

255

INCIDENTS REPORTED
151 in 2019

22%

INCIDENTS INVOLVING VIOLENCE
20% in 2019

15

STAFF KILLED
12 in 2019

12

STAFF INJURED
21 in 2019

14

AID WORKERS DETAINED
24 in 2019

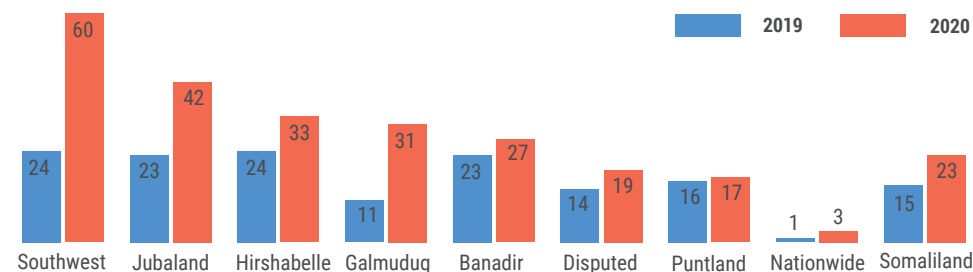
24

AID WORKERS ABDUCTED
18 in 2019

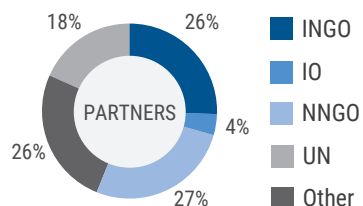
In 2020, humanitarian organizations continued to face a challenging operational environment across Somalia. Insecurity, including violence against humanitarians, bureaucratic interference, environmental challenges and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic culminated in widespread access challenges and hindered humanitarian workers' ability to reach vulnerable populations and provide humanitarian assistance and services. Thirteen of 74 districts in Somalia, primarily centered around Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Southwest and Jubaland States, and with a population of 895,536, remained inaccessible in 2020.

The Access Working Group (AWG) recorded 255 access incidents that hindered humanitarian operations with the highest number of incidents occurring in Southwest State (60), Jubaland (42) and Hirshabelle (33). These three states alone accounted for 53 per cent of all recorded incidents. The most common constraint recorded across Somalia was the restriction of movement on humanitarian supplies and personnel. Illegal taxation, roadblocks, checkpoints imposed by non-state armed groups, ongoing hostilities amongst armed actors, military operations, improvised explosive device attacks and the broader and unpredictable security situation restricted or prevented both humanitarian and commercial transport, which led to shortages of supplies and increases in the price of commodities.

ACCESS INCIDENTS PER STATE (2019-2020)



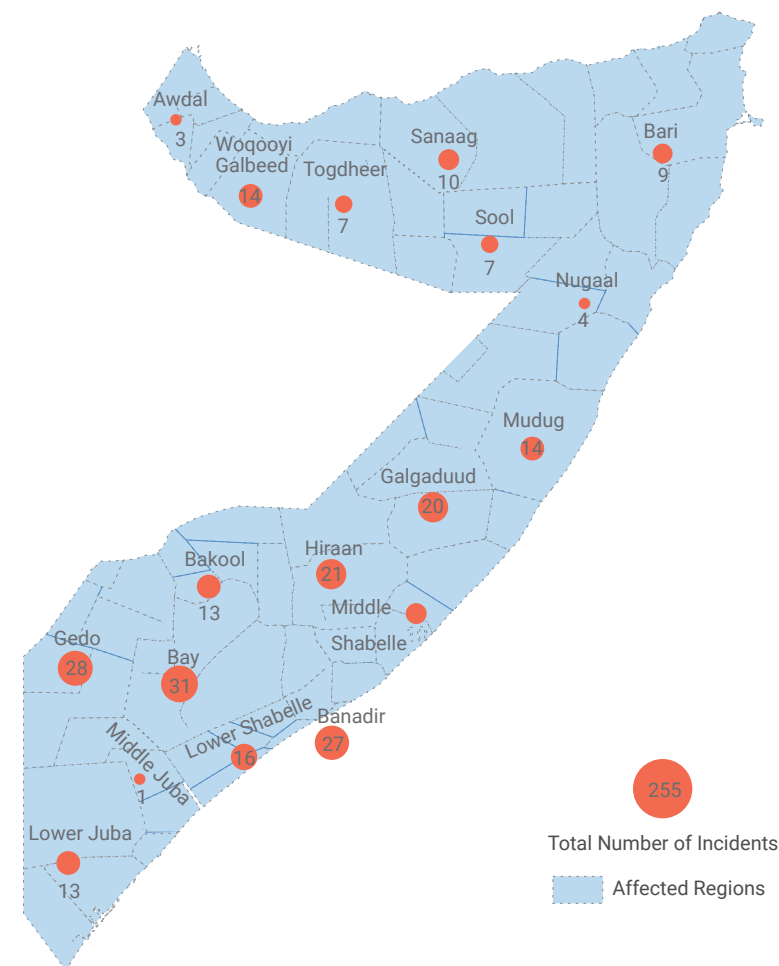
AFFECTED PARTNERS TYPE



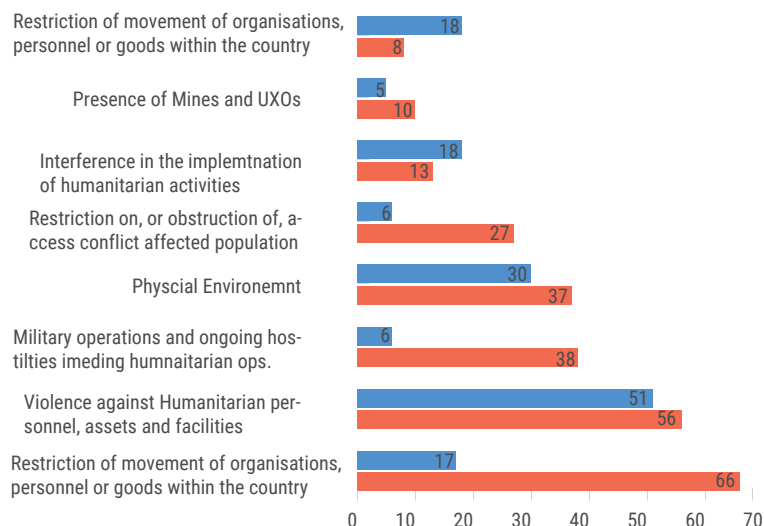
Top 5 Regions With Incidents

Bay	31
Gedo	28
Banadir	27
Hiraan	21
Galgaduud	20

OF ACCESS INCIDENTS BY REGION



ACCESS INCIDENTS PER TYPE (2019-2020)



VIOLENCE AGAINST HUMANITARIAN STAFF

Out of the 255 access incidents recorded in 2020, 56 (22 percent) involved violence against humanitarian workers, assets and facilities with the vast majority of those incidents taking place in Banadir/Mogadishu (10), Southwest (13) and Jubaland (11). Overall, 15 aid workers were killed, 12 were injured, 24 abducted and 14 were temporarily detained. In comparison, 51 access incidents involving violence against humanitarian workers, assets and facilities were recorded in 2019, which saw 12 aid workers killed, 21 injured 18 abducted and 24 temporarily detained. Incidents involving the killing and abduction of humanitarian personnel were mostly concentrated in Hirshabelle (16), Southwest State (12) and Jubaland (7).

All humanitarian workers abducted were national staff. With the exception of the abduction and murder of the 7 health personnel in Hirshabelle, all of the other abductions verified by the AWG were attributed to Al Shabab who consider kidnapping a source of income. With the exception of one, all staff were released following engagement by community or clan leaders and families. One international aid worker, kidnapped in May 2018, also remains in Al Shabaab captivity. Six mortar attacks were launched against the UN compounds inside Aden Adde International Airport (AAIA) in Mogadishu with three UN staff and contractors injured.

COVID-19

Covid-19 restrictions amplified existing challenges. On 18 March 2020, two days after the first Covid-19 case was confirmed, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) suspended all international flights into the country except those carrying essential food and medical supplies. This was extended on 29 March to include domestic passenger flights. COVID-19 related bans on international and domestic flights, which saw 11 out of 12 airports in Somalia closed, did not lead to an increase in the formal reporting of restrictions of movement of agencies, personnel, or goods into or within or into the country. This may be due to the reduced footprint and decreased presence of humanitarian personnel in order to adhere to COVID-19 measures. All international and domestic flights resumed by 5 July 2020. In total 66 Covid-19 related directives were promulgated resulting in the closure of borders, mosques and other institutions as well as all schools across the country affecting 1.5 million children. While regulations challenged the delivery of aid and services, including field missions, the monitoring of projects and the conduct of needs assessments, the humanitarian community adapted working practices and modalities. With limited medical facilities available, many humanitarian organisations temporarily reduced their international footprint in order to allow a focus on Somali nationals.

SOMALILAND DIRECTIVES IMPACT HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

On 16 August 2020, Somaliland authorities issued a directive instructing humanitarian and development actors to restrict the participation of Somalia based staff in meetings, trainings and other activities being held in Somaliland and to suspend the participation of Somaliland based local NGOs in meetings held in Somalia. The Directive also introduced a requirement to use maps or names identifying Somaliland as an independent entity. With the Somaliland authorities considering the Directive to be in immediate effect, the humanitarian and donor communities advocated for alignment with humanitarian principles. The Somaliland authorities issued a second directive was promulgated on 25 October announcing the temporary suspension of discussions and consultations related to UN Country development programs and work plans for 2021 and beyond. In December the Government of Somaliland shared an additional protocol, to come into effect on 1 April 2021, defining the modus operandi for UN agencies in Somaliland. While engagement continued, uncertainty around the implementation of the Directives and Protocol resulted in confusion and delays in the work of humanitarian agencies. To date, the AWG have not recorded any significant incidents against the UN and NGOs who have not complied with the Directives, however, tensions exist especially on planning and programming of projects which cover both Somaliland and the rest of Somalia.

AIR ACCESS

The fluid security environment, poor infrastructure, or a combination of both mean that accessibility outside of the major urban centres, particularly in the southern and central regions of Somalia remained limited. Illegal checkpoints, taxation, armed hostilities and the military encirclement of several towns by non-state armed groups complicated the movement of humanitarian supplies and personnel overland with a combination of UN and commercial flights providing a lifeline, delivering both people and aid across the country. However, air access also had its challenges with limited capacity and airstrips in poor condition. Two security incidents in May 2020, directly involving aircraft delivering humanitarian supplies to Berdale and Qansax Dheere in Southwest State, one of which resulted in the shooting down of an aircraft and the deaths of all six personnel on board, demonstrate the vulnerability of this delivery modality. Following these incidents, both humanitarian and commercial flights stopped servicing these airstrips, impacting the delivery of nutrition and food supplies. While air access was restored to Qansax Dheere in February 2021, humanitarian and commercial flights to Berdale have not resumed.

ACCESS CHALLENGES IN GEDO REGION

Gedo recorded the second highest number of recorded access constraints (28), behind the Bay region in Southwest State (31). In Gedo, local authorities introduced new regulations leading to an increase in administrative constraints for humanitarian partners. Of particular note was the increase in demands for registration and the payment of taxes duplicating processes already existing at the state level.