



This update provides information on the protection environment in Somalia, including apparent violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law as reported during the last two weeks through the IASC Somalia Protection Cluster monitoring systems. Incidents mentioned in this report are not exhaustive. They are intended to highlight credible reports to inform and prompt programming and advocacy initiatives by the humanitarian community and national authorities.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Military tensions increased in South and Central Somalia over the past two weeks, resulting in increased displacement of people, civilian casualties and arbitrary arrests of civilians by various warring parties.

Despite the AMISOM advances in the capital, sporadic fighting between Al Shabaab and AMISOM troops continued in Yaqshiid, Heliwa, Dherkenley, Karaan and Dayniile districts. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) continued its eviction operations of people, including a large number of protracted internally displaced persons (IDPs) in public buildings in Mogadishu, with approximately 7.500 IDPs being evicted from public buildings in Mogadishu since the beginning of February. The majority of those evicted arrived in Hodan and Wadajir districts of Mogadishu. The humanitarian community continued to express their concern to the authorities, while trying to find common and alternative ways to assist the evicted IDPs.

On 13 February, TFG supported by AMISOM forces announced their plan to increase their offensive in densely populated Al Shabaab controlled area of Afgooye district in Lower Juba region.¹ The TFG warned the Afgooye residents to evacuate the area. The price of transportation rise as the fighting continued, leaving many families in Afgooye in despair while forcing many to flee by foot to safer areas. Reports also indicate that Al Shabaab authorities increased the fees for crossing the checkpoints for IDPs travelling to Mogadishu. Despite the increased costs of movement, the PMT data indicates that between 13 and 24 February over 22.000 people left Afgooye and arrived mainly in Mogadishu, as well in various districts of Lower Shabelle region.

On 22 February Baydhaba district of Bay region was taken over by the Ethiopian Defence Forces (ENDF) following Al Shabaab retreat from the district. Reports however indicate that Al Shabaab forces had planted a number of landmines prior to their departure from the town. The tensions in Baydhaba further resulted in over 6.800 people fleeing the district due to fear of retaliation. The majority of those displaced arrived in other districts of Bay and Banadir region.

Increased tensions in Al Shabaab controlled regions, as well as in Belet Weyne district of Hiraan region, resulted in arbitrary arrests by both by TFG and allied forces and Al Shabaab, of suspected members having links with enemy forces. Nevertheless, intensive recruitment by Al Shabaab of men and boys, particularly in Afgooye district, Bay and Lower Juba regions was also reported. Reports indicate that families were also told to marry off their daughters to Al Shabaab militias.

The latest influx of IDPs into Mogadishu from both Afgooye corridor and Bay region, at a time when the TFG is trying to re-build the public buildings may lead to additional tensions between the affected population due to increased competition over resources and land. Moreover, possible advancement by AMISOM troops in Lower Shabelle may result in residents being further displaced in Middle and Lower Juba regions.

MOGADISHU (BANADIR)

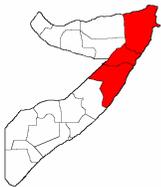
The eviction of people from public buildings over the past two weeks resulted in congestion of crowded IDP camps in the capital. Meanwhile, Al Shabaab's guerilla attacks in Mogadishu persisted over the past two weeks² in Dayniile, Heliwa, and Yaaqshiid and Karaan districts, including IED attacks. An influx of IDPs arrived in Hodan and Wadajir districts of Mogadishu following new TFG/AMISOM offensives in Afgooye corridor in Lower Shabelle region. The prevailing insecurity continues to restrain the work of humanitarian agencies and consequently the provision of basic services.



- A businessman was reportedly killed in front of his family by two armed men dressed in TFG uniform in Waaberi district. The perpetrators fled. The reason behind the killing is unknown.³ (24 February)
- A local politician was assassinated by two alleged Al Shabaab militants while he was sitting in a local coffee shop in Wadajir district. Following the assassination the TFG forces carried out a security operation in Bulo Huubey area of Wadajir and arrested five suspects.⁴ (23 February)
- 50 men suspected of having links with Al Shabaab were arrested after the TFG security forces conducted a security operation in Heliwa and Yaaqshiid districts.⁵ (22 February)
- Four IDPs, including one minor were reportedly injured by stray bullet when fighting erupted in outskirts of Dherkenley district between AMISOM/TFG forces and Al Shabaab. The individuals were taken to Banadir hospital.⁶ (20 February)
- An elderly woman was shot during a food distribution exercise when an unknown militia opened fire at the crowd in Abdi Aziz district of Mogadishu. The reason behind the shooting is not clear. The victim was transferred to the hospital.⁷ (14 February)
- One IDP were reportedly killed and 2 others injured when heavy fighting erupted between Al Shabaab militia and AMISOM forces close to Baadbaado IDP camp in Dharkenley district.⁸ (14 February)
- A woman was reportedly killed in Hodan district when an AMISOM convoy hit her. The AMISOM announced that it would investigate the case.⁹ (12 February)
- At least one civilian was killed and two others injured when an unknown man hurled a hand grenade at a check point in Nasteesho area of Wadajir district. The report indicates that the soldiers manning the check point began firing indiscriminately as a result of the attack, resulting in the killing of another civilian. Several persons were arrested following the incident.¹⁰ (12 February)

NORTH-EAST (MUDUG, NUGAAL & BARI)

Clan tensions between clan militias hailing from Sa'ad and Omar Mohamud continued around Ceelbardale, Jilable Hayre, Jeexdin towns of Gaalkacyo district following the killing of two men from Omar Mohamud. IDPs in Bulo Bacley IDP settlement in Gaalkacyo were affected by the tensions, which resulted in over 1.000 people, mainly women and children to abandon their shelters. A report indicates that businesses in the area closed down following the tensions in Gaalkacyo. An interagency assessment was undertaken, including UN agencies, local NGO and the local authority to identify the needs of the displaced population in the next one or two weeks. Tensions are still high in Gaalkacyo, as no conflict mediation process is believed to be under way.



- A female passenger on board a passenger bus was shot dead when a security officer shot at the bus after the driver refused to stop. The officer was arrested.¹¹ (18 February)
- Revenge killing in Hormor village of Gaalkacyo town lead to over 800 displacements within Gaalkacyo district.¹² (11- 12 February)

HIRAAAN & GALGADUUD

The situation in Belet Weyne district, Hiraan region is tense, as fighting erupted in Hawl Wadag neighbourhood between clan militias. Meantime disagreement between Shabelle Valley State (SVS) and the TFG concerning territorial administration of Belet Wayne district remain unclear, while preventing an agreement on new military operations further south. In the past week, the Ethiopian forces partially lifted long hours of curfew they had previously imposed in Belet Weyne.



- Three IDP children were killed and two others injured when they were playing with a landmine in Ali Jiir village of Galgaduud region.¹³ (16 February)
- At least 15 people, including civilians were injured and some 400 people were displaced when heavy fighting erupted between clan militias in Hawl Wadag neighbourhood of Belet Weyne town, Hiraan region. The fighting broke out following dispute over the collection of taxes on trucks carrying goods. The injured were brought to the Belet Weyne hospital. Local clan elders intervened to calm down the situation.¹⁴ (11 February)
- At least eight people were killed and 10 others injured when SVS militias conducted a search operation targeting Al Shabaab affiliates in Hawl Wadag neighbourhood of Belet Weyne.¹⁵ (11 February)

LOWER & MIDDLE SHABELLE (SHABELLE HOOSE & DHEXE)

On 13 February AMISOM/TFG announced its planned offensive against Al Shabaab in Afgooye corridor and urged all civilians to evacuate the area. Heavy fighting erupted between Al Shabaab and TFG/AMISOM forces in Kahshigal area located between Afgooye and Dharkenley districts, Lower

Shabelle region¹⁶ resulting in take over of the area by AMISOM.¹⁷ Continued fighting in Afgooye also resulted in an increase in the price of transportation, while forcing many families to foot to safer areas. The main road from Afgooye to Mogadishu that had been closed on 13 February was reopened on 14 February, allowing people to move out of Afgooye. PMT data indicates that between 13 and 24 February over 22.000 residents fled Afgooye due to fear of attacks. The majority of these arrived in in various districts of Mogadishu¹⁸. The number of casualties is unknown.

In reaction to movements of population from the Afgooye corridor towards TFG/AMISOM controlled areas of Mogadishu, Al Shabaab administration in Afgooye further continued its appeal to the public to join the “holy war” against the TFG allied forces.¹⁹



- Over the past two weeks, over 500 people reportedly fled Lower and Middle Shabelle region after being told to join Al Shabaab forces and marry off their daughters to Al Shabaab fighters.²⁰ (12- 23 February)

BAY, BAKOOL & GEDO

Trend of Somali refugees returning from Kenya to border towns of Gedo region for harvesting was reported over the past two weeks. PMT data indicate that some 446 refugees arrived from Kenya in border towns of Belet Hawo, Ceel Waaq and Baardheere, Gedo region.

On 22 February ENDF took control of Baidoa town of Bay region. Reports indicate that Al Shabaab had been busy planting landmines and IEDs, as they were expecting an offensive. This has increased the tensions in Bay region, especially after a number of civilians were killed by landmines. Although Al Shabaab seems to have almost surrendered the town, over 6,800 residents fled the town over the past week, while expecting retaliation by Al Shabaab and possible arrests by the TFG allied forces in the coming days and weeks. Meanwhile, Al Shabaab administration in Bay and Bakool multiplied calls to local residents in religious schools and mosques to unite against attacks by TFG allied forces.²¹ PMN reports also indicate that fear of forced recruitment of men and boys by Al Shabaab have resulted in a number of families fleeing districts of Bay region.²² In light of the above it is understood that people will likely continue moving out of Bay, due to increased insecurity and possible guerrilla warfare in and around the town. Al Shabaab forces partially vacated Wajiid and Xudur districts of Bakool region.²³



- One civilian was killed by an unidentified gunman near Hotel Jinaay in Baidoa town, Bay region.²⁴ (24 January)
- Six people were reportedly killed and unknown numbers were injured when fighting erupted between TFG allied forces and Al Shabaab militias in Aboore village, located 10 KM from Xudur district.²⁵ (23 February)
- Ten young men were forcefully recruited by Al Shabaab militia in Horsed village of Bay region. The whereabouts of the men are unknown.²⁶ (21 February)
- A medical store receiving medical equipment and food from ICRC in Horsed village of Baidoa town was reportedly looted by al Shabaab militiamen.²⁷ (17 February)

- A public gathering celebrating the merger of Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda was organized in Afar Irdoodka area of Baidoa town. All private business centres, schools and other services in Baidoa were closed to facilitate the participation of the local residents.²⁸ (15 February)
- Four businessmen accused of supporting Al Shabaab were arrested by TFG forces in Baidoa town, Bay region.²⁹ (13 February)

LOWER & MIDDLE JUBA (JUBA HOOSE & DHEXE)

Trend of Somali refugees returning from Kenya to border towns of Lower and Middle Juba regions decreased slightly over the past two weeks with 810 people arriving in border town of Dhobley compared to 845 during the first two weeks of February.

Armed clashed between Al Shabaab militias and anti-Al Shabaab forces also continued in Afmadow district of Lower Juba region. During the reporting period, air strikes were reported in Dhobley town, as well as Tabta and Jeldayste villages of Afmadow district, resulting in unconfirmed number civilian casualties. Also in Lower and Middle Juba regions Al Shabaab appealed the residents to participate in 'holy war' against TFG- allied forces. Nevertheless, the humanitarian access, including in the areas gained by Kenyan forces remained a challenge.



- The members of a family, including the father, mother and their two daughters aged 10 and 12 were killed when heavy fighting erupted between Al Shabaab militia and TFG- allied forces in Baadhede district of Lower Juba region.³⁰ (24 February)
- Two women suspected of having links with Al Shabaab were reportedly harassed by TFG soldiers in Baadhede district of Middle Juba region. The women were beaten for having sold milk to Al Shabaab militia.³¹ (21 February)
- A religious leader who had been preaching against Al Shabaab policies in a mosque in Kismaayo town of Lower Juba region was arrested and later evicted from town by Al Shabaab authorities.³² (20 February)
- A 17 years old girl was accidentally shot and killed by an Al Shabaab security officer in Jilib district, Middle Juba region. This incident happened after two Al Shabaab militias were chasing a thief. Al Shabaab administration agreed to pay compensation to the family.³³ (17 February)
- One woman was wounded by a stray bullet when two groups of Al Shabaab militants exchanged fired amongst themselves in Dhobley town.³⁴ (13 February)

¹AFP, *AU forces to attack Shebab stronghold- AFP*, 12 February, available at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hKT1j_MqBTAqn5SEhFqCpKUQ5VNW?docId=CNG.52c525f06fcbf4db7e3f0a8c268395da.3d1

Somalia report, *TFG Asks Afgoye Residents to Vacate Area*, 13 February, available at http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/2778/TFG_Ask_Afgoye_Residents_to_Vacate_Area

Huffington Post, *Somalia Refugees Flee To Mogadishu, Fearing Imminent Attack*, 16 February, available at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/16/somalia-refugees-mogadishu_n_1282022.html

² Somalia Report, *Al-Shabaab Attacks on Mogadishu Persist*, 6 February, available at,

[http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/2717/Al-Shabaab Attacks on Mogadishu Persist](http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/2717/Al-Shabaab_Attacks_on_Mogadishu_Persist)

³ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 25 February

⁴ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 24 February

⁵ Report recorded by organization conducting security analysis in Somalia. Source name withheld

⁶ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 21 February

⁷ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 15 February

⁸ Report recorded by organization conducting security analysis in Somalia. Source name withheld

⁹ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 14 February

¹⁰ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 14 February

¹¹ Report received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 20 February

¹² Reports by IASC protection cluster partners

¹³ Somalireport, *3 Children Killed Playing with Landmine*, 16 February, available at,

[http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/2811/3 Children Killed Playing with Landmine](http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/2811/3_Children_Killed_Playing_with_Landmine)

¹⁴ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 11 February 2012

¹⁵ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 11 February 2012

¹⁶ Garowe Online, *Fighting erupts in Mogadishu*, 31 January, available at

[http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia Fighting erupts in Mogadishu.shtml](http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Fighting_erupts_in_Mogadishu.shtml)

¹⁷ Reuters, *AU forces capture rebel strongholds near Somali capital*, 14 February, available at,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/14/us-somalia-conflict-idUSTRE81D1VY20120214>

¹⁸ BBC News, *Fresh Somalia fighting forces thousands to flee*, 15 February, available at,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17048223>

¹⁹ <http://radiomuqdisho.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Halkaan-Ka-Dhageyso-Codka-Horjooge-Fuaad-Shongole-Uu-Dadka-Ku-Gaaleysiinayo.mp3>

²⁰ Reports received from IASC Protection Cluster Partner on 11-23 February

²¹ Voice of America, Ethiopian, *Somali Forces Set to Advance on Al-Shabab Stronghold*, 31 January, available at

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/Ethiopian-Somali-Forces-Set-to-Advance-on-Al-Shabab-Stronghold-138409234.html>

²² Reports by IASC protection cluster partner received on 15-22 February 2012

²³ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 24 February 2012

²⁴ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 25 February 2012

²⁵ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 23 February 2012

²⁶ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 21 February 2012

²⁷ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 21 February 2012

²⁸ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 17 February 2012

Report recorded by organization conducting security analysis in Somalia. Source name withheld

²⁹ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 23 February 2012

³⁰ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 24 February 2012

³¹ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 22 February 2012

³² Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 22 February 2012

³³ Report by IASC protection cluster partner received on 18 February 2012

³⁴ Report recorded by organization conducting security analysis in Somalia. Source name withheld