

## **Status and Impacts of Open River Points along the Shabelle River in Jowhar, Balcad and Afgooye Districts**

Issued: 28 Dec 2020

A recent flood analysis by SWALIM indicates that there has been an increase in flood frequency and intensity in the last 10 years along the riverine areas of Juba and Shabelle Rivers in Somalia. This year has seen three consecutive flood seasons (*Gu*, *Haggai* and *Deyr*) that left thousands of hectares of cropland inundated for more than six months leading to negative impacts on food security. Recognizing the recurrent flooding along the Shabelle River in the last few years, SWALIM undertook a field survey in Jowhar, Balcad and Afgooye districts. The objective of the survey was to map existing open and weak river embankments in the three districts. A total of 93 weak/open river points were identified with a total of 10,474 household being affected and about 72,000 hectares of cropland underwater (Annex I). Using SWALIM's online tool, detailed information about each point was captured during the survey, including location, width, and depth of the points. This information is crucial in designing interventions for repair of the open/weak points. Information on number of household and inundated land was also collected.

The survey further sought to build a culture of safety and flood resilience among the vulnerable communities in the three districts by creating awareness on best practices on flood preparedness before, during and after the hazard. Four thousand, five hundred (4,500) flood preparedness leaflets were distributed through meetings and in collaboration with the local authorities.

In Jowhar district 45 points were identified, four of them open with widths of between 2m to 20m. The rest of the points were overflows, with the longest being 890m (Annex II). [Overflows are hereby described as those points that have caused flooding by overbank spillage while open points are those whose banks have been cut either deliberately or by raging waters]. Twenty (20) points were identified in Afgooye with very expansive overflows of up to 1Km in some areas (Annex III). According to the field reports this was the worst impacted district with majority of the riverine communities having been displaced for several months. Twenty eight (28) points were identified in Balcad districts (Annex IV). Parts of the flooded areas have remained under water since May 2020.



There exists other open or weak river embankments in these districts as identified through satellite image analysis. However, due to constraints in logistics the survey team could only access the mapped areas.

The next three months (January to March 2021) are expected to be dry and intervening agencies are advised to take advantage of the dry period and low river levels to repair the open and weak river banks to reduce flood impacts in the three districts during the next rainy season of *Gu* 2021. Detailed datasets of the survey are available on request.

*This update is produced by the: FAO - Somalia Water and Land Information Management—SWALIM Project.  
For more information, please contact [SO-hydro@fao.org](mailto:SO-hydro@fao.org) or visit <http://www.faoswalim.org>*

FAO SWALIM Technical Partners:



SWALIM is Managed by FAO and Currently Funded by:

