



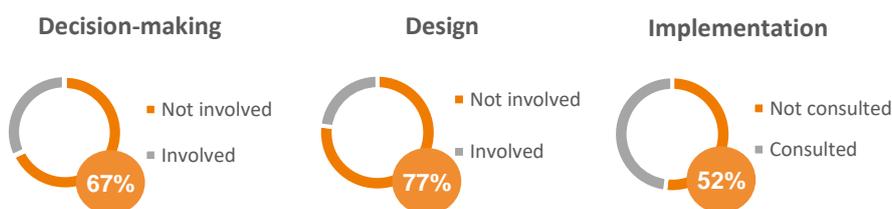
# ANTICIPATORY ACTION: REPORT 5

November 8<sup>th</sup> ~ Week 5

This report seeks to provide insight to some of the key trends and concerns emerging in **South Central** only, with other regions and thematic concerns highlighted in future reports. Accounting for some instances where demographic or location data has not been provided, the following analysis is based on information gathered from 44 focus group discussions (FGDs), 71 interviews, and 154 beneficiary satisfaction perception surveys. A number of key highlights are summarised below before an in-depth review of the data per location thus far.

## Community Inclusion and Participation

The figures below provide an initial overview of experiences and observations highlighted during FGDs, including the percentage of participants who believe that beneficiaries are not involved in decision-making, in programme design, or in consultations during implementation.



## Accessibility, Extortion and Exploitation

Inaccessibility has been reported by interviewees in all seven locations covered by interviews thus far: namely, Baidoa, Beledweyn, Dhusamareb, Hudur, Jowhar, Merca, and Mogadishu. Survey data demonstrates a similar trend, with 57 people reporting that they had experienced or observed exclusion from services in the last four weeks.

The findings from interviews, FGDs, and surveys collectively raise concerns that people with disabilities are excluded from services more often than any other group and across all locations. Women also experience significant barriers to accessing services, including exploitation in Beledweyn, Dhusamareb, Hudur, and Merca.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- (i) There is a widespread perception that decisions are made on beneficiaries' behalf by external actors, including those concerning programme design.
- (ii) Overall, beneficiaries acknowledge that feedback is sometimes gathered through surveys, assessments, and other evaluation tools but that their involvement in consultations beyond this is generally limited.
- (iii) People with disabilities and women often face the greatest barriers to accessing services in a number of settlements, with women also encountering exploitative practices across sites.
- (iv) Affected populations stress the need to build local capacity to address these problems.

## Baidoa

According to interviewees, both minority groups and people with disabilities are frequently excluded from cash, health, and nutrition services in Baidoa, and sometimes from seed distribution too. Minority groups are further excluded from food and NFIs, while newcomers also struggle to access food-based assistance. Access to each of these services is perceived to be restricted primarily by local authorities - as unanimously voiced by 20 interviewees (12 female). Interviews with beneficiaries also reveal that NGOs and other actors have been raising awareness of these problems, and that some organisations are liaising with religious leaders to find effective solutions. Many interviewees explained that these efforts could be strengthened with training targeted specifically at beneficiaries.

## Beledweyn

FGD participants in Beledweyn have explained that people with disabilities are generally ignored during consultations. In addition, interviewees also highlight the difficulties faced by these groups in accessing food, cash, and NFIs because they are prevented from doing so by local authorities. There are also reports from interviews which indicate that community leaders are extorting or exploiting these groups trying to access cash and NFIs. A similar story has emerged for women using these services given the restrictions they face from local authorities. Many women, including divorced women in particular, are often targeted by community members for the purposes of extortion or exploitation.

## Dhusamareb

FGDs reveal that beneficiaries with disabilities are generally excluded from programme design, with interviewees explaining that these groups often have trouble accessing cash-based assistance because of interference from community members and local authorities. Participants in FGD groups also highlighted the challenges faced by women in Dhusamareb, including those who are exploited by camp leaders when they are trying to access cash-based assistance.

## Hudur

In Hudur, it is widely perceived that camp leaders and implementing organisations tend to make decisions on behalf of beneficiaries. According to interviewees, community members, NGOs, law enforcement, and local authorities have all reportedly demanded bribes from people with disabilities trying to access cash-based assistance. FGD participants underscore similar sentiments insofar as these groups are often also ignored during follow-up consultations.

Women are also commonly excluded from food, cash, and nutrition services by law enforcement and local authorities who demand bribes or sexual favours from them. Another trend emerging in Hudur concerns exploitation based on sexual-orientation whereby local authorities demand bribes, sexual favours, or child labour in order to access food and cash services.

## Jowhar

In Jowhar, FGD participants perceive that programmes are designed and decisions made on their behalf by IDP committees or implementing organisations. Various groups in the area experience exclusion, most notably when trying to access food, health, and shelter services; and the general perception is that this inaccessibility is established by camp leaders and local authorities. More specifically, however, interviewees indicate that women and young girls are targeted by bribes, sexual favours, or opportunities for child labour. The actors behind these bribes most commonly include law enforcement, local authorities, camp leaders, and NGOs. For interviewees, awareness-raising is a key first step to tackling these issues.

## Merca

The FGDs in Merca highlight that decisions are made by implementing organisations and/or camp leaders, and that beneficiaries are generally not involved. Moreover, many participants are unsure what programme design is or what humanitarian decision-making should mean to them. Others agreed that programmes are most commonly designed elsewhere (i.e., out-with the settlement) by external actors.

According to interviewees, clan-affiliation and disability-status often create barriers to accessing services in Merca. People with disabilities, for instance, have trouble accessing food-based assistance and NFIs due to interference from camp leaders. Furthermore, several FGD participants agree that people with disabilities are frequently excluded from consultations. Members of certain clans are reportedly exploited trying to access food- and cash-based support, and interviewees suggest that legal support to prosecute perpetrators of this abuse would be helpful for them. Indeed, this kind of support could be one means of addressing the fear to speak out expressed by several interviewees here.

## Mogadishu

FGD participants in Mogadishu highlight the limited involvement of beneficiaries in decision-making and programme design, stressing the need for greater community involvement in consultations. Indeed, only 21 per cent of all survey respondents in Mogadishu felt that they are given opportunities to provide feedback.

Older persons are often excluded from nutrition services, faced with bribes to access shelter support, and are overall very unsatisfied with staff capacity to meet their needs. People with disabilities are excluded from shelter services, but also from consultations during project implementation. In order to access cash or nutrition support, many of these individuals face extortion or exploitation by camp leaders and NGOs.

The survey findings also indicate that 13 females may be eligible for, but are not accessing, gender-sensitive services here. This is perceived to be a persistent problem amongst beneficiaries, stemming commonly from community members and a widespread lack of awareness. Interviewees also explained that women often have trouble accessing cash-based assistance.