



ECONOMIC SECURITY

Economic security is intended to ensure that households and communities can cover their unavoidable expenditures and maintain or restore sustainable livelihoods.

SOMALIA: CASH TO REBUILD LIVES FOR FLOOD VICTIMS



A flood victim points out the level of flood waters in her traditional mud house in Leebo, Beletweyne

Asha Ali* lives next to the Shabelle river in Beletweyne, a location that can be both a blessing and a curse. Easy access to water is a blessing. But five months ago the river poured over its banks, flooding the region. Asha lost almost all her crops and her four goats were washed away. Her traditional mud house made from tree branches and a mixture of clay soil still shows the signs of flood damage.

The May flood was so big that it displaced 70,000 people from their homes. Farmers living near the river's shores were hit the hardest.

Asha and her husband Hassan were busy harvesting bananas when the river burst its banks, damaging her entire farm. Asha rushed to gather her children and join the people moving to higher ground in Eljale, 10km from Beletweyne town.

"I still bear the shock," Asha said. "I was

planning to sell the bananas and sorghum and pay my debts and here I am in a displacement camp. I couldn't imagine this would happen."

Before the catastrophe, Asha and Hassan used to sell almost five sacks of sorghum in the main Beletweyne market every day, earning enough income to feed their family. Today, there is no farming income.

"I would sell a sack of sorghum for \$2 and on a good day I would come back home

with \$10. This was enough to take care of my family, but later things turned upside down and we have nothing left with us for now," explained Asha.

The International Committee of the Red Cross and the Somali Red Crescent Society carried out a five-day distribution of rice, oil, beans and mosquito nets to 65,000 people affected by floods in July in both Beletweyne and Middle Shabelle.

The ICRC is also providing cash grants to almost 7,000 families in regions in Hiraaan and Middle Shabelle affected by floods. The money is intended to help families restart economic activities.

"We are supporting the most-affected families to start an income-generating program so that they can be self-reliant," says Dusan Vukotic, the Economic Security Coordinator for ICRC in Somalia.

Asha is planning to use the \$450 grant from the ICRC to pay off her debts and to expand her farm.

"Once I make enough profit, I will buy a piece at a higher elevation where I can stay away from floods and live with my family in peace," she says.

*Is not her real name

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