Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note
Somalia: Humanitarian situation in Mogadishu

Version 2.0

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Contents

Executive summary

Mogadishu has a population estimated to be around 3 million, over a third of whom are internally displaced persons (IDPs). Poverty is common with IDPs amongst the poorest populations. While there is a variety of work, unemployment remains high. Food is available; access to it is challenging in IDP settlements. Housing is available but tenure maybe insecure and purchasing property expensive. Cheaper accommodation is in less secure areas. Water and sanitation are mostly provided by private companies, better-off households have piped water while others rely on kiosks and water trucks. There is a range of healthcare facilities, which is better in private facilities, but costs are high. There is limited availability of medicines and some mental healthcare.

Clan and family support is important for returnees and displaced individuals to establish themselves in Mogadishu. Clan identity is deeply embedded in Somali society, shaping interactions with various actors and offering advantages in areas such as justice, politics, and security. Although Mogadishu is predominantly associated with the Hawiye clan, it remains a diverse city where people from all clans can generally move freely, find employment, and access services, even though dominant clans may control specific sectors.

The Upper Tribunal in the Country Guidance case of OA (Somalia) (CG) [2022] UKUT 33 (IAC) held that for a person to meet the threshold for granting humanitarian protection under paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules (IR)/Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) because the humanitarian situation/living conditions breach Article 3 ECHR they must demonstrate that they face 'intense suffering' which would be 'serious, rapid and irreversible' upon return. The general humanitarian situation in Mogadishu is not so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment as defined in paragraphs 339C and 339CA (iii) of the IR and Article 3 ECHR.

Internal relocation to Mogadishu for people who have not previously lived there is likely to be viable depending on the person's circumstances. Relocation from Mogadishu to another part of south-central Somalia is not likely to be viable but will depend on the facts of the case.

Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

Back to Contents

Assessment

Section updated: 23 July 2025

About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is the country information, refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of **whether**, **in general**:

- the humanitarian situation/living conditions are so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to inhuman or degrading treatment as within paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- internal relocation is possible to avoid serious harm
- a claim, if refused, is likely or not to be certified as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

Back to Contents

1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

1.1 Credibility

1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants).

1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check, when such a check has not already been undertaken (see Biometric data-sharing process (Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process)).

1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person's claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis).

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Back to Contents

1.2 Exclusion

1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons to apply one (or more) of the exclusion clauses. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.

1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).

1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33(2) of the Refugee Convention, Humanitarian Protection and the instruction on Restricted Leave.

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Back to Contents

2. Convention reason(s)

2.1.1 A fear of harm as a result of severe humanitarian situation/living conditions does not fall within the scope of the Refugee Convention.

2.1.2 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Refugee Convention grounds necessary to be recognised as a refugee, the question to address is whether the person will face a real risk of serious harm in order to qualify for Humanitarian Protection (HP).

2.1.3 However, before considering whether a person requires protection because of the general humanitarian situation, decision makers must consider if the person faces persecution for a Refugee Convention reason. Where the person qualifies for protection under the Refugee Convention, decision makers do not need to consider if there are substantial grounds for believing the person faces a real risk of serious harm meriting a grant of HP.

2.1.4 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, see the Asylum Instruction, Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

Back to Contents

3. Risk

3.1.1 The general humanitarian situation/living conditions in Mogadishu are **not** so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment as defined in paragraphs 339C and 339CA (iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR.

3.1.2 Those with no clan or family support who may not have access to financial resources or be in receipt of remittances from abroad and who have no real

prospect of securing access to a livelihood (employment or self-employment) are likely to face a risk of serious harm.

3.1.3 Even where there is not a real risk of serious harm because of the general humanitarian situation/living conditions, a person may still face a real risk of serious harm because of their specific circumstances. Each case must be considered on its facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate a risk.

3.1.4 The threshold for a risk of serious harm as a result of the humanitarian situation/living conditions is very high. In the country guidance (CG) of OA (Somalia) (CG) [2022] UKUT 33 (IAC), heard on 14 to 18, and 21 June 2021, with further submissions received on 21 September, 8, 12 and 14 October 2021, and promulgated on 2 February 2022, the Upper Tribunal (UT) of the Immigration and Asylum Chamber considered whether there was a breach of Article 3 of the ECHR because of the humanitarian situation/general living conditions in Mogadishu. In reaching its country-specific guidance the UT also made the following general finding:

'In an Article 3 "living conditions" case, there must be a causal link between the Secretary of State's removal decision and any "intense suffering" feared by the returnee. This includes a requirement for temporal proximity between the removal decision and any "intense suffering" of which the returnee claims to be at real risk. This reflects the requirement in Paposhvili [2017] Imm AR 867 for intense suffering to be "serious, rapid and irreversible" in order to engage the returning State's obligations under Article 3 ECHR. A returnee fearing "intense suffering" on account of their prospective living conditions at some unknown point in the future is unlikely to be able to attribute responsibility for those living conditions to the Secretary of State, for to do so would be speculative.' (Headnote 1)

3.1.5 Therefore for a person to meet the threshold for granting humanitarian protection under paragraphs 339C and 339CA (iii) of the Immigration Rules because the humanitarian situation/living conditions breach Article 3 ECHR, they must demonstrate that they face 'intense suffering' which would be 'serious, rapid and irreversible' upon return.

3.1.6 Mogadishu's population is around 3 million including around 1.16 million internally displaced people (IDP) mostly living in the districts Daynile, Hodan and Kahda in camps or informal settlements. The city is dominated by the Hawiye but has other clans and minority groups such as the Reer Hamar. Clans are less segregated than in other parts of Somalia (see Geography and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)I).

3.1.7 Sources observed that since Al Shabab withdrew from Mogadishu in 2011/12 the city has experienced significant growth, with many people returning from overseas. There has also been substantial migration from the surrounding regions, driven by conflict and environmental factors including drought and flooding, and the economic opportunities available in Mogadishu, which continues to experience a construction boom. However, nationally over 50% of the population is extremely poor, living on less than US$2.06 a day, although poverty rates are lower in urban areas such as Mogadishu. Poverty is common in Mogadishu; IDPs are amongst the poorest populations (see Economy).

3.1.8 The EU Asylum Agency (EUAA) observed that there is a variety of work available in the city, mostly in the informal sector. But unemployment

remains high and obtaining a job usually requires some support from relatives or clan members (see Economy).

3.1.9 The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) classified Banadir region's (which is comprised mainly of Mogadishu city) food security as generally 'stressed', with households having minimally adequate food consumption. The IPC assessed IDP settlements as being in 'crisis' meaning households have consumption gaps or have to use up 'essential livelihood assests to obtain minimum food needs'. However, the African Cities Research Consortium noted that a shift from emergency food provision to cash transfers for those needing support had broadened access to and availability of food (see Food security). The EUAA noted that food is not expensive if bought in local markets (see Economy).

3.1.10 The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) observed that housing conditions have improved with more sustainable housing types and that the local authorities have taken steps to improve access - such as reducing land taxes and allocating land for vulnerable groups. However, barriers like tenure insecurity, weak legal systems, and urbanisation continue to limit housing stability and affordability. Due to high land prices, economic instability, and low incomes, many residents are unable to purchase homes and must rent. The EUAA also noted that the cost of accommodation (and electricity) is relatively high, with poorer areas with cheaper rents less secure because of criminality and the presence of Al Shabab (see Housing and shelter).

3.1.11 Water supply is mainly derived from groundwater and managed by private companies, but humanitarian organisations also contribute to its provision. Better off households have access to piped water, although this is not considered clean enough to drink. Others rely on wells, kiosks and water trucks. The sewerage system is limited, and one study found that over 50% of the population lacks access to improved sanitation facilties. IDPs find it particularly difficult to access sanitation facilities (see Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)).

3.1.12 The Danish Immigration Service and the EUAA considered that there are a variety of private and public healthcare facilties some operated by non-government organisations, including 18 hospitals, offering medical treatment. The quality of care is better in private facilities, but the cost of these services is high. The availability of medicines is limited. There is some mental health care (see Health).

3.1.13 Around a third of Mogadishu's population are IDPs, displaced mainly from Lower and Middle Shabelle. They live in camps and informal settlements mostly in the city's outskirts, many of which are on private land (see Size and location of IDP population). IDPs camps are managed by gatekeepers, who may be part of a chain of actors running the camps (see Gatekeepers). IDPs sometimes faced forced eviction because of uncertain tenure and lack of legal protection, although according to the NRC, the number of evictions declined from over 140,000 in 2022 to just under 70,000 in 2024 (see Forced evictions). The EUAA noted that many IDPs do not belong to the main clans, so lack wider clan support. The NGO Somali Public Agenda considered that IDPs can face discrimination in accessing socio-economic opportunities and rely on social connections to effectively integrate (see Internlly Displaced Persons (IDPs)) .

3.1.14 The EUAA noted that clan and family connections remain important factors for settling in Mogadishu, providing financial and other support. 'Social capital' is needed to live sustainably in the city (see Clan and family support, and Settling in Mogadishu).

3.1.15 The UT in the CG case of MOJ & Ors (Return to Mogadishu) Somalia CG [2014] UKUT 00442 (IAC) heard 10 to 13 and 25 February, and 9 September 2014, and promulgated on 20 October 2014, held in its headnote:

'(ii) Generally, a person who is "an ordinary civilian … on returning to Mogadishu after a period of absence will face no real … risk of harm such as to require protection under Article 3 of the ECHR …

'(vii) A person returning to Mogadishu after a period of absence will look to his nuclear family, if he has one living in the city, for assistance in re-establishing himself and securing a livelihood. Although a returnee may also seek assistance from his clan members who are not close relatives, such help is only likely to be forthcoming for majority clan members, as minority clans may have little to offer.

'(viii) The significance of clan membership in Mogadishu has changed. Clans now provide, potentially, social support mechanisms and assistance with access to livelihoods, performing less of a protection function than previously. There are no clan militias in Mogadishu, no clan violence, and no clan based discriminatory treatment, even for minority clan members.

'(ix) If it is accepted that a person facing a return to Mogadishu after a period of absence has no nuclear family or close relatives in the city to assist him in re-establishing himself on return, there will need to be a careful assessment of all of the circumstances. These considerations will include, but are not limited to:

- circumstances in Mogadishu before departure.
- length of absence from Mogadishu.
- family or clan associations to call upon in Mogadishu.
- access to financial resources.
- prospects of securing a livelihood, whether that be employment or self employment.
- availability of remittances from abroad.
- means of support during the time spent in the United Kingdom.
- why his ability to fund the journey to the West no longer enables an appellant to secure financial support on return.

'(x) Put another way, it will be for the person facing return to Mogadishu to explain why he would not be able to access the economic opportunities that have been produced by the "economic boom", especially as there is evidence to the effect that returnees are taking jobs at the expense of those who have never been away.' (Headnote)

3.1.16 The UT in OA held in its country guidance that:

'(a) The country guidance given in paragraph 407 of MOJ (replicated at paragraphs (i) to (x) of the headnote to MOJ [see above]) remains

applicable.

‘(b) We give the following additional country guidance which goes to the assessment of all the circumstances of a returnee’s case, as required by MOJ at paragraph 407(h) [which relates to paragraph ix of the Headnote to MOJ].

‘(c) The Reer Hamar is a senior minority clan whose ancient heritage in Mogadishu has placed it in a comparatively advantageous position compared to other minority clans. Strategic marriage alliances into dominant clans have strengthened the overall standing and influence of the Reer Hamar. There are no reports of the Reer Hamar living in IDP camps and it would be unusual for a member of the clan to do so.

‘(d) Somali culture is such that family and social links are, in general, retained between the diaspora and those living in Somalia. Somali family networks are very extensive and the social ties between different branches of the family are very tight. A returnee with family and diaspora links in this country will be unlikely to be more than a small number of degrees of separation away from establishing contact with a member of their clan, or extended family, in Mogadishu through friends of friends, if not through direct contact.

‘(e) In-country assistance from a returnee’s clan or network is not necessarily contingent upon the returnee having personally made remittances as a member of the diaspora. Relevant factors include whether a member of the returnee’s household made remittances, and the returnee’s ability to have sent remittances before their return.

‘(f) A guarantor is not required for hotel rooms. Basic but adequate hotel accommodation is available for a nightly fee of around 25USD. The Secretary of State’s Facilitated Returns Scheme [FRS] will be sufficient to fund a returnee’s initial reception in Mogadishu for up to several weeks, while the returnee establishes or reconnects with their network or finds a guarantor. Taxis are available to take returnees from the airport to their hotel.

‘(g) The economic boom continues with the consequence that casual and day labour positions are available. A guarantor may be required to vouch for some employed positions, although a guarantor is not likely to be required for self-employed positions, given the number of recent arrivals who have secured or crafted roles in the informal economy.

‘(h) A guarantor may be required to vouch for prospective tenants in the city. In the accommodation context, the term “guarantor” is broad, and encompasses vouching for the individual concerned, rather than assuming legal obligations as part of a formal land transaction. Adequate rooms are available to rent in the region of 40USD to 150USD per month in conditions that would not, without more, amount to a breach of Article 3 ECHR.

‘(i) There is a spectrum of conditions across the IDP camps; some remain as they were at the time of MOJ, whereas there has been durable positive change in a significant number of others. Many camps now feature material conditions that are adequate by Somali standards. The living conditions in the worst IDP camps will be dire on account of their overcrowding, the prevalence of disease, the destitution of their residents, the unsanitary

conditions, the lack of accessible services and the exposure to the risk of crime.

'(j) The extent to which the Secretary of State may properly be held to be responsible for exposing a returnee to intense suffering which may in time arise as a result of such conditions turns on factors that include whether, upon arrival in Mogadishu, the returnee would be without any prospect of initial accommodation, support or another base from which to begin to establish themselves in the city.

'(k) There will need to be a careful assessment of all the circumstances of the particular individual in order to ascertain the Article 3, humanitarian protection or internal relocation implications of an individual's return.

'(l) If there are particular features of an individual returnee's circumstances or characteristics that mean that there are substantial grounds to conclude that there will be a real risk that, notwithstanding the availability of the FRS and the other means available to a returnee of establishing themselves in Mogadishu, residence in an IDP camp or informal settlement will be reasonably likely, a careful consideration of all the circumstances will be required in order to determine whether their return will entail a real risk of Article 3 being breached. Such cases are likely to be rare, in light of the evidence that very few, if any, returning members of the diaspora are forced to resort to IDP camps.

'(m) It will only be those with no clan or family support who will not be in receipt of remittances from abroad and who have no real prospect of securing access to a livelihood on return who will face the prospect of living in circumstances falling below that which would be reasonable for internal relocation purposes.

'(n) There is some mental health provision in Mogadishu. Means-tested anti-psychotic medication is available.

'(o) Hard drugs are not readily available in Mogadishu, and the focus of substance abuse is khat, cannabis, alcohol and tobacco. It is not reasonably likely that an ordinary returnee, without significant means or pre-existing connections to criminal elements in Mogadishu, would be able to procure hard drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, upon their return.' (paragraph 356)

3.1.17 On the issue of clan and family assistance available to minority groups, the UT in OA held in the analysis of the determination (not the country guidance):

'We also accept that, as a general rule, minority clans may struggle to offer significant levels of practical assistance (although, as we set out below, clan-specific additional considerations may apply, as may be the case with the Reer Hamar) … [t]he evidence before us does not support the contention that a network or connections in a minority clan would be of no assistance at all. Rather, it may be an issue where some positive, practical or otherwise costly contribution would be required on the part of the clan. Where there is a dispute requiring resolution, or where some form of practical provision from the clan is required in order to access accommodation or services, in those circumstances, and as a general rule, the assistance provided by a minority clan may rank below that which would be provided by a majority clan in corresponding circumstances. But there is no evidence to support the view

that a member of a minority clan would be unable to act as a guarantor, whether formal or informal …

'… even a minority clan would, in principle, be able to provide some assistance to a returnee seeking accommodation, primarily in the form of vouching for the individual concerned.' (paragraphs 241 and 259)

3.1.18 The country evidence referred to in this note does not indicate that there are very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence to depart from the CG issued in MOJ and OA. Therefore, the relevant findings in each case continue to apply.

3.1.19 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

3.1.20 For information and guidance about the security situation, see the Country Policy and Information Note, Somalia: Security situation in Mogadishu, and for position of women, see the Country Policy and Information Note, Somalia: Women fearing gender-based violence).

Back to Contents

4. Protection

4.1.1 The state is not able to provide protection against a breach of Article 3 ECHR because of general humanitarian conditions if this occurs in individual cases.

4.1.2 For further guidance on assessing state protection, see the Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

Back to Contents

5. Internal relocation

5.1.1 Internal relocation to Mogadishu for people who have not previously lived in Mogadishu is likely to be viable but depends on the person's circumstances.

5.1.2 Internal relocation from Mogadishu to another part of south-central Somalia is not likely to viable but will depend on the facts of the case.

5.1.3 The UT in MOJ held:

'The evidence indicates clearly that it is not simply those who originate from Mogadishu that may now generally return to live in the city without being subjected to an Article 15(c) risk or facing a real risk of destitution. Large numbers of Somali citizens have moved to Mogadishu where, as we have seen there is now freedom of movement and no clan-based discrimination. Such a person seeking to settle in Mogadishu but who has not previously lived there would be able to do so provided he had either some form of social support network, which might be in the form of membership of a majority clan or having relatives living in the city, or having access to funds such as would be required to establish accommodation and a means of ongoing support. That might be in terms of continuing remittances or securing a livelihood, based on employment or self employment.' (para 424)

5.1.4 The UT in OA did not comment on paragraph 424 of MOJ but held:

'There will need to be a careful assessment of all the circumstances of the particular individual in order to ascertain the Article 3, humanitarian protection or internal relocation implications of an individual's return … It will

only be those with no clan or family support who will not be in receipt of remittances from abroad and who have no real prospect of securing access to a livelihood on return who will face the prospect of living in circumstances falling below that which would be reasonable for internal relocation purposes.' (paragraph 356, sub-paragraphs k and m)

5.1.5 The UT in OA explained that the assessment of the viability of internal relocation for people who had feared persecution was different from the assessment of risk under Article 3 ECHR:

'Where an individual has established that they face a well-founded fear of being persecuted such that internal relocation is a live issue, the analysis is different. Such an assessment necessarily entails an examination of the prospective, longer term, living arrangements. In those circumstances, as was the case in MOJ as held by Said, the humanitarian conditions in the IDP camps and informal settlements acquire a greater potential relevance. It is established refugee law that the "unduly harsh" test for internal relocation entails a materially lower threshold than that necessary to establish an Article 3 ECHR claim, and to that extent it will be necessary to consider whether residence in an IDP camp or informal settlement will be unduly harsh, consistent with the guidance in MOJ at [408] which, as clarified by Said, was referring to internal relocation.' (paragraph 340)

5.1.6 The UT in OA also held that 'very few, if any, returning members of the diaspora are forced to resort to IDP camps …' (paragraph 356l)

5.1.7 The country evidence referred to in this note does not indicate that there are very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence to depart from the CG issued in MOJ and OA. Therefore, the relevant findings in each case continue to apply.

5.1.8 For information and guidance about the security situation, see the Country Policy and Information Note, Somalia: Security situation in Mogadishu, and for position of women, see the Country Policy and Information Note, Somalia: Women fearing gender-based violence).

5.1.9 For further guidance on internal relocation and factors to consider, see the Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status

Back to Contents

6. Certification

6.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

6.1.2 For further guidance on certification, see Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (clearly unfounded claims).

Back to Contents

Country information

About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the research methodology. It provides the evidence base for the assessment which, as stated in the About the assessment, is the guide to the current objective conditions.

The structure and content follow a terms of reference which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **25 June 2025**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

The USD to GBP currency conversions in this note have been calculated based on an exchange rate of 1USD = £0.73 as on 25 June 2025[1].

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

Back to Contents

7. Geography

7.1.1 The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs report, 'General country of origin information report on Somalia', June 2023, (NL MOFA report 2023) citing other sources noted: 'Mogadishu is formally part of the administrative region of Benadir. In fact, that region consists solely of the capital, Mogadishu … According to data from the Integrated food security Phase Classification (hereinafter: IPC), the city's population was about 2,777,000 (including more than 1 million displaced persons) in August 2022.'[2]

7.1.2 The EU Asylum Agency's Somalia: Country Focus, May 2025, (EUAA Focus 2025), based on a range of sources, noted:

'Mogadishu is the most populous city in Somalia … It consists of 20 districts. The old ones are: Wadajir, Dharkenley, Daynile, Wardigley, Hawl Wadaag, Waberi, Hamar Jajab, Hamar Weyne, Bondere, Karaan, Yaqshid, Huriwaa, Kahda, Hodan, Shibis, Abdulaziz, Shangani … Recently, in May 2024, three new districts were added: Gubadley, Darussalam, Garasbaaley … As of February 2022, Benadir Region was the only region in Somalia completely controlled by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). Mogadishu hosts the FGS. Its international airport and port are the country's largest two revenue sources. Mogadishu is the only city where the FGS collects taxes …'[3]

7.1.3 The EUAA Focus 2025 further noted:

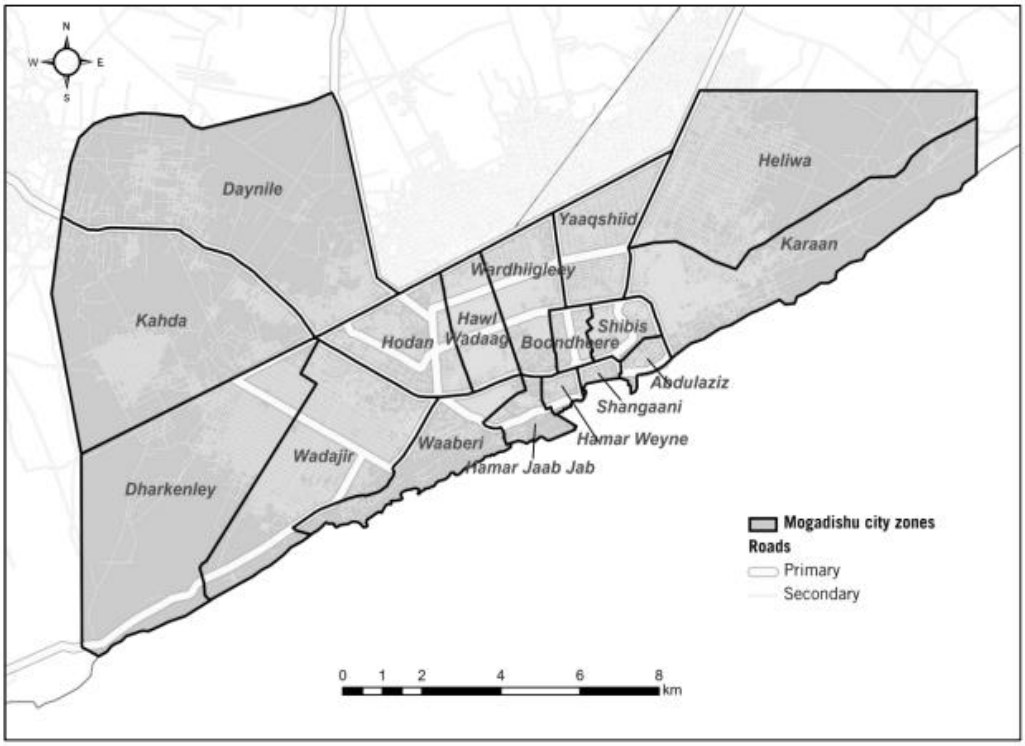
'Mogadishu is inhabited largely by Hawiye from the clans Abgaal, Habar Gedir and Murosade. Besides, certain minority groups such as Reer Hamar are traditional inhabitants of the city … Moreover, members from many other

[1] XE, Currency converter, no date
[2] NL MOFA, General country of origin information report on Somalia (section 2.2.1), June 2023
[3] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.1), May 2025

Somali clans reside in Mogadishu as students, professionals, businesspeople or government workers … Mogadishu is "not as segregated by clan as other areas of Somalia". Still, clan membership is important. Hawiye clan holds the most powerful positions … Minority group members and members of other clans face exclusion and discrimination. … Particularly in the oldest quarters Shangani and Hamar Weyne, Reer Hamar - which consist of many small groups … have their ancestral homes …'[4]

7.1.4 For more information about the IDP population, see Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) below.

7.1.5 The map below[5] shows Mogadishu's districts and main and secondary roads:



7.1.6 For additional maps of Mogadishu, see OpenStreetMap, Mapcarta, and Satellites.pro.

Back to Contents

8. Economy

8.1.1 The World Bank in its overview of Somalia dated April 2025 observed about the country generally:

'As Somalia continues to rebuild economic governance institutions, it has several opportunities—rapid urbanization, the growing use of digital technologies, planned investments in energy, ports, education, and health—so building resilience to shocks is a priority to support economic growth and job creation. However, severe droughts, floods, locust infestation, the pandemic, volatile global prices, as well insecurity and conflict have slowed the transition from fragility. Real [gross domestic product] GDP growth

[4] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.1), May 2025
[5] EUAA, Somalia: Key socio-economic indicators…, (Districts Map of Mogadishu), September 2021

averaged only 2.4% annually in 2019–24 with an average negative real GDP per capita growth of 0.4%.

'In 2024, sustained favorable rains improved agricultural production and led to better food security and higher private consumption; economic growth remains strong, standing at 4% in 2024, compared to 4.2% in 2023.

'… Repeated shocks have eroded households' assets and purchasing power, increasing the risk of more people falling into poverty. In 2022, an estimated 54% of the Somali population lived below the national poverty line. … Labor force participation rates are exceptionally low, with significant gender gaps. Only one-third of men and 12% of women participate in the labor market. Almost half of those employed are living below the poverty line, indicating that jobs are of low productivity. Therefore, accelerated momentum in building institutions and developing resilience is fundamental for growth, poverty reduction, and transition from fragility.'[6]

8.1.2 The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for Somali Report 2024, published by the Somali National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS) and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA), based on data collected in the 2022 Somalia Integrated Household Budget Survey, noted that for the country as a whole:

'… poverty is one of the country's primary challenges, with over half of the population (54.4 per cent) living below the poverty line, consuming less than [US]$2.06 per day. This significant poverty rate is particularly acute among nomadic communities, with 78.4 per cent of this population falling below the poverty line. Rural areas also face severe poverty challenges, with 65.5 per cent of the rural population living in poverty. While urban areas show a lower poverty rate at 46.1 per cent, it remains a significant concern, highlighting the multifaceted nature of poverty in Somalia. By design, the traditional monetary poverty indicators cannot fully capture the depth and diversity of deprivation faced by individuals and society.'[7]

8.1.3 Professor Afyare A Elmi, City University of Mogadishu and Senior Research Fellow, Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (HIPS), and and Faisal N Ali, HIPS researcher, in the working paper for the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC)[8] Mogadishu: City report, dated August 2024 (ACRC report 2024), based on a range of sources, noted: 'Mogadishu, as the capital of the Somali government, has undergone a gradual process of urban recovery over the past decade. This recovery has been accompanied by rapid urbanisation, with estimates suggesting a growth rate of up to 4% per year (Earle, 2021, Expanding Access to Justice Program, 2020), leading to a surge in construction activities and escalating land prices. However, despite these positive developments, certain fundamental aspects of the city's political settlement remain unresolved, particularly Mogadishu's constitutional status.'[9]

8.1.4 Landinfo, the Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre responsible for gathering COI for use by the Norwegian immigration authorities, in its response, Somalia: Klan- og sikkerhetsrelaterte forhold i Mogadishu, 7 November 2024, translated from Norwegian into English using ChatGPT,

[6] World Bank, Somalia (Overview), 9 April 2025
[7] SNBS-MLSA, Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) … (page 2), no date
[8] ACRC,About, no date
[9] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report (Introduction), August 2024

based on open-source research and a fact finding visit to Mogadishu in April 2024 similarly observed:

'Landinfo has visited Mogadishu regularly since February 2012, when many of the city's districts were nearly deserted following the 2011/12 withdrawal [of Al Shabab]. Since then, the city has experienced significant growth. Many people returned after the fighting subsided, and there has also been substantial migration from surrounding regions, driven by deteriorating rural livelihoods and the economic opportunities available in the capital … There has also been considerable urban development, particularly in areas inhabited by the capital's upper middle class, including modern apartment complexes, office buildings, and high-rises.'[10]

8.1.5 The EUAA Focus 2025 noted:

'Mogadishu being the largest city in Somalia and featuring the port as major economic hub exhibits the largest growth opportunities. Economic growth is hampered by increasing costs for land and property, and scarcity of water … Land and property prices in Mogadishu are generally high. Disputes over land titles are common … Electricity access is near universal in Mogadishu, but electricity prices are relatively high (ca. 0.4 USD/kilowatt). Electricity provision is organised by oligopolistic cartel … The unreliability of water supplies is affecting 53 percent of firms in Mogadishu. Still, in Mogadishu the productivity level for all types of entrepreneurial businesses is high in comparison to other places in Somalia …

'Most businesses in Mogadishu are small and have one to five employees. One quarter in fact only employs the owner. Only seven percent have more than 20 employees … Most business are in service provision … Two-thirds of firms are estimated to be informal. Informality affects tax collection, worker security, and the potential for businesspeople to engage in long-term investment … Even among formal businesses, half are micro enterprises of no more than five employees … Women rarely own large formal businesses. Yet, among the informal and formal micro businesses, they hold a large share, especially in food production and tea shops … The biggest market in Mogadishu is Bakara market. It hosts more than 20 000 indoor businesses housed in some 7 000 buildings in addition to numerous outdoor businesses … Besides, Mogadishu port is a major business hub. Moreover, telecommunication and mobile banking have a huge monthly turnover, with 70% of Somalis regularly using mobile money services … Most revenue for the Somali government is collected in Mogadishu … Al-Shabaab is another crucial actor in this domain, with interests primarily in revenue generation. It collects its own taxes in the city … Al-Shabaab taxes businesses, but also private persons e.g. building houses …'[11]

8.1.6 The EUAA Focus 2025 also noted:

'Finding a job in Mogadishu usually requires some support by relatives on the ground, or by government officials (who are also normally asked for support in their capacity as patrilineal relatives). Relatives who run a business are asked to employ their kin. Government officials who are representatives of their own clan or lineage are asked to pave the way into a lucrative job. People without any relevant social ties in Mogadishu face

[10] Landinfo, Somalia: Klan- og sikkerhetsrelaterte forhold i Mogadishu, 7 November 2024
[11] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025

serious challenges getting a middle to well-paid job, regardless of their qualification … Only international organisations managed by foreigners offer a neutral application process … Salaries vary greatly across professions. The vast majority of inhabitants of Mogadishu earns low salaries as maids (50-100 USD/months [£36.75-£73.48], watchmen (100-150 USD/months) £73.48- £110.22], waiters (150-200 USD/months) [£110.22-£146.98] or as simple soldiers or policemen (200 USD/months plus food allowances). A nurse earns some 200 USD/month when he/she is a beginner. A qualified nurse or any other experienced professional can earn 350 to 500 USD/month [£257.23-£367.48]. Higher ranking soldiers and police officers can earn between 300 and 500 USD/month (plus food allowances). A military or police general earns 1 000 USD/month [£734.91] (plus food allowances) … Government officials often seek to get several salaries to increase their monthly income. Among the top earners are those working for international organisations. Top salaries in Mogadishu can go up to 6 000 [£4,409.48] USD/month …

'While there is a construction boom ongoing in Mogadishu, the general unemployment rate is still high, with the displaced and the urban poor severely lacking economic inclusion … There is more poverty in Mogadishu than in other urban areas, likely because of the presence of many displaced persons. [Internally displaced persons] IDPs are among the poorest and most vulnerable populations … Life is not very cheap in Mogadishu. Rents are higher here than elsewhere in Somalia. Additionally, electricity is expensive in Mogadishu. A family of six in a four-bedroom flat pays 25-35 USD/months [£18.25 to £25.55] for electricity. Besides, the cables are often old and/or not well-maintained. This sometimes leads to considerable losses and also to fires. Water needs to be paid. Food is not expensive if bought on local markets (and not in the supermarket) … One person living in the outskirts of Mogadishu, in a shack, still may have to pay 50-90 [£36.73-£66.12] USD/rent per month, plus water and food (ca. 150 USD/month [£110.23]). The minimum costs for survival (without humanitarian aid) would thus be around 200-250 USD (£146.96 to £183.70)/month for an adult. This does not include healthcare. This is more than unskilled workers would earn per month in Mogadishu. There are no public social services supporting the needy … Many have to rely on help from relatives in the diaspora to make ends meet …'[12]

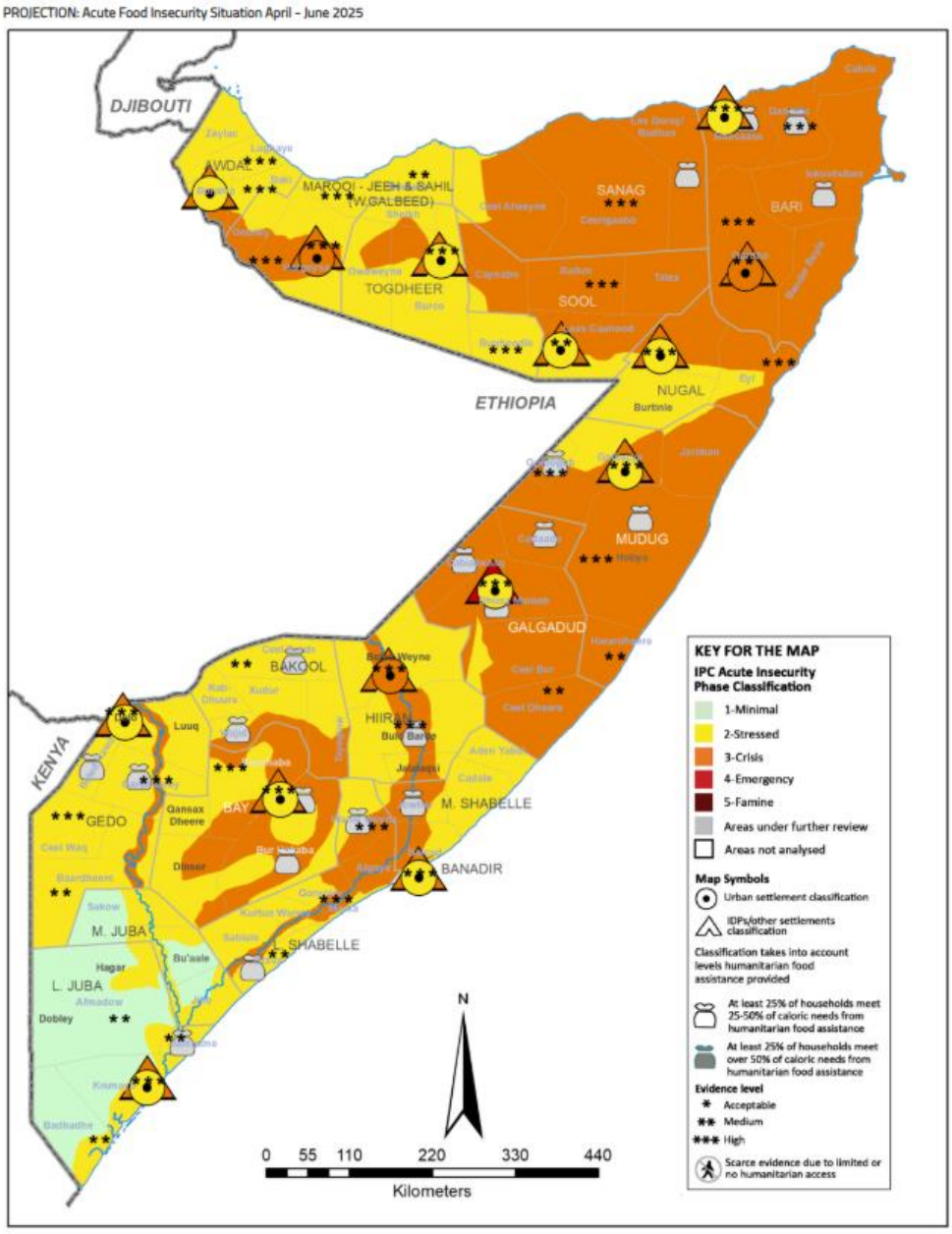
Back to Contents

9. Food security

9.1.1 The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multistakeholder initiative comprised of 21 organisations and intergovernmental institutions 'aimed at enhancing food security and nutrition analysis to inform decisions collates data and undertakes analysis of levels of food security[13]. The IPC provides a 'common global scale for classifying the severity and magnitude of food insecurity and malnutrition.'[14] The IPC's map of March 2025[15] (see below) shows its projection of food insecurity between April and June 2025 in Somalia by region, including Banadir (which

[12] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025
[13] IPC, Overview and classification system, no date
[14] IPC, FAQs, no date
[15] IPC, Somalia: Acute Food Insecurity Projection Update April - June 2025, March 2025

is mainly composed of Mogadishu):



9.1.2 The IPC food security classification phase for the Banadir region generally was 'stressed' which is defined as '[h]ouseholds have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies'. However, the food security phase for IDP settlements in Banadir was classified as 'crisis', defined as when 'Households either:

- 'Have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; or
- 'Are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies.'[16]

[16] IPC, Overview and classification system (Understanding the IPC Scales), no date

9.1.3 UNOCHA in their Somalia Monthly Humanitarian Update, dated 6 March 2025 noted for the country as a whole, not specifically Mogadishu:

'Food security in Somalia is deteriorating and one million more people will face crisis levels of food insecurity in the coming months due to worsening drought conditions, conflict and high food prices, according to new Integrated Phase Food Security Classification (IPC) findings released by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on 24 February [2025]. Some 3.4 million people are already experiencing crisis-levels of hunger, but this number is expected to rise to 4.4 million – nearly a quarter of the population – between April and June [2025] when below-average rains are forecast. The people currently experiencing acute food insecurity represent a 15 per cent reduction compared to the same period last year, when approximately 4 million people were classified in crisis or worse food insecurity. The IPC analysis attributes this to relatively better rainfall over the past two seasons with a positive impact on livelihoods and continued humanitarian assistance, albeit at a reduced level.'[17]

9.1.4 The ACRC report 2024 noted:

'… [The food distribution] system includes a variety of stakeholders, such as importers, wholesalers, transporters, brokers and small-scale retailers. The private sector's dynamic involvement is pivotal, complemented by humanitarian aid organisations.

'The shift from emergency food provision to cash transfers for food assistance has broadened food access and availability. Nonetheless, many residents still face significant challenges in accessing food, due to widespread poverty. The population primarily depends on imported staples like pasta and rice, with maize and millet being the main locally produced foods. Given the critical role of road transportation in accessing local produce, enhancing road security is imperative.

'The city boasts four major markets – Bakara, Suq Bacad, Hamarweyne and Madina – while the Banadir Regional Administration (BRA) manages an additional 21 markets, overseeing distribution, vendor operations and tax collection. Despite government taxation, concerns persist regarding the quality of food and the prevalence of food waste.'[18]

Back to Contents

10. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

10.1.1 The ACRC report 2024 noted:

'When it comes to water supply, Mogadishu primarily relies on groundwater, extracted from wells. The management of water resources is predominantly in the hands of the private sector, with minimal governmental involvement, although humanitarian organisations also contribute to water provision. The government's role has largely been limited to administrative functions, focusing on policy development and infrastructure planning through the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Somalia (AfDB, 2015,). Private boreholes, operated by dominant clans and religious institutions, play a significant role in the city's water industry, controlling various sections of the

[17] UNOCHA, Somalia Monthly Humanitarian Update, February 2025, (page 1), 06 March 2025
[18] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report (page 16), August 2024

market (Watanabe and D'Aoust, 2021). Despite the competition among well owners and private water companies, the clans facilitate direct interactions between water companies and customers, which helps mitigate excessive competition and potentially prevents price hikes.'[19]

10.1.2 The ACRC report 2024 also noted:

'Water access in Mogadishu is highly segregated, with urban households benefiting from better services due to their proximity to water facilities. In contrast, peri-urban and IDP populations rely on expensive non-piped water from small-scale vendors, which increases their financial burden and limits their access to clean water (Watanabe and D'Aoust, 2021: 88). The World Bank reports that only 12% of Mogadishu residents have access to improved sanitation, compared to 14% in Somaliland and 11% in Puntland (World Bank, 2017: 41). IDPs and low-income urban residents face a shortage of latrines, insufficient for the high number of households in these areas, making women particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence, due to the distance of latrines from their settlements (UNOCHA, 2017: 8). Both displaced and non-displaced populations struggle with access to facilities such as water and soap, with only about 4% of Mogadishu's latrine facilities having access to water. Electricity access is similarly uneven, with urban residents benefiting most, due to their proximity to the grid and service providers, while IDPs and low-income urban residents are insufficiently supplied. These disparities, influenced by socioeconomic factors, clan affiliation and geographic location, perpetuate existing inequalities and significantly impact the quality of life for Mogadishu's peri-urban and IDP populations.'[20]

10.1.3 The ACRC report 2024 noted regarding waste management, including sewerage:

'Presently, the Mogadishu municipality, through the [Banadir Regional Autority] BRA, engages in public–private partnerships with companies or community groups for waste, drainage and sewage management. The BRA has specifically collaborated with a waste management company named IFI to oversee waste collection and disposal in Mogadishu. Additionally, informal entities contribute by collecting waste from businesses situated away from main collection points. However, the service is often too costly for many, especially impoverished residents and IDPs, limiting the service coverage. A contributing factor is the monopolisation of the waste management sector by private entities like the IFI company. There is a clear need for innovation and the introduction of open competition among private investors in the waste management sector.

'The sewage system in Mogadishu, established during the colonial era, has not been modernised to support the city's expanding population. Consequently, many residents rely on septic tanks, which now contaminate the underground water supply. Although some NGOs have launched sanitation projects in impoverished areas, their services are fragmented and insufficient for the population's needs. The study also revealed that less than one-third of households and commercial properties in Mogadishu possess their own sanitation facilities, and over half of the population lacks access to

[19] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report (page 15), August 2024
[20] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report (page 20), August 2024

improved sanitation facilities and uses unimproved pit latrines or open defecation. Particularly affected are displaced individuals, who are often prohibited from constructing their own facilities, due to the absence of formal land rights. The report suggests that distributing the responsibility for waste management among all stakeholders and promoting joint efforts could enhance the system's efficiency. Unfortunately, this approach has not been adopted, leaving the poor and most vulnerable residents to suffer the social and environmental repercussions of inadequate waste management. Poor drainage frequently leads to flooding, and the prevalence of open sewage contaminates water sources, triggering outbreaks of disease.'[21]

10.1.4 The UN Secretary General's September 2024 report on Somalia covering the period 24 May to 20 September 2024 (UNSG report 2024) noted:

'Poor sanitation and low access to safe drinking water, especially at sites for displaced people, triggered a spike in acute watery diarrhoea/cholera cases. During the reporting period, 6,462 cholera cases were reported, including 21 deaths, with a case-fatality rate of 0.3, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), including in the Banaadir region, where Somalia has experienced uninterrupted cholera transmission since 2017. The spread of the disease is fuelled by seasonal rains and floods.'[22]

10.1.5 UNOCHA in their Somalia Monthly Humanitarian Update for February 2025 noted: 'Reports from Banadir region on 12 February [2025] indicated that 550 displaced families (about 3,300 people) in Kahda district face severe water shortages. Many are new arrivals or people who were evicted from previous settlements. Partners are seeking resources to address the situation but two organizations supplying water will cease operations by the end of February due to funding shortfalls, worsening the crisis.'[23]

10.1.6 The EUAA Focus 2025 observed:

'In the expensive neighbourhoods in the secure zone, many houses and apartments are connected to the water system through pipes. The tap water is used for cooking and washing. But it is not considered clean enough for direct human consumption, at least by people with middle class or high income. Yet, poorer people are also drinking tap water. Better off people buy bottled water or get it delivered in larger quantities (e.g., up to 40 litre bottles) into their houses or apartments. There are also some wells in the city where people can drink water. Monthly costs for tap water depend on consumption. Several sources questioned about their regular water costs mentioned that a household of six people (grown-ups and children) would pay between 20 and 30 USD/months for the tap water. Clean water for human consumption is extra.

'Hagmann et al. (2022) found that "[w]ater delivery and consumption patterns reflect existing urban inequalities." While piped water is available in the better off (and more secure) districts, people in poorer and outer (and more insecure) districts have to rely on shallow wells, water kiosks, water trucks or donkey carts. The latter are used where roads and access are particularly bad.

[21] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report (page 17), August 2024
[22] UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General t… (section C), 27 September 2024
[23] UNOCHA, Somalia Monthly Humanitarian Update, February 2025, (page 2), 06 March 2025

'In neighbourhoods near the Indian Ocean wells cannot be used because of salinity. Urban flooding in combination with shortcomings in the sewage system planning and the malfunctioning waste management system produce problems regarding water supply and consumption in Mogadishu. Human waste and other waste not professionally deposed contaminates floodwaters which again pollutes the groundwater and wells. IDPs are most vulnerable to water shortage and water pollution. In the past, urban flooding had also very negative effects, especially on IDPs. On the other hand, at the beginning of 2022 only 30 per cent of IDP sites in Benadir/Mogadishu had access to water nearby.'[24]

Back to Contents

11. Housing and shelter

11.1.1 Somali Public Agenda (SPA), a non-profit public policy and administration research and action organization based in Mogadishu[25], in their report Mogadishu's Spiraling House Rents: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solutions, dated 29 January 2023 noted:

'With old and new residents moving back to Mogadishu after the relative peace, it is obvious that not everyone does have land or a house in the city and cannot afford to buy one. This leaves them no choice but to rent residences and become tenants. Moreover, due to the weak economy of the country, unpredictable and expensive land prices in Mogadishu, and the low income of the society, it is not easy for many families to own houses or become permanent residents. Consequently, they are compelled to remain tenants for a long time. However, being a renter is also becoming difficult to bear because of the current skyrocketing rent prices in Mogadishu.'[26]

11.1.2 The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in their report, Community-driven consultations on housing, land and property needs among minority, marginalised, and displaced communities in Mogadishu, dated 6 February 2025 (NRC report February 2025) noted:

'Housing conditions in Mogadishu have transformed significantly over the past decade. Several positive developments have emerged, including improved housing conditions and more sustainable housing types. However, multiple challenges affect housing accessibility and market dynamics:

- security concerns
- economic instability
- widespread tenure insecurity
- weak legal institutions and limited access to justice
- emerging rental trends at housing and site levels
- shift from land-based savings to formal banking
- rapid urbanisation.'[27]

11.1.3 NRC report February 2025 also noted: 'Mogadishu's local government has

[24] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025
[25] SPA, Who we are, no date.
[26] SPA, Mogadishu's Spiraling House Rents: Causes, Consequences, and…, 29 January 2023
[27] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, land and prop…, (page 16), 06 February 2025

taken positive steps to improve housing access by reducing land taxes and identity document costs, and allocating land for marginalised groups and IDPs. The local and national governments have worked together to provide land for IDP camps, collaborating with organisations like NRC and other humanitarian agencies.'[28]

11.1.4 On the issue of house ownership, NRC report February 2025 also noted:

'A household survey conducted in Mogadishu of 288 respondents included 59 per cent female. Only eight per cent say they owned a house. When asked to indicate the type of house they owned, five per cent owned metal-structured houses; 95 per cent of IDPs lived in temporary structures/tents … When respondents indicated who owned the house/tent they stayed in, 72 per cent said the structures were owned by the camps, 27 per cent were owned by landlords who had rented them to the respondents, and three per cent were community-owned housing structures. In comparison, two per cent were supported by humanitarian organisations.'[29]

11.1.5 The EUAA report 2025 stated:

'Mogadishu is characterised by socio-spatial and economic differentiation. Security and area of residence are connected. In the secure zone near the airport rent prices are highest. This is where government institutions, foreign embassies and international organisations are concentrated. Government officials, diaspora members, foreigners, and business people mostly reside here. In the outer districts, the level of insecurity is high. Criminal gangs operate there. Also Al-Shabaab has a clandestine but effective presence there. A one to two bedroom apartment (including bathroom, kitchen and living room) in one of the new apartment houses in the secure zone near the international airport costs 700 to 1200 USD/month. In the districts Abdulaziz, Hawl Wadaag, Hodon or Waberi, where many young professionals reside, it is slightly cheaper. Apartments with up to four bedrooms in this area cost some 300 to 700 USD/month. Families with two to three children live here, if they have a middle-class income, as well as young professionals who frequently share flats, before they get married. Poorer people reside in outer districts like Karaan, Yaqshid and Kahda. There one pays 90- 250 USD/month for either a small stone house with two to three bedrooms or, at the cheap end, a shack (jingad in Somali). In the cheapest parts of Daynile or Kahda one can get a shack for 50 USD/month. Below that come the IDP camps, often situated at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum.

'Those who own houses or land are usually from the dominant groups in Mogadishu, including, particularly Hawiye. Many others do not own land or houses. The income of many inhabitants is rather low. Thus, many people remain tenants for a long time. The housing situation is aggravated by constant movement from rural areas to Mogadishu. Additionally, climate change including more frequent droughts and floods foster rural to urban migration. This puts pressure on the already marginalised areas, where IDPs and the poor reside, and increases the need for humanitarian assistance in Mogadishu.'[30]

[28] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, land and prop…, (page 43), 06 February 2025
[29] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, land and prop…, (page 19), 06 February 2025
[30] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025

11.1.6 The EUAA Focus 2025 also noted regarding returnees:

'Much land and real estate, which is increasingly valuable, is bought by well-off returnees from the Somali diaspora and local political and economic elites in Mogadishu. Much of the land and buildings in Mogadishu have been forcefully occupied by militias. Until today, those owning land or real estate rely on clan support. New acquisitions of (private or even public) land are often accompanied by forcible evictions of vulnerable populations residing in informal settlements and camps.'[31]

Back to Contents

12. Health

12.1.1 ACRC report 2024 noted:

'Mogadishu's health system, in comparison to the rest of the country, is more advanced. The city has 61 public facilities that provide healthcare services, in addition to 105 private institutions and 49 clinics with operating licences. Additionally, Mogadishu is home to nine hospitals that have the capacity to perform surgeries, and various NGOs operate 17 healthcare centres. The private sector offers essential services, such as MRI scans and dialysis machines, which previously compelled Somalis to seek treatment abroad. Despite often delivering superior care compared to the public sector, the private healthcare sector is viewed by many residents as expensive, poorly regulated and unreliable. Donor-funded health facilities also offer higher quality services with more resources than those funded by the government.'[32]

12.1.2 Danish Immigration Service (DIS), in their Country-of-Origin Information (COI) report, titled Somalia: Health care services in Mogadishu, dated February 2025 (Danish COI report February 2025) noted:

'The health care landscape in Somalia is fragmented. The majority of hospitals and clinics in the country is located in the Banadir region and therefore Mogadishu has more hospitals and clinics than any other of the federal member states. There has been an increase of private for-profit health clinics in Mogadishu. Most of these facilities have been established by members of the diaspora and foreigners who are willing to invest in building new infrastructure. However, the mechanisms to control the quality of health care services are limited in Somalia. The quality of care is ascribed to be better in private hospitals, but the cost of services is high, and the poor parts of the population are unable to pay for services provided by private hospitals.'[33]

12.1.3 Danish COI report February 2025 noted:

'In Mogadishu, there are two "fully public hospitals" (meaning that they are managed by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) and not co-run by another country or organisation), which are described as free of charge to the patients, including the poor and displaced populations. These are Banadir Hospital and De Marino General Hospital.

'At public hospitals, basic medicines (such as vitamins for nutrition-deprived

[31] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025
[32] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report, (page 18), August 2024
[33] DIS, Somalia: Health care services in Mogadishu,(Executive summary), February 2025

patients or medication against fever) are offered free of charge as long as they are in stock. At other places, medicines are sold to patients at unregulated prices since there is no regulation of medical products in Somalia and because many pharmacies in Mogadishu operate without any form of accreditation.'[34]

12.1.4 In terms of availability of mental health treatment, the Danish COI report February 2025 noted:

'In Mogadishu, patients who suffer from psychiatric diseases may consult a psychiatrist at three different hospitals in Mogadishu. Two of these hospitals also offer in-patient treatment by a psychiatrist, but only one of these two admits female patients at their wards for inpatient treatment. People who need to consult a psychologist may find this service at one of the hospitals included in the survey. None of these hospitals offered special housing or assisted living for people suffering from long-term mental disease.'[35]

12.1.5 The EUAA Focus 2025, based on a telephone interview with 'Siyaad', 'a medical laboratory supervisor in Mogadishu', stated:

'In early 2025, some 18 larger hospitals exist in Mogadishu, including Benadir, Medina and De Marino (aka Martino) Hospital, which are public, and Aden Adde, Kalkal, Somali Sudanese, Ummo, Digfer (aka Erdogan), Yardimeli, Jazera, Dufle, Fiqi, Dalmar, Forlanini, Habeeb, Liban, Shaafi and Hodon Hospital, which are private. Digfer/Erdogan and Yardimeli Hospital are Turkish owned. They are built on public land which has been provided for free by the government. The services are slightly cheaper than in fully private hospitals … Forlanini, Habeeb and Digfer/Erdogan have psychiatric wardens. Medina Hospital is mainly used by the police forces but offers also some services to general public …'[36]

12.1.6 The EUAA Focus 2025 also noted:

'There are contradictory statements on the fee/non-fee involved with public hospitals in Mogadishu. Fadumo, who is a medical professional who studied medicine in Mogadishu and works as surgeon, mentioned that there is no admission fee for Benadir and De Marino Hospital. Treatment including inpatient treatment is free of charge. However, the medical supply of the public hospitals is limited. If a patient needs medication or dressing material or any other help that is not available, he/she has to pay it privately … Ahmed, who works as laboratory supervisor in Yardimeli Hospital, mentioned that, in early 2025, the public hospitals in Mogadishu started demanding admission fees of around 3 USD …

'[Fadumo observed] Prices for treatments vary greatly, depending on the complexity and time of treatment. For instance, a small ambulant treatment for an abscess that needs a minimal surgery may cost 50 USD plus follow-up medication. A caesarean section costs between 250 and 300 USD. An orthopaedic fixation costs between 1 000 and 1 500 USD. An operation for breast cancer in Erdogan Hospital including follow-up treatment of some weeks costs around 8 000 USD.

'… [Citing Fadumo and Marcus Hoehne, a German academic and expert on

[34] DIS, Somalia: Health care services in Mogadishu,(Section 2.1.4), 6 March 2024
[35] DIS, Somalia: Health care services in Mogadishu,(Section 3.6), 06 March 2024
[36] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025

Somalia] Complicated cases must be treated outside of the country, e.g. in Kenya, on the Arabic peninsula or in India. Costs for such treatments are private … Mental health care is very basic in Mogadishu (and across Somalia). Usually, only very severe conditions such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder are identified as mental disorders. Persons suffering from anxiety or depression are usually not diagnosed and treated. The number of psychiatrists and psychologists in Mogadishu is small. The infrastructure for mental health treatment is very limited. There is a huge stigma against people with mental health issues in Somali society.'[37]

Back to Contents

13. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

13.1 Size and location of IDP population

13.1.1 The EUAA Focus 2025 noted:

'Mogadishu is also hosting a considerable IDP population. Based on UNOCHA data, at the end of 2024, out of 3 812 registered IDP sites across the country, Mogadishu hosted 2 057 sites, with an overall population of more than 1 160 million [1.16 million, about one third of the population] people … Most IDPs come from neighbouring regions such as Lower Shabelle and Middle Shabelle, while some come also from Bay region … Most IDPs in Mogadishu reside in the districts Daynile, Hodan and Kahda … Some live in camps while many live in informal sites. Most of these sites are found in Daynile (1 091), and in Kahda (966) … Many IDPs do not belong to dominant clans in Mogadishu and thus cannot rely on effective clan support when needed. They do not have a power base in the city …'[38]

13.1.2 ACRC report 2024 noted:

'IDP camps are located on Mogadishu's outskirts. They have organised management and closer engagement with district commissioners than inner-city informal settlements. Their emergence in 1992 was driven by conflicts in Somalia. They have limited access to centralised utilities like electricity and shared sanitation, but humanitarian actors often step in to provide these services, such that IDPs sometimes have better access to water and gender-segregated latrines than low-income urban residents of informal settlements.'[39]

13.1.3 UN HNRP 2025 stated:

'There are an estimated 3.5 million internally displaced Somalis living in over 3,700 self-identified informal sites/ settlements, with limited or no access to services and humanitarian assistance and hosted in inadequate shelters. The majority of these sites are concentrated in districts such as Daynille in Mogadishu (1,115 sites), Khada in Mogadishu (844 sites) … According to CCCM Cluster data and the Detailed Site Assessment (DSA VII), 81 per cent of these informal settlements are located on private land, while 86 per cent are in major urban areas.'[40]

13.1.4 Somali Public Agenda, in their report Marginalization and Social Cohesion

[37] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.3), May 2025
[38] EUAA, Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.1), May 2025
[39] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report, (page 18), August 2024
[40] UNOCHA, Somalia 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan…, (Section 3.1) January 2025

among Minoritized Clan Groups and Dominant Groups, Aid Actors, and Local Authorities in Mogadishu, dated 28 August 2023 (SPA report August 2023) noted: 'Lack of equal access to livelihood opportunities and basic services is a key driver of feelings of exclusion among minority and marginalized IDPs in Mogadishu. IDPs from minority and marginalized clans face clan-based discrimination from the dominant clans in Mogadishu that control access to socio-economic resources.'[41]

Back to Contents

13.2 Gatekeepers

13.2.1 The ACRC report 2024 observed:

'With the arrival of The UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNOSOM) in 1993-94, the "gatekeeper" system was established to provide representation and governance for IDPs, a system that persisted and evolved, despite changes in the city's security landscape and humanitarian intervention strategies. Gatekeepers are camp managers and business figures … either self-appointed or nominated by district commissioners or landowners, who have strong connections to dominant clan elites in the city and wield considerable influence in the governance of IDPs. Gatekeepers are supported by a camp management committee of respected clan leaders, reflecting traditional Somali governance structures. Understanding the origins and formation of gatekeepers is crucial for humanitarian agencies planning interventions in Somalia that can fit into the humanitarian, development and peace nexus (Oxfam, 2019).

'The link between formal and informal governance structures forms a "hybrid" system of governance in IDP camps, with appointed officials such as the district commissioners being part of an alliance between the municipality and clan leadership. Sub-governance structures under the district commissioner, influenced by clan leadership, do not receive regular salaries and often participate voluntarily, implicating them in the gatekeeper system in IDP settlements. Businesspeople (the successful amongst whom tend to belong to one of the four dominant clans) play a significant role in appointing local authority leaders, up to and including mayors, and protecting their business interests.'[42]

13.2.2 Evidence for Change (e4c), which describes itself as a leading humanitarian research organization in East Africa that is committed to reshaping the landscape of humanitarian work through innovative approaches[43], in Role of Gatekeepers in Somalia - Final Report, dated May 2024 (EAC May 2024 report) noted:

'While the focus of gatekeeping is on the IDP context, in part due to the volume of support that is targeted at IDPs in Somalia, the term "gatekeeper" means different things to different people. In the context of humanitarian crises in Somalia it is most closely associated with an individual who is considered the manager or owner of an IDP camp. It is however important to recognise that such individuals act within a chain or network of actors that may all be considered gatekeepers involved in the management and/or

[41] SPA, Marginalization and Social Cohesion among…,(Discussion and Analysis), 28 August 2023
[42] ACRC, Mogadishu: City report (section 4.2.3), August 2024
[43] E4C, About, no date

control of aid resources.

'However, the idea of a gatekeeper is not restricted to IDP camp settings and brings attention to other forms of aid manipulation and control, such as in other programming contexts and which can be any individual or a combination of actors working together, that control or influence the distribution of aid resources. In some cases, a powerful District Commissioner might be the primary gatekeeper, in other cases the implementing NGO or contracting UN agency may be the primary gatekeeper (through specific staff). Local elders may also be important in these dynamics. Often it is a combination of these actors who work in a collusive relationship that comprise the gatekeeping chain. The behaviour of these gatekeepers may change over time as local authorities, agency staff and other actors change.'[44]

13.2.3 EAC May 2024 report also noted: 'In Mogadishu, the displaced population are living in a large urban centre with a long history of violence, where the Hawiye clan are dominant and where powerful individuals from this clan will be important in gatekeeping practices.'[45]

13.2.4 NRC report February 2025 noted: 'The findings show the critical role that settlement leaders in Mogadishu play in the delivery of humanitarian relief, especially their influence on beneficiary selection and resource allocation. While their thorough grasp of community needs allows for precise and efficient aid distribution, there is a risk of biased decision-making, which could lead to discrimination, favouritism, and resource mismanagement.'[46]

Back to Contents

13.3 Forced evictions.

13.3.1 The Somali Observatory for Humanitarian Affairs (SoOHA), which described itself as a specialised, independent, non-profit media network based in Mogadishu, that observes and follows up the Somali humanitarian scene[47], referring to an article entitled Somalia's State-Sponsored Evictions, 'A Crisis deepens for displaced communities, published in Hiraan online an online newsmedia' dated 27 November 2024 noted: 'Mogadishu has experienced severe state-sponsored evictions. Thousands of households living in government buildings were forced to leave their homes without adequate notice or alternative solutions. Somalia has a national IDP and Refugee Commission aimed at preventing evictions. Ironically, the commission has not condemned the recurrent state-sanctioned eviction.'[48]

13.3.2 The UN HNRP 2025 stated:

'By the end of November 2024, the Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) Area of Responsibility (AoR) in Somalia documented 197,000 eviction cases affecting internally displaced persons (IDPs), primarily in urban canters such as Mogadishu and surrounding districts … The primary causes of forced evictions include ambiguous land ownership rights, lack of legal protections, persistent conflicts and instability coupled with natural disasters that compel

[44] E4C, Role of Gatekeepers in Somalia- Final Report, (page 07), May 2024
[45] E4C, Role of Gatekeepers in Somalia- Final Report, (page 07), May 2024
[46] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, land and prop…, (page 43), 06 February 2025
[47] SoOHA, Who we are, no date.
[48] SoOHA, Somalia's State-Sponsored Evictions: A…, (Evictions in Mogadishu), 27 November 2024

individuals to migrate to safer but mostly urban canters and the increasing trend of commodifying land in conjunction with diminishing humanitarian assistance.'[49]

13.3.3 NRC report February 2025 noted:

'Mogadishu struggles with a complex crisis of insecure land tenure, which has profound socio-economic and stability implications. IDPs often have no choice but to settle on private and government land, where they find themselves caught between powerful landlords without clear or lasting tenure security arrangements, resulting in repeated forced evictions which intensify the protection and displacement crises in Somalia. The power imbalance particularly impacts IDPs, from minority and marginalised groups, preventing them from accessing and exercising their basic HLP rights, and leaving them more vulnerable to targeted violent evictions and discrimination.'[50]

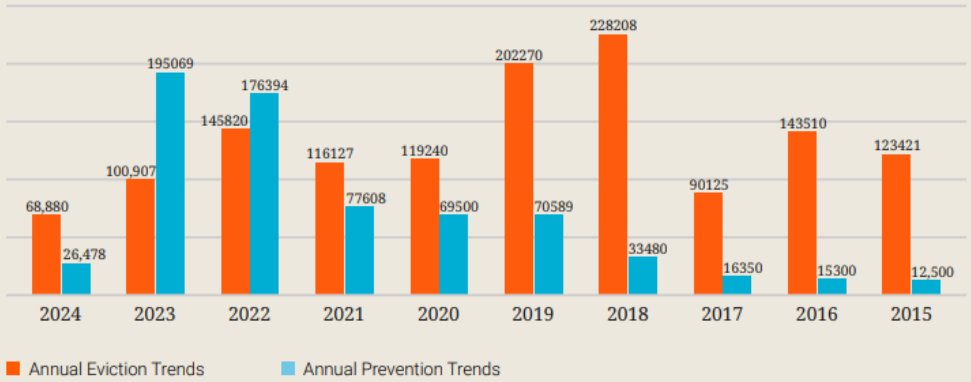
13.3.4 NRC report February 2025 also noted:

'Since 2018, forced eviction have affected more than 1.5 million people in informal settlements, with more than 80 per cent occurring in the Banadir Regional Administration (BRA) alone. In 2023, 100,907 people were forcefully evicted in Mogadishu, with increased government-led eviction incidents. The threat of forced evictions remains one of the most severe and prevalent protection threats in Mogadishu, particularly for IDPs, minorities, and marginalised households. They disrupt livelihoods, break down community bonds, threaten physical security, and critically undermine people's search for lasting solutions. Between January and December 2023, government security forces evicted 13 sites, forcing more than 10,000 people to flee again.'[51]

13.3.5 The figure below from NRC report February 2025 shows that between 2015 and 2024 Mogadishu experienced significant fluctuations in forced evictions and prevention efforts, with a total of approximately 1.34 million people forcibly evicted and 658,944 people prevented from eviction. The highest number of evictions occurred in 2019 (228,208), while 2023 saw the most preventions (195,069). Although eviction numbers generally remained high, prevention efforts increased notably in recent years, particularly from 2021 onward, indicating a growing focus on mitigating displacement despite ongoing challenges.

[49] UNOCHA, Somalia 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan…, (Section 3.7.4) January 2025
[50] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, lan…, (Executive Summary), 06 February 2025
[51] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, lan…, (Executive Summary), 06 February 2025

Figure 1: Trends in forced evictions and preventions in Mogadishu



Total recorded: 1,341628 people forcefully evicted in +8 years while an additional 6,58,944 people were prevented from forced evictions.

[52]

Back to Contents

13.4 Support providers

13.4.1 The UN HNRP 2025 noted for Somalia generally: 'Approximately 390 organisations are either physically present or delivered humanitarian assistance in 72 districts in 2024. 40 National NGOs continue to make up the largest cohort of humanitarian partners (77 per cent) followed by INGOs (14 per cent), Government institutions (7 per cent) and UN organizations (2 per cent).'[53]

Back to Contents

14. Clan and family support

14.1.1 European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) in their Country Guidance: Somalia, dated 14 June 2022 (EUAA CG June 2022) noted: 'Layered in all aspects of life, the clan is both a tool for identification and a way of life. Clans define the relationship between people and all actors in Somalia, including Al-Shabaab, must deal with the clan variable. Belonging to a strong clan matters in terms of access to resources, political influence, justice, and security.

Somalis are roughly divided in five large family clans: the Dir are mainly present in the western part of Somaliland and in the southern part of Somalia; the Isaaq are mainly present in the middle part of Somaliland; the Darood are mainly settled in Puntland, in the eastern part of Somaliland and in the southernmost part of Somalia; the Hawiye are mainly present in central Somalia; the Rahanweyn, sometimes called the Digil-Mirifle group, are mainly present between the Jubba and the Shabelle rivers.'[54]

14.1.2 In respect of clan composition in Mogadishu EUAA CG June 2022 noted: 'The dominant clan family is the Hawiye, with several sub-clans. Other Somali clans also reside in the city, although with the 'status of guests and limited rights', and several mixed neighbourhoods exist. The Darood clan family – which dominates over some neighbourhoods - and minorities such as Dir, Digil-Mirifle, Yibr (Sab) and Sheikhal, for example, are present. The significant number of IDPs has contributed to the heterogenic ethnic make-

[52] NRC, Community-driven consultations on housing, lan…, (Executive Summary), 06 February 2025
[53] UNOCHA, Somalia 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan …, (Section 2.2) January 2025
[54] EUAA, Country Guidance: Somalia, (page 58),14 June 2022

up of the city.'[55]

14.1.3 The SPA report August 2023 commenting on clan support for the IDPs noted:

'Newly displaced persons in Mogadishu use bonding social capital to overcome immediate displacement vulnerability but need inter-group social connections for sustainable integration. Displaced persons living in Mogadishu who mainly come from the Bay, Middle, and Lower Shabelle regions rely on social relations developed in their place of origin to access resources in Mogadishu. According to the forum participants, this relationship is often based on an acquaintance or clan affiliation (bonding social capital) and is viewed as a resource that assists the new arrivals in finding information on where to settle and how to get immediate assistance from aid agencies.'[56]

14.1.4 Commenting on clan and family support for Somalis returning to Mogadishu, the EUAA Country focus 2025 noted:

'Important factors for reintegration are kinship and family. Kinship networks help getting financial and other support. Those returnees who were previous residents of Mogadishu still have a network on the ground that helps settling in. Social capital (personal networks) are necessary for sustaining livelihoods in Mogadishu. Clan belonging makes a huge difference for returnees. Those belonging to weak or minority clans face more challenges upon return to Somalia than those belonging to strong clans. Even returnees who have marketable skills have, if they belong to weak groups, a hard time to establish a stable living.'[57]

Back to Contents

15. Freedom of movement

15.1 Law and practice

15.1.1 US State Department (USSD) in their 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Somalia, dated 22 April 2024 noted:

'The law provided that all persons lawfully residing in the country had the right to freedom of movement, to choose their residence, and to leave the country… Checkpoints operated by government forces, allied groups, armed militias, clan factions, and al-Shabaab inhibited movement and exposed citizens to looting, extortion, harassment, and violence. Roadblocks manned by armed actors and attacks on humanitarian personnel severely restricted movement and the delivery of aid in the southern and central regions.'[58]

15.1.2 The EUAA Focus 2025 noted:

'Challenges to mobility in Mogadishu include insecurity (caused by Al-Shabaab bombings), poor transportation infrastructure, lack of traffic regulation and a massive increase of traffic including old vehicles and drivers without license … On most roads, there are no traffic signs, no traffic lights and no traffic police … Some roads are damaged by decades of fighting. Others have more recently been rehabilitated by local communities and

[55] EUAA, Country Guidance: Somalia, (page 151),14 June 2022
[56] SPA, Marginalization and Social Cohesion among…,(Discussion and Analysis), 28 August 2023
[57] EUAA, Country of Origin Information: Somalia: Country Focus (section 1.9.2), 26 May 2025
[58] USSD, 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, (Section 2-D), 26 June 2024

businesspeople. The Turkish government also constructed some 23 kilometres of smooth tarmac roads in Mogadishu … Moreover, some of the newly built and/or rehabilitated roads have been partially closed or are restricted due to security concerns … This again hinders public transportation and produces traffic jams … As of March 2025, floods have again damaged or destroyed some roads …

'Schouten (2023) identified 22 checkpoints in the Benadir region, which encompasses the capital Mogadishu … Those checkpoints in the city are major targets for Al-Shabaab attacks … Former Deputy Police Commissioner General Zakia Hussen, who recently left the active police service, explained that there are 54 junctions with checkpoints in the Somali capital. At each of these checkpoints, police forces work in tandem with National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) officers (in civilian clothes). Every vehicle passing through is searched … Additionally, mobile checkpoints are occasionally set up by the police to conduct random checks … Around Villa Somalia (in Wardigley) and along the roads leading there (through Hamar Weyne, Hamar Jajab, Waberi and Hawl Wadaag), checkpoints are set up which are run by the presidential guard/Red Barrets (Somali: kofiyad cas). These are very strict and only let vehicles through which have a special authorisation … Cars have to be parked before the checkpoints and drivers' ID cards have to be shown to soldiers who then may allow the pass through … This is particularly the case in areas where government buildings are located. Thus, citizens seeking to access government services will face particular challenges with accessing these areas … Hagmann et al. (2022) found that "insecurity renders Mogadishu Somalia's most immobile city". They indicate that "[e]ntire neighbourhoods have limited accessibility as the government seeks to quell the al-Shabaab insurgency and protect itself from attacks […] the 'green zone' around Halane and Aden Adde International Airport are blocked to Bajaj and minibuses." … There are four major checkpoints on the way to the Mogadishu international airport. These are run by NISA. After the checkpoints, (African Union) AU troops are guarding the actual gates to the airport …

'The number of vehicles in Mogadishu is constantly increasing. Particularly three-wheeled motor rickshaws (bajaaj in Somali, also known as tuk-tuk elsewhere) flood the streets … Some of the mostly young drivers do not have driving licenses. They create frequent traffic jams, which can cost people many hours while moving across the city … Public minibuses are also gradually disappearing from the streets, and the widely used bajaaj has become the dominant public transport mode in the city … To manage the flood of bajaajs, the government divided them into "A" and "B" bajaajs and allows them to operate only on alternating days … The overcrowding causes jams and security challenges, as crowded places are vulnerable to attacks with vehicle-borne explosive devices (VBIED) … IDPs, who often are very poor and live at the margins of Mogadishu, are less mobile. Many cannot afford motorised transport and/or have to walk significant distances to the nearest bus stop …'[59]

Back to Contents

[59] EUAA, Country of Origin Information: Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.2), 26 May 2025

15.2 Settling in Mogadishu

15.2.1 The EUAA Focus 2025 stated:

> 'Any Somali can just enter Mogadishu. But to settle in, one needs connections. Typically, relatives would accommodate a newcomer, at least temporarily. To rent or buy a place, one needs to go through local government registration. NISA is working closely with local governments to check on newcomers. One normally needs local relatives or acquaintances as guarantors … Also to find employment, one needs a network … Regarding IDPs coming to the city, Hagmann et al. (2022) mentioned that "[a] web of local powerbrokers, usually drawn from the dominant clans in a particular district and comprised of landowners, district officials, businessmen and gatekeepers, have effectively monopolised the business of urban informal settlements and inward migration to Mogadishu" …'[60]

15.2.2 The EUAA Focus 2025 further noted:

> 'Newcomers (Somalis) coming from abroad by plane go through the normal entry procedures at the Mogadishu international airport. They need to have valid passports. Others coming by land (from the regions) to Mogadishu go through the checkpoints (mentioned above) leading into the city. For settling down, newcomers typically need to be registered with the local government, which includes some background checking by NISA … Those travelling by land do not necessarily need ID documents. Yet, for renting or buying property, they need to go through a registration process with local authorities …'[61]

Back to Contents

[60] EUAA, Country of Origin Information: Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.2), 26 May 2025
[61] EUAA, Country of Origin Information: Somalia: Country Focus (section 2.1.2), 26 May 2025

Annex A: Landinfo response – English translation

Landinfo response - Somalia: Klan- og sikkerhetsrelaterte forhold i Mogadishu

Translation of narrative using ChatGPT; translation of footnotes using DeepL; reviewed by Landinfo.

Response – 7 November 2024

Somalia: clan and security situation in Mogadishu

The Overall Security Situation in Mogadishu Since 1991
– Attacks on and clashes between government forces
– Attacks on civilians
– Al-Shabaab's influence in Mogadishu
– Clans in Mogadishu
– The security situation in the settlements

Introduction

This response provides a brief account of the security situation in Mogadishu, including in the settlements, and of the significance of clan affiliations for security conditions in the city. Security in Mogadishu has been a key topic for Landinfo for several years, and this response should be viewed in connection with previous publications, see among others (Landinfo 2022b, 2017, 2018, 2020b, 2021a, b).

Source Basis

This response is based on meetings and interviews conducted during a fact-finding mission to Mogadishu and Nairobi in May 2024. The sources primarily consist of Somali resource persons who live in the city and maintain social networks there, as well as employees of international organizations who have worked in the country for a long time. The oral sources have been anonymized to protect their safety or employment situations.

In addition, the response draws on information from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) and other open sources.

In Somalia, there are no institutions that record and maintain statistics on killings and other violent incidents. ACLED collects information on violent events in Mogadishu and elsewhere in Somalia from sources such as media and local organizations, storing the data in a database (ACLED 2022) that provides details about the actors involved, the course of events, and the number of fatalities. The extent to which local media and organizations—and thus ACLED—capture violent events likely varies throughout Somalia and over time, but in Landinfo's assessment, serious violent incidents in Mogadishu are generally recorded.

Given the challenges related to information gathering, and the fact that there is no comprehensive overview of violent incidents in Somalia, Landinfo considers that ACLED's information provides a good indication of the level of violence in Mogadishu, including the number of people killed, the perpetrators, and the victims. Although ACLED presents exact figures, and these are reproduced in the response, they should be viewed as estimates.

The Overall Security Situation in Mogadishu Since 1991

Since the state collapse in 1991, when Siad Barre's regime was overthrown, Mogadishu has been the scene of political conflict involving clan-based and Islamist groups, as well as regional and international forces. The nature and intensity of the conflict has varied, including for the civilian population. When the Hawiye clan-based rebel group United Somali Congress (USC) entered Mogadishu and drove out the Barre regime in 1991, the city descended into lawlessness. Violence was particularly directed at members of Barre's clan family—the Darod—and other non-Hawiye groups who were unable to defend themselves or their property. The USC then split into two factions dominated by warlords from the Abgal and Habar Gidir Hawiye sub-clans. From autumn 1991 to April 1992, they fought a devastating urban war for control of the capital (Kapteijns 2013, pp. 120–146, 181–182).

The U.S.-led UNITAF force intervened in December 1992. While international forces managed to stabilize the security situation in the capital to some extent, they were unable to resolve the conflicts between the increasingly numerous clan-based militias and withdrew in 1995 (see Poole 2005).

During the 1990s, many—but not all—residents returned to Mogadishu, along with new groups moving in. Among them were Hawiye from Central Somalia, affiliated with USC militias that had entered the capital in 1991, as well as people from surrounding regions seeking refuge from unrest and rural poverty. Somalia researcher Roland Marchal estimated that the city had over one million inhabitants by 2002. During this period, Mogadishu was ruled by various warlords who had established local clan-based rule in districts and neighborhoods of the city (Marchal 2002, pp. 11–16).

The warlords' rule was unpopular (Marchal 2002, pp. 9, 38–46) and was eventually challenged by a coalition of militias affiliated with local Sharia courts and influential businesspeople. They took control of the capital in 2006 after armed conflict with a coalition of warlords and established the Islamic Courts Union (Barnes & Hassan 2007). The Courts' governance was strict and based on a very conservative interpretation of Islam but brought (temporary) improvements to security and predictability, and for the first time in 15 years, the city was unified under one authority (Samatar & Samatar 2022, pp. 14–15).

In December 2006, Ethiopian forces entered Somalia at the invitation of the internationally recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG), aiming to defeat the Courts Union and establish the TFG control in the capital. They quickly seized key areas of Mogadishu but were soon met with an armed insurgency. In spring 2007, the Ethiopians launched an offensive against insurgent groups in the city, using heavy-handed tactics including artillery bombardments of northern neighborhoods without regard for civilian safety (see HRW 2007; 2008, pp. 31–64). Human Rights Watch (2008, p. 5) estimated that approximately 870,000 people fled the city due to the fighting—equivalent to about two-thirds of Mogadishu's population at the time.

The Ethiopian forces withdrew from the capital in January 2009, following an agreement with moderate opposition groups who then joined the TFG. However, hardline opposition groups, including Al-Shabaab, continued armed resistance against the TFG. In May 2009, fighting broke out in the capital between Al-Shabaab and TFG forces[62]. By summer, Al-Shabaab had taken control of large parts of the city. However, they failed to capture the southern districts, which were defended by

[62] In addition to Al-Shabaab, Hizbul Islam was among the groups fighting the TFG. Hizbul Islam also controlled some areas of the capital but was incorporated into al-Shabaab in December 2010.

African Union troops (AMISOM) protecting the TFG (Hansen 2013, p. 82). Mogadishu was effectively divided in two by an active frontline marked by mutual shelling with heavy weapons and occasional offensives that shifted the front (see HRW 2010; Ibrahim & Gettleman 2011). Large parts of the civilian population again fled the city (see Landinfo 2020b, p. 9, footnote 24).

This war of attrition lasted until August 2011, when Al-Shabaab withdrew from the city center (Rice 2011). In March 2012, the group also pulled out of the last peripheral area it controlled, and the government formally regained control over the entire capital (Anzalone 2013).

Situation After 2012

Landinfo has visited Mogadishu regularly since February 2012, when many of the city's districts were nearly deserted following the 2011/12 withdrawal. Since then, the city has experienced significant growth. Many people returned after the fighting subsided, and there has also been substantial migration from surrounding regions, driven by deteriorating rural livelihoods and the economic opportunities available in the capital. IPC (2023, p. 3) estimates that approximately 2.9 million people now live in the city, including in the informal settlements (see below). There has also been considerable urban development, particularly in areas inhabited by the capital's upper middle class, including modern apartment complexes, office buildings, and high-rises.

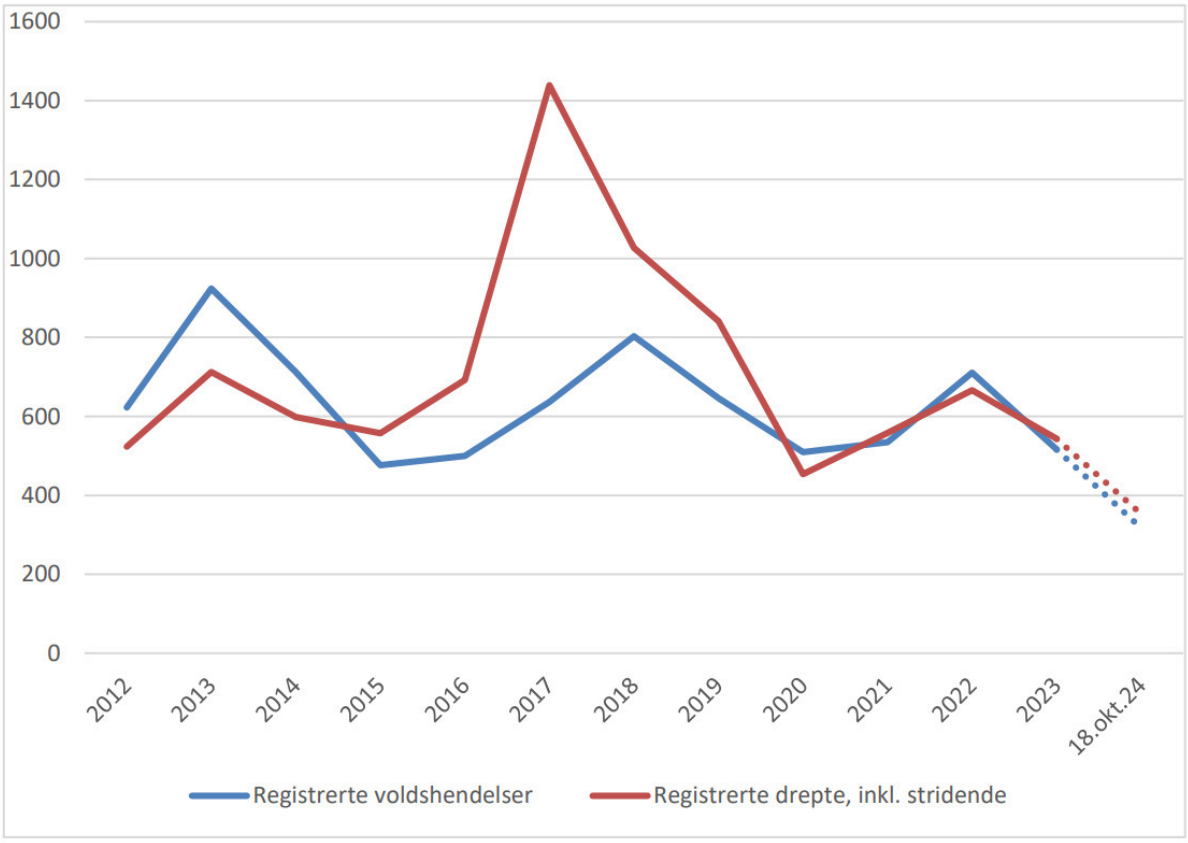
The overall security dynamic in the city has largely remained the same since Landinfo's first visit in 2012: Al-Shabaab has not had an open presence since their withdrawal in 2011/12, but they are behind most of the violent incidents. These attacks—which include suicide bombings, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and targeted assassinations—are primarily aimed at government officials and their allies. However, the group shows no regard for civilian safety during such attacks. The number of civilian casualties in connection with larger attacks can therefore be high.

The frequency and scale of attacks fluctuate, and the city alternates between relatively calm periods and periods when Al-Shabaab carries out multiple attacks. That said, the overall trend—especially when considering the significant population increase—is that the level of violence in recent years has somewhat declined (see Diagram 1).

When Landinfo visited the city in May 2024, sources unanimously stated that the security situation was better than it had been in a long time, pointing to greater freedom of movement at night and the fact that there had been few large-scale attacks in the past year. In the period following our visit, Al-Shabaab carried out several attacks, including a major one on the Beach View Hotel & Restaurant (see below). However, in Landinfo's assessment, these attacks do not represent a qualitatively new development in the security situation compared to what has been described over several years, but rather reflect the fluctuating frequency and intensity of such incidents.

Diagram 1: Violence in Mogadishu, 2012–18 October 2024[63]

[63] Events that ACLED has categorized as 'peaceful protests' and 'strategic developments have been Taken out of the figures.



Registrerte voldshendelser = registered incidents of violence

Registrerte drepte, inkl. Stridende = registered deaths, including combatants

Prepared by Landinfo based on data from (ACLED 2024).

Attacks on and Clashes Between Government Forces

From October 18, 2023, to October 18, 2024, ACLED recorded 402 violent incidents in Mogadishu, resulting in a total of 407 deaths.

Table 1: Registered incidents of violence in Mogadishu 18 October 2023 – 18 October 2024

Attack targets	Registered incidents of violence	Registered deaths
Military	248	214
Civilian	149	193
Other[64]	5	0
Total	402	407

Prepared by Landinfo based on data from (ACLED 2024).

Well over half of the recorded violent incidents were directed at military targets and included attacks on government forces by al-Shabaab and unidentified perpetrators, as well as firefights between different government security forces. According to ACLED, these incidents resulted in 214 deaths. It is reasonable to assume that the

[64] Includes incidents that ACLED has categorized as "violent protests" and "explosion/remote violence," where the target of the attack appears to be unclear.

victims were primarily military personnel, although civilians may also have been affected in such attacks.[65]

Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for—or is believed to have been behind—the vast majority of the recorded attacks on military targets (191 recorded incidents, with 175 deaths)[66]. These attacks primarily took the form of assassinations using firearms, hand grenades thrown at checkpoints, and the placement of IEDs. However, they also included some suicide attacks as well as “hit-and-run” assaults targeting police stations and checkpoints on the outskirts of Mogadishu.

The attack on government forces that received the most attention occurred at the General Gordon Camp military base in the Hodan district, where a recruit turned his weapon on his instructors, killing, among others, three Emirati and one Bahraini trainer. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack (The Somali Digest 2024c). The operation is an example of al-Shabaab’s ability to infiltrate government security forces, which remains a persistent challenge for Somali security authorities.[67]

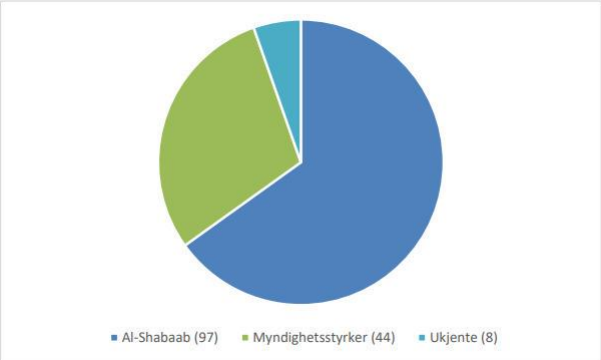
All districts have been affected by attacks from al-Shabaab. The district with the most recorded attacks against government forces is the outlying district of Daynile, where the attacks mainly consist of assassinations, IEDs, and hand grenade assaults. In the outlying district of Kahda, south of Daynile, two "hit and run" attacks also took place against roadside checkpoints and a police station (see, among others, Shabelle Media Network 2024a), where al-Shabaab attacked with a group of fighters before retreating. Although the outlying districts are less frequently affected by large-scale attacks from al-Shabaab, they are, due to their location, more vulnerable to infiltration, as the group can operate relatively freely just a few kilometers outside the city limits (Source C, meeting 2024).[68]

Attacks on Civilians

Of the 402 recorded violent incidents between October 18, 2023, and October 18, 2024, ACLED registered 149 as attacks on civilians, with 193 killed.[69]

Diagram 2: Who was behind attacks on civilians between October 18, 2023, and October 18, 2024?

[65] The attack on Beach View Hotel, where ACLED (2024) recorded 41 deaths, is registered in ACLED as a clash between al-Shabaab and government forces. However, ACLED's entry indicates that most of the deceased (37) were civilians. Therefore, in the data for this response, this incident is categorized as an attack on civilians.
[66] ACLED (2024) recorded 54 incidents, with 36 deaths, where government forces were responsible, while three incidents were recorded with unknown perpetrators, and one with the Islamic State's Somalia Province (ISSP).
[67] According to The Somali Wire newsletter (2024a), the recruit had defected from al-Shabaab in 2021 and
participated in Somalia's rehabilitation programme before becoming part of the government forces
[68] Through urbanisation the city boundary has been pushed outwards and the most peripheral parts are in the Lower Shabelle.
[69] ACLED includes members of government forces who were not on duty when they were attacked. See also footnote 4.



[Legend]

- Myndighetsstyrker – government forces
- Ukjente – unknown

Prepared by Landinfo based on data from (ACLED 2024).

Al-Shabaab Attacks on Civilians

As shown in Diagram 2, al-Shabaab was responsible for about two-thirds of the attacks on civilians in Mogadishu between October 18, 2023, and October 18, 2024, according to ACLED (2024), resulting in a total of 162 deaths. This includes both attacks that al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for and those they are suspected of carrying out. The attacks primarily took the form of assassinations by shooting or IEDs targeting businesses, as well as the homes or offices of government officials, including soldiers and members of other security forces, who were off-duty when attacked.

The attacks also include assaults on specific hotels and restaurants frequented by individuals associated with the government.[70] During the period, ACLED recorded two hotel attacks: on the **SYL Hotel** (Wright & Wafula 2024) and the **Beach View Hotel & Restaurant** (see also p. 14).[71]

Local sources that Landinfo met in Mogadishu in May 2024 agreed that the general civilian population is not the target of al-Shabaab (Sources A; B; C; G, meetings 2024). The group mainly directs its attacks at government forces, officials, and locations frequented by such individuals. This is supported by ACLED (2024) data, showing that the attacks were primarily aimed at people or places linked to the authorities. However, as in previous visits to Mogadishu, sources emphasized that al-Shabaab shows little regard for collateral damage when targeting its objectives.

There is therefore a risk of being in the "wrong place at the wrong time"—for example, if a bomb detonates before reaching its intended target. Checkpoints are

[70] In connection with similar hotel attacks in the past, there has been speculation that the attack took place because the hotel did not pay taxes. Source A and Source C (2024) believed that such hotels are charged tax from al-Shabaab, but that at the same time, the businesses have been told that as long as they house government officials, they risk being attacked anyway.

[71] Al-Shabaab attacked the Beach View Hotel, on Lido beach in the Abdiaziz district, on Friday night. August 2, 2024. The hotel served, among other things, as a social meeting place for government officials (The Somali Wire Team 2024b). The attack was based on the same tactics as previous hotel attacks:
It was initiated by a suicide bomber who blew himself up, and followed by a group of
followed by a group of armed individuals shooting at everyone in the hotel and the beach below. The attack continued for several hours until the last attacker was killed by government forces in the morning. By then, at least 37 people had been killed and dozens injured (Ali & Gabobe 2024; Faruk 2024).

vulnerable to such attacks because they may be a direct target or because a suicide bomber might choose to detonate upon being discovered.

There is a general awareness among locals of what constitutes typical al-Shabaab targets in Mogadishu, and people try to avoid unnecessary stops near government buildings and checkpoints (Sources B; C; G, meetings 2024).

In addition to attacks on government targets, there appears to be an increase in attacks directed at businesspeople and enterprises. Over the past year, these have made up about 25% of registered al-Shabaab attacks on civilians in Mogadishu. The motivations behind many of these attacks are unclear. Source A believed that several of them are likely carried out by other actors pretending to be al-Shabaab, but sources (A; C; G, meeting 2024) agreed that al-Shabaab is also behind many. The sources linked the attacks to, among other things, the group's tax collection efforts in the city.

Over the years, many have pointed out that al-Shabaab has significant financial interests in Mogadishu, including taxation of businesses of a certain size (see also Hiraal Institute 2020; Landinfo 2022). As part of a military offensive against al-Shabaab in the summer of 2022, the authorities attempted to disrupt the group's finances and reiterated previous threats of prosecuting individuals and companies that pay taxes to the group (AFP 2022).

At the beginning of 2024, the authorities also ordered several businesses to install surveillance cameras outside their premises, partly to detect al-Shabaab activity. Al-Shabaab, in turn, demanded that the cameras be removed and threatened retaliation if they were not (The Somali Digest 2024e; Libyan Express 2024).

Several news reports and entries in the ACLED database link attacks on businesses to either the installation of surveillance cameras or failure to pay taxes to al-Shabaab (The Somali Digest 2024b, e; Libyan Express 2024). These attacks can therefore be understood as al-Shabaab's way of (re)establishing its deterrent power over the business community in Mogadishu. In line with this, Source G (2024) stated that many businesses had resumed paying taxes to al-Shabaab, either via mobile payment services or more often than before, in cash. [72] According to the source, authorities may respond against the businesses, but they lack the capacity to monitor all tax payments.[73]

Attacks on Civilians by Government Forces and Others

Nearly one-third of recorded violent incidents, resulting in 27 deaths, were committed by government forces, according to ACLED (2024). Almost half of these attacks targeted drivers, especially those operating tuk-tuks. Landinfo understands that most of these attacks occur at checkpoints manned by various government forces, who use the opportunity to extort money from travellers. In such situations, misunderstandings and conflicts may arise, sometimes resulting in soldiers or police officers pointing weapons at the driver.

[72] The source believed that many business people had stopped paying tax in the period immediately following the authorities' efforts against al-Shabaab's tax activities in the fall of 2022. Among other things, the source pointed out that several people had taken down signs with telephone numbers, used to make demands for money, outside shops.

[73] Source A (2024) stated that people who fail to pay tax are not immediately liquidated, but are given more warnings and opportunities to change their minds. Source G (2024) also believed that alShabaab is more open to negotiations about the size of the tax than the government's tax collection services are.

Sources Landinfo has spoken with over the years have noted that clan affiliation can influence interactions with government forces. If someone belongs to a strong clan or has connections to powerful individuals in the city, they are generally less vulnerable to harassment by authorities (see below).

Al-Shabaab's Influence in Mogadishu

The picture painted by sources during Landinfo's stay in Mogadishu in May 2024 largely matches that of previous visits. In short, al-Shabaab does not have an open presence in Mogadishu but operates covertly, recruiting informants, collecting taxes from businesses, and attacking selected targets. For a more comprehensive description, see Landinfo (2022b, pp. 8–12).

However, sources agreed that the number of large-scale al-Shabaab attacks had decreased over the past year. They attributed the decline to the government's offensive against the group and improved organization of checkpoints entering and within Mogadishu (Sources C; F; G; H, 2024).

One specific measure mentioned was that checkpoints are now manned by personnel from various units within the police and security services to make them less vulnerable to bribery, infiltration, and extortion.

At the same time, the sources emphasized that al-Shabaab has previously shown an ability to adapt to and bypass security measures. The attack on the Beach View Hotel was thus cited as an example that the group still has the capability to bypass or pass through checkpoints into central areas of the capital.[74]

Clan Dynamics in Mogadishu

Since the state collapse in 1991, the **Hawiye clans Abgal** and **Habar Gidir**[75] have been the dominant clans in Mogadishu. The Abgal consider the city and adjoining areas in Middle Shabelle as their historical homeland,[76] and they dominate northern Mogadishu and the Medina district in the south. The Habar Gidir clans solidified their position in Mogadishu as part of the USC militia in 1991 (Marchal 2002) and today dominate several southern districts (Source B, 2024).

[74] Based on the sources consulted, it is unclear how al-Shabaab attackers reached the hotel and made their way to the hotel. According to the online newspaper The Somali Digest (2024a, 2024d), the attackers passed through several road checkpoints in Mogadishu, aided by members who had infiltrated the government forces. The think tank Sahan's newsletter The Somali Wire (2024b) points out that
al-Shabaab may have made the bomb vests themselves in Mogadishu city, making it more difficult to detect at a roadside checkpoint into the city.

[75] Abgal and Habar Gadir consist of several sub-clans, which in turn consist of several diya groups. Which clan level is mobilized in a conflict depends on, and in turn affects, the extent of the conflict. Membership of the Hawiye clan family, for example, is far too broad to have any practical significance in Mogadishu, but can be used to mobilize in connection with national elections - which have historically been between candidates from the Hawiye and Darod clans.

[76] Today, all clans have areas they consider "their" historical homelands, in Somali deegan, where the dominant clan usually holds political positions and makes up the majority of the majority of the population.

Other Hawiye clans like **Duduble**, **Murusade**, **Hawadle**, and **Sheikhaal**[77] also have some political and economic influence, reflected in the fact that each has its own district commissioner (Source B, email 2024).[78]

Nevertheless, as the capital of the country, **all clans**, in addition to the aforementioned Hawiye clans, are represented in Mogadishu (Sources A; B; D, meetings 2024). Landinfo's impression is that populations originating from nearby regions such as Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, and Bay are significantly larger than those from more distant regions.[79]

Several sources (A; E; H, meetings 2024) noted that over time there has been an increase in people from **Rahanweyn clans**[80] in Mogadishu, particularly from the **Elay** clan, whose historical homeland is around the town of **Bur Hakaba** in the Bay region. Sources estimated that together they number several hundred thousand in and around Mogadishu.

Many arrived as internally displaced persons during periods of conflict and food insecurity in the interior, while others moved to the capital for better economic opportunities.[81] Source B and Source E (2024), the latter being Elay themselves, noted that there are many from Rahanweyn clans in the capital's police and security forces, although "they are not as strong as the Hawiye clans."

Sources Landinfo has spoken with over the years have pointed out that clan affiliation does not necessarily impact everyday interactions and friendships, but it does play a role in conflict resolution and access to economic resources. It is common to inquire about a person's clan affiliation, as knowing this is necessary to understand who you are dealing with and how to proceed in case of a conflict or disagreement.

Clan Militias

Police and security forces in Mogadishu are largely based on clan-based militias, which were given new mandates in connection with the rebuilding of state institutions in the 2000s and 2010s, and are dominated by the most powerful Hawiye clans (Hills 2014; Felbab-Brown 2020, pp. 118–119).

Although these forces are formally under the authority of the Somali government, their loyalty primarily lies with their own clan. This became evident, for example,

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[77] The Sheikaal's connection to Hawiye is not based on kinship, but on a political alliance from the 1990s
to USC (ACCORD 2009, p. 19).

[78] Mogadishu consists of 20 districts, including Gubadley, Darussalam and Garasbalay, which were recognized as districts in May 2024 (Shabelle Media Network 2024b). Each district is headed by a district commissioner.

[79] Before the civil war broke out in the late 1980s, one's clan affiliation, especially in the cities, played less of a role in everyday life than it does today. At the time, the capital's educational institutions and labour market attracted people with different clan affiliations from all over the country. The collapse of the state in 1991 meant that clan affiliation took on renewed relevance, not least because some clan militias in the in the immediate aftermath carried out murders and assaults on the basis of clan affiliation (Kapteijns 2013). The warlords' militias were clan-based, and in the absence of state or relevant or relevant non-clan-based institutions, many fled to the historical homelands of their clans, seeking safety and assistance among their ownclan.

[80] The use of the clan name Rahanweyn can vary between sources, some referring exclusively to the Mirifle clans, while others use the term for both the Mirifle and Digil clans.

[81] In practice, it is impossible to draw a clear distinction between internally displaced people and economic migrants in settlements. There are also a number of people who arrive as internally displaced
remain, even after the situation has improved in the area they fled from.

during the fighting in Mogadishu on April 25, 2021, when various government forces took sides for or against former President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed "Farmaajo" based on clan affiliation (see Landinfo 2021b).

Conflicts also occur between different government forces, often with differing clan affiliations, due to disagreements, such as disputes over control of road checkpoints. These conflicts are usually limited in time and location but result in injuries and deaths each year, with civilians sometimes caught in the crossfire (ACLED 2024).

There are also clan militias that are not formally part of a government force. Source B (2024) stated that clan militias, with or without uniforms, man road checkpoints outside areas that "belong" to a clan. The purpose is to ensure that people from other clans cannot enter the area if they are armed. The source also pointed out that there are many weapons in circulation in Mogadishu, and that the loose structure of the clan militias — based on the expectation that combat-ready male clan members will contribute when needed — enables the militias to mobilize quickly in the event of conflict (see also Hansen 2007, p. 89).

The Importance of Clan for Access to Economic Resources

By virtue of being the strongest clans politically and militarily, the Abgal and Habar Gidir clans dominate Mogadishu’s economy, although other clans also have a presence. According to Source B (2024), for example, the Sheikhaal clan dominates the Kahda district, where the diversion of aid intended for settlements is an important source of income.

There is a fundamental expectation that one favors one's own clan and shares resources one has access to (see Landinfo 2015, 2020a). This also applies to hiring for positions in the public sector and private enterprises, where personal contacts, kinship, and clan connections are generally favored — often at the expense of actual qualifications (Samatar & Samatar 2022, pp. 16–18; Source A; Source D 2024).

Sources interviewed indicated that everyone, regardless of clan affiliation, can do business in Mogadishu. However, they also emphasized that it is wise to involve or stay on good terms with individuals from an influential Hawiye clan. Without such a connection, one may arouse jealousy and be perceived as weak — thereby risking extortion by individuals associated with the locally dominant clan (Sources A, B, E; meetings 2024).

Conflict Resolution

The police and judiciary on one side, and the clan on the other, constitute parallel justice systems that often overlap and interfere with one another. However, the ultimate power does not lie with the police or the courts, but with powerful individuals and clans who have the ability to influence these institutions.

Source B (2024) noted that minor cases, such as theft, can typically be handled by police officers, but the police are powerless when faced with cases where an accusation is made against an important person from a powerful clan. Source D (2024) similarly observed that a police officer from a Rahanweyn clan cannot simply arrest a person from a Habar Gadir clan; this must be done by an officer who himself belongs to the Habar Gadir clan.

Most serious cases, including those involving personal injury, are therefore usually referred to the clans’ own conflict resolution mechanisms (Sources A; B; D; E; F, meetings 2024). These mechanisms are not based on individual criminal responsibility, but on the payment of compensation (diya) to the harmed clan

collective (see Landinfo 2015, p. 11).
If the clan collective does not accept the compensation, the clan may instead resort to blood revenge or inflict proportional damage on the other clan's property. However, there is reason to believe that killings as a result of blood feuds are more common in rural areas, particularly in nomadic regions, than in Mogadishu. This is supported by the fact that ACLED (2024) has not recorded any of the violent incidents in the city as revenge killings, even though the motive in many cases is unknown.

For clan-based conflict resolution mechanisms to function optimally, it is a prerequisite that the involved clans have a mutual agreement on compensation payments and/or mutual deterrence capability — that is, a real ability to inflict damage on the other clan. If the stronger clan in a conflict does not believe that a weaker opponent can cause them any negative consequences, it is not guaranteed that they will be willing to resolve the conflict through payment of compensation (Menkhaus 2003, p. 411-412). This can be a problem for locally weaker clans or low-status groups when facing one of the stronger clans in Mogadishu, and is one reason why individuals from weaker clans try to avoid such conflicts.

A representative from the Rahanweyn clan Elay (Source E 2024) stated that he tries to avoid trouble with individuals from powerful clans and that he would leave the city if he came into serious conflict with someone from the Habar Gadir or Abgal clans. However, the source pointed out that it is possible to position oneself ahead of a potential conflict by forming ties with the Hawiye clans through business connections, personal friendships, or marriage, so that one has people from a strong local clan who can advocate on one's behalf. Additionally, the source believed that since the Hawiye clans are large, "there will always be someone who can speak on your behalf, if the payment is sufficient."

In the most extreme cases, the source stated that it is possible for Rahanweyn clans to threaten retaliation against the relevant Hawiye clan in areas where Rahanweyn are dominant and Hawiye are in the minority. The source noted that goods transported from the Port of Mogadishu to Ethiopia and Kenya often pass through Rahanweyn-dominated areas, and that the transport is often operated and staffed by Hawiye, who in such cases could be vulnerable to retaliatory attacks. The source pointed out that targeting goods transport in their own areas is a deterrent that several clans resort to when dealing with locally dominant clans.

Clan Affiliation Can Affect Personal Safety
The sources Landinfo has spoken with over the years have all pointed out that affiliation with a strong clan generally has a positive impact on personal safety in Mogadishu. This is because the strong clans' capacity for retaliation raises the threshold for subjecting their members to harm.

One commonly cited example is that individuals from strong clans are less exposed to harassment and extortion at checkpoints.

However, for clan affiliation to serve as a deterrent, it presumes that the perpetrator knows the victim's clan affiliation. Clan affiliation also does not protect against explosions and is something that al-Shabaab takes little or no account of when carrying out attacks.

The Relationship Between al-Shabaab and Clans in Mogadishu
It is very difficult to shed light on the relationship between al-Shabaab and clan collectives in Mogadishu. There is little available source material, and such relationships are individually conditioned and vary by time and place.

There are individuals from “all” clans within al-Shabaab, and its leadership also consists of people with different clan affiliations (see Hiraal Institute 2018). It is not uncommon to have relatives—whom one has sporadic contact with—inside the organization. In this way, kinship and clan affiliation can function as a communication channel between individuals inside and outside the organization (see Landinfo 2022a, p. 9). One example is that defectors usually check return possibilities with relatives outside the organization before leaving al-Shabaab (Landinfo 2023b, p. 10).

Such connections can also be used by businesspeople to negotiate tax amounts or in other situations where contact with al-Shabaab occurs (Source I, meeting 2022). Although kinship and clan ties can be used as a communication channel, these connections do not necessarily influence al-Shabaab’s reactions and therefore do not provide automatic protection.
This is supported by the fact that the group imposes taxes on and occasionally attacks businesses owned by individuals affiliated with powerful clans.

Individuals from certain clans and regions may also be suspected of having al-Shabaab ties by government forces at checkpoints due to their clan or geographical background. It is worth noting that no clan as a whole is affiliated with al-Shabaab, even though some sub-clans in al-Shabaab-controlled areas may have local arrangements with the group (Landinfo 2022a, pp. 7–9).

The Security Situation in the Settlements

Settlements in Mogadishu

A large proportion of Mogadishu’s population, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), live in so-called settlements. These are not uniform and are spread throughout Mogadishu, but they share common characteristics such as widespread poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and the fact that residents do not own or have secure tenure over the land they live on (see also Landinfo 2016a).

Several of the settlements have expanded into the city and appear more like neighborhoods or districts rather than typical refugee camps, while others consist of temporary corrugated iron structures and tent camps on the outskirts of the city.

It is very difficult to determine the exact number of people living in the settlements. IOM and UNHCR (2022) estimate that there are around 1.35 million internally displaced persons in the outer districts of Kahda and Daynile alone, where the largest settlements are located.
Source F (2024), who works with IDPs in Mogadishu, pointed out that the official number of IDPs is too high, partly due to multiple registrations of the same individuals. A report that addresses the situation in the settlements estimates that there are about 500,000 IDPs in Mogadishu, most of whom live in settlements (Chonka, Wasuge & Mohamud 2023, p. 8).

Not everyone living in the settlements in the outskirts is internally displaced; what they have in common is that they generally lack the means or networks to settle elsewhere in Mogadishu. A study partly funded by UNHCR (JIPS 2016, p. 18) estimated that 85% of the settlement residents are IDPs, while the rest include economic migrants, people from Mogadishu, and returning refugees.

Most people in the outskirts’ settlements come from the regions of Lower Shabelle, Bay, and Bakool, and belong to the so-called agricultural clans Digil and Rahanweyn (Mirifle) or the Bantu/Jareer population (Chonka, Wasuge & Mohamud 2023, p. 23; Source E 2024; Source F 2024). However, there are also individuals from so-called "noble clans" in the settlements, including nomadic families from Central Somalia

who have lost their livelihoods due to drought (Source F 2024).
Internally displaced persons with family and connections to influential clans in Mogadishu are more likely to live in settlements within the city, where conditions are better than in the outskirts (Source E 2024). As in the rest of Somalia, people tend to seek out relatives and clan members. Some establish contact before arrival, while others seek out family and clan members after arriving and settle near them or others from the same district (Sources B; F 2024).

Several of the settlements are operated by individuals connected to the local clan that owns the land the settlements are located on. Individuals from the local clan act as intermediaries between humanitarian organizations providing aid and the settlement population, in exchange for receiving a significant portion of the aid (Source F 2024; Bakonyi & Chonka 2024, pp. 55–66).

Security Conditions in the Settlements

The overall security situation in the settlements was described by Source C (2024) as fairly similar to the rest of Mogadishu. Source F, who works in the settlements, pointed out that the main issue is not security, but poverty, and that the residents do not have predictable rights to the land they live on, and therefore risk eviction. [28]

That the overall security situation in the settlements does not differ significantly from many other areas in Mogadishu is supported by a comparative study (Chonka, Wasuge & Mohamud 2023) of the districts of Kahda, where a large share lives in settlements, and Hodan, where few do. Respondents in both districts reported that the number of violent incidents caused by conflict between armed groups—including government forces—had declined over the past ten years, and that the primary security concern now was crime committed by youth gangs.

In addition to crime, the study found that many internally displaced people in Kahda reported that many residents are vulnerable due to their marginalized status, such as belonging to weak clans and/or living in female-headed households where the mother is a widow or divorced. Respondents noted that this latter group is particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation or rape by militia soldiers stationed in the settlements, and that the number of assaults is likely underreported (Chonka, Wasuge & Mohamud 2023, pp. 18–20).

Sources C and F (2024) also stated that gender-based violence and intimate partner violence are widespread problems, stemming from the precarious socioeconomic conditions and living arrangements.

According to Sources E and F (2024), conflicts are primarily resolved through the clan or through intermediaries who run the camps. The clans present in the settlements are represented by their clan elders, who meet in “community councils.” Internally displaced persons generally have poor access to conflict resolution mechanisms involving the local clans in Mogadishu (Source F 2024), though this likely varies depending on which clan or group one belongs to.
Sources E and F (2024) stated that the Rahanweyn clan does have access to conflict resolution mechanisms in Mogadishu, although it is uncertain whether this applies to all sub-clans of Rahanweyn.

Al-Shabaab in the Settlements

In the city’s outlying districts, particularly Kahda and Daynile, where the majority of settlements are located, al-Shabaab has carried out some raids against government targets using small groups of fighters who withdraw shortly after the attack (see for example *The Somali Digest 2023; Hassan 2022; Shabelle Media Network 2024a*).

There have also been instances where al-Shabaab has fired mortars at targets in the city, including the airport, from the outskirts, before retreating (Horn Observer 2024; Source C 2024; Somali Guardian 2023). The Daynile district, through which the main road between Mogadishu and Afgoye runs, is also one of the districts where the most IEDs are deployed (Source C 2024). These activities are possible because al-Shabaab can move fairly freely outside Mogadishu—and, for that matter, outside other government-controlled cities (see Landinfo 2019)—and therefore does not necessarily have to pass through checkpoints.

The aforementioned study also indicates that the fear of major al-Shabaab attacks is lower in Kahda than in more central areas. One reason the authors point to is that there are fewer targets, such as government institutions, in the outskirts than in central Mogadishu (Chonka, Wasuge & Mohamud 2023, pp. 20–22). As a result, the chance of being in the wrong place at the wrong time and being hit by an explosion is smaller. Nevertheless, bombs intended for targets in central Mogadishu sometimes explode en route due to unforeseen events, thereby impacting the outlying areas. Additionally, some recent attacks have specifically targeted the police station in Kahda (The Somali Digest 2023; Hassan 2022; Shabelle Media Network 2024a).

As in other parts of Mogadishu, al-Shabaab does not have an open presence in the settlements, but operates covertly, and can therefore carry out assassinations and extort individuals (ACLED 2024; Source C 2024; Source F 2024). Source F (2024), who works in the settlements, rejected the notion that al-Shabaab is actively recruiting foot soldiers in the settlements, noting instead that many of those who flee to the settlements do so to escape recruitment in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. The fact that many residents in the settlements have fled from child recruitment in al-Shabaab areas was also emphasized by Source C (2024).

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Back to Contents

Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the Common EU [European Union] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information (COI), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used, and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the bibliography.

Back to Contents

Terms of Reference

The ‘Terms of Reference’ (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the country information.

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Humanitarian situation
- Numbers of people in need
- Food security
- Water, sanitation and hygiene
- Housing and shelter
- Displacement and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Commercial and humanitarian access
- Evictions
- Clan support
- Support providers

Back to Contents

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Back to Contents

Version control and feedback

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **2.0**
- valid from **23 July 2025**

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section.

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section

Back to Contents

Changes from last version of this note

Updated COI.

Back to Contents

Feedback to the Home Office

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the Country Policy and Information Team.

Back to Contents

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support them in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the gov.uk website.

Back to Contents