **Harbole, Mido, Bibi, Soya, and Bula-Haji** in **Afmadow district, Lower Jubba**. The military intervention was intended to gain control of the Kismaayo-Afmadow and Dhobley-Afmadow roads, ensuring the access to the major towns in Afmadow district.

Jubaland forces are reportedly in control of Harbole and Bula-Haji villages, though Al-Shabaab are alleged to be instructing local communities to move out of these liberated areas particularly from Bula-Haji. This has caused fear among the communities, leading to movements out of these villages towards Kismaayo on foot, and using donkeys and camels as a mode of transport.

According to the Protection and Solutions Monitoring Network (PSMN), the conflict has impacted local communities in these districts, with approximately **300 households** consisting of **1,800 individuals** displaced to **Afmadow**¹ and **270 households (1,620 individuals)** to **Kismaayo**². In addition, Jubaland Commission for Refugees and IDPs (JUCRI) issued a Rapid Needs Assessment report on 30 July 2024 indicating **4,968 individuals (828 households)**. The difference in data indicates the fluidity of the situation and continuous influx of IDPs.

The newly displaced population have settled in various locations throughout West Kismayo such as **Bilicsan, Dalsan, Basra, Dalxiska, Barkada Shariifada, Qarsa, Turqato, Yontoy and Gasho**. They are in a dire humanitarian situation requiring assistance and humanitarian actors to scale up their response, which must be efficiently coordinated through the Protection Cluster sub-national coordinators and Area Based Coordination structures.

The priority protection risks reported during this conflict and displacement are:

- **Unlawful impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement, siege and forced displacement:** considering the ongoing tensions and the high likelihood of continued clashes between the Jubaland forces and AS and increase in forced displacement.
- **Forced recruitment and association of children in armed forces and groups:** displaced persons voiced concerns that the risk of non-state armed actor (AS) forcibly recruiting men and boys from the conflict affected areas.
- **Risk of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and ERWs:** This poses significant risk to civilians especially during displacement of the conflict affected areas. The impact of IEDs on civilians can be devastating, causing death, serious injury, and long-term psychological trauma.
- **Child and forced family separation:** Displaced people, driven by fear, often lack proper transportation, putting vulnerable individuals at risk of being left behind.
- **Psychological distress and deterioration of mental wellbeing:** As a result of displacement, civilians continue to experience psychological distress due to exposure to violence, political

¹ [UNHCR Somalia Flash Alert #14 - Jubaland Forces Conflict with Al-Shabaab in Villages Surrounding Afmadow District Displaces Approximately 1,800 Individuals](#)

² [UNHCR Somalia - Flash Alert 15 - Over 1,620 Individuals Displaced from Bullo-Haji Arrive in Kismayo Following Recent Clashes between Jubaland Forces and Al-Shabaab](#)

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.

- **Child, early or forced marriage:** IDPs reported that child, early or forced marriage is a major protection concern in Kismayo faced by women and girls.
- **Gender-based violence:** the risk has been reported by local partners to be on the rise.

Protection and Shelter Cluster Joint Frontline Response:

The Protection and Shelter Clusters continue to work with all partners, including Area Based Coordination structures, to ensure a proper coordination response to identify gaps, avoid duplication and to promote the centrality of protection in the frontline protection response. Ensuring the inclusion of the most vulnerable within the affected communities including minority and marginalized groups, elderly, persons with disabilities, women, boys, and girls.

This joint response is aligned with the Inter-sectoral Response Framework (IRF) and Protection Cluster's 2024 Somalia [Response Strategy](#). Moreover, Kismaayo and Afmadow districts are designated as Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) priority districts and have an Area-Based Coordination (ABC) mechanism.

As of 27 August, the following are the joint mobilized response:

District	Location	Partner	Response	Targeted households	Status
Afmadow	Dhobley	NRC	NRC will establish 3 protection desks in Dhobley operated by the PSMN monitors. NRC is also going to deploy additional 2 Case Workers per desk to support PSMN monitors with coaching and mentoring. At the protection desks, those with protection risks and vulnerabilities will be identified and supported with Individual Protection Assistance (IPA) through cash modalities and referrals. In each of the protection desks, there will be mobile activities carried out in the surrounding villages.	3 Protection Desks	Planned
Afmadow	Afmadow	IOM	Distribution of tarpaulins for the displaced persons in Afmadow	11,500 HHs	Planned
Afmadow	Afmadow	NRC	NRC will establish 3 protection desks in Afmadow operated by the PSMN monitors. NRC is also going	3 Protection Desks	Planned

			<p>to deploy additional 2 Case Workers per desk to support PSMN monitors with coaching and mentoring. At the protection desks, those with protection risks and vulnerabilities will be identified and supported with Individual Protection Assistance (IPA) through cash modalities and referrals.</p> <p>In each of the protection desks, there will be mobile activities carried out in the surrounding villages.</p>		
Afmadow	Afmadow and Dhobley	UNHCR	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) to the displaced population. UNHCR has completed the Vulnerability Assessment and planned to release by the first week of September	250 HHs	Planned
Afmadow	Dhobley	DRC	DRC conducted Best Interest Assessments (BIAs) and provided support to unaccompanied children in Dhobley.	5 children	Completed
Kismaayo	Bilicsan, Dalsan, Basra, Dalxiska, Barkada Shariifada, Qarsa, Turqato, Yontoy and Gasho	UNHCR	Referrals: UNHCR coordinated 25 referrals received from partners, including 3 cases referred by minority organizations, 5 health-related cases, 13 livelihood-related cases, and 2 GBV cases (allegations of sexual violence). All cases have been referred to the relevant partners, including the livelihood, protection and health partners based in Kismaayo.	25 persons	Completed
Kismaayo	Bilicsan, Dalsan, Basra, Dalxiska, Barkada Shariifada, Qarsa, Turqato, Yontoy and Gasho	UNHCR	Following a multi-agency rapid needs assessment in West Kismaayo, Shelter plans to support the 680 most vulnerable households. Each household will receive an NFI kit per the national cluster NFI guidelines. These kits include (3 blankets, 2 jerry cans, 2 mosquito nets, 1 plastic sheet, 2 sleeping mats, 1 solar lamp, and 1 kitchen set). The aim is to help families recover from the impact of conflict by restoring essential non-	680 HHs	Completed

			<p>food items lost, thereby promoting their recovery with dignity.</p> <p>Additionally, UNHCR will coordinate with other clusters and inter-cluster partners to address other sectoral gaps in WASH, health, and food to respond to the identified needs comprehensively. To enhance community engagement, UNHCR will utilize Juba Foundation protection help desk to facilitate regular feedback sessions, enabling the community to express their experiences and concerns regarding the response. The feedback collected will be analyzed and used to adjust the response as needed, ensuring it aligns with the community's evolving needs.</p>		
Kismaayo	Bilicsan, Dalsan, Basra, Dalxiska, Barkada Shariifada, Qarsa, Turqato, Yontoy and Gasho	UNHCR AVORD & JUCRI	Distribution of plastic tarpaulins to 450 HHs in the west of Kismaayo	450 HHs	Completed
Kismaayo	Bilicsan	UNHCR	Distribution of Dignity Kits	20 HHs	Completed
Kismaayo	Bilicsan, Dalsan, Basra, Dalxiska, Barkada Shariifada, Qarsa, Turqato, Yontoy and Gasho	UNHCR	Unconditional Cash Transfer to the displaced population UNHCR has completed the Vulnerability Assessment and planned to release by the first week of September	440 HHs	Planned
Kismaayo	Kismaayo	UNFPA	Distribution of Dignity Kits (reproductive health) in Kismaayo	300 (girls and women)	Planned
Kismaayo	Bilicsan	NRC	NRC, in collaboration with Juba Foundation, has established a Protection Desk in the Bilicsan area to address the needs of the displaced population. NRC and Juba Foundation will deploy four PSMN monitors in the area who will:	3	Ongoing

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Conduct sensitization and awareness sessions on protection risks, threats, and vulnerabilities using protection cluster key messages, identifying and referring protection-related cases to service providers. . Perform regular PSMN protection monitoring and documentation through the PSMN dashboard. . Provide information and counselling, using Psychological First Aid (PFA) techniques to support those in need. <p>Additionally, NRC will deploy an additional two case workers to support the Bilicsan Protection Desk and initiate Individual Protection Assistance (IPA) response including an accompaniment package, designed to support individuals with vulnerabilities or risks by providing financial assistance to meet their needs or helping them access service providers.</p>		
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Gaps

Joint Multi-Sectoral Rapid Needs Assessment conducted by iMMAP in Kismayo revealed NFIs and protection response are urgently needed by the newly displaced persons due to the conflict. The top three **most urgent NFI needs** for the conflict-affected people in Kismayo district are **mosquito nets, plastic sheets and tents, and solar lamps**.

The Protection and Shelter Clusters continue to advocate for urgent frontline support in hard-to-reach and newly accessible areas to address the protection risks associated with violence, coercion and deprivation and humanitarian needs among the displaced and vulnerable civilian populations.

Photos



IDPs using the UNHCR distributed plastic tarpaulins in Barkada Shariifada settlement, Kismayo.



UNHCR partner (JUCRI) distributing NFIs to the newly displaced in Kismayo.



Juba Foundation staff in Bilicsan site in west of Kismaayo where the conflict displaced IDPs have settled.



Note: Juba Foundation staffs in Bilicsan, west of Kismaayo