

# Report of the Drought Operations and Coordination Centre (DOCC) Field Mission to Galkaacyo: Situation Overview, Key Findings and Follow-Up Action Points for the Relocation of 17,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

24-26 April 2018

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## 1. BACKGROUND

From 24 – 26 April, members of the DOCC travelled to support the Regional Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (RICCG) and the Relocation Task Force following the decision of the Government of Puntland to relocate 17,000 drought-affected IDPs from 17 settlements in North Galkaacyo. Five<sup>1</sup> DOCC members travelled from Mogadishu, and were joined by UNHCR and UNOCHA staff<sup>2</sup> based in Galkaacyo.

In North Galkaacyo, the DOCC team met with UN and NGO members of the Relocation Task Force<sup>3</sup> and Government Officials, including the Governor, Deputy Governor, Deputy Minister of Interior, Mayor of North Galkaacyo, and Government Focal Point for the relocation. The team also visited two IDP settlements – one together with the Government – where they met with affected people and sought their views on the relocation. The team also visited one of the two proposed relocation sites, which lies approximately three kilometres outside of the city. The team also travelled to South Galkaacyo where they met with Government officials from Galmuduug, including the Mayor of South Galkaacyo, Deputy Governor, Minister of Health and Minister of Justice.

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## 2. SITUATION OVERVIEW

Galkaacyo has a population of approximately 390,000 people, and lies on the border between Puntland and Galmuduug State. Galkaacyo city is split up in to a North and South section that are administered by the Puntland and the Galmuduud governments, respectively. It has traditionally been a gateway for displaced populations, and Galkaacyo is home to a large population of IDPs, including both those seeking refuge from regional conflicts (primarily from South Central Somalia) and more recently, those from neighbouring regions affected by drought. In total, Galkaacyo hosts an estimated 122,000 IDPs representing 31.2 per cent of the population of Galkaacyo town.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the border between Puntland and Galmuduug that divides Galkaacyo has proven to be a flashpoint. Most recently, in late 2016 armed clashes erupted between the two sides, displacing an estimated 90,000 people at the height of the crisis. Most people displaced during this period have returned home, however, some people are still settled in the area between North and South Galkaacyo, leaving them exposed to violence in the event of a resurgence in armed conflict.

In late 2016, the North Galkaacyo authorities informed humanitarian organizations that they intend to relocate approximately 17,000 drought-affected IDPs (i.e., new arrivals from 2016 onward, reportedly linked to the authorities through clan affiliation) living in 17 of 34 settlements across North Galkaacyo. Authorities have stated the current living conditions, exploitative nature of the gatekeeper system, the proliferation and creation of new IDPs settlements, and unique vulnerability of the drought-affected (i.e. nomadic pastoralist communities) are the motivation behind the relocation. In

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<sup>2</sup> Mahamadou Guindo, Head of Sub-Officer, UNHCR; Guled Isse, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA; Ahmed Farah Roble, OCHA.

<sup>3</sup> Includes 22 NGOs (Local and International), UN Agencies and Puntland State Authorities

<sup>4</sup> 105,000 living urban and 17,000 rural areas as per the detailed site assessment of the camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) cluster (UNHCR/NRC & REACH) and IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

particular, the local authorities reported to be concerned about the ‘splitting’ of sites, a term they prefer to use when IDP move away and establish new sites to free themselves from the control of gatekeepers. In addition, the Government and humanitarian partners in Galkaacyo reckon that having IDPs housed in 1 or 2 locations would facilitate the delivery of humanitarian response and sustainable services, while acknowledging the following risks associated with establishing a managed site; exclusion of eligible vulnerable population groups, new sites could become a magnet and pull factor for displacement and humanitarian agencies could concentrate their assistance to people living in managed sites.

In February 2018, a Task Force was established to coordinate the relocation between Government and humanitarian organizations. The Task Force comprising of 22 agencies and institutions<sup>5</sup> (Puntland state, UN, NGOs) and the Protection Cluster, has developed a draft framework to guide the relocation and coordinate action of the involved actors, encompassing three phases: pre-relocation, relocation and post-relocation. A technical committee has been established within the Task Force to oversee technical teams on Shelter, Protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and camp coordination and camp management (CCCM). The Government has purchased two plots of land for the relocation, one in Galkaacyo East, 3 kilometres (km) from the town, and one in Galkaacyo West (16 km from town). The Government has expressed their interest to move forward quickly with the relocation, ideally completing the exercise within six months. Humanitarian members of the Task Force have expressed concern over the time period, and reiterated the importance of engaging and involving IDPs in the proposed relocation and abiding by international norms and standards in all phases of the relocation, to which the government has agreed in principle. At the time of the visit, the Government had informed the Task Force that Phase 1 of the framework was complete (pre-relocation) and Phase 2 (relocation) should commence. The Government also informed partners that non-lifesaving projects should not be implemented in existing IDP settlements, and are to be implemented in the new settlements only. Notably, only drought affected IDPs are being considered for profiling and relocation by the Government.

South Galkaacyo also hosts a significant number of IDPs, and the Government estimates there are approximately 18,000 protracted IDP households, 8,500 drought IDP households and 490 returnees. An estimated, 7,900 people have been evicted when their land tenure agreement expired recently, and the Galmuduug Government is also exploring options to relocate IDPs in the near future.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. KEY FINDINGS

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- **The joint Government-Humanitarian Task Force has proven to be a successful coordination mechanism, and should be considered a best practice and replicated across Somalia.** The Task Force has provided a platform for stakeholders to engage around key issues, and importantly, for humanitarian actors to advocate with authorities on key protection issues. Moving forward, it will be important to agree on roles and responsibilities in both the immediate and long term, ensure transparency, secure buy in of humanitarian actors to the process, and mobilize resources.
- **Many steps that the Government has taken in planning for the relocation are in line with key asks of the humanitarian community, and pave the way for eventual realization of durable solutions for some IDPs.** There is commitment and initial efforts to engage the IDPs who will be moved in the process, to facilitate ‘go and see visits’, allow IDPs to choose between the two sites, and grant household level property deeds for the new land. Local authorities also spoke to the importance of taking in to consideration the unique needs of individuals with special needs in to

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<sup>5</sup> State Ministry of interior, MOWDAFA-Justice, Education and Health; UNHCR, UNOCHA, UNICEF, NRC, DRC, IRC, SRCS, RI GECPD, TASS, PMWDO and DRDO

<sup>6</sup> Galmuduug state has identified land (1km x 1 km) for relocating IDPs

the planning process. It will be important to engage development actors on issues related to durable solutions, using permanent shelter as an entry point to improve the livelihoods of IDPs.

- **Observations of existing IDP settlements visited by the team indicate they were spacious and less crowded than other settlements observed elsewhere in urban and peri urban environments** of Mogadishu and Baidoa. However, the settlements suffered from a lack of planning and availability of sufficient services such as circulation, latrines, water points and schools.
- **However, additional measures are required by the Government to ensure that the relocation does not contribute to exclusion of any group and is line with international standards.** These include a comprehensive profiling of all IDPs in Gaalkaacyo (i.e. conflict-affected/protracted IDPs, including communities from southern parts of Somalia, and drought IDPs/new arrivals), a joint risk analysis conducted by the Task Force, and budgeting of the total requirements and costs of the relocation process. As the process currently stands, there is high risk of exclusion of conflict-affected IDPs from South and Central areas of Somalia who arrived in previous years and who reportedly make up more than 50 per cent the majority of IDPs in North Gaalkaacyo. While it is reported that conflict-affected IDPs have established themselves in Gaalkaayco and have adequate livelihoods opportunities such as daily casual labour, it is essential that these IDPs also be included in the profiling exercise to better understand their current situation, vulnerabilities, intentions and desires. The option to relocate should be open to all IDPs in North Gaalkaacyo, and efforts should be undertaken to understand and mitigate any risks that may be involved in opening the relocation to conflict-affected IDPs.
- **The risk of exclusion remains high, and the importance of needs-based, principled humanitarian assistance is critical in mitigating this risk.** The current approach of relocating only some IDPs and consolidating humanitarian assistance in the new IDP sites risks the exclusion of others, reportedly based on clan affiliation. Humanitarian partners should coherently advocate for and apply a needs-based approach to their interventions to ensure that assistance is prioritized to the most vulnerable, whether they be conflict- or drought-related IDPs regardless of clan affiliation. To this end, the issues of halting non-lifesaving humanitarian assistance to people of concern sites was discussed, and it will be important to clearly identify and agree on what is considered life-saving, and to understand the funding modality (i.e. short- term emergency projects that are ineligible for no-cost extensions). The Task Force is well placed to take forward discussions on principled humanitarian action, with support from the National ICCG as needed.
- **While meaningful interaction between the team and IDPs was limited, the people the team spoke to expressed their interest to be relocated.** The team visited the first IDP settlement jointly with the Government. People in the site informed that they knew about the planned relocation and would be interested to move if services are guaranteed. Some IDPs also noted the decline in humanitarian assistance in their current location in recent months. The Government did not visit the second location with the team, though information suggests that individuals present in the site had been alerted of the visit ahead of time. While it was difficult for IDPs to speak freely in the second site due to the presence of the gatekeeper and reportedly individuals from Gaalkaacyo city, efforts were made to communicate to the team that people would be happy to be relocated if given the opportunity. IDPs in this site also reiterated the importance of livelihoods trainings to develop skills sets suited from an urban lifestyle. In both locations, education was highlighted as a priority (with a notable initiative in the site of community members teaching children in a makeshift school).

- **The proposed relocation sites appear to be adequate.** The Government has purchased two sites, one in West Galkaacyo and one in East Galkaacyo. The first site in the west, which was visited by the team is prime land of size of two square kilometres (2 km<sup>2</sup>). It is located approximately 3 kilometres from town and can host between 3,000 and 3,500 households (roughly 20,000 IDPs). While there was initial concern regarding the proximity to the prison, after having visited the site and assessed the proximity to the prison (approximately 3 km<sup>2</sup>), the team does not feel that this is problematic, also due to the fact that access to Galkaacyo City does not necessarily lead past the prison. The second site, in East Galkaacyo, is three square kilometres, and approximately 16 km away from the town, near to the airport. Because the team did not visit this location, it was not possible to make any deductions. However, there are fears that this settlement is far removed from basic services and livelihoods opportunities, thus making it an unattractive choice for some IDP households. The Government informed the team that the different sites allow for different livelihood opportunities and preferences including clan affiliations, and all IDPs being relocated will have the opportunity to visit each site before they decide where to relocate. In general, it is recommended that humanitarian actors, through the taskforce, need to ensure the allocation of at least 100 square meters (m<sup>2</sup>) of land per household, family or a single individual, beyond the recommended land size 45 m<sup>2</sup> per person as stated in the sphere standards, to give households space for privacy, livelihoods activities such as trade artisanal workshops and kitchen gardens.
- **While noting that there is a window of opportunity that should be seized, the 6-month timeframe being proposed by the government is too short.** In order to carry out the required prerequisites for a relocation from a humanitarian point of view – namely a comprehensive profiling process – additional time will be required. Furthermore, funding mechanisms such as the Somali Humanitarian Fund (SHF) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) are not appropriate for such an exercise and additional time is required to mobilize resources from development focused donors. It should be noted, however, that the team noted that the likelihood of relocation will occur with or without humanitarian actors' involvement, and it is important to engage as meaningfully as possible. In this light, an early mobilisation to show intent would have beneficial effects.
- **Given the nature of the relocation and potential to support the realization of durable solutions, there is an urgent need for development/Durable Solutions colleagues to be involved.** As a first step, Durable Solutions colleagues should be represented on the Task Force. There is also an urgent need to operationalize the Durable Solutions frameworks and planning processes to quickly mobilize support of relevant actors and ensure streamlining of approaches countrywide. In addition, clarification around the scope, role and resources of humanitarian actors should also be discussed and agreed upon urgently. In an environment of limited resources and extremely high needs in other parts of Somalia, the role that humanitarian actors can play in such a circumstance is limited. It is therefore critical that humanitarian actors undertake a mapping of current resources available, identify and agree upon the scope of their role in the relocation, and engage with develop actors to maximize complementarity and efficiency, where possible.
- **A coordinated and coherent approach by all humanitarian actors is essential, and any action taken in support of the relocation should be agreed on by the inter-cluster coordination group (ICCG) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) via the Task Force.** It is essential that humanitarian organizations avoid unilateral decisions or provision of assistance, and all support to the Government's relocation should be mapped and agreed upon. This is essential to firmly

establish the position of the humanitarian community in the Task Force, strengthening the ability to advocate for, and demand, principled action from the Government, inclusive of all population groups.

- **Should the conditions below be met, the team recommends support to the Government in the relocation, and advocacy with the HCT and Durable Solutions Initiative for support:**
  - Comprehensive profiling of all IDPs in North Galkaacyo;
  - Option to relocate afforded to all IDPs in North Galkaacyo;
  - Involvement of the community, including through consultations and civil society, in all stages of planning;
  - Risk Analysis completed by Task Force (assessing risks to IDPs from a practical and rights based perspective, look into land issues specifically, as well from process/resource mobilisation perspectives and site management);
  - “Go and see” visits;
  - Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, including going forward in time (as well as development of an ‘exit-strategy’);
  - Budget for entire relocation.
- **In South Galkaacyo, authorities informed of their intention to follow a similar procedure to relocation 8,000 IDPs who have been evicted.** The authorities expressed concern over the extreme vulnerability of these IDPs and asked for more engagement from humanitarian actors. They also drew attention to the high levels of gender based violence (GBV) present and lack of services available to survivors. In relation the proposed relocation, the team highlighted the success of establishing a Task Force in other contexts, as well as principles governing humanitarian action, the need to seek engagement with and involvement of communities, and the benefits of a risk analysis in any efforts moving forward. Finally, authorities expressed concern about high levels of child recruitment, as well as large numbers of released, recaptured or escaped children, in Galmuduug and requested support from the humanitarian community. Standard operating procedures for regional forces have been developed and are in use, but UNICEF and the United Nations Mission Assistance Mission to Somalia Human Rights team have not been involved at this stage.

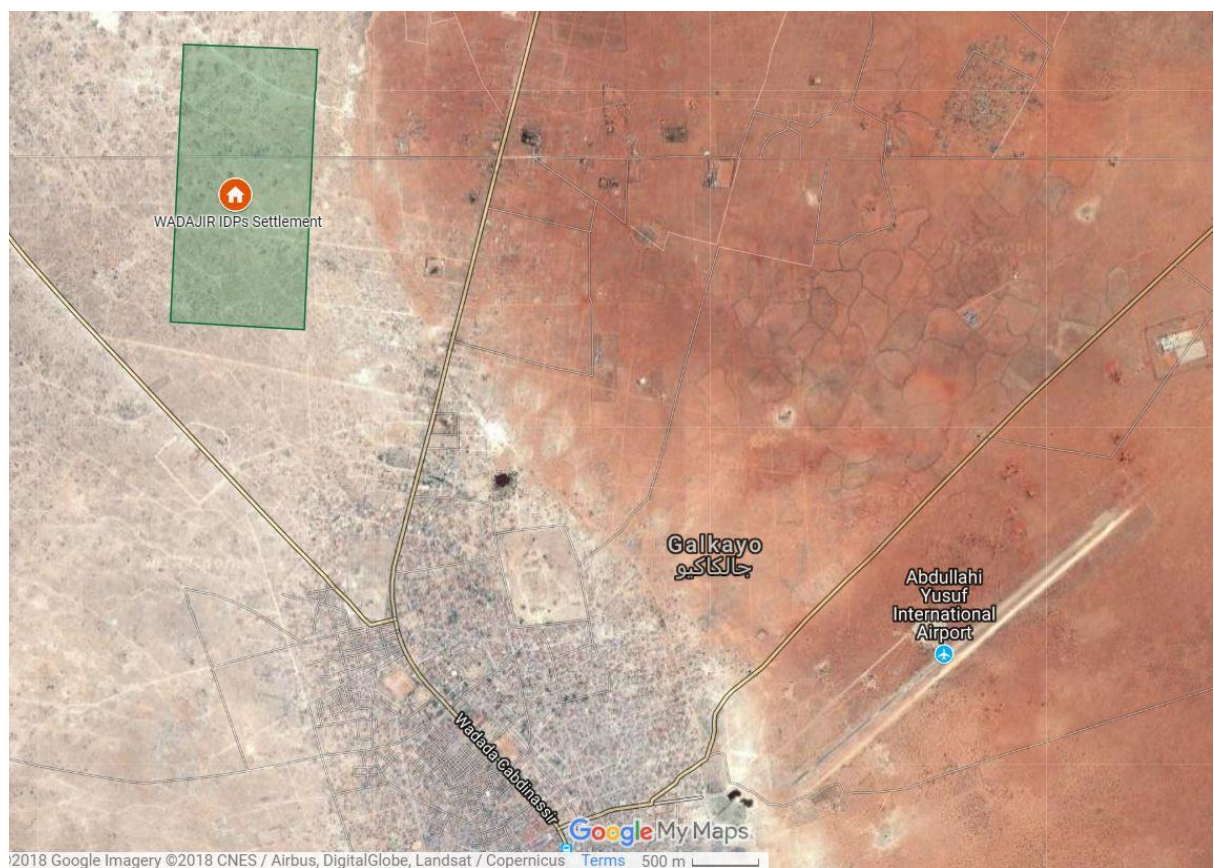
#### 4. FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

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- Task Force to share draft relocation framework for input from National Clusters [National clusters, ASAP]
- Team members to liaise with Durable Solutions Initiative (DSI) and other relevant development colleagues, with emphasis on swift, concrete action and to participate in the Task Forces [DOCC mission members, ASAP]
- RICCG to complete 3Ws to map available resources [OCHA with national clusters, ASAP]
- Request issue to be added to HCT Agenda as AOB [DOCC mission members, ASAP]
- Develop a minimum standards ‘checklist’ of conditions and actions to be taken in similar circumstances, which can be used for or adapted to relocations in other areas of Somalia [Protection Cluster, ASAP]
- Decision to be taken on making assistance for the relocation process conditional on a profiling exercise of all IDPs and offering the option to relocate to the sites to all IDPs [ICCG, HCT]

- Liaise with UNICEF/UNSOM Human Rights team on engagement with Galmuduug related to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for released, recaptured and escaped children [Protection Cluster, ASAP]
- Organise a sensitisation session for the Puntland state government on best practices, to stimulate appropriate steps for relocations are followed as per the accepted policies (e.g. the Puntland IDP policy), international standards and humanitarian principles, as well as other housing, land and property (HLP) protocols (Protection Cluster/ICCG, ASAP).
- Get clarity on the type of site management arrangements that would be put into place to at the new IDP settlements to prevent the emergence of new gatekeeping structures (Task Force, ASAP).

## Annex 1







Overview of the proposed new site in West Galkaacyo: 1 km x 2 km = 2 square kilometres



Access to the proposed site located in Galkacyo West



One of the IDP sites visited by the DOCC members