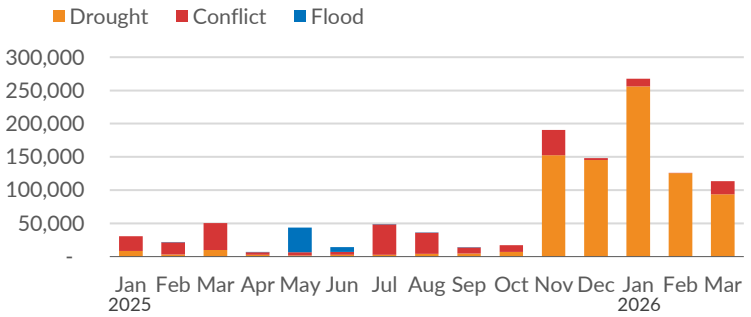
511,797
TOTAL DROUGHT INDUCED DISPLACEMENT
increase of over 400,000 displacements compared to Q1 2025, driven predominantly by a **worsening climate crisis**.

476,142
TOTAL DROUGHT INDUCED DISPLACEMENT
Surpassing the total drought induced displacement recorded in the entire 2025 where a total of 344,758 individuals where recorded

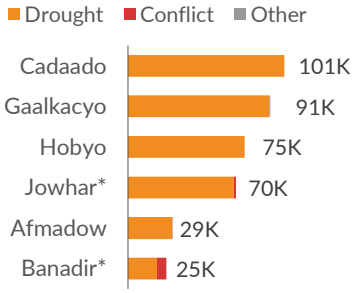
797
PROTECTION INCIDENTS RECORDED
50% decline compared to Q1 2025.
Caused by a shift in the main driver of displacement **(from conflict to drought)** rather than an improvement in the overall protection environment.

13
ALERTS PUBLISHED
100% drought related
3 times the total number of alerts published in Q1 2025 where 4 alerts were published.

MONTHLY DISPLACEMENT TRENDS AND DRIVERS
Jan 2025 – Mar 2026



TOP 6 DISTRICTS OF DISPLACEMENTS
Q1 2026



(*) HNRP prioritized district

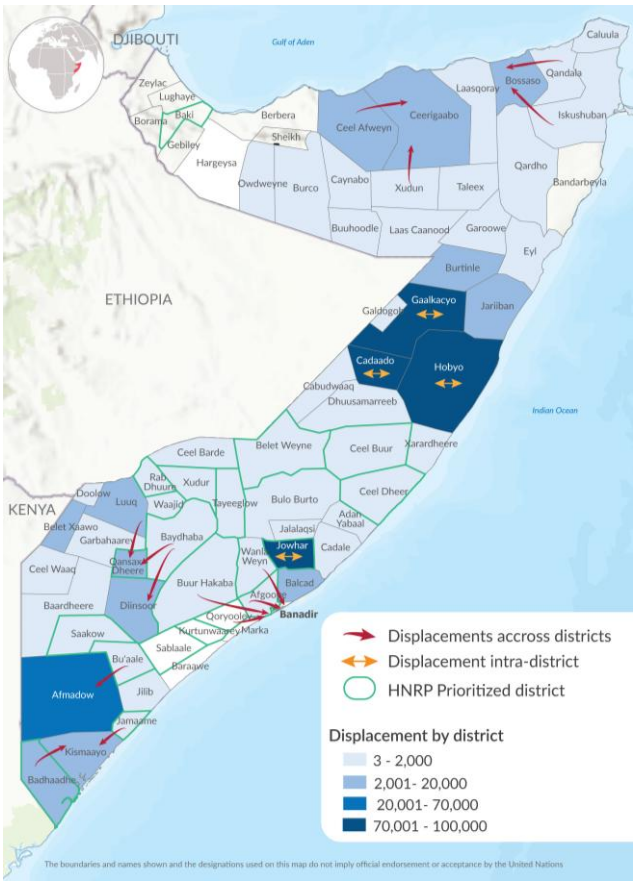
DISPLACEMENTS DRIVERS
Q1 2026

DROUGHT
475K (93%)

CONFLICT
32K (6%)

FLOOD
No displacement

OTHER REASONS
4K (1%)

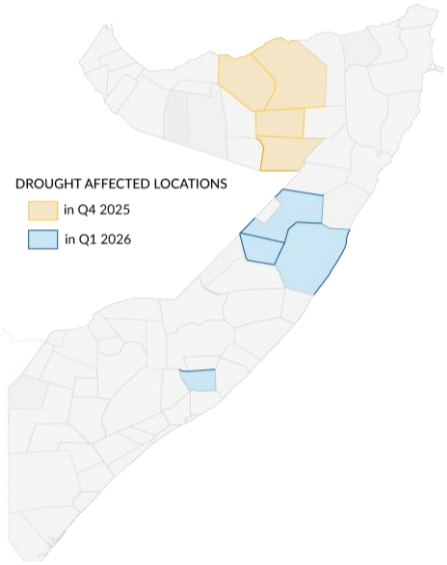


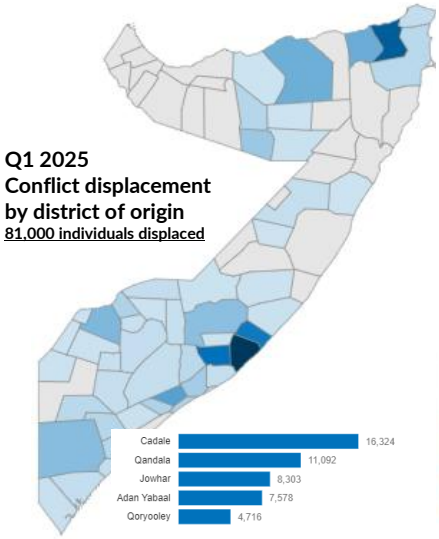
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

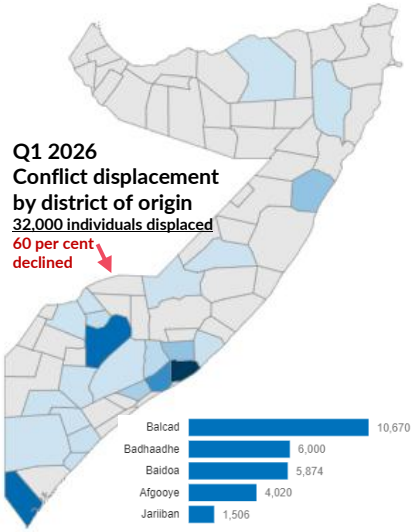
- **A total of 511,797 internal displacements were recorded in the first quarter of 2026, representing an increase of over 400,000 compared to the same period last year. The surge was driven predominantly by the worsening climate crisis with drought emerging as the leading cause of displacement.** Drought-related movement accounted for 476,142 displacements (93% of the total displacement), continuing a trend that intensified in Q4 2025.
- The three most affected districts were Cadaado, Gaalkacyo, and Hobyo, all located in central Somalia, collectively accounting for 52% of total displacements.
- Conflict-induced displacement represented 6% of total displacement, with Balcad district recording the highest number of conflict-related displacements (10,670 individuals),
- The large-scale movements of people have significantly increased protection risks. Women and children—who make up 85% of those displaced—are particularly affected, as they are the most exposed to risks such as rights violations, abuse, and exploitation, and therefore require greater protection attention.

- **17% of these displacements occurred within the 21 districts prioritized under the 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP),** with Jowhar (69,543) and Qansax Dheere (6,738) recording the highest influxes.
- To support timely humanitarian action, 13 flash alerts were published in Q1 2026, informing partners of urgent protection concerns, emerging risks, and priority response needs.

DISPLACEMENT ANALYSIS







DROUGHT

Drought was the primary driver of displacement in Q1 2026, accounting for 93% of total displacement. This makes a significant a shift from Q1 2025, when conflict and insecurity were the leading causes of displacement, accounting for 75% of displacements. Geographical analysis shows a notable shift in the areas most affected by drought over the past two quarters:

- In Q4 2025 the most severely affected districts were concentrated in the northern Somalia (Ceerigaabo, Xudun, Ceel Afweyn and Laascanood)
- In Q1 2026, the epicentre of drought-related displacement shifted to central Somalia, particularly Cadaado, Gaalkacyo, Hobyo and Jowhar.

Geographical analysis indicates that the areas most affected by drought shifted over time, moving from northern Somalia in the fourth quarter of 2025 to central Somalia in the first quarter of 2026. This change is mainly due to evolving weather patterns, particularly the shift in below-average rainfall from northern to central regions during this period.

In late 2025, northern districts—including Ceerigaabo, Xudun, Ceel Afweyn, and Laascanood—experienced significantly reduced Deyr rainfall. This led to severe drought conditions, which in turn contributed to high levels of displacement observed in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Central districts entered the prolonged Jilaal dry season (January–March) with depleted water sources, limited pasture availability, and insufficient livelihood reserves, contributing to increased displacement and humanitarian needs.

CONFLICT

Conflict-related displacement in Somalia decreased substantially between Q1 2025 (82,000 displacement) and Q1 2026 (32,000), falling by approximately 60 per cent. Despite this improvement, displacement remained concentrated in a limited number of conflict-affected districts (see map above).

Geographically, the pattern shifted from a relatively dispersed distribution that included northern and central districts in Q1 2025 to a stronger concentration in south-central Somalia in Q1 2026. The prominence of districts such as Balcad, Baidoa, Afgooye, and Badhadhe is the result of conflict which continue to drive displacement, particularly along strategic corridors in Middle Shabelle, Lower Shabelle, Bay, Bakool, and Lower Juba regions.

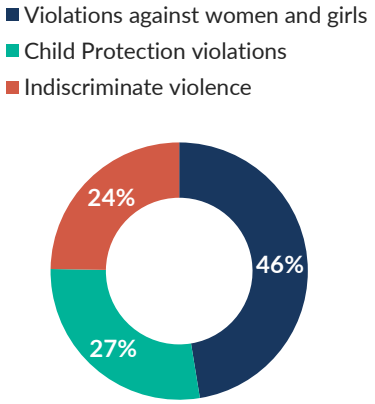
CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

PSMN has not reported any cross-border movement in Q1 2026.

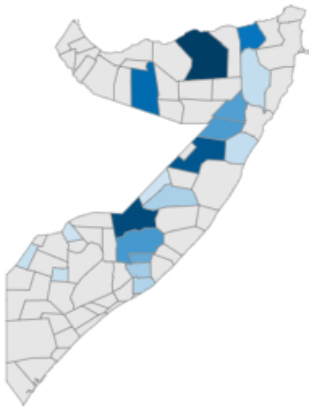
PROTECTION ANALYSIS | Violations and Risks

A total of 897 protection incidents were recorded in Q1 2026, representing a 50% decrease compared to the same period in Q1 2025. As protection incidents reported through the Protection and Solutions Monitoring Network (PSMN) are primarily captured in the context of displacements, this decline is largely attributable to changes in the nature of displacement patterns.

While conflict was the primary driver of displacement in Q1 2025, the vast majority of displacements recorded in Q1 2026 were drought-induced.



Protection violations in Q1 2026


Concentration of violations against women by district

As such, the reduction in reported protection incidents should not be interpreted as an improvement in the overall protection environment. Rather, it reflects a shift in the primary drivers of displacement and the associated protection risks.

Violations affecting women and girls accounted for 46% of the protection violations recorded in Q1 2026, highlightingtheir continued exposure to protection risks and vulnerabilities.. The highest numbers of violation against women were primarily recorded in the districts of Belet Weyne (Hiraan region) Ceerigabo (Sanaag), and Gaalkacyo (Mudug). These violations are domestic violence, FGM, and forced marriage.

Protection risks

Analysis of trends between Q1 2025 and Q1 2026 indicates a shift in the nature of protection risks, closely linked to the primary drivers of displacement in each year.

In Q1 2025, when conflict was the main driver, protection risks were more directly associated with insecurity and violence. Unlawful restrictions on freedom of movement, forced displacement, and attacks on civilians featured prominently, reflecting the immediate impacts of active conflict on affected populations.

In contrast, **in Q1 2026, when drought emerged as the main driver of displacement**, the protection risk landscape shifted towards more structural and access-related challenges. Discrimination and stigmatization, along with the denial of access to resources, livelihoods opportunities, basic services, and humanitarian assistance, became the most prominent risks. This trend reflects the increasing vulnerability of drought-affected populations as competition for limited resources intensifies and access to essential services has become more constrained.

Protection response

Despite the limited funding, PSMN partners facilitated referrals for vulnerable cases to specialized special service providers including psychosocial, legal assistance and medical services.

Individual protection assistance (IPA) such as emergency cash, transport, medical/legal referrals, safe service referrals, and follow-up through protection case management was provided to highly vulnerable individuals and families facing immediate risks, including support for transportation and medical check-ups where required.

Newly drought displaced households sheltering in Qoorgooye Village, Jariban District, Mudug Region February 2026©SBACO

ABOUT PSMN

The PSMN (Protection & Solutions Monitoring Network) is a UNHCR-led project that identifies and reports on displacements, as well as the protection risks and incidents driving such population movements. On behalf of UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 10 local partners across Somalia conduct data gathering—primarily through interviews with affected communities and key informants—and monitor displacement trends at strategic locations.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA LIMITATIONS

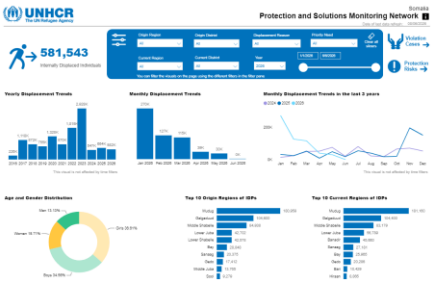
PSMN is a flow movement tracking and does not represent the stock of IDPs in Somalia. The same applies to the protection risks and violations as they are collected during displacements limited to the geographic coverage, the figures don't represent the total human rights violations in Somalia.

PSMN Data is collected through a network of trained field monitors operating in key locations such as IDP settlements, transit points, and border areas. Information is gathered through:

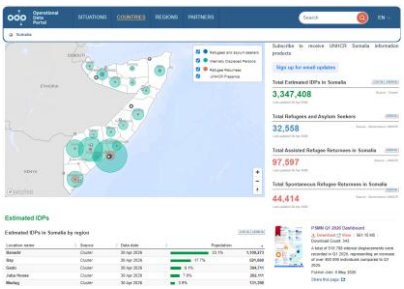
- **Household-level interviews** with displaced persons, focus group discussions capturing demographic profiles, vulnerabilities, and reasons for displacement.
- **Key informant interviews** to report on group movements and broader trends. Data collection relies on standardized tools to ensure consistency. Reports capture key variables including location of origin and arrival, drivers of displacement, and protection incidents. Sensitive personal data is not stored.
- All data is uploaded to a secured online platform, where it undergoes verification, quality control, triangulation, review, and approval by partner focal points before analysis and dissemination. The system enables near real-time monitoring of displacement trends and protection risks, supporting timely humanitarian response and evidence-based planning.

RESOURCES

PSMN Interactive dashboard



UNHCR Data Portal



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To request further details on displacement, please contact SOMMOPMN@UNHCR.ORG

CREDIT

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