WASH Cluster Somalia

Somalia: WASH Humanitarian Overview

2025 Mid-year update

As of 14 July 2025

5.2M
People in need

3.8M
People targeted

1.3M
People reached

Situational update

In 2025, Somalia's WASH crisis continues to deteriorate due to the combined effects of prolonged droughts, recent flash floods, and critical funding shortfalls. The Gu and Hagaa rains triggered flash floods in several districts in Banadir and Galmudug, damaging latrines and contaminating shallow wells, further reducing access to safe water and sanitation. Meanwhile, drought persists across much of southern and central Somalia, where drying riverbeds and declining groundwater levels—particularly in areas like Gedo—are making water access increasingly difficult. Rising groundwater salinity, especially in coastal and riverine zones, is also rendering some sources unsafe for use. Despite these challenges, WASH Cluster partners have continued delivering lifesaving services, reaching 1.3 million people by mid-2025. This includes sustainable water access for over 760,K individuals, emergency water support for 330K, sanitation services for 265K, and hygiene promotion for nearly 786K people.

Meanwhile, funding for the 2025 Somalia WASH Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) remains critically low, with only 6.6% of the required resources received as of mid-July. This shortfall has severely constrained the ability of WASH Cluster partners to maintain or scale up life-saving interventions. Humanitarian actors are warning that unless urgent support is mobilized, more communities will lose access to essential WASH services, and disease outbreaks such as cholera—already endemic in Somalia—could intensify. During the reporting period, the national WASH Cluster team conducted field visits to Jubaland and Galmudug to assess WASH needs related to drought and the 2025 Gu rains, while strengthening coordination with local partners. These missions helped guide response priorities based on emerging needs. In addition, the Cluster held coordination meetings at national and sub-national levels to improve planning and address operational challenges. A WASH Technical Working Group meeting in Garowe, Puntland, also took place, where partners updated the Strategic Operational Framework and finalized revisions to the WASH Toolkit to ensure alignment with evolving humanitarian priorities.

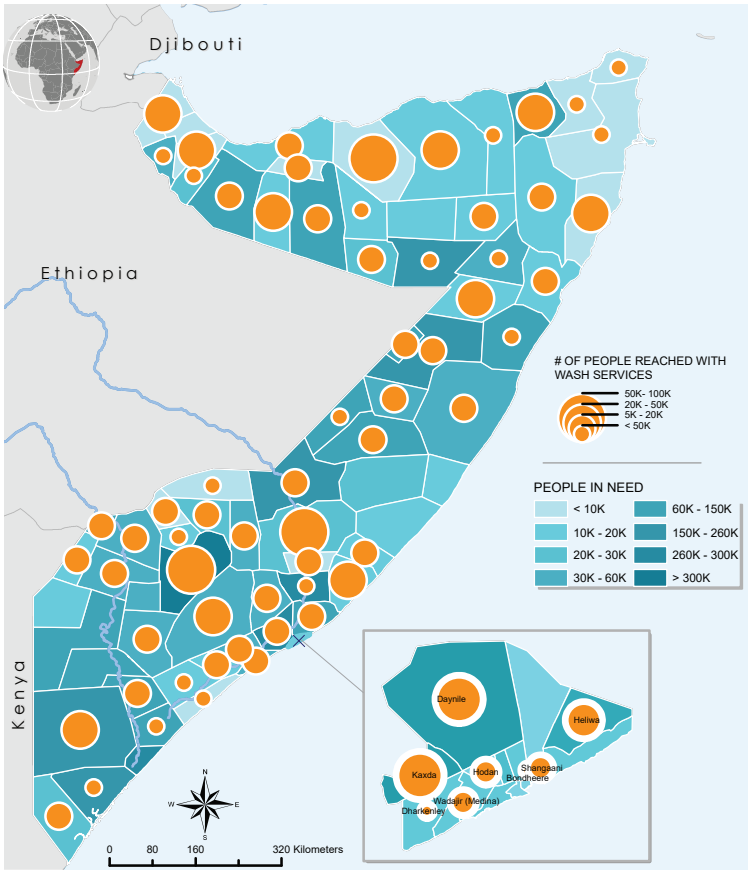

Figure 1: Mid-2025 WASH response coverage vs. population in need across Somalia.

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UNICEF or the United Nations.

Sources: MSNA & WASH Cluster .

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REACH by Population Groups

NON-DISPLACED PEOPLE

PEOPLE TARGETED **3.0M** PEOPLE REACHED **1.0M**

DISPLACE PEOPLE

PEOPLE TARGETED **826K** PEOPLE REACHED **282K**

Cluster Response per Indicator

762K — 42%

TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED WITH SAFE WATER THROUGH SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY.

331K — 12%

TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED WITH SAFE WATER THROUGH EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY.

265K — 22%

TOTAL PEOPLE BENEFITED FROM SAFE SANITATION SERVICES.

786K — 20%

TOTAL PEOPLE BENEFITED FROM HYGIENE KIT DISTRIBUTION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

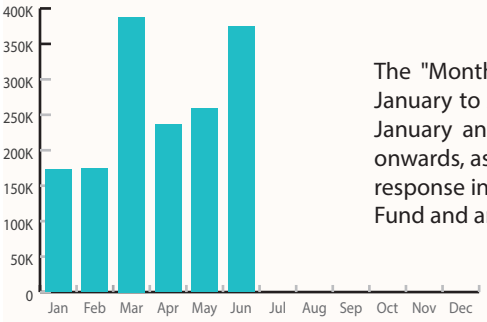
Trends in WASH Needs and Response

	Jan-Jun 2023	Jan-Jun 2024	Jan-Jun 2025
PIN	8.0 M	6.6M	5.2M
TARGET	6.1M	4.3M	3.8M
REACH	2.0M	1.6M	1.3M
% REACH	33%	37%	34%

A STRATEGIC SHIFT TOWARD SUSTAINABLE WATER SOLUTIONS IN SOMALIA'S WASH RESPONSE (2025)

One of the most significant developments in the Somalia WASH Cluster's 2025 strategy was the deliberate reduction of emergency water trucking interventions. While water trucking has traditionally served as a critical life-saving measure during acute droughts, it remains one of the most expensive and short-term solutions. Between January and June 2025, the number of people reached through water trucking declined by 60% compared to the same period in 2024, and by 74% compared to 2023. This sharp reduction was driven by a combination of mounting funding constraints and a strategic pivot toward more sustainable and cost-efficient water delivery systems. Water trucking, though essential in emergencies, is logistically complex, costly to sustain, and highly susceptible to disruptions from insecurity, fuel shortages, and poor road conditions. Recognizing these limitations—especially amid Somalia's protracted and recurrent droughts—the Cluster prioritized transitioning from short-term emergency responses to longer-term, climate-resilient solutions. Investments were channeled into solar-powered boreholes and gravity-fed piped water systems, which offer continuous, lower-cost, and more reliable access to safe water. These systems also promote community ownership and sustainability, as they can be managed and maintained by locally trained water committees with minimal external support. The strategic pivot reflects a broader push to build durable WASH infrastructure that addresses both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term resilience.

In response, the WASH Cluster and partners significantly increased efforts to scale up sustainable water supply interventions. By mid-2025, around 762,000 people had gained access to improved and permanent water systems—marking a 22.1% increase compared to the same period in 2024. This progress was driven by the rehabilitation and expansion of solarized boreholes, construction of piped distribution networks, and maintenance of shallow wells, particularly in drought-prone and displacement-affected areas such as Gedo, Bay, Lower Shabelle, and Hiiran. These investments not only enhanced water supply reliability and coverage but also reduced operational costs and the sector's reliance on emergency logistics. However, the Cluster's operational capacity was significantly impacted by the suspension of USAID funding to multiple international NGOs due to policy and procedural changes. Key implementing partners—including UNICEF, CARE, DRC, NRC, WVI, NCA, PAH, ACF, ACTED, Save the Children, IMC, and dozens of local WASH actors—were among those affected. As a result, the number of active WASH partners declined from 76 in mid-2024 to 61 in the first half of 2025, reflecting a 20% reduction. Despite these challenges, many partners demonstrated strong adaptability by reorganizing resources, strengthening inter-agency coordination, and embracing integrated programming approaches. The focus shifted to high-impact, resilient infrastructure capable of withstanding repeated climate shocks and easing the demand for emergency interventions. The Cluster also reinforced capacity building and community engagement, training local water committees and implementing community-based monitoring systems. These efforts have improved service delivery and enhanced local ownership, enabling communities to manage their water resources more effectively amid recurring climate and funding shocks. Ultimately, the strategic transition has proven not only necessary but also impactful, sustaining and even expanding reach despite a challenging operational and financial landscape.



Monthly Cluster Response

The "Monthly Cluster Response" graph shows the number of people reached with WASH services from January to June 2025. The response peaked in March and June, with over 375K individuals assisted, while January and February saw the lowest reach, at around 200K. There is no recorded response from July onwards, as those months have not yet occurred. However, the WASH Cluster anticipates a slight increase in response in the coming months, as several partners will receive funding through the Somalia Humanitarian Fund and are expected to scale up activities.

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Gu seasonal Rainfall Performance

The 2025 Gu rainy season in Somalia ended prematurely in May, with little to no rainfall recorded in June. While rainfall distribution varied significantly across regions, preliminary CHIRPS remote-sensing data indicate a promising start to the season in early April in many areas. As illustrated in Figure 3, actual rainfall accumulation ranged widely across the country. Southern and southwestern regions—particularly Lower Juba, Middle Juba, and parts of Bay and Gedo—received the highest totals, between 251 mm and over 500 mm (shown in dark pink and red). These high-rainfall areas are vital for agro-pastoral livelihoods, groundwater recharge, and surface water replenishment.

Conversely, northeastern and central regions—including Bari, eastern Sanaag, and parts of Nugaal—recorded very low rainfall, often below 70 mm (depicted in light green to white), indicating poor soil moisture and minimal water availability. Moderate rainfall (100–200 mm) was observed in regions like Mudug, Galgaduud, Hiiraan, and parts of Middle Shabelle, offering limited reprieve but insufficient to fully support agricultural recovery or significantly replenish water sources. These patterns align with the Gu rainfall anomaly map (Figure 4), which reveals deficits of up to 300 mm below the long-term average (1981–2010) in key areas of northern and central Somalia—including Woqooyi Galbeed, Togdheer, Sool, Sanaag, Mudug, Galgaduud, Hiiraan, and parts of Gedo and Bakool. These deficits signal worsening drought conditions, declining crop and pasture productivity, and reduced recharge of shallow and deep aquifers.

In contrast, southern Somalia—especially Lower Juba, Lower Shabelle, and Middle Shabelle—recorded positive rainfall anomalies, with above-average rainfall levels (depicted in blue on the anomaly map). These areas may experience temporary improvements in vegetation and water availability, offering short-term relief from drought impacts and supporting seasonal farming activities. However, the uneven spatial distribution of rainfall underscores the country's growing exposure to climate-related shocks. For the WASH sector, this variability translates into escalating emergency water needs in drought-affected regions such as Somaliland, Puntland, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle.

In parallel, the ongoing Hagaa rains—mainly affecting the southern coastal belt, particularly Mogadishu—and the preceding Gu season have triggered intense and widespread flash flooding, compounding Somalia's already fragile WASH situation. Between April and May, heavy rains led to flooding across key districts in Banadir, Puntland, and Galmudug, displacing vulnerable communities and damaging critical infrastructure. In low-lying settlements and IDP camps, floods destroyed latrines, contaminated water sources, and washed away temporary shelters, exposing thousands to hazardous living conditions.

The collapse of sanitation systems and the overflow of open defecation areas have significantly heightened the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks, particularly Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) and cholera. Stagnant floodwaters have created ideal breeding grounds for pathogens, with children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals facing elevated health risks. The breakdown of safe water infrastructure has forced affected communities to rely on unprotected and unsafe water sources for drinking and domestic use, further increasing public health vulnerabilities.

Figure 2: Stagnant floodwaters from the April Gu rains in Dhuusmareeb pose serious health risks, creating mosquito breeding sites and increasing the threat of malaria and waterborne diseases.

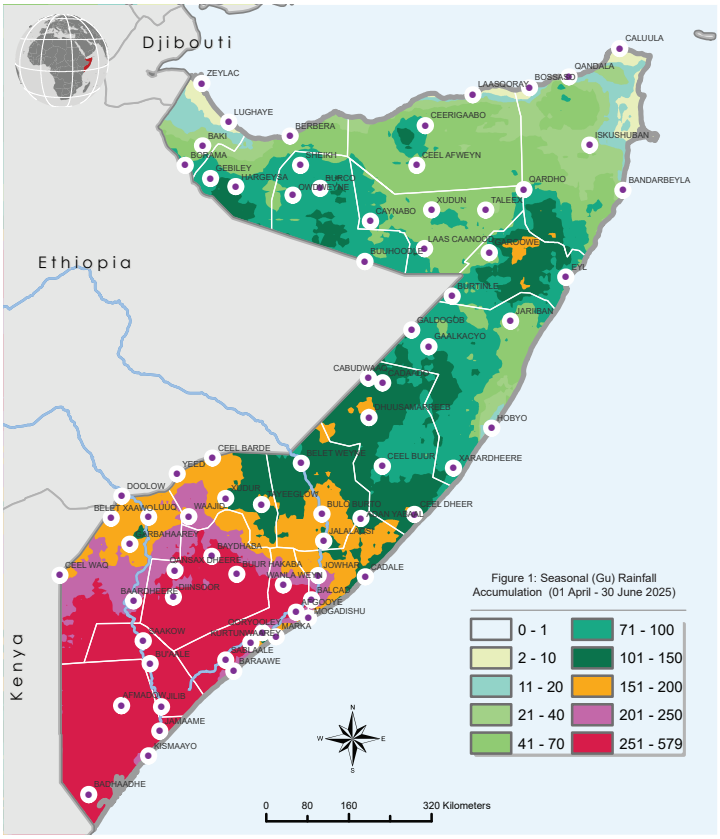

Figure 3: Seasonal (Gu) Rainfall Accumulation (01 April - 30 June 2025).

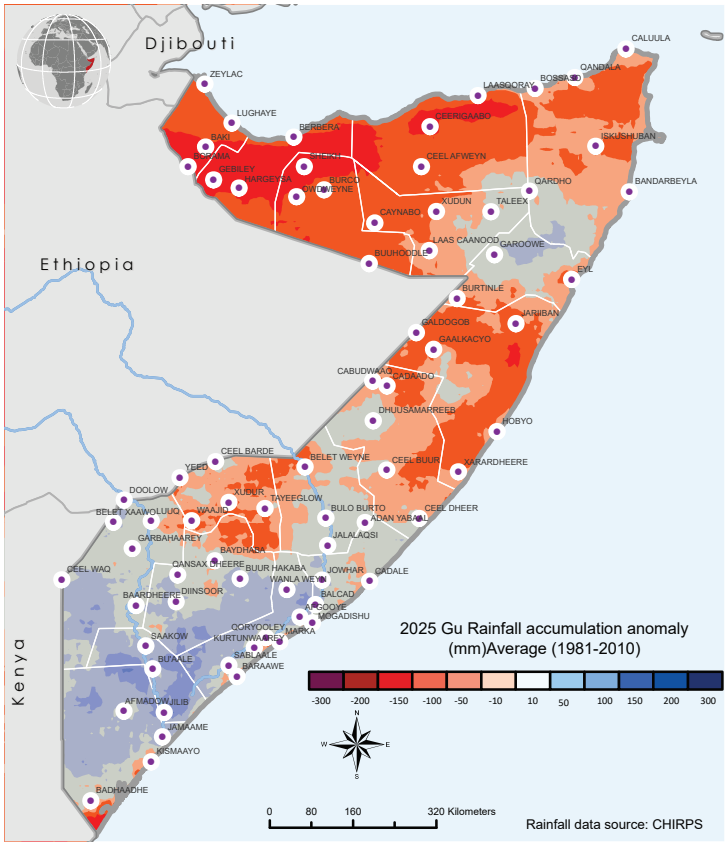

Figure 4: 2025 Gu Rainfall accumulation anomaly (mm): Average (1981-2010)

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Urgent Call to Action: Immediate Support Needed to Sustain WASH Services in Somalia

The WASH Cluster is issuing an urgent appeal for increased and timely funding to sustain critical water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions across the country. Recent reporting from partners through the WASH Cluster's funding tracking tool indicates that most existing funding sources are projected to run out by June or July 2025. Without additional financial support, numerous ongoing WASH projects will be forced to shut down, leaving millions of people—particularly in drought- and flood-affected regions—without access to lifesaving services at a time of rising humanitarian need.The consequences of this funding gap are deeply concerning. WASH services, including safe water supply systems, hygiene promotion campaigns, and emergency sanitation, are essential pillars of public health, particularly in Somalia's fragile and climate-vulnerable context.

Interruptions to these services would disproportionately affect internally displaced persons (IDPs), women, and children—groups already bearing the brunt of prolonged droughts, depleted groundwater reserves, and recent Gu-season flooding. The peak of the Hagaa dry season, coupled with limited access to clean water, will only worsen the situation and increase pressure on overstretched community systems. Communities that have recently gained access to improved water and sanitation services are now at risk of losing these vital lifelines. If WASH systems collapse, the likelihood of disease outbreaks such as Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) and cholera will increase significantly, overwhelming Somalia's already fragile healthcare infrastructure. The short-term nature of most humanitarian funding also presents operational challenges, forcing partners to scale back or suspend interventions—particularly in hard-to-reach rural areas and overcrowded IDP settlements. These disruptions not only reverse development gains but also undermine community trust and increase vulnerability.

According to WASH Cluster estimates, tens of thousands of households may be left without functional water points, soap, or hygiene supplies by the third quarter of 2025 if the current funding trajectory continues. This would be devastating in areas recently affected by floods, drought-induced displacement, and rising water prices. The resulting population movements and overcrowding will place even more pressure on already limited WASH infrastructure, increasing the risk of preventable disease and deepening humanitarian needs. To avert this crisis, additional investment in WASH programming is urgently needed. This includes support to sustain and expand existing services, solarize and rehabilitate boreholes, continue limited water trucking in high-risk areas, repair damaged latrines, and strengthen cholera preparedness and hygiene promotion campaigns tailored to seasonal and climate-related risks. These activities are essential not only for saving lives but also for protecting long-term resilience and recovery in vulnerable communities.

There is also a critical need for more flexible and adaptable funding mechanisms that allow for rapid response to emerging climate shocks—whether floods, droughts, or disease outbreaks. Building in flexibility will enable WASH partners to respond quickly, strengthen resilience, and integrate WASH services more effectively with health, nutrition, and shelter programming. Such coordinated efforts are key to maximizing the impact of humanitarian assistance and ensuring sustainable outcomes. The Somalia WASH Cluster urges all donors and development partners to act swiftly and scale up support. Continued investment in WASH is not only a humanitarian imperative but also a critical safeguard for public health, dignity, and development progress. Without urgent action, millions of people across Somalia risk losing access to the most basic services needed to survive.

FUNDING GAPS

While donors continue to make generous contributions to the 2025 WASH Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP), the scale, scope, and severity of needs are outpacing the response.

As of 14 July 2025, the WASH Cluster is only 6.5% funded under the HRP. Sustained and increased support is urgently required, as needs on the ground continue to grow significantly.

$ 129 Million
Total funding required

8.4 Million
Total funding received

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