



RIVERINE FLOOD ADVISORY [MODERATE / WATCH]

Shabelle River Flood Situation

Issued: 11 May 2026

Location: Belet Weyne, Bulo Burte, Jowhar, Balcad, Afgooye and downstream areas along the Shabelle River

(Message begins)

Current Situation

The Shabelle River is now at a **moderate flood-risk condition**, following a steady rise in river levels over the past week. The most critical situation is at **Belet Weyne**, where the river level has reached **6.75 m**, exceeding the **moderate flood-risk threshold of 6.50 m by 0.25 m**. This represents a weekly increase of **0.55 m**, and the level is now **1.01 m above the same period in 2025** and **1.14 m above the long-term mean**.

Downstream, the river is also rising at **Bulo Burte**, where the current level is **5.74 m**, which is still **0.76 m below** the moderate flood-risk threshold of **6.50 m**. However, the station has increased by **0.32 m over the past week**, and is now **0.74 m above the 2025 level** and **1.05 m above the long-term mean**, indicating active downstream propagation of flood waters.

At **Jowhar**, the river stands at **4.88 m**, only **0.12 m below** the moderate flood-risk threshold of **5.00 m**. Although the level has slightly decreased by **0.02 m compared to last week**, it remains flood-sensitive and vulnerable to additional upstream inflows, weak riverbanks, canal diversions, and local rainfall.

Rainfall and River Outlook

Recent rainfall over the Shabelle basin and upstream Ethiopian catchments has contributed to the sustained rise in river levels. The latest rainfall forecast indicates continued rainfall over parts of the Shabelle basin, including areas around **Hiiraan, Middle Shabelle, Banadir and Lower Shabelle**, as well as upstream Ethiopian catchment areas west and northwest of Belet Weyne. Such rains are likely to sustain elevated flows, worsen flood sensitivity, and trigger localized riverine flooding, especially in low-lying and weak riverbank areas.

Flood Risk Areas

The highest immediate concern is:

- **Belet Weyne and surrounding low-lying areas**, where the river has already exceeded the moderate flood-risk threshold.
- **Bulo Burte and downstream riverine settlements**, where levels are rising and flood waters are propagating downstream.
- **Jowhar, Balcad and Afgooye**, where river levels remain close to threshold and may respond to upstream flows, rainfall, canal overflow, and weak embankments.

The Juba River remains comparatively stable. Current levels at **Dollow** and **Luuq** remain below moderate flood-risk thresholds, although continued monitoring is advised.

Implications

There is an increased likelihood of:

- Riverine flooding along the entire reach of Shabelle River, especially the low lying areas.
- Overflow or seepage at weak riverbank points.
- Flooding linked to canal openings, irrigation diversions, or riverbank breaches.
- Disruption of movement, markets, farming activities and access to services.
- Damage to crops, riverine farms, shelters and water points.
- Increased public health risks where stagnant flood water accumulates.

Recommended Actions

Communities along the Shabelle River should:

- Avoid crossing flooded sections, river channels, and fast-flowing water.
- Move people, livestock, food stocks and essential items away from low-lying riverine areas.
- Avoid deliberate riverbank cutting or canal breaching for irrigation, as this may trigger uncontrolled flooding.
- Closely monitor river levels and follow official early warning messages.

Local authorities and disaster management actors should:

- Inspect and reinforce weak riverbank points, especially around Belet Weyne, Bulo Burte, Jowhar, Balcad and Afgooye.
- Identify and close illegal or unsafe riverbank openings and canal breaches.
- Alert communities living in flood-prone settlements and low-lying farms.
- Prepare evacuation routes and temporary safe areas where flood risk is highest.
- Continue close coordination with SWALIM, SoDMA, Hirshabelle authorities and local disaster management committees.

Advisory Note

Communities and authorities are advised to remain alert and follow updates from **FAO SWALIM, SoDMA**, state authorities, local radio, television and official SMS alerts.

This advisory is issued by FAO SWALIM in collaboration with relevant government and disaster management partners.

(Message ends)

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