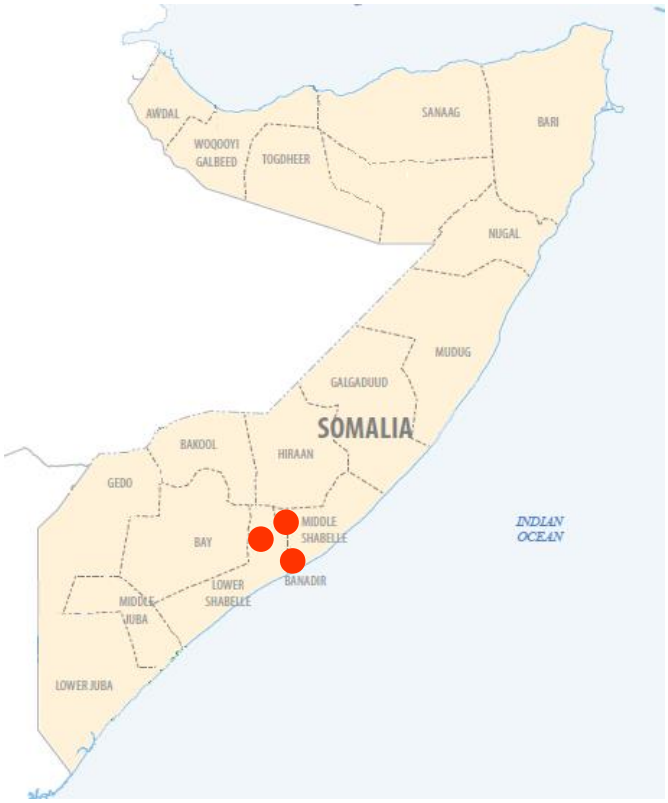
FLASH REPORT
PRMN DISPLACEMENT UPDATE
23 November 2017

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency
Somalia

Forced to flee due to conflict: more than 10,000 local residents are reported displaced in Middle and Lower Shabelle, Somalia.



Bal'ad and Afgoye Districts: Middle, Lower Shabelle

Reports indicate that multiple airstrikes on 10 November 2017 targeted Basra, a small Al-Shabaab controlled town on the southern outskirts of Bal'ad District, Middle Shabelle. Confrontations between government forces and the militant group have also considerably intensified in several other parts of the region. At the same time, tensions remain increasingly high in outlying villages along the Bal'ad-Afgoye axis that connect Middle and Lower Shabelle regions.

These continuing military operations have heightened insecurity, prompting a wave of new displacements in addition to destruction of livelihood and shelter assets. So far, the Network has monitored at least 1,500 individuals arriving in settlements hosting displaced persons in Bal'ad town, including Xanaly (Hanley), El Gelle and Hawatako. According to monitors, apart from IDPs in protracted situations and poor host communities, those fleeing the conflict include families who were former IDPs but returned in 2014 and 2015 as part of return and reintegration programs, and many more are believed to be in hideouts on route towards safe locations. This new dynamic, which has not been statistically established as a particular displacement pattern, will be closely monitored and further analysed moving forward.

Banadir Region

Between November 5th and 17th, an estimated 2,976 persons have been forced to flee due to intermittent, but persistent fighting that has hitherto disproportionately affected a number of villages in the Afgoye District area and far beyond. According to those interviewed by Network partners on arrival in Ceelasha, Hawa-Abdi, Lafole, Afgoye town, and the larger Carbiska area, the villages hardest hit, from where virtually all of them fled, include Bakhdad, Buhow, Danida, Alifoow and Baldooska. This generalized insecurity, which has led to a sharp increase in the number of road blocks and checkpoints, has also precipitated movement restrictions, extortion, torture and sexual abuse by all parties.

Banadir on the other hand, by virtue of being one of the most preferred destinations for those seeking safe havens and access to humanitarian assistance, continues to receive a large number of displaced persons due to the growing insecurity that has and continues to characterize Middle and Lower Shabelle regions. Between 1st and 20th November 2017, fighting between government forces and Al-Shabaab in Barire, Basra main town and surrounding villages displaced an estimated 956 households (approximately 5700 individuals) to Mogadishu in search of safety and access to humanitarian assistance, majority of whom joined one of the twenty IDP settlements along the KM13 and KM14 stretch in Dynille and Kaxda Districts, Mogadishu.

The PRMN (Protection & Return Monitoring Network) is a UNHCR-led project which identifies and reports on displacements as well as protection risks and incidents underlying such population movements. On behalf of UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 41 local partners in the field in Somalia (South Central regions, Puntland and Somaliland) undertake data gathering (primarily through interviews with affected communities and key informants) and monitoring at strategic locations.

This 'flash' report highlights only a selection of movements and incidents - some of these reports may not be verified independently by UNHCR.

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