

REPORT: Current Rainfall Impacts, Flood Risk and Locally Led Anticipatory Action in Gedo Region, Somalia

Prepared by: Marginalized Communities Advocacy Network (MCAN)

Location: Gedo Region, Jubaland State, Somalia

Date: 22 September 2026

1. Executive Summary

Gedo Region is currently facing increasing climate-related risks associated with heavy rainfall, flooding, displacement, and severe disruption of livelihoods and essential services. Recent rainfall over the past 24 hours has had immediate and significant impacts on communities in **Bardheere**, **Garbaharey**, and **Buurdhuubo**, with substantial displacement reported across all three locations.

According to field-level information gathered directly through MCAN's community monitoring network and verified by local authorities, the emergency situation in Buurdhuubo has regrettably resulted in the loss of at least one life. The convergence of heavy local rainfall, mounting flood risks, acute displacement, and high baseline vulnerability underscores an urgent need for strengthened preparedness, community-level early warning, and Locally Led Anticipatory Action (LLAA).

This localized emergency is occurring within a broader, national-level surge in climate risk:

- **FAO (September 2026):** Highlighted strengthening El Niño conditions and seasonal outlooks indicating a high probability (up to 90%) of above-normal rainfall during the upcoming October–December *Deyr* season, particularly across central and southern Somalia.
- **IOM (September 2026):** Identified flooding as a primary driver of acute displacement in its multi-hazard outlook, calling for immediate contingency planning and response readiness.

Consequently, this report advocates for the rapid development and execution of a **Locally Led Anticipatory Action Pilot for Drought and Juba River Flooding in Gedo Region**, ensuring local communities and Somali civil society organizations maintain a central role in risk monitoring, analysis, decision-making, and resource deployment.

2. Background

Gedo Region is highly exposed to climate-related shocks, including recurrent drought, heavy rainfall, flash flooding, and riverine flooding associated with the Juba River system.

Communities living along and around the Juba River corridor face particular risks because many households depend directly on agriculture, livestock, informal trade, and natural resources. Climate shocks can therefore quickly affect food security, livelihoods, access to water, shelter, health, protection, and mobility.

MCAN has a strong local presence in Gedo and works with vulnerable, marginalized, displaced, and crisis-affected communities. Its field-level engagement includes community mobilization, data collection, needs assessment, resilience activities, protection, and emergency response.

The current rainfall situation provides an important practical example of why anticipatory action needs to be strengthened at the local level.

3. Current Situation – Recent Rainfall Impacts in Gedo

Over the past 24 hours, intense rainfall has affected several parts of Gedo Region. Based on field reporting transmitted through MCAN’s community networks, the most severe impacts are concentrated in three key districts:

- **Bardheere:** Rapid accumulation of runoff leading to localized flooding and immediate household displacement.
- **Garbaharey:** Significant disruption to residential settlements and displacement of vulnerable families.
- **Buurdhuubo:** Severe localized flooding causing immediate displacement and **at least one reported fatality**.

Methodological Note on Data Verification

*The displacement figures and the reported loss of life in Buurdhuubo have been jointly verified on the ground by the **Buurdhuubo District Authority** and **MCAN’s local field monitoring team**. This local intelligence provides authoritative, early field visibility and directly complements formal national monitoring mechanisms (such as FAO-SWALIM and SoDMA).*

4. Wider National Flood Risk Context

The recent impacts in Gedo are occurring against a broader national flood-risk outlook:

- **FAO Seasonal Forecast (1 September 2026):** Warned that El Niño conditions combined with positive Indian Ocean Dipole dynamics point to a 90% probability of above-normal rainfall and widespread flood risks across southern river basins.
- **Somali Disaster Management Agency (SoDMA):** Issued urgent early warnings designating 29 priority districts across 14 regions—including key corridors along the Juba River—as high-risk zones requiring immediate early action.

- **IOM Multi-Hazard Displacement Outlook (September 2026):** Forecasted heavy flood-induced displacement and urged humanitarian partners to scale up pre-positioning and community-level contingency plans.
- **Radio Ergo Feedback (10–17 September 2026):** Community calls from Gedo confirmed early river level rises, express frustration over limited localized weather alerts, and report initial bank overflows along vulnerable stretches of the Juba River.

5. River Level & Hydrometeorological Monitoring

Hydrological data recorded by FAO-SWALIM / FRISC on **21 September 2026** reflected baseline river gauge levels. However, real-time field observations by MCAN networks confirm that river levels across key stretches—particularly Bardheere and Buurdhuubo—have reached **bankfull capacity (gabiga sare)**.

Monitoring Station	Region	Reported SWALIM Level (m)	Field Observed River Status
Dollow	Gedo	2.2 m	Moderate rise
Luuq	Gedo	2.0 m	Moderate rise
Bardheere	Gedo	0.0 m <i>(Station Check)</i>	Critical: Reached Bankfull Capacity (Gabiga Sare)
Bu'aale	Middle Juba	0.0 m <i>(Station Check)</i>	Monitoring ongoing

Critical Analytical Insight & Monitoring Gaps

While formal remote telemetry for stations like Bardheere reflects data transmission gaps (0.0 m), ground-level monitoring by MCAN confirms that the Juba River has reached bankfull level due to acute runoff from recent 24-hour rainfalls.

When a river reaches bankfull capacity, any additional local precipitation or upstream inflows from the Ethiopian highlands will trigger immediate overbank riverine flooding. This stark

contrast highlights the critical necessity of community-based monitoring to complement automated technical gauges during active hazard developments.

6. Humanitarian and Community Impact Analysis

The recent rainfall has produced several interconnected risks across affected districts:

6.1 Acute Displacement

Significant displacement has been reported in Bardheere, Garbaharey, and Buurdhuubo. Displacement can expose affected households to:

- Inadequate shelter and lack of non-food items (NFIs).
- Lack of safe drinking water and heightened risk of waterborne diseases (AWD/Cholera).
- Food insecurity and loss of household assets.
- Severe protection concerns, particularly for women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly.
- Disruption of education and livelihoods.

6.2 Loss of Life & Severe Injury

At least one person reportedly lost their life in Buurdhuubo following the recent rainfall. This highlights the importance of early warning messages, evacuation preparedness, identification of safe areas, and community-level emergency planning.

6.3 Livelihoods & Agro-Pastoral Assets

Flooding and heavy rainfall can damage:

- Farms and standing crops.
- Livestock assets.
- Household property and small businesses.
- Roads, access routes, and water infrastructure.

For communities already affected by drought and food insecurity, a sudden flood can create a compound climate shock rather than simply replacing one hazard with another.

6.4 Access to Essential Public Services

Flooding can disrupt access to:

- Health facilities and schools.
- Markets and water points.
- Sanitation facilities and humanitarian assistance.

This is particularly important in remote communities where alternative access routes may be limited.

7. Why Locally Led Anticipatory Action is Needed

The recent situation demonstrates the difference between responding after a disaster and acting before impacts become severe. Anticipatory Action seeks to use forecasts, early warning information, local observations, and pre-agreed decisions to take action before a predicted hazard produces major humanitarian consequences.

[Risk Monitoring & Alerts] → [Local Field Verification] → [Joint Decision]
→ [Pre-Agreed Early Action] → [Post-Event Review]

Core Principles of a Locally Led Model:

1. **Community Ownership:** Local populations define critical hazard thresholds based on lived experience.
2. **Inclusive Governance:** Direct inclusion of minority groups, women, youth, and marginalized pastoralists in decision-making.
3. **Contextual Communications:** Disseminating early warnings in accessible local dialects via trusted grassroot networks.

8. Proposed MCAN LLAA Pilot Project

MCAN proposes further exploration and co-design of a dedicated:

Locally Led Anticipatory Action Pilot for Drought and Juba River Flooding in Gedo Region

The proposed pilot would focus on strengthening locally led systems for:

1. Risk monitoring
2. Community-based early warning
3. Risk verification
4. Joint decision-making
5. Pre-agreed early actions
6. Community preparedness
7. Rapid local response
8. Post-event learning

The pilot should initially be considered a discussion and learning framework, rather than a finalized operational trigger system.

9. Operational Risk & Decision-Making Framework

- **Stage 1 – Monitoring:** Track rainfall, river levels, weather forecasts, satellite information, community observations, water levels, drainage/flood-prone locations, and displacement indicators.
- **Stage 2 – Elevated Risk:** Verify information, identify exposed communities and vulnerable households, assess access routes, communicate early warnings, and monitor protection concerns.
- **Stage 3 – Activation Review:** Jointly review forecast information, river conditions, rainfall, community observations, expected impacts, available resources, and safety conditions with local technical actors.
- **Stage 4 – Early Action:** Disseminate early warnings, prepare community evacuations, identify safe areas, protect water sources, pre-position emergency supplies, support vulnerable households, and protect livestock/assets.
- **Stage 5 – Post-Activation Review:** Document events, assess warning accuracy, identify gaps, gather community feedback, evaluate early actions, record lessons learned, and refine future activation cycles.

10. Role of Local Communities & MCAN

10.1 Role of Local Communities

A locally led model places communities at the centre. Community representatives support local risk identification, rainfall/river observations, identification of vulnerable households, dissemination of early warnings, evacuation planning, access route monitoring, and post-event assessments. Women, youth, persons with disabilities, displaced people, and elderly persons are meaningfully included.

10.2 Role of MCAN

MCAN contributes through its strong presence and relationships in Gedo through community mobilization, rapid needs assessments, local data collection, early warning/action, field monitoring, and coordination with local stakeholders. MCAN helps link community-level insights with formal technical frameworks.

11. Potential Early Actions for Gedo

Hazard / Risk Scenario	Pre-Agreed Early Action Protocol	Target Impact
Heavy Local Rainfall	Megaphone dissemination, SMS alerts, and community readiness protocols	Reduced casualties & injury

Hazard / Risk Scenario	Pre-Agreed Early Action Protocol	Target Impact
Rising Juba River Levels	Clearing key drainage channels & preparing pre-mapped evacuation routes	Unobstructed flood flow
Flash Flood Hazards	Pre-positioning sandbags at critical public/settlement entry points	Asset & shelter protection
Water Source Contamination	Distribution of water purification tablets (aquatabs) & Jerrycans	Disease outbreak prevention
Displacement Risks	Pre-identifying elevated safe grounds and temporary community shelters	Safe relocation

12. Strategic Recommendations

1. **Strengthen Community-Based Early Warning:** Combine formal forecasts and river monitoring with local observations from communities.
2. **Establish a Gedo Risk-Monitoring Mechanism:** Develop a simple system for regularly documenting rainfall, river conditions, displacement, and community concerns.
3. **Identify High-Risk Communities:** Map flood-prone locations and households requiring additional preparedness support.
4. **Develop Pre-Agreed Early Actions:** Agree in advance on what should happen when specific risk conditions are reached.
5. **Strengthen Local Coordination:** Bring together local authorities, communities, NGOs, technical agencies, and humanitarian actors.
6. **Invest in Anticipatory Financing:** Ensure resources are available before impacts become severe.
7. **Document Community Knowledge:** Systematically incorporate local knowledge into risk analysis and decision-making.
8. **Use Recent Rainfall as a Learning Case:** Capitalize on the recent events in Bardheere, Garbaharey, and Buurdhuubo to document lessons learned and refine response mechanisms.

13. Conclusion

The recent rainfall impacts in Bardere, Garbaharey, and Buurdhuubo demonstrate the immediate vulnerability of communities in Gedo to heavy rainfall, flooding, and displacement. The reported loss of life in Burdhubo further illustrates the potential severity of these hazards.

At the same time, the broader 2026 *Deyr* outlook indicates a significant need for strengthened preparedness and anticipatory action across Somalia. For Gedo, locally led anticipatory action provides a practical mechanism for connecting community knowledge, early warning information, technical forecasting, local decision-making, and pre-agreed early actions.

MCAN proposes continued collaboration and learning with the **Anticipation Hub** and the **Working Group on Locally Led Anticipatory Action**, with the aim of exploring a practical pilot focused on drought and Juba River flooding in Gedo.

Institutional Contact Information

Mohamed Farah Gulled

Programme Director

Marginalized Communities Advocacy Network (MCAN)

Gedo Region, Jubaland State, Somalia

- **Email:** mofarah803@gmail.com
- **Phone:** +252 61 529 7253
- **Website:** www.mcan-africa.org