UDLÆNDINGESTYRELSEN
DANISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

South Central Somalia

Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process

Report from the Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya and Mogadishu, Somalia
2-12 May 2015

Copenhagen, September 2015

Overview of Danish fact finding reports published in 2014 and 2015

Situation of LGBT persons in Uganda, Joint report from the Danish Immigration Service's and the Danish Refugee Council's fact finding mission to Kampala, Uganda from 16 to 25 June 2013

Update on the Situation for Christian Converts in Iran, report from the Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey and London, United Kingdom 25 March to 2 April 2014 and 10 April to 11 April 2014

Eritrea – Drivers and Root Causes of Emigration, National Service and the Possibility of Return, Appendix edition, Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process. Report from the Danish Immigration Service's fact finding missions to Ethiopia and Eritrea, August and October 2014

Stateless Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, Country of Origin Information for Use in the Asylum Determination Process, Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Beirut, Lebanon, 25 May to 6 June 2014

Security and human rights in Chechnya and the situation of Chechens in the Russian Federation – residence registration, racism and false accusations, Report from the Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Moscow, Grozny and Volgograd, the Russian Federation, From 23 April to 13 May 2014 and Paris, France 3 June 2014

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Abbreviations

AMISOM	African Union Mission to Somalia
Al-Shabaab	Al-Shabaab
ASW/ASWJ	Ahlu Sunna WalJama
COI	Country of Origin Information
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defense Forces
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit, FAO
HQ	Head quarter
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised explosive device
INGO	International non-governmental organization
KDF	Kenya Defense Forces
MIA	Mogadishu International Airport
MSR	Main supply routes
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NISA	National Intelligence and Security Agency, Somalia
S/C Somalia	South Central Somalia
SFG/ FGS	Somali Federal Government/ Federal Government of Somalia
SNAF	Somali National Armed Forces
SNP	Somali National Police
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCC	United Nations Common Compound
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States Dollar
VBIED	Vehicle-borne improvised explosive device
WFP	World Food Programme

Disclaimer

This report was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology[1] (2012). The report is based on approved notes from meetings with carefully selected interlocutors.

The information contained in this report has been gathered and presented with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organization is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organization does not exist.

While every effort is made to cover all relevant aspects of a particular topic, it is not always possible to obtain all information concerned. For this reason, it is important to note that information included in the report should not be taken to imply anything beyond what is actually stated.

This report exclusively contains the information obtained during the delegations mission to Nairobi and Mogadishu from 2-12 May 2015. The report is based entirely on the approved interview notes and/or other documentary material provided by the listed interlocutors.

Therefore this report is not, and does not purport to be a detailed or comprehensive survey of all aspects of the issues addressed in the report and should be considered a supplement to the great amount of other available information about South and Central (S/C) Somalia.[2]

The report at hand does not include any policy recommendations or analysis. The information in the report does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Danish Immigration Service and makes no political statement whatsoever.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

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[1] European Union: European Asylum Support Office (EASO), EASO Country of Origin Information report methodology, 10 July 2012. http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ffc33d32.html
[2] See for instance publications on Refworld.org and Ecoi.net about Somalia.

Introduction and methodology

This report has been produced by the Country of Origin Information (COI) Division, Danish Immigration Service for use in the asylum determination process. The report is based on approved notes from meetings with interlocutors in Nairobi, Kenya and Mogadishu, Somalia from 2-12 May 2015.

The purpose of the mission was to make relevant information on matters related to the security and human rights situation in S/C Somalia more accessible, as well as to update existing information. The Terms of Reference (ToR) are found in Annex C.

The ToR were finalized after having been circulated to the Refugee Appeals Board and a Reference Group consisting of the Danish Refugee Council, Amnesty International in Denmark, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Danish Institute Against Torture, Christian organizations, the National Commissioner of Police and the Danish Bar and Law Society (representing asylum lawyers). A number of European COI Divisions were also consulted prior to the mission.

Several relevant inputs were received and included in the ToR. However, some of the received suggestions for topics fell outside the overall scope of the mission and due to limited time available it was decided not to include them in the ToR.

During the mission, time constraints as well as logistical and security challenges meant that it was not possible to gather information on all topics outlined in the ToR and on some topics only limited information was obtained.

The approved notes from the meetings with the interlocutors in Nairobi and Mogadishu are included in Annex A in their full extent. The notes contain detailed and in-depth information from the interlocutors regarding the issues presented in the report as well as issues beyond the main scope of the report.

Detailed descriptions of the situation in Somaliland and Puntland are excluded from the scope of this report. Both regions are mentioned where deemed necessary. The information gathered related to Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting will be presented in a separate publication which will be published at a later stage.

The situation in S/C Somalia is fluid and unpredictable in particular regarding the security situation. The information provided in this report may become outdated due to events on the ground in S/C Somalia. Therefore, the issues addressed in this report should be monitored periodically and be brought up to date accordingly.

Due to security concerns the delegation was advised to only visit Mogadishu for one day and to limit its stay to the Mogadishu International Airport (MIA) area.

In Nairobi and Mogadishu the delegation consulted altogether ten interlocutors, including NGOs and international organizations working in S/C Somalia as well as a humanitarian worker in Somalia. The interlocutors are presented in Annex A.

The list of interlocutors interviewed was selected by the delegation based on the expertise, merit and role of each interlocutor relevant to the mission. However, factors such as time constraints and availability of

sources mean that the list of interlocutors consulted should not be considered exhaustive with regard to the topics outlined in the report.

All interlocutors represent organizations or are individuals actively engaged in S/C Somalia. All organizations are present in one or several locations inside S/C Somalia and travels regularly between Nairobi and Mogadishu and other parts of S/C Somalia. The interlocutors are in regular contact with staff on the ground in various locations in S/C Somalia.

The delegation considers the interlocutors as sources having first-hand information about the topics outlined in the report. In some instances however, the interlocutors have described facts, events or situations by referring to an intermediary or primary source.

Due to limited direct access to relevant information in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab the interlocutors in general had less up to date information about the situation in these areas and underlined that this information to some extent was anecdotal or second-hand.

All interlocutors were thoroughly informed of the purpose of the mission and all interlocutors were explicitly informed that the delegation's report would be published on the website of the Danish Immigration Service, www.newtodenmark.dk, and thus be available to all stakeholders in the refugee status determination process as well as to the general public. Each interlocutor was asked how a descriptive reference might best be made to them.

All interlocutors are referred to according to their own request on this matter. All but one of the interlocutors requested varying degrees of anonymity or indirect referencing for security reasons and in order to protect their ability to conduct their work in Somalia. The choice had to be made between not interviewing them at all or referring to them with some degree of anonymity. Considering the value of the information provided, the latter approach was preferred. This needs to be taken into account when assessing what weight to attach to the information.

The notes from the meetings with the sources were forwarded to the interlocutor in question for approval, giving the source a chance to amend, comment or correct his or her statements. In the report, care has been taken to present the views of the interlocutors as accurately and transparently as possible. In this regard, all interlocutors' statements are found in their full extent in Annex A of this report.

Two interlocutors consulted decided that they could not have their statements used in a public report due to security and operational reasons. The statements from these interlocutors are therefore not used in the report.

Out of the ten interlocutors consulted, eight interlocutors have approved their statements, which have been included in the report at hand.

For clarification purposes it was found necessary to adjust certain phrases, insert commas and correct minor typing errors in the meeting notes in Annex A in a few cases. Such phrases have been modified slightly in order to avoid otherwise unclear statements. In addition, few minor supplementary or explanatory clarifications are marked with a closed bracket […].

Terminology

The sources consulted used the term "AMISOM (African Union Mission to Somalia)/SNAF (Somali National Armed Forces) presence" regarding several towns and areas in S/C Somalia. Several, but not all the sources also used terms such as "AMISOM/SNAF controlled towns" or similar, when describing these locations. Some sources emphasized that AMISOM/SNAF could only be said to control the very center of some of the towns in which AMISOM/SNAF are present.

The term "AMISOM/SNAF presence" refers to the physical presence of AMISOM/SNAF forces in a given location, such as a town or district. This presence will always translate into a certain extent of control in that given location. Due to the very fluid security environment in S/C Somalia, how and to what extent this control it is effectively implemented varies and depends on a range of factors. These factors could include, but are not limited to, the current security situation in the area, the number, equipment and quality of the deployed troops, their capacity to operate during nighttime, potential presence of clan conflicts as well as lack of infrastructure.

Consequently, the term "AMISOM/SNAF presence" is used throughout this report whenever it was not possible to clearly assess the degree of control that AMISOM/SNAF could be expected to exercise in different locations.

Further, some of the sources consulted by the delegation considered any recruitment of minors less than 18 years of age to Al-Shabaab as forced recruitment, regardless of how the recruitment took place and how the minor experienced the recruitment, even if the minor did not actively refuse to be recruited to Al-Shabaab. Other sources use the term forced recruitment only in cases where the minor was recruited against his or her will.

1. Security situation in towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence

Information about AMISOM/SNAF presence in towns and areas of S/C Somalia should not be considered in any way exhaustive and will continuously be subject to change. Therefore this particular kind of information should be monitored regularly.

Several towns in S/C Somalia have a presence of AMISOM/SNAF and other armed actors following recent offensives in 2014. However, compared by sheer mileage, the majority of the surface of S/C Somalia is still controlled by Al-Shabaab, especially the rural areas between towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence.[3]

As of May 2015, a number of sources[4] considered that Al-Shabaab was no longer in control in several towns in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence. However, while Al-Shabaab was no longer in control of any of these towns' administrative zones, it retained the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style attacks using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and vehicle-borne IEDs, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals.

Further, the same sources emphasized that AMISOM/SNAF forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of a city, with surrounding villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides.

Information provided by several of the consulted sources suggested that as of May 2015 AMISOM/SNAF had a presence in the following towns in S/C Somalia: Mogadishu (Banadir), Luuq (Gedo), Doolow (Gedo), Kismayo (Lower Juba), Baidoa (Bay), Belet Weyne (Hiraan), Dhuusamarreeb (Galgaduud), Ceel Buur (Galgaduud), Qoryooley (Lower Shabelle), and Baraawe (Lower Shabelle). See Annex B for a map of S/C Somalia.

Information suggesting that as of May 2015, the towns of Xudur[5] (Bakool), Dhobley[6] (Lower Juba) and Jowhar[7] (Middle Shabelle) had AMISOM/SNAF presence was provided by one source each.

UNHCR Somalia underlined that AMISOM/SNAF presence in a location does not mean there has been an improvement in the protection environment as limited progress has been made with regard to stabilization, to try to ensure security for the civilian population, and to establish governance structures and access to basic services and livelihood opportunities.

Further UNHCR Somalia referred to the "International Protection Considerations for persons fleeing Southern and Central Somalia"[8] January 2014 as well as to UNHCRs position on returns to Southern and Central Somalia[9] June 2014 as the relevant guidance. According to these publications, the security situation in most

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[3] UNHCR Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

[4] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)

[5] UNHCR Somalia

[6] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

[7] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia

[8] UNHCR, International Protection Considerations with Regard to people fleeing Southern and Central Somalia, January 2014, HCR/PC/SOM/14/01, http:www.refworld.org/docid/52d7fc5f4.html

[9] UNHCR, UNHCR Position on Returns to Southern and Central Somalia, June 2014, http://www.refworld.org/docid/53a04d044.html

parts of S/C Somalia continues to be volatile.[10] UNHCR Somalia further stated that the capacity of the State and its institutions to protect the civilian population remains weak. UNHCR Somalia referred to information provided to the Security Council as reported by UN News Service[11]. Protracted armed conflict has weakened community structures and those of law and order. Reports of serious human rights violations continue and large parts of S/C Somalia remain under the effective control of non-state armed groups.[12]

UNHCR Somalia emphasized that Internal Flight Alternative is not an option in S/C Somalia and nothing has changed in this regard since the 2014 UNHCR guidelines on international protection considerations were issued.

One source clarified that it would not be correct to assume that AMISOM/SNAF have lost territory through direct confrontations with Al-Shabaab, but rather because AMISOM/SNAF cannot maintain a presence in every town or village in S/C Somalia due to overstretched resources. Such gaps in presence are sometimes exploited by Al-Shabaab in order to retake towns which are undefended or lightly defended. However, in the majority of cases, most major towns and areas have not been retaken by Al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNAF are still holding them.[13]

1.1 Stability of towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence

Two sources considered it unlikely that Al-Shabaab under the current circumstances would be able to retake towns with AMISOM presence. However, this is dependent on a strong presence of AMISOM or government forces in a town, since Al-Shabaab otherwise might attempt to retake the town.[14]

Two sources considered it very unlikely that Al-Shabaab would be able to retake Mogadishu under the present circumstances.[15] One source found the same to be true for Kismayo. However, the source was uncertain about other towns such as Belet Weyne, Baidoa, Luuq and Baraawe. Sometimes smaller towns or villages are completely retaken by Al-Shabaab but the news does not reach the media until the fighting to take back the town begins.[16]

One source stated that the circumstances in S/C Somalia are dynamic and the ability of Al-Shabaab to retake towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence is largely dependent on which armed actors have the necessary number of forces on the ground at any given time. Therefore it is not possible to state anything definite about Al-Shabaab's capability in this regard.[17]

Further, the objective of Al-Shabaab is to destabilize the situation in the newly reclaimed areas. The degree of success will largely depend on the inhibiting context, i.e. the security measures put in place to mitigate any possible attacks in these areas.[18]

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[10] UNHCR, UNHCR Position on Returns to Southern and Central Somalia, June 2014, http://www.refworld.org/docid/53a04d044.html
[11] UN News Service, Somalia's efforts to build cohesive State require international support, Security Council told, 11 March 2014, http://www.refworld.org/docid/5322d9f24.html
[12] UNHCR, International Protection Considerations with Regard to people fleeing Southern and Central Somalia, January 2014, HCR/PC/SOM/14/01, http:www.refworld.org/docid/52d7fc5f4.html
[13] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[14] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[15] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[16] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[17] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)
[18] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

Al-Shabaab primarily uses a deliberate tactic of destabilization through hit and run attacks and asymmetrical warfare in towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence. In general, Al-Shabaab does not engage AMISOM in direct confrontations.[19]

Al-Shabaab's aim with this strategy is to instill fear in the UN and other international actors in order to disrupt the current political process in S/C Somalia.[20]

1.2 Extent of AMISOM/SNAF control/presence

It is not possible to clearly define how far the influence or control of AMISOM/SNAF stretches from a town centre with AMISOM/SNAF presence into the surrounding areas. It is not possible to clearly define where and when Al-Shabaab's influence or presence begins, as this is fluid and unpredictable.[21]

According to UNHCR Somalia, Al-Shabaab is present in much of the territory of S/C Somalia, including in those areas in the control of AMISOM/SNAF. In this regard, Al-Shabaab often maintains presence at the outskirts of many towns and in village communities where AMISOM/SNAF and Somali government structures exist in S/C Somalia.[22]

Some cities with AMISOM/SNAF presence could be described as islands in Al-Shabaab territory. Therefore many towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence are still difficult to access by road since Al-Shabaab is often present in the surrounding areas and has established both fixed and ad hoc checkpoints on the main supply routes (MSR).[23]

Several sources stated that Al-Shabaab will have a clandestine presence in the areas surrounding most towns in S/C Somalia and according to sources they would have a clandestine presence or sleeper cells in the centre of most cities with AMISOM/SNAF presence.[24]

Three sources stated that only the very centre of a town with AMISOM/SNAF presence can be said to be controlled by AMISOM/SNAF.[25] However, especially at night time Al-Shabaab is able to carry out operations even in the centre of town.[26]

For different reasons the areas surrounding towns with AMISOM presence have not been secured by AMISOM. Consequently, AMISOM do not maintain a permanent presence in most of these areas[27]. One source went on to state that due to a lack in numbers, AMISOM will not be able to secure the population

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[19] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[20] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[21] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (D), Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[22] UNHCR Somalia

[23] UNHCR Somalia

[24] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (D), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia

[25] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

[26] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia

[27] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

between the cities that have an AMISOM presence, which is why AMISOM will never have complete control over the large rural areas of S/C Somalia.[28]

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[28] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

2. Al-Shabaab activities in cities with AMISOM/SNAF presence

2.1 Targets of Al-shabaab

Several sources stated that Al-Shabaab has the ability and will to attack any target in all areas throughout S/C Somalia.[29] With sufficiently important operational reason Al-Shabaab may attempt to attack any target anywhere.[30]

The main targets for Al-Shabaab attacks are persons or institutions representing the international community, the Somalia government and its supporters or perceived supporters, including but not limited to AMISOM, the UN, representatives of the Somali government and international NGOs.[31]

UNHCR Somalia gave the example of Mogadishu where a high number of security incidents continue to take place, including targeted killings of journalists, judiciary, government officials and others.

However, one source stated that international NGOs are not targeted per se, but could be considered an alternative target for Al-Shabaab. It was explained that if Al-Shabaab is looking for a target and if there is no UN or AMISOM target at hand, then the international organizations could be the next in line.[32]

Another source explained that there have not been reported many attacks against international or national NGOs. It was added that many national NGOs pay a tax to Al-Shabaab.[33]

Some sources stated that Al-Shabaab currently seems to aim for spectacular attacks against high value targets, such as AMISOM, the government and the UN. Reference was made to recent attacks in 2014 and 2015 on Villa Somalia, hotels in Mogadishu where high ranking politicians and government officials congregate, on the UN in Garowe in April 2015, as well as the attack on the UN and AMISOM areas of Mogadishu International airport in December 2014.[34]

In addition, one source mentioned representatives from educational institutions, persons believed to be collaborating with or spying for the government, people who refuse to pay tax to Al-Shabaab or business people refusing to pay money demanded by Al-Shabaab.[35]

One source had heard of Al-Shabaab infiltrating and assassinating village elders inside the villages surrounding the towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence.[36]

Two sources stated that local NGOs may be targeted by Al-Shabaab if they are perceived to be working for the UN. However, there have not been many documented cases of Al-Shabaab attacks on local Somalis working for the UN but it cannot be ruled out that it happens. Therefore the local Somali UN staff fear Al-

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[29] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[30] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[31] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B),), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

[32] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

[33] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[34] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B),), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)

[35] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

[36] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

Shabaab and they take care not to be associated with the UN, as do their families in order to avoid being targeted.[37]

One source explained that local staff of International organizations often report receiving threats on their phones, which they assumed were from Al-Shabaab. Further, Al-Shabaab reportedly has killed humanitarian workers doing data collection in S/C Somalia.[38]

Another source explained that Al-Shabaab is cautious when it comes to targeting local people with no or a very limited relation to AMISOM, the government, UN or NGOs, such as tea sellers or tailors. If such people were systematically killed it would make Al-Shabaab extremely unpopular and turn the local Somalis in the area against Al-Shabaab. Therefore, the preferred target is international staff from AMISOM, UN or the NGOs.[39]

One source stated that Al-Shabaab do not prioritize low level targets, such as local staff from international or national NGOs, but if no preferred high profile targets such as AMISOM or the UN is available, they will go for an available low profile target instead.[40]

Several sources agreed that civilians are not directly targeted by Al-Shabaab. However, ordinary civilians are often killed, as a consequence of Al-Shabaab's attacks on their targets in often populated areas with the use of IEDs, suicide bombs and hand grenades.[41]

Al-Shabaab has, however, stopped and confiscated food supplies along the supply routes between cities with AMISOM/SNAF presence, thereby making life for the civilian population in such towns difficult.[42] Further, there have been reports of extortion or forced taxation of local population.[43] One source stated that there have been examples of beheadings.[44]

Not all violent incidents and murders in S/C Somalia should be contributed to Al-Shabaab. Due to the current dynamic and volatile political climate in many areas of S/C Somalia such incidents are often the result of conflicts related to clans, business, criminal disputes, land ownership issues, local power and politics.[45] Several sources agreed that Al-Shabaab will often take credit for these murders or incidents.[46]

In Mogadishu, as reported by observers, civilians are injured and killed every week in targeted attacks by gunmen, or attacks involving IEDs and grenades.[47]

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[37] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)
[38] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[39] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)
[40] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[41] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[42] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)
[43] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[44] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)
[45] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), Humanitarian worker in Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[46] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[47] UNHCR Somalia

2.2 Recruitment by Al-Shabaab

Forced recruitment by Al-Shabaab does take place via the established networks, even in areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence. Women, including minors are also forcibly recruited to work for Al-Shabaab, e.g. as cooks and wives.[48]

Several sources stated that adolescent boys and girls as well as children are the main target of forced or voluntary recruitment by Al-Shabaab in areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence.[49] Girls are recruited to do chores in Al-Shabaab camps.[50]

In addition members of weaker clans or minority groups such as young men from the Bantu minority have been recruited by Al-Shabaab.[51] However, one source explained that these young men have most likely joined Al-Shabaab in the hope of gaining security and social status.[52]

An established mechanism of recruitment by Al-Shabaab is through the madrassas or religious schools in S/C Somalia. The teacher might be the one promoting Al-Shabaab ideology on the young and thereby making it easier to recruit them later on.[53] One source stated that Al-Shabaab might also use the community for a more indirect approach, such as establishing contact to a young person through an acquaintance of the youngster, who also might deliver implicit threats.[54]

Recruitment by Al-Shabaab does take place in towns or areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence although information about the scope was not available.[55] One source explained that it is less likely to happen in cities under AMISOM/SNAF control but that it does happen from time to time.[56]

Incentives for recruitment

The reasons or motives to join Al-Shabaab vary. They are not completely clear and could include elements of ideology as well as the promise or actual provision of material resources, money, food, security, guns, sense of responsibility and respect, power or a combination thereof.[57]

Since armed conflict and an absence of sufficient state structures is the norm in S/C Somalia, joining Al-Shabaab for many young people could be seen as the more viable choice in terms of gaining a steady income and providing a degree of security for their families.[58]

Two sources found it important to point out that the current generation of young Somali men has grown up surrounded by men carrying arms, which is why for many it will not matter if they had to join Al-Shabaab,

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[48] UNHCR Somalia
[49] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Humanitarian worker in Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[50] Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[51] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[52] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[53] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[54] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[55] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[56] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[57] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), Humanitarian worker in Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[58] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), Humanitarian worker in Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

other militias, or the governmental forces. In this regard sources also underlined that the government has become known to be less reliable regarding the payment of monthly wages.[59]

However, one source explained that after some time the youngsters become disillusioned with the actual work and training they have to do for Al-Shabaab.[60]

Consequences of refusing recruitment

Consequences of refusing to join Al-Shabaab could include the person being killed or the killing of family members.[61]

Another consequence could be that the person who does not want to be recruited or whose family or clan wants to prevent them from joining Al-Shabaab voluntarily might relocate to another area in order to avoid recruitment.[62]

One source stated that most of the recruited teenagers join Al-Shabaab without the knowledge of their parents.[63]

2.3 Reprisals against defectors

Al-Shabaab has the capacity and ability to track down and kill defectors in areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence in S/C Somalia.[64]

One source stated that Al-Shabaab does not systematically kill people in areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence but that they do so occasionally.[65] Another source underlined that Al-Shabaab has not killed many defectors.[66] However, if there is a sufficiently important operational reason they can and will kill anyone anywhere.[67]

Whether Al-Shabaab will actively track down and kill defectors depends on the different circumstances surrounding each individual. One would be the operational importance of killing a high ranking defector. The importance of the defector could be determined by the kind of knowledge about Al-Shabaab and their operations the defector possesses. Another would be the possibility to demonstrate they can kill any defector, including low ranking defectors, and thereby establishing an example.[68]

According to one source, retaliation against low ranking defectors might also include attacks on immediate family members. However, this would not be the norm with every case of defection, and would depend greatly on how Al-Shabaab estimated the advantages to be gained by such an action in each individual case.

[59] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[60] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[61] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[62] Humanitarian worker in Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[63] Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[64] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[65] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[66] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[67] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[68] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)

The same source also stated that Al-Shabaab has, in any case, not been able to kill many defectors or intimidate or attack their relatives.[69]

Minors are defecting from Al-Shabaab and relocating to areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence. These minors would not be high ranking Al-Shabaab operatives and would lack any knowledge about Al-Shabaab operations. Al-Shabaab would therefore in general not be motivated to track them down and kill them.[70]

However, examples from 2013 and 2014 of minors killed in Baidoa after defecting from Al-Shabaab illustrate how Al-Shabaab uses opportunities to establish an example by killing non high ranking defectors.[71]

2.4 Forced marriage to Al-Shabaab fighters

One source explained that there were unconfirmed reports indicating that Al-Shabaab call and send text messages to women in towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence, asking the women to join and marry Al-Shabaab fighters with threats to harm or kill the women if they refuse. However, it would not be easy for Al-Shabaab to physically access the women in these areas unless they attack and take them away as captives.[72]

When asked if Al-Shabaab would track down a woman from an Al-Shabaab controlled area unwilling to marry an Al-Shabaab fighter into a town under the control of AMISOM, another source stated that this could not be completely ruled out. Whether or not Al-Shabaab would do it would depend on the individual circumstances of the case.[73]

According to one source there are no reports of forced marriages to Al-Shabaab fighters in cities and towns with an AMISOM/SNAF presence. It was stated that this happens in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab.[74]

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[69] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[70] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[71] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[72] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[73] Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[74] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

3. Situation in areas with no AMISOM/SNAF presence

Anything outside the centre of a town with AMISOM/SNAF presence should be considered as an Al-Shabaab controlled area, with a fluid transition between the areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence and the Al-Shabaab controlled areas.[75]

Throughout all regions in S/C Somalia Al-Shabaab has a presence and influence in several areas or pockets where it is able to force the local population to pay taxes.[76] Another source stated that Al-Shabaab has pockets of control in Hiraan along the main supply road running between Mogadishu and Belet Weyne, Galgadud and Ceel Buur regions.[77]

Sources agreed that Al-Shabaab's main remaining stronghold is Middle Juba region where there is no government control.[78] One source specified that Al-Shabaab is also in complete control of Jamaame district in Lower Juba region and Baardheere district in Gedo region.[79]

In the areas they control, Al-Shabaab has full control of all aspects of society. All residents in these areas should follow any given instruction by Al-Shabaab i.e. dressing, living, marriage, tax payment, joining Al-Shabaab operations, shaving, spying, education etc. Failure to obey can result in serious punitive measures which include death.[80]

Further, Al-Shabaab imposes taxes on businessmen doing business in areas under Al-Shabaab control. Al-Shabaab also imposes such taxes in areas with a presence of AMISOM/SNAF, but to a lesser extent.[81]

Al-Shabaab continues to receive funding. Many years of presence and control in vast areas of S/C Somalia has given Al-Shabaab a deep rooted network in the trading and business community. Recently Al-Shabaab extorted 50.000 USD from the telecommunications company Hormuud that provides mobile phone service across S/C Somalia. The money was payment for Hormuuds antennas in Al-Shabaab controlled areas.[82]

Recently, Al-Shabaab is reported to have destroyed basic services in areas they control in order to force populations to leave certain areas ahead of anticipated military action by AMISOM/SNAF. For example In Xudur in Bakool region, Al-Shabaab, suspecting an offensive from AMISOM, forced people to leave the villages on the outskirts of town and destroyed the wells and infrastructure.[83]

3.1 Human rights violations by Al-Shabaab

Given the limited access to and lack of reporting from areas under the control of Al-Shabaab, the scale and prevalence of human rights violations such as severe physical punishments in these areas is not known.[84]

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[75] International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)
[76] UNHCR Somalia
[77] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[78] UNHCR Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[79] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[80] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[81] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[82] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[83] UNHCR Somalia
[84] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

However, cases of arbitrary abuses such as extortion, harassment, illegal arrest and detention, and even beheadings and amputations have been reported in 2015. There continue to be reports of beheadings and other severe punishments but the prevalence is unknown.[85]

Al-Shabaab will punish those not following their instructions e.g. women not using Hijab or not covering their body properly. Punishments in the shape of public beatings are being reported for most offences.[86]

Punishment such as beheadings or amputations in Al-Shabaab controlled areas would usually not be carried out at check-points, but rather with a proper audience in order to state an example.[87] However, they may shoot someone at a checkpoint for no other reason than to state an example.[88]

Al-Shabaab has also been known to stop access to areas for delivery of humanitarian response i.e. vaccinations, food, nutrition etc.[89]

One source stated that Al-Shabaab makes quick judicial decisions, and in the minds of many people living in Al-Shabaab controlled areas this judicial process is often perceived to be relatively fair. That is why some people might favor Al-Shabaab.[90]

3.2 Forced recruitment by Al-Shabaab
In Al-Shabaab controlled areas forced recruitment takes place on a regular basis as families and young men have no viable choice other than to adhere to the rules and regulations imposed by Al-Shabaab.[91]

Al-Shabaab may recruit young boys and girls instead of tax payment or by offering money to the families. In case the family refuses, Al-Shabaab would kill the family members.[92]

One source stated that Al-shabaab does not recruit by force in Somalia, but that there is an element of indoctrination of the young men, primarily teenagers, joining Al-Shabaab.[93]

3.3 Forced marriages to Al-Shabaab
Forced marriage without parental consent of teenage girls to Al-Shabaab fighters or Al-Shabaab elders continue to be reported from Al-Shabaab controlled areas.[94] One source stated that the girl or their families could be killed by Al-Shabaab if they do not accept the marriage.[95]

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[85] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Humanitarian worker in Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[86] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[87] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[88] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[89] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[90] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[91] UNHCR Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[92] International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[93] Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[94] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[95] Humanitarian worker in Somalia

4. Freedom of movement between areas in S/C Somalia

Moving by road is a challenge and a complex task for ordinary citizens in S/C Somalia. Armed clashes, poor infrastructure, checkpoints by Al-Shabaab, government forces and other armed actors are risks for those travelling.[96]

At such checkpoints travelers are reported to risk being exposed to a number of incidents with varying degrees of scope and intensity. Those include but are not limited to robbery, extortion, questioning, harassment, physical abuse including sexual violence and detention.[97]

Somalis do travel by road in S/C Somalia but each time they would carefully weigh the purpose of their travel against the risks involved. The risks involved are great and ordinary Somalis would only travel when they do not have other options, e.g. during health emergencies or food insecurities.[98]

According to one source, Al-Shabaab has no interest in hindering people in leaving Al-Shabaab-controlled areas for medical assistance elsewhere. Denial of access to treatment of persons in serious medical conditions could undermine Al-Shabaab's control in an area.[99]

4.1. Commercial air travel

There are commercial flights between several cities in S/C Somalia but the connections and schedules are changing sporadically.[100] One source mentioned that as of May 2015 there were flights from Mogadishu to Belet Weyne, Baidoa and possibly also Kismayo.[101] UNHCR Somalia stated that Baidoa and Kismayo airports are used by a number of commercial airlines.

However, according to UNHCR Somalia the general population in S/C Somalia would not be able to afford to take flights when travelling between cities. On the contrary, one source stated that travelling by flight is the most common means of transportation for ordinary people in S/C Somalia, even despite the higher cost involved.[102]

4.2 Travel from Al-Shabaab areas to towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence

Travelling between Al-Shabaab controlled areas and areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence is considered to be extremely dangerous and challenging due the many Al-Shabaab checkpoints.[103]

At Al-Shabaab checkpoints Al-Shabaab will conduct searches and in one instance, a refugee returnee's smartphone was destroyed as Al-Shabaab is very cautious of westernized elements from the outside. Also refugee returnees with branded non food items from Dadaab in Kenya were questioned by Al-Shabaab.[104]

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[96] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)

[97] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C), International organization working in S/C Somalia (D), Humanitarian worker in Somalia

[98] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)

[99] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

[100] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)

[101] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

[102] International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)

[103] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia

[104] UNHCR Somalia

People do travel from Al-Shabaab controlled areas to areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence. However, it depends on the individual's relationship with Al-Shabaab and how those individuals weigh the risks involved against the purpose of the trip.[105]

One source explained that any person leaving Al-Shabaab controlled areas would be questioned about the purpose, destination and duration of their travel.[106]

If a person decides to permanently leave an area controlled by Al-Shabaab and relocate to areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence, the person would build a false story about the reason for leaving in order not to raise suspicion from Al-Shabaab. If Al-Shabaab found out that the person was giving false information he could be killed.[107]

Likewise, every time people return to an Al-Shabaab controlled area they risk being accused of spying and collaborating with the government which could lead to execution, severe beatings and detention.[108]

4.3 Groups at risk

Particular groups at risk when travelling from Al-Shabaab controlled areas to areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence could include but are not limited to youths, in particular young men, women and government supporters or those perceived as such.[109]

Youth in particular are at risk when travelling to and from Al-Shabaab controlled areas as they are targeted to join Al-Shabaab or militias.[110]

The risk facing Somalis from abroad returning to an Al-Shabaab controlled area depends on the profile of the person returning. There is a concern that Al-Shabaab might target intellectuals, human rights activists, business people and those potentially looking as possible future government leaders or those supporting or sympathizing with the government or perceived to do so. Ordinary Somalis would not be targets as such, but they could be followed and spied upon by Al-Shabaab.[111]

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[105] Humanitarian worker in Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B)
[106] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[107] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[108] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[109] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[110] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[111] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

5. Livelihood in cities with AMISOM/SNAF presence

Somalia continues to be one of the most complex humanitarian emergencies in the world. Access to livelihood such as accommodation, health services and employment opportunities in S/C Somalia should thus be viewed in this particular context.[112]

There has been a gradual improvement in food security since the end of the famine in 2012. However, since February 2014 the number of people unable to meet their basic food requirements increased by 20 percent to 3 million. The situation remains very fragile and external shocks could create a new emergency.[113]

Somalia's Gross Domestic Product and living standards are among the lowest in the world. The population is dependent on foreign aid. It remains unrated in comparison with the other developing countries due to severe lack of reliable data caused by ongoing political instability.[114]

Therefore, in all cities of S/C Somalia, including Mogadishu access to basic social services are limited for the general population.[115]

5.1 Role of clan and family

Both clan and family, including the extended and distant family, continue to be one of the most important factors in terms of gaining acceptance, security, as well as access to basic necessities such as accommodation and food.[116] It was added that there are "blurry lines" between what is defined as extended family and what is defined as clan.[117]

A person relocating to a new area would expect acceptance from his clan in the local community. That acceptance from the clan informs people that a person is known by someone and where that person belongs and thereby constitutes the protection a person can get from his clan. One would not ask the clan for other resources or money. Financial assistance, accommodation etc. all begins at the family level.[118]

However, if a person has no nuclear family or relatives in an area the clan can provide support if it has the resources or provide links to other clan members who may be willing to support a newly arrived person.[119]

5.2 Capacity of clan and family

As a general rule, Somalis will assist even very distant relatives coming from a different area as long as there is a clan connection, provided they have the capacity to do so. However, in S/C Somalia the concept of clan solidarity has been overstretched, and many families and clan networks find themselves unable to respond to the needs of their displaced relatives.[120]

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[112] International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)
[113] International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)
[114] International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)
[115] International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)
[116] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Humanitarian worker in Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)
[117] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[118] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[119] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[120] Humanitarian worker in Somalia, UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

As a consequence, persons leaving Al-Shabaab areas and attempting to relocate to cities or towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence will be forced to settle in IDP settlements unless they have nuclear or extended family with the necessary resources to support them.[121]

Also for single women with or without children, access to livelihoods would depend on the status and resources of their family in the area.[122]

There has been an increase of forced evictions of IDPs and the urban poor from public and private land and buildings in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Luuq, Bossasso and Baidoa due to increasing land prices, returning Diaspora with money and the fact that authorities have been gaining areas previously under Al-Shabaab control.[123]

In urban areas such as Mogadishu a person returning would still have to somehow be identified by the local community in order to gain acceptance. Depending on the skills and capacity of the person returning, he or she might be self-sufficient and would not as a rule face clan harassment. If a person is weak and less resourceful he or she would need support from family members, relatives or close network in order to get housing, money etc.[124]

In Mogadishu, the returning Somali diaspora are usually people with a network or a family in Mogadishu and they are often returning to recover their property, establish businesses, visit relatives or to work in the government. Given their socio-economic status this category of returnee are self-reliant, resilient and would not normally end up in the same situation as IDPs in Mogadishu.[125]

5.3 Local clan structures

The clan composition in a town would in general reflect the clan composition in the surrounding areas and villages in the district of that town.[126]

However, one source explained that the district capitals may have the same variety of clans as the surrounding areas, but the quantitative proportions of each clan inside the district capitals may differ from those of the surrounding area. It is important to note that the clan distribution in S/C Somalia has been affected by the many years of conflict and internal displacement.[127]

The same source emphasized that clan composition in S/C Somalia should be considered dynamic and that it therefore is not possible to state anything definite about the exact composition of clans in an area.[128]

5.4 Health, education and employment

Basic medical care is generally available in the larger urban centres of S/C Somalia, even though the quality and access to these medical services is subjected to local differences and instability.[129] Some remote rural

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[121] UNHCR Somalia, Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[122] Humanitarian worker in Somalia
[123] International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)
[124] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[125] UNHCR Somalia
[126] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, UNHCR Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (D), International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[127] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[128] Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia
[129] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia, International organization working in S/C Somalia (B), International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)

areas of S/C Somalia have no public medical care facilities, which is why many people will have to travel to the nearest urban center in order to get medical attention.[130]

Very basic education would be available in some urban centers in S/C Somalia but schools lack the capacity to provide quality education. Most rural towns and villages only offer Koranic school education.[131]

Employment opportunities, although subject to local differences, are in general limited in S/C Somalia and unemployment is high, in particular in rural areas and among the youth.[132]

Very often, economic opportunities, including employment are to a large extent determined by familial and clan ties. Therefore, employment might be more difficult to find for minority groups, widowed women, and migrants without families.[133]

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[130] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[131] UNHCR Somalia
[132] Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia
[133] UNHCR Somalia

Annex A – Notes from meetings with sources consulted

UNHCR Somalia

UNHCR Somalia referred to the "International Protection Considerations for persons fleeing S/C Somalia"[134] January 2014 as well as to UNHCRs position on returns to S/C Somalia[135] June 2014 as the relevant guidance. The security situation in most parts of S/C Somalia continues to be volatile[136] and the capacity of the State and its institutions to protect the civilian population remains weak[137]. Protracted armed conflict has weakened community structures and those of law and order. Reports of serious human rights violations continue and large parts of S/C Somalia remain under the effective control of non-state armed groups.[138]

Since 8 December 2014, UNHCR Somalia has been supporting the spontaneous return of Somali refugees in Kenya to selected destinations in the Juba Valley in southern Somalia where humanitarian access is possible. However, the Agency stated that, at the moment, conditions in Somalia are not yet conducive for safe, dignified and sustainable mass refugee returns to S/C Somalia where a non-international armed conflict is still ongoing. UNHCR Somalia stressed that rigorous procedures are in place in countries of asylum, notably Dadaab, Kenya, to provide up to date information on conditions in areas of return and to counsel refugees who approach UNHCR Somalia to ensure that their decision to return to Somalia is both informed and voluntary.

In S/C Somalia, there are areas controlled by Al-Shabaab and areas where AMISOM and the Somali Government are present following the two military offensives conducted in 2014. Presence by AMISOM/SNAF in these locations does not mean there has been an improvement in the protection environment as limited progress has been made with regard to stabilization, to try to ensure security for the civilian population, and to establish governance structures and access to basic services and livelihood opportunities. Moreover, many of these towns are still difficult to access by road since Al-Shabaab is often present in the surrounding areas and has established both fixed and ad hoc checkpoints on the main supply routes (MSR).

So far in 2015, there have been no significant changes to conditions for return in the areas where AMISOM/ SNAF have newly established presence from those described in the 2014 UNHCR guidelines. These locations remain extremely fragile. In this regard, the assessment of the situation in the 2014 UNHCR guidelines remains valid.

All of Middle Juba region is an Al-Shabaab area and there is no government control.

In Mogadishu a steady trend of Somali diaspora returning from abroad to Mogadishu was noted. Usually these are people with a network or a family in that city and are often returning to recover their property, establish businesses, visit relatives or to work in the government. Given their socio-economic status this category of returnee are self-reliant, resilient and would not normally end up in the same situation as IDPs in Mogadishu.

The absorption capacity of Mogadishu is overstretched and mass returns to the city and its environs in the current environment could have serious humanitarian consequences unless urgent and substantial action is taken to comprehensively address the situation of IDPs in particular. An assessment by ICRC in 2012 indicates that there are approximately 369,000 IDPs in Mogadishu while UNHCR recorded 39,000 forced evictions in the city from January to March 2015.

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[134] UNHCR, *International Protection Considerations with Regard to people fleeing Southern and Central Somalia*, January 2014, HCR/PC/SOM/14/01, http:www.refworld.org/docid/52d7fc5f4.html

[135] UNHCR, *UNHCR Position on Returns to Southern and Central Somalia*, June 2014, http://www.refworld.org/docid/53a04d044.html

[136] UNHCR, *UNHCR Position on Returns to Southern and Central Somalia*, June 2014, http://www.refworld.org/docid/53a04d044.html

[137] UN News Service, *Somalia's efforts to build cohesive State require international support, Security Council told*, 11 March 2014, http://www.refworld.org/docid/5322d9f24.html

[138] UNHCR, *International Protection Considerations with Regard to people fleeing Southern and Central Somalia*, January 2014, HCR/PC/SOM/14/01, http:www.refworld.org/docid/52d7fc5f4.html

Right now people have begun to return to Mogadishu from Yemen, as a result of the crisis in that country. Inter-agency contingency planning as of March 2015 indicated that as many as 100.000 Somali refugees could return to all areas of Somalia from Yemen, some 40% of who would return to Mogadishu. These planning figures have since been revised downward to 20,000 Somali returns up to September 2015 with the same percentage estimates for Mogadishu (8,000).

Al-Shabaab is present in much of the territory of S/C Somalia, including those areas in the control of AMISOM/SNAF. In this regard, Al-Shabaab often maintains presence at the outskirts of many towns and in village communities where AMISOM/SNAF and FGS structures exists in S/C Somalia. In some towns their presence would be less than 10 km from the centre and in other towns it would be even less.

Moving by road is a challenge and a complex task for ordinary citizens in S/C Somalia. Poor infrastructure, bad roads during the rainy season, checkpoints by Al-Shabaab, militia and government forces all expose civilians to protection risks.

Due to the ongoing clashes between AMISOM/SNAF and Al-Shabaab including airstrikes by the Kenyan Defence Forces and action by other armed actors, makes travel by road challenging. Additionally, there are checkpoints along the roads, where armed actors, including the SNAF, collect money, conduct searches, harass and intimidate the population.

Al-Shabaab's tactics ahead of military offensives by AMISOM/SNAF remains unpredictable according to UN sources. Previously Al-Shabaab encouraged people to stay in their homes and villages while recently, Al-Shabaab is reported to be forcing populations to flee in advance of military activity. Recently, Al-Shabaab are reported to have destroyed basic services in order to force populations to leave certain areas ahead of anticipated military action by AMISOM/SNAF.

In Xudur in Bakool region, the villages on the outskirts of town are under Al-Shabaab control. Recently Al-Shabaab, suspecting an offensive from AMISOM, forced people to leave the villages and destroyed the wells and infrastructure in order to force people to leave.

The people from the surrounding villages fled to Xudur, where the clan composition is the same as the surrounding area. This is typically the case in villages surrounding cities in S/C Somalia. Although it should be noted that there exist other smaller clans that live in these towns.

The concept of clan solidarity has been overstretched by the size of needs of displaced populations, meaning that even though clans may want to help IDPs, they may lack the capacity to do so. Inevitably some people will not be able to find shelter as overstretched clan networks find themselves unable to respond. Thus people who are displaced are often forced to live in IDP camps. The civil war and its lasting effects, the unprecedented famine in 2011 and other shocks have stretched the community capacity structures to breaking point. The clan-system as such still exists, but community capacities and capacities of the individual clans are being seriously overstretched.

Internal Flight Alternative is not an option in S/C Somalia and nothing has changed in this regard since the 2014 UNHCR guidelines on international protection considerations were issued.

Some cities under AMISOM/SNAF control could be described as islands in Al-Shabaab territory. For example, the situation in Bay, Bakool and Hiraan regions is such that AMISOM is struggling to secure the main supply roads to the cities / towns in which they have a presence. Al-Shabaab maintains checkpoints a few kilometers outside of cities/ towns.

The general population in S/C Somalia would not be able to afford to take flights when travelling between cities. Most ordinary Somalis flee on foot from their home area in times of crisis. Some would take minibuses but the price is high due to the extra amount of money needed to pay at checkpoints along the roads. These checkpoints could be Al-Shabaab, SNAF or other armed actors. Others use donkey carts to move and transport their belongings.

Given the limited access to areas under the control of Al-Shabaab, the scale/prevalance of human rights violations is not known. Cases of abuses such as extortion, harassment, illegal arrest and detention, and even beheadings have been reported in 2015. There continue to be reports of beheadings and other severe punishments but the prevalence is unknown. It should be emphasized that when it comes incidents in Al-Shabaab controlled areas there is a lack of reporting and a lack of access. It is thus very difficult to measure the prevalence of such severe punishments.

According to political analysts, Al-Shabaab is not as strong an organization as was previously the case. Reports indicate that its capacity has been severely undermined following the killing of their leader by AMISOM/SNAF. Nonetheless, Al-Shabaab still controls the majority of the South Central zone and frequently conducts hit and run attacks or in some cases, sustained clashes in government controlled areas.

Throughout all regions in S/C Somalia Al-Shabaab has a presence and influence in several areas ("pockets") where it is able to force the local population to pay taxes.

Generally the situation in S/C Somalia does not simply evolve around the conflict between Al-Shabaab and the government, but there is also a lot of focus on clan-conflicts and the ongoing discussions on state-building and federalism. Use of the term "relative safety" should therefore be very cautious.

Forced recruitment by Al-Shabaab does take place via the established networks, even in areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence.

Women are also forcibly recruited to work for Al-Shabaab, e.g. as cooks and wives for the jihadists.

Question: Are these women minors? Are they forcibly recruited even in towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence, or only in Al-Shabaab controlled areas?

Answer: Yes, there are minors too. Recruitment is reported to be happening everywhere including in neighbouring countries and beyond.

In areas where Al-Shabaab has firm control, families and young men have no viable choice other than to adhere to the rules and regulations imposed by the Al-Shabaab. Previously, Al-Shabaab gave some money to the men's families, but it is unclear how the situation is today, since Al-Shabaab might be challenged economically.

In the Al-Shabaab training camps, young men are being taught that they are contributing to some cause, and that they are doing what is right.

There are 5 checkpoints between Kismayo and Dhobley, 2 of them are manned by Al-Shabaab, while 3 are operated by the SNAF. At Al-Shabaab's checkpoints Al-Shabaab will conduct searches and in one instance, a refugee returnee's smartphone was destroyed as Al-Shabaab is very cautious of westernized elements from the outside. Refugee returnees also with branded non food items from Dadaab were questioned by Al-Shabaab.

AMISOM's presence in a town does not necessarily entail a normalization of the situation. Al-Shabaab continues to attack such towns and supply routes leading thereto, including convoys into towns. The living situation in Al-Shabaab controlled areas and areas that recently have been "recovered" by AMISOM is therefore not dramatically different. For example, the quality of services available is very dire. In terms of food shortage and the humanitarian situation in general the situation for the civilian population might even get worse after such a "recovery" of towns by AMISOM/SNAF.

Mogadishu

In Mogadishu - the SFG continues to face significant challenges in providing basic security to its populations. Thus the reality on the ground, as reported by observers, remains that civilians are injured and killed every week in targeted attacks by gunmen, or attacks involving IEDs and grenades.

The continued high number of security incidents, including targeted killings of journalists, judiciary, government officials and others, and fighting between government forces and affiliated militias still dominant in parts of the city illustrate these challenges.

For Somalis in Mogadishu, it is very difficult to survive without a support network, and newcomers to the city, particularly when they do not belong to the clans or nuclear families established in the district in question, or when they originate from an area formerly or presently controlled by an insurgent group, face a precarious existence in the capital. Often, they are forced to settle in IDP settlements where living conditions are deplorable and human rights violations commonly reported – with no durable solutions in sight.

Luuq

Security

Between 2008 and 2010, Al-Shabaab had control of most of Gedo region after ousting local warlords. In 2011 allied forces (SNA, AMISOM, Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF)) have taken back control of most major towns in the region's districts from Al-Shabaab – except for Bardheere. As a result, the region has been able to re-establish some district-level governments.

Despite the re-emergence of these authorities, Al-Shabaab is still able to operate and execute attacks in towns where it has lost control like Belet Hawa and has a significant presence in rural areas. For example Elboon located 45 kilometres from Luuq is still controlled by Al-Shabaab.

Luuq District is enjoying a relatively secure environment as a result of AMISOM/SNAF presence, particularly in close proximity to Luuq town. That notwithstanding, Al-Shabaab remains a persistent threat in remote areas of the district where AMISOM and government troops are less present. Luuq town is perceived to be relatively safer than the surrounding as there is only one entrance to the town, which is guarded by a checkpoint.

The presence of Al-Shabaab is still reported outside the town, but this has no major impact on the freedom of movement of civilian population and goods. The AMISOM forces consist of ENDF who holds the checkpoint at the main road entrance of Luuq.

According to field sources, there are currently no forced recruitments in the district as a result of AMISOM/SNAF presence. It should be noted however that the situation across South Central is fluid and trends change rapidly.

Gedo region is inhabited by people from different communities among which the Marehan community are the majority, especially in the southern part of the region. Luuq district in the north is also mainly inhabited by the Marehan, however, there are more mixed communities here than in the south part of the region. The Rahanweyn, Dir, Sheikhaal and Gasara-Gude communities can also be found in Luuq.

Freedom of movement

There is a relative freedom of movement inside Luuq town and in its surroundings for ordinary Somali citizens.

Vehicle movement along main roads is considered to be more dangerous as a result of Al-Shabaab threats. For example the road leading to Garbahaarey, the roads around Shaatalow Village, as well as the main road leading to Mogadishu and Bay/Bakool regions are all considered to have considerable amount of risk due to Al-Shabaab presence.

Luuq town also has an unpaved airstrip located in the north of the town, which is mostly used by UN Agencies and international NGOs for transportation of goods and people.

Education

Luuq only offers primary education; the closest areas for secondary and tertiary education are in Garbahaarey and Bardera. The quality of education in the district is also very low as a result of untrained teachers and poor curriculums. The cost per student is roughly USD 5 per student per month.

Employment

Access to material safety in the district is greatly limited by the lack of employment opportunities both within Luuq town and rural villages within the district. Dominant Marehan and Rahanweyn clans who monopolize businesses in sectors that offer the most employment opportunities further exacerbate this situation. It is very difficult for minority clans and migrant groups to find employment opportunities in agriculture, construction, salt mining, and major trade industries.

Health

Luuq has one public hospital (Luuq District Hospital), and one private hospital (Al-Aqsa General Hospital). Both have very limited capacity, especially for inpatient cases. Particularly IDPs are dependent on free medical services by NGOs in the district. Currently there is a funding vacuum in the Health sector in Luuq, and the quality of healthcare provision is extremely low.

Kismayo

Security

Kismayo is one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in Somalia, with approximately 40 subclans inhabiting the city. The region is predominantly comprised of three major subsets of the Darod clan (the Marehan, Ogaden and Majerten), and the Hawiye. The Ogaden mostly occupy the border region, with a large territory stretching into Northeastern Kenya. They focus on livestock and trade with Kenyan markets, and are the primary power holders in Jubbaland. There is also a sizeable presence of Somali Bantu population. Clan identity remains the primary source of access to power, resources, land and economic opportunities. Alliances are fluid, shifting in response to the ever-changing relations of power between clans.

With Kismayo now under the control of a fluid mixture of armed groups, mostly aligned with AMISOM troops and the Ras Kamboni militia which are progressively integrating into regular forces, with pockets of rival clan militia and Al-Shabaab presence, traditional leadership has found certain space to again exert their authority, albeit in a precarious and often dangerous fashion. Al-Shabaab has managed to exploit clan tension in the city of Kismayo, and has managed to gain support within certain minority groups. The city is still very vulnerable to sporadic attacks by the militant group, and many surrounding villages are still influenced by Al-Shabaab.

One successful tactic employed by Al-Shabaab has been to exploit clan conflict through building up support for their cause amongst marginalized communities.

Persistent conflicts between rival militias over revenue generating resources pose serious risks to stability in the region. Although improved, the security situation in Kismayo still remains volatile. SNA and AMISOM continue to be the target of Al-Shabaab attacks often resulting in civilian casualties.

If a person returned to an area where he does not have strong [clan] connections, protection would tend to be weaker than if he/she could rely on clan and community support and solidarity. People without clan affiliations in areas of return have a higher risk of experiencing protection problems.

Freedom of movement

Kismayo's air transportation needs are served by Kismayo International Airport, located about 10 km from the city. The airport is used by Humanitarian airlines (UNHAS/WFP), military airlines (AMISOM/SNA/KDF), and private airlines (Jubba Airways, Daallo Airways, Transom Airways, East Africa Airways, and occasionally Sky Airways.

As the epicentre of trade in the region, most of the roads leading to Kismayo experience frequent problems as Al-Shabaab forces illegally tax traders and transporters of goods.

Access to the villages outside the town and adjacent districts is still limited as most parts are still under the control of Al-Shabaab. In town, curfews are imposed for few hours when security operations are carried out.

Education

There are no public schools and the few privately managed schools lack the capacity to provide quality education. Most rural towns and villages only offer Koranic school education.

Health

There is one public referral hospital in Kismayo called Kismayo General Hospital, which offers ambulance services, and has an operating theatre. In addition there are three main private hospitals called: a) Peace hospital, b) Al Shifa hospital, and c) Kismayo University Hospital.

Employment

The Kismayo urban centre provides the majority of the region's income-generating opportunities. This often low-paid work includes port-based labour, fishing, construction, quarrying and other physical labour for men; domestic servant work, shop-keeping, petty commodity sales and seasonal farming activities for women;. Such jobs fluctuate heavily in conjunction with the conflict and violence environment.

Housing

Lack of housing is a major issue in Kismayo and forced evictions are commonly reported.

Baidoa

Security

Baidoa has experienced a significant improvement in security since February 2014, when allied forces began a sequence of offenses that would eventually free major towns, roads, and territories from al Shabaab rule in south central Somalia. Although security still remains unpredictable and SNAF and AMISOM, in particular, continue to be the target of Al-Shabaab attacks, resulting often in civilian casualties, a continued focus by AMISOM/SNAF on stabilizing Baidoa has resulted in a steady, though not broad, decline in incidents.

Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of Baidoa's administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals.

SNA forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of the city, with certain villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides.

Question: Would you say that the two paragraphs above would also be true for other towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence in S/C Somalia, such as Qoryooley, Baraawe, Luuq, Ceel Buur, Belet Weyne and Kismayo?

Answer: Yes, the above paragraphs would be true for the mentioned locations.

Freedom of Movement/Access

Air transportation in Baidoa is served by Shati-Gadud airport used mostly by humanitarian agencies, AMISOM, and some commercial airlines like Transom airways and East African Airlines.

As the epicentre of trade in the region, most of the roads leading to Baidoa experience frequent problems as Al-Shabaab forces illegally tax traders and transporters of goods.

AMISOM and SNA forces have put up security blockades around residential parts of the district limiting the freedom of movement for citizens. Curfews are also commonly imposed at night.

Many hazards exist along the key supply routes in and out of the city, and a major minefield is suspected to be located not much more than 10 km northwest of the city. Improvised Exploding Devices (IED) related incidents, which in the last years have been the main source of civilian casualties, are concentrated along key roads and supply routes, the very same routes that IDPs take when arriving in Baidoa.

Health

Baidoa has one public hospital 'Baidoa General Hospital' which is under management of Swiss-Kaalmo, and one private hospital 'Bayhaaw Hospital' under management of SAMA (Salama Medical Agency).

The health services available to lower income and poor people are also very limited in terms of medical supplies and ability to undertake complicated surgery.

Education

Baidoa benefited from the countrywide campaign led by the Directorate of education. Some 7 schools with about 6,000 students and 83 teachers are currently under the campaign.

However, the majority of teachers lack basic teaching skills, which negatively affect the quality of the teaching offered in those schools. School fees and distance are the main obstacles for enrolment.

Employment

Mirife sub-clans tend to occupy the majority of top-level jobs such as accounting, engineering, managerial functions within NGOs, and heads of larger business companies. These clans include Leysan, Hareen, Hadama, Elay, and Luway, and typically come from Bay or Bakool districts.

Less well-educated people, often from minority clans tend to be self employed conducting petty trade activities with low levels of skills requirements.

Many rural populations have been pushed to urban areas in search for work; however, increased competition in these areas leaves very limited opportunities for employment. Job opportunities as mostly offered through clan-affiliation, making it particularly challenging for people who come from other parts of the country to find employment in Baidoa.

Economic opportunities are almost exclusively determined by familial and clan ties, making the district very hostile to minority groups, widowed women, and migrants without families.

Humanitarian international NGO working in S/C Somalia

The organization is present throughout S/C Somalia, including in Mogadishu.

Mogadishu, Middle Shabelle

Mogadishu, Benadir district and Middle Shabelle is the scene of frequent Al-Shabaab attacks targeting AMISOM/SNAF, government institutions and officials and UN agencies. Softer targets include ministries and learning institutions. These attacks are mostly in the form of explosions, road side IEDs, VBIEDS, suicide attacks and hand grenade attacks.

Currently Al-Shabaab is carrying out hit and run attacks. Al-Shabaab carefully plans the attack and then hits and quickly retreats. Hand grenade attacks are currently the main modus operandi of Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab has gained access to their targets by disguising themselves as SNG police or AMISOM.

Other frequent incidents include targeted killings and assassination of government officials and other persons believed to be supporting the government.

There are few open confrontations or front lines between Al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNAF.

Kismayo, Lower Juba region

In Kismayo, AMISOM and local militias have secured an area 5-10 km from the town centre. Anything outside that area is controlled by Al-Shabaab. However, AMISOM continue to liberate more areas albeit at a slow pace.

Most of the routes out of Kismayo are not easy to travel due to Al-Shabaab. Most of the routes out of Kismayo to the Gedo areas in the north are controlled by Al-Shabaab.

It is difficult and dangerous to get supplies by road to Luuq from Kismayo. Sometimes international organizations will pay money to Al-Shabaab and other armed actors in order to get humanitarian supplies through. It was emphasized that for business purposes you can reach anywhere in S/C Somalia as long as you pay the right people, including Al-Shabaab, SNAF and other militia.

Belet weyne, Hiraan region

Most of Hiraan region is controlled by the AMISOM contingent from Djibouti. Main security incidents reported in Belet Weyne and Hiraan region are targeted assassinations. There are also clashes between AMISOM and Al-Shabaab and clan-conflicts. Explosions and suicide bombings are not a common occurrence in Belet Weyne.

Assassinations in Hiraan region is mainly carried out by Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab may target people spying for AMISOM or the Government or anyone they perceive as an ally or associate of the administration and government. Assassinations have not been an issue in clan conflicts because those killed in clan conflicts are mostly killed in the open.

Baidoa, Bay region

Baidoa is the scene of a similar modus operandi from Al-Shabaab as in Mogadishu. There are frequent Al-Shabaab attacks targeting AMISOM/SNAF, government institutions and officials and UN agencies. Softer targets include ministries and learning institutions. These attacks are mostly in the form of explosions, road side IEDs, VBIEDS, suicide attacks and hand grenade attacks.

Al-Shabaab carries out frequent assassinations of government officials and moderate religious leaders perceived to be supporting the government.

Clan elders are in general respected and not targeted, unless they are outspoken against Al-Shabaab or perceived as such. Religious leaders opposing Al-Shabaab interpretation of religion are the main target in the communities.

Luuq, Gedo region

The city is under the control of AMISOM/SNAF. AMISOM consists of Ethiopian soldiers in that area.

Al-Shabaab has no easy access to Luuq due to the strategic location of the city, protected by a crocodile infested river an all sides and with only one entry point. However, immediately outside of town Al-Shabaab has easy access and controls the surrounding villages. AMISOM is able to detect Al-Shabaab and able to confront them.

Doolow, near the Kenyan border is considered very safe and is under AMISOM control. The road between Doolow and Luuq is relatively safe.

AMISOM only controls maybe 2 km around Doolow town. Beyond that AMISOM has no control or access.

In general in Lower and Middle Juba it would be a safe assumption that areas not under AMISOM control are controlled by Al-Shabaab.

Dhuusamarreeb, Galgaduud region

Question: Do you have any information about Ceel Buur and Dhuusamarreeb in Galgaduud? Who is controlling the towns and do they have AMISOM presence or other armed actors?

Answer: Ceel Buur is controlled by Al-Shabaab. Dhuusamarreeb is the HQ of the central state, and the area is contested by Ahlu Sunna WalJama'a (ASW) who often fights with SNG for control. There have been negotiations between SNG and ASW which failed several times. This dispute is part of political differences between SNG and ASW

In general as long as AMISOM has a presence in a town, Al-Shabaab will not be able to retake the town, but instead will carry out a lot of hit and run attacks in order to destabilize the town and region. Whenever AMISOM exits a town, it is crucial to ensure that government forces are left in control of the town, otherwise Al-Shabaab might attempt to retake the town.

Al-Shabaab will not engage AMISOM in a direct confrontation in several locations [except under specific circumstances] in S/C Somalia. Al-Shabaab has a deliberate hit and run tactic.

Al-Shabaab has sympathizers in most cities of S/C Somalia. Al-Shabaab has a clandestine presence in some towns with an AMISOM presence, where they secretly collect intelligence.

The degree and level of control or influence between AMISOM/SNAF and Al-Shabaab should be considered to be fluent in areas where both actors have a presence.

Question: From the meetings we had in Nairobi and Mogadishu it was our understanding that the following is true for several towns in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence, such as Qoryooley, Baraawe, Luuq, Baidoa, Ceel Buur, Belet Weyne, Kismayo and Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of the towns' administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals.

AMISOM/SNAF forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of a city, with surrounding villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides. Would you agree?

Answer: Yes.

Access to livelihood

The clan composition in a town would in general reflect the clan composition in the surrounding areas and villages in the district of that town.

Clans continue to be important in terms of getting acceptance by the local community in which one lives. There is a thin line between the definition of clans and distant relatives.

Regarding access to livelihood for newly arrived persons the source stated that as long as the person returning is from the same clan as the community in the area he or she will get acceptance and help if possible. The clan connections actually work in terms of support. However, it depends on the economic strength of the clan community and that is decisive of the support a person will be able to get. It was emphasized that resources are stretched in S/C Somalia.

The absorption of new arrivals into the local communities might be a challenge. New arrivals will thus need some resources in order to start up a livelihood upon return.

If a newly arrived person is known to the receiving community he or she will be safe. It can be very difficult or impossible to gain acceptance from the local community if a person is not from that area or not known by the local community and would hence experience difficulties in getting access to basic services. The same applies if the person is returning from the Disapora to a place where he or she is not known by the community.

The nuclear family is better than the clan in terms of getting help and assistance with accommodation, money, food etc. However, if a person has no nuclear family or relatives in an area the clan can provide support if it has the resources or provide links to other clan members who may be willing to support a newly arrived person.

In urban areas the situation is different. Urban areas are more cosmopolitan, although a person returning would still have to somehow be identified in order to gain acceptance. It is also depending on the skills and capacity of the person returning. A business man that is self-sufficient would not as a rule face clan harassment. If a person is weak and less resourceful he or she would need support from family members, relatives or close network in order to get housing, money etc.

Employment opportunities are limited in Somalia and local youth compete for the available opportunities mostly in the humanitarian sectors. For new arrivals it would be a challenge to find employment.

When coming from abroad, you would typically pre-identify your talents (craftsmanship etc.) before your arrival, to make yourself more attractive to the receiving community.

Unemployment is high in Somalia and this makes the new arrivals vulnerable if they have no alternative source of income before they settle down. The number of unemployed youth is very high.

Turkish airlines fly from Istanbul to Mogadishu three times a week and many young Somalis are travelling back and forth. The new arrivals are looked upon as more competition in terms of employment by those already in Somalia.

In rural areas there are limited livelihood opportunities such as casual or skilled work, as most locations are surrounded by Al-Shabaab. Other locations have continuous clan conflicts and therefore one will look for opportunities within ones close family members.

Access to land is a major issue in terms of conflicts in S/C Somalia. The clan can provide assistance if a person wants to buy land. Many returnees' families have property, which can be used by the returnees and thus provides for a soft landing upon return.

Land is a key issue of contention for newly arrived persons. Land tenure issues are not formalized and not many host communities are willing to resettle newcomers if they do not belong to their clans. If a person returning wants to be a farmer he would need the acceptance of the clan in that area to do so.

Mogadishu, Kismayo and Belet Weyne are potential locations with better livelihood opportunities compared to other places in S/C Somalia. There are upcoming or improving livelihood conditions such as markets, movements and access to establish business ventures or farming practices along the riverine areas.

Luuq is somehow different; it is located near the Ethiopian and Kenyan borders with poor livelihood opportunities but with access to the bordering Kenyan and Ethiopian markets.

Some remote areas of S/C Somalia have no public medical care systems. These facilities are mostly found in urban locations. Many people therefore have to go to the nearest urban center in order to get medical attention.

In Mogadishu there are several private hospitals. Besides the Medina hospital and AMISOM facilities there is not much access to advanced healthcare in Mogadishu and the rest of S/C Somalia. In other towns there are private hospitals but the standard is not very high and the medical infrastructure is very basic.

In most Al-Shabaab controlled areas there are no formal structures and so access to basic services and accommodation facilities depend on the clans and communities living in these areas.

Question: Would you agree that persons leaving Al-Shabaab areas and attempting to relocate to cities or towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence will end up as IDPs unless they have family or relatives in those places. Family should be understood as the extended family?

Answer: Yes. And also unless they have capacity to rent houses in the peri urban or urban areas. Family may be either nuclear or extended.

Question: Would you agree that many people stay in Al-Shabaab controlled areas because they do not have the luxury to leave, so they comply with Al-Shabaab's rules?

Answer: Most likely.

Targets of Al-Shabaab or other armed actors in towns under AMISOM/SNAF control

Al-Shabaabs targets of attacks include but are not limited to facilities and representatives from the following:

- AMISOM/SNAF
- UN agencies
- INGOs and local NGOs
- Government institutions and ministries
- Government officials and employees
- Learning institutions
- Persons believed to be collaborating with or spying for the government
- People who refuse to pay tax to Al-Shabaab

In addition Al-Shabaab is known to target business people in the rural districts such as Luuq, Dhuusamarreeb or Ceel Buur. Sometimes Al-Shabaab asks the business people to finance Al-Shabaab operations and if they refuse they would be killed.

The organization receives information from its sources in S/C Somalia about threats, including threats from Al-Shabaab. The organization does not appear to be the main target and is not among the soft targets. However, if Al-Shabaab is looking for a target and if there is no UN or AMISOM target at hand, then the international organizations could be the next in line. INGOs are not targeted per se, but could be a plan B for Al-Shabaab. Reference was made to the attacks on the UN in Garowe and the December attack on the UN and AMISOM areas of Mogadishu International airport.

Generally, Al-Shabaab do not prioritize low level targets, but if no other high profiled target is available, they will go for a low profile target instead if this is available.

Local NGOs may be targeted by Al-Shabaab if they are perceived to be working for the UN. The source mentioned examples of people targeted by Al-Shabaab because they were perceived to be associated with the UN. However since these incidents were under investigation further details could not be provided.

Local staff of International organizations often report receiving threats on their phones. Al-Shabaab could target local staff from INGOs or local NGOs if they cannot find their most preferred target such as AMISOM or the UN.

Al-Shabaab has also been killing humanitarian workers doing data collection in S/C Somalia. Accusing someone of spying or blasphemy gives Al-Shabaab a legit reason to kill someone.

The frequency of Al-Shabaabs attacks varies. 2014 was a year with many attacks compared to previous years.

Women

Unconfirmed reports indicate that Al-Shabaab call and send text messages to women in Mogadishu and other towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence, asking the women to join and marry Al-Shabaab fighters with threats to harm or kill the women if they refuse. However, it would not be easy for Al-Shabaab to physically access the women in these areas unless they attack and take them away as captives.

It is not easy for Al-Shabaab to get access to the women in Al-Shabaab controlled areas. The families minimize the public exposure of their women. In some Al-Shabaab controlled areas there has been sporadic reports of Al-Shabaab fighters forcefully taken women from their home. This has not been reported on a large scale or as occurring systematically.

Forced recruitment in cities under AMISOM/SNAF

There is a continuous mobilization of the youth to join Al-Shabaab. If a person refuses to join, he or she risks being killed and those who do not want to be recruited will have to relocate the youth to another area.

In cities where the government or AMISOM is in control Al-Shabaab will try other ways to recruit people, including influence through persuasion, money and appealing to the recruits through the use of religion. Al-Shabaab might also use the community for a more indirect approach, fx establishing contact to a young person through an acquaintance of the youngster, who also might deliver implicit threats.

In Al-Shabaab controlled areas Al-Shabaab's main recruitment modus is threats combined with psychological pressure and indoctrination of the youth. Al-Shabaab does not forcibly abduct youths from their home in the middle of the night.

The reason why people join Al-Shabaab is not completely clear and could include elements of ideology as well as material resources promised or provided.

Areas not under effective control of AMISOM/SNAF

In the areas they control, Al-Shabaab has full control of all aspects of society. All residents in these areas should follow any given instruction by Al-Shabaab i.e. dressing, living, marriage, tax payment (an absolute must), joining Al-Shabaab operations, shaving, spying, education etc. Failure to obey can result in serious punitive measures which include death.

Al-Shabaab imposes taxes on businessmen doing business in areas under Al-Shabaab control. Al-Shabaab also imposes such taxes in the so called liberated areas or areas with a presence of AMISOM/SNAF, but to a lesser extent.

Forced marriage

In Al-Shabaab controlled areas there are both Al-Shabaab elders and the traditional village elders. Al-Shabaab uses the traditional elders to collect zakat (tax) from the clans in an area.

In some areas controlled by Al-Shabaab the Al-Shabaab elders will demand parents to give their adolescent girls for marriage. The girl can be 13-17 of age and there is no negotiation with the family nor any discussion or consent from the girls.

The traditional village elders are in general opposed to Al-Shabaab's concept of forced marriage, but will enter negotiations with Al-Shabaab elders regarding these marriages.

Al-Shabaab Human rights violations

Al-Shabaab will punish those not following their instructions e.g. women not using Hijab or not covering their body properly. Punishments in the shape of public beatings are being reported for most offences.

Stealing could be punished with public amputations. A murder could be punished with public execution.

Al-Shabaab does not see their interpretation of sharia law as a human rights abuse but as adherence to law.

Punishment such as beheadings or amputations in Al-Shabaab controlled areas would usually not be carried out at check-points, but rather with a proper assembly as an audience.

There have not been any reports of mass killings taking place in Al-Shabaab controlled areas.

Al-Shabaab has also been known to stop access to areas for delivery of humanitarian response i.e. vaccinations, food, nutrition etc.

It was emphasized that it is not possible to state anything conclusive about the frequency of Al-Shabaabs human rights violations. There is very limited reporting from Al-Shabaab controlled areas. There might still be severe human right violations in Al-Shabaab areas but it is not reported as much as in previous years.

Returning persons from abroad

The risk facing Somalis from abroad returning to an Al-Shabaab controlled area depends on the profile of the person returning. There is a concern that Al-Shabaab might target intellectuals, human rights activists, business people and those potentially looking as possible future government leaders or those supporting or sympathizing with the government or perceived to do so.

Ordinary Somalis would not return to areas controlled by Al-Shabaab. They would rather choose to relocate to one of the urban centers. Also, ordinary Somalis would not be targets as such, but they could be followed and spied upon by Al-Shabaab.

Freedom of movement

Any place in S/C Somalia is in principle accessible. However, the practicalities and risks involved depend on who is travelling. Those who are not government supporters and not perceived as such as well as those who are not a youth can travel almost anywhere. The youth are the ones facing the most risks and challenges of travelling from both Al-Shabaab, the government and other armed actors.

Question: Could you please elaborate on what are the risks facing the people travelling and why are the youth more exposed?

Answer: Risks may include, attacks from militia, gangs, Al-Shabaab etc. Youth are targeted to join Militia and Al-Shabaab groups.

Travel from Al-Shabaab controlled area to areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence is extremely challenging. People do travel over land between villages and cities, including from Al-Shabaab controlled areas to areas with an AMISOM/SNAF presence. There are different options of travelling between villages and cities across S/C Somalia.

Question: Would you agree that people travel by busses, taxis, donkey carts and on foot between towns?

Answer: Yes. Busses, taxis, on foot, but not donkey carts. Donkey carts are used to transport goods and other agricultural products

In Al-Shabaab controlled areas, any person leaving the area will be asked a lot of questions about where he or she is going, the reason for leaving, when they are coming back. In areas with an AMISOM/SNAF presence Al-Shabaab will not be able to make these demands.

Travelling between villages in the rural areas of S/C Somalia is restricted by Al-Shabaab since Al-Shabaab controls most of the rural areas and villages. However, the local people may travel with some difficulties and would carefully consider the risks involved each time they travel. Humanitarian workers cannot travel without proper security in rural areas.

If a person decides to permanently leave from an area controlled by Al-Shabaab to one of the so-called liberated areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence, the person would build a false story about the reason for leaving in order not to raise suspicion from Al-Shabaab. If Al-Shabaab found out that the person was giving false information he could be killed. The planning of such travels should be done as quiet and secretly as possible.

Every time people return to an Al-Shabaab controlled area they risk being accused of spying and collaborating with the government which could lead to execution, severe beatings and detention. Therefore people carefully outweigh the purpose of their travel with the risks involved.

In areas with full Al-Shabaab control, Al-Shabaab detains youths, women and men passing trough Al-Shabaab controlled areas and ask questions. Sometimes people are detained for more than a month and at times they are persuaded to join Al-Shabaab or they are killed.

Al-Shabaab has no interest in hindering people in leaving Al-Shabaab-controlled areas for medical assistance elsewhere, since Al-Shabaab cannot control an area where people are dying due to medical needs.

There are commercial flights between several cities in S/C Somalia but the connections and schedules are changing sporadically. Currently there are flights from Mogadishu to Belet Weyne, Baidoa and perhaps also Kismayo.

Humanitarian worker in Somalia

The source frequently travels all over S/C Somalia and has worked ten years for UN agencies in Somalia.

Access to livelihood is depending on the presence of both clan and family in the area. There are clan clusters even in the IDP camps. Access also depends on the economic situation of the individual.

Family should be understood as the extended family that would include far cousins on both sides of the family. It was added that there are "blurry lines" between that which is defined as extended family and that which is defined as clan.

If Somalis can afford it they will assist even very distant relatives coming from a different area as long as there is a clan connection. It should be noted that at the moment many families in S/C Somalia have stretched their resources to the limit.

In the current situation every family supports at least 2-3 other families that have relocated from other areas. Every single working person in S/C Somalia already supports 2-3 other persons.

Persons returning from the west are perceived as having money or access to resources and would therefore be very welcome with their relatives if they arrived in S/C Somalia. There would be a strong anticipation that they would bring money with them or have access to money via remittances from the west which is a huge factor in the economy of Somalia.

For single women with or without children their access to livelihoods would depend on the status and resources of their family in the area.

Travelling by road in S/C Somalia is extremely dangerous for women due to the risk of sexual violence. Rape is a big risk and a common and increasing occurrence.

If the person travelling is on good terms with Al-Shabaab he or she can travel through the areas they control without problems and access to both Al-Shabaab and AMISOM areas is easy.

Al-Shabaab hands out severe punishments in an arbitrary manner in the areas they control. Recently there have not been as many reports of severe punishment for violations of Al-Shabaabs interpretation of Sharia law as before, but it is very likely that they still carry out beheadings and amputations.

Forced marriages to Al-Shabaab fighters and Al-Shabaab elders continue to be reported in Al-Shabaab controlled areas. The common age is 14-18. If the girls or their families do not accept the marriage they could be killed.

There are increasing reports that young girls are married and divorced several times to Al-Shabaab fighters and are used as toys without the knowledge of their parents. This action places young girls in increased likelihood to be abused and violated and this abuse not being reported.

When asked if Al-Shabaab would track down a woman from an Al-Shabaab controlled area unwilling to marry an Al-Shabaab fighter into a town under the control of AMISOM, the source stated that this could not be completely ruled out. Whether or not Al-Shabaab would do it would depend on the individual circumstances of the case.

It was emphasized that Al-Shabaab can track down anyone they want to track down and that you cannot disappear in Somali communities. So in case an Al-Shabaab fighter or elders was so angered by a girl's disappearance, he could track her and could then kill or kidnap her.

The situation is identical with defectors. Al-Shabaab actions are irrational one can expect anything. People are easily tracked down, and if the opportunity arises, Al-Shabaab might take revenge on a defector.

Before Al-Shabaab there were warlords all over S/C Somalia. These warlords have not disappeared completely and they are increasingly becoming more visible. Not all murders and assassinations in S/C Somalia

are related to Al-Shabaab. A lot of them are related to conflicts related to business, power and politics. Al-Shabaab has a strong interest in taking the responsibility of these murders.

Young people joining Al-Shabaab do so in order to make money and gain power in the local area. Young men in S/C Somalia have grown up with war and instability and there is a strong incentive to join a militia and carry a gun. There is a respect of armed militias and Al-Shabaab can be seen as one way of gaining that power and respect in a community. Since armed conflict is the norm, you pick the side that pays you and provides for you. There are a lot of incentives to join Al-Shabaab, like money, power and a wife. These young men joining Al-Shabaab do not do it voluntarily, but neither are they forced to join.

Question: Does the information above describe forced recruitment in cities under AMISOM/SNAF control?

Answer: I do not have the necessary information to comment if this is the case.

There is an element of indoctrination of the young men joining Al-Shabaab, but Al-Shabaab does not recruit by force in Somalia.

Al-Shabaab primarily recruits teenagers since they are easier to indoctrinate. The first step is to turn the teenager against his parents. This would be done by convincing the teenager that his parents are not sufficiently Islamic in their way of life. They will then continue to isolate the teenager. Girls are also recruited to do chores in Al-Shabaab camps.

Question: Who conducts the recruitment? It is our understanding that it could be the madrassa teachers or persons with Al-Shabaab connections who is also acquainted with the potential recruit. Is this correct?

Answer: I do not have any information if this is the case in Somalia.

Parents of a recruited boy could try and get the boy to another area in S/C Somalia. The clan of the family might also be involved in this attempt to relocate a young boy to avoid that he will be recruited voluntarily by Al-Shabaab.

Questions: Which area would they attempt to relocate the boy to? Areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence or another Al-Shabaab controlled area?

Answer: I would assume that the parents if they have income would relocate their boy to neighboring countries or send them to Europe through illegal migration routes.

Question: Have you heard of threats/violence against family members if they attempt to stop the recruitment process of the young family member?

Answer: I have not heard of threat against the family members, but it's a possibility and in addition most of the recruited teenagers join the group without the knowledge of parents.

Question: Would you be able to comment on the scope of this recruitment? How many teenagers are being recruited on a monthly or yearly basis?

Answer: I'm not aware of any available statistic on the number of teenagers recruited

Representative of an International NGO working in S/C Somalia

The organization has partners in all areas of S/C Somalia among Somali civil society and works through local partner organizations in all of S/C Somalia, including in Al-Shabaab areas. Representative travels regularly to Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab is in complete control of Jamaame and Baardheere districts as well as the whole of Middle Juba region.

Measured by the number of districts Al-Shabaab have less control than AMISOM/SNAF and other armed actors in Juba, but measured in terms of area Al-Shabaab controls the most of Juba and have a presence everywhere.

In towns with an AMISOM/SNAF presence Al-Shabaab would be observable present at the outskirts of town and have a clandestine presence in the town centre. AMISOM/SNAF can only be said to control the very centre of a town. People living in the town would know who is [affiliated with] Al-Shabaab but no one will talk about it. Al-Shabaab has blended in to the local community.

In some towns the presence of AMISOM/SNAF only means there is a Somali flag waving over the town. At night the forces retreat to their bases and Al-Shabaab is free to roam the streets. This is the case for many or all towns with an AMISOM/SNAF presence in S/C Somalia.

Question: From the meetings we had in Nairobi and Mogadishu it was our understanding that the following is true for several towns in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence, such as Qoryooley, Baraawe, Luuq, Baidoa, Ceel Buur, Belet Weyne, Kismayo and Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of the towns' administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals.

AMISOM/SNAF forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of a city, with surrounding villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides. Would you agree?

Answer: Yes.

In Kismayo Al-Shabaab is not strong enough to do whatever they want at night. The Ras-Kamboni militia controlling Kismayo has incorporated many former Al-Shabaab fighters into their ranks making Al-Shabaab very weak in Kismayo.

In other areas of S/C Somalia the local militia is not well organized or strong enough to control the area 100% leaving room for Al-Shabaab to carry out operations.

Jowhar is also a town where Al-Shabaab is relatively weak and the security situation is good, although not as good as in Kismayo. In Jowhar the local communities have absorbed Al-Shabaab and many former Al-Shabaab fighters have joined the militia and Al-Shabaab is therefore less of threat in that town.

It is unlikely that Al-Shabaab would be able to retake towns with AMISOM presence under the current circumstances. It is a deliberate survival tactic of Al-Shabaab not to engage AMISOM directly in open warfare but rather to carry out asymmetrical attacks and hit and run attacks. Attacks in Kenya have a much larger impact on the support to AMISOM and is much easier to carry out for Al-Shabaab which is why this seems to be the preferred modus.

Al-Shabaab is not the main cause of conflict and violence in Galgaduud region. Al-Shabaab is present in the region but is not an issue.

Question: What about in the town of Ceel Dheer? Does Al-Shabaab control that city?

Answer: Yes, however, Ceel Dheer is geographically the most southern district of Galgaduud region and its residents are related more to the residents of Middle Shabelle region thus more influence.

It is not possible to clearly define the areas of AMISOM and government control in the towns in which they have a presence. Nor is it possible to clearly define where the areas controlled by Al-Shabaab begin. Only the very centre of town with AMISOM/SNAF presence can be said to be controlled by AMISOM/SNAF. However, at night time the situation is fluid and Al-Shabaab is able to carry out operations in the centre of town.

It is not possible to identify any sort of buffer zone between areas controlled by Al-Shabaab and areas controlled by AMISOM/SNAF. The situation is fluid and so are the areas of control and influence. It is therefore not possible to define a radius of influence or control of AMISOM/SNAF from the town centre.

Al-Shabaab no longer controls any port city in S/C Somalia but still manages to generate an income.

Al-Shabaab should be viewed on three levels. There is the military level, which is the only one the international community is talking about at the moment, but the ideological level and the clan level are equally important and should also be addressed.

The only way to defect from Al-Shabaab is to go back to one's own clan. Recently the head of a special Al-Shabaab intelligence branch, the Amnyiat, defected. He returned to the area of his own subclan and settled there. This was in early 2015 in Ceel Waaq town of Gedo region.

Al-Shabaab continues to receive funding. Many years of presence and control in vast areas of S/C Somalia has given Al-Shabaab a deep rooted network in the trading and business community. Recently Al-Shabaab extorted 50.000 USD from the telecommunications company Hormuud that provides mobile phone service across S/C Somalia. The money was payment for Hormuuds antennas in Al-Shabaab controlled areas.

Al-Shabaab are taxing or extorting businessmen and even police officers in all areas where AMISOM/SNAF have presence, including Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab is deeply engrained in society and uses their strict interpretation of Sharia law to install fear in the population in the areas it controls. Beheadings and amputations do not have anything to do with sharia law but is an effective way to install fear in the population.

Al-Shabaab makes quick judicial decisions, and in the minds of many people living in Al-Shabaab controlled areas this judicial process is often perceived to be relatively fair. That is why some people might favor them. Rape is not as widespread a phenomenon in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab compared to areas with an AMISOM/SNAF presence.

Al-Shabaab creates a sense of security based on fear. This is the reason why some minority clans support Al-Shabaab. They use Al-Shabaab to curb the dominating majority clans. The Bantus is an example of this as they are very represented in Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab reportedly carries out beheadings and amputations in the areas they control. This kind of punishment does not take place at checkpoints. Such punishments have a more political importance and would thus be carried out with a proper audience. However, they may shoot someone at a checkpoint for no other reason than to state an example.

Al-Shabaab could be compared to an organized criminal organization such as the mafia. Many of the same behavioral patterns and logic would apply.

Al-Shabaab has the capacity and the ability to carry out attacks in all areas throughout S/C Somalia.

The Somali army and AMISOM lack the local knowledge and therefore have difficulties in finding public trust and hence weaken Al-Shabaab.

The districts capitals do not always have the same clan composition as the surrounding districts. The same clans may be present in the capital but their numbers may not always reflect the numbers when looking at the district as a whole.

The same situation applies to Mogadishu. The clan distribution has been affected by the many years of conflict and internal displacement in Somalia.

The most complicated towns when it comes to clan composition are Kismayo and Mogadishu. A lot of displacement and population movement during the last 25 years have created a complicated clan composition. This is partly the reason why Kismayo is the scene of the largest number of clan conflicts in S/C Somalia.

Since Jubaland is very resourceful, it has been plagued by the most clan fighting in the past. Therefore many clans are present in the area today, and they all want a share of power and resources.

Clan composition should be considered dynamic and it is therefore not possible to state anything definite about the exact composition of clans in an area.

In general the district and regional capitals are considered to be more cosmopolitan in terms of many clans being present and the surrounding districts tend to be more uniform in their clan make up.

The clan structures/composition approximately 30 km outside of towns generally reflects the clan structures/composition within that town. However, it should be noted that conflict and population movements can have changed this

If possible, people would move away from Al-Shabaab into a town with AMISOM presence, even if their clan is not present in that town.

A person living in the vicinity of the district capital in the village of his or her subclan might not be able to travel by road to the district capital. The obstacles would be checkpoints manned by Al-Shabaab and other armed actors. Passing these checkpoints can be dangerous and results in taxation, extortion, physical abuse and detention.

The clan is a network. In a situation where the protections structure of the state is no longer available a person will need to look to the clan for protection.

The person in question will not ask the clan for resources or money, but acceptance from the clan. That acceptance from the clan informs people that a person is known by someone and where that person belongs. This acceptance is what constitutes the protection one can get from the clan. On the other hand, financial assistance, accommodation etc. all begins at the family level.

The common perception in S/C Somalia is that people affiliated with western culture have money and better education. In many cases this holds true for people returning from the diaspora in the west. Some Diaspora members will try to exploit the Somali politics.

International organization working in S/C Somalia (A)

A number of towns throughout S/C Somalia have now been reclaimed by AMISOM/SNAF and other actors and Al-Shabaab is no longer visibly present but still has access. AMISOM/SNAF do not move too much outside of the centre of these towns, so Al-Shabaab might be present in the radius [areas] surrounding a town. Al-Shabaab has no visible presence in a radius of 10-30/40 kilometers from the centre but this is very fluid and they remain a certain influence within that radius with the capability of resorting to guerilla style assymetric warfare.

Al-Shabaab has also been terrorizing the civilian population of some of these cities by stopping and confiscating food supplies along the supply routes to the cities. Al-Shabaab's aim is to make life for the civilian population in such towns difficult, in order to keep people from cooperating with AMISOM. Extortions are one example and there have been examples of beheadings.

AMISOM can defend its own compounds, but it is not possible for AMISOM/SNAF to keep the outskirts of towns and surrounding villages safe and therefore Al-Shabaab can and will carry out hit & run attacks, such as throwing hand grenades or indiscriminate arms firing.

Al-Shabaab has a clandestine presence or sleeper cells in some, if not all, cities where AMISOM/SNAF have a presence. Al-Shabaab has the capacity to exchange information between the different cities and can attempt to kill any target they want. The deadly attack on the UN Minivan in Garowe of 20 April 2015 is a recent example of such tactics. Also, recently there has been new concern about Al-Shabaab's ability to infiltrate AMISOM in Mogadishu, while in several incidents mortars were being fired towards a beach near Mogadishu International Airport that is frequented by AMISOM troops as well as members of the International Community.

Inside the villages surrounding the towns, Al-Shabaab infiltrates and carries out assassination of village elders. They move clandestinely in order to show the population that they are present and can do what they want in that area. Al-Shabaab avoids any direct confrontation with AMISOM and has resorted to asymmetrical warfare carrying out hit and run attacks.

Question: From the meetings we had in Nairobi and Mogadishu it was our understanding that the following is true for several towns in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence, such as Qoryooley, Baraawe, Luuq, Baidoa, Ceel Buur, Belet Weyne, Kismayo and Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of the towns' administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals.

AMISOM/SNAF forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of a city, with surrounding villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides. Would you agree?

Answer: In principle, yes.

On the major supply roads in S/C Somalia Al-Shabaab carry out attacks and ambushes AMISOM convoys with for instance Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). According to public information it does not happen very often but since AMISOM do not share their number of losses it would be a safe assumption that the actual number of losses is higher than what is being reported.

Al-Shabaab is expected to increase their attacks along the main supply routes on AMISOM, UN and other convoys that are related to the current political administration or the international presence in S/C Somalia.

Al-Shabaab tends to go under the radar for a while and play it carefully, infiltrating areas and organisations, in order to then be able to attack more violently with asymmetric attacks. Al-Shabaab wants headlines and therefore carries out spectacular attacks against high profile targets. Typical targets in Mogadishu are Ho-

tels, where high ranking politicians and government officials (SNA, SNP, NISA) would congregate for meetings (e.g. attacks on Jazeera Hotel, Peace Hotel, Central Hotel).

There may be a tendency to blame all sorts of violent incidents on Al-Shabaab. Nevertheless, many violent incidents in S/C Somalia are also related to clan conflicts or personal scores resulting from political rivalries, quarrels between warlords, land and criminal disputes.

Some of the quietest cities in terms of the number of security incidents would be Dhobley or Doolow.

Question: Could you comment on the number of security incidents and scope of AMISOM/SNAF control/influence in: Mogadishu, Kismayo, Belet Weyne, Ceel Buur, Dhuusamarreeb, Baidoa, Luuq, Baraawe, Qoryooley?

Answer: No answer provided.

Question: Under the present circumstances would you consider it impossible or very unlikely that Al-Shabaab will recapture some of the cities where there is now AMISOM/SNAF presence, such as Mogadishu, Kismayo, Belet Weyne, Ceel Buur, Dhuusamarreeb, Baidoa, Luuq or Baraawe?

Answer: No, since this is dynamic and largely depends on the question of who has the ability to pull together the necessary number of forces on the ground.

Al-Shabaab could in many ways be compared to organized criminal networks in terms of how they operate. Like organized criminal network competing groups fight over power and influence in an area. This competition is often violent and the group that carries out the most spectacular attacks and instills the greatest fear in the area will be building up the most influence and power.

Al-Shabaab is getting stronger and has re-pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda from which it receives money.

Question: When you say Al-Shabaab is getting stronger does that imply stronger in terms of numbers or stronger in terms of being able to carry out more sophisticated attacks against AMISOM, government, UN and NGO targets?

Answer: Actually, both. All depends on how successful Al-Shabaab is in the recruitment of new fighters, which is an ongoing activity.

It was emphasized that whenever and wherever Al-Shabaab sees the worthwhile possibility, they are likely to carry out attacks, given their proven capacity and intent.

Compared by sheer mileage the majority of the surface of S/C Somalia is controlled by Al-Shabaab. The actual number of Al-Shabaab fighters and supporters are not known.

Due to a lack in numbers, AMISOM will not be able to secure the population between the cities that have an AMISOM presence, which is why AMISOM will never have complete control over the large rural areas of S/C Somalia.

As long as Al-Shabaab receive funding, e.g. through export of charcoal, extortion of money from local population and businesses at checkpoints and other illegal activities, they are likely to remain present in Somalia

The intensified efforts by AMISOM have forced Al-Shabaab to retreat from a number of areas. They have therefore increased their activity in Puntland, which was previously relatively quiet in terms of Al-Shabaab activity. Al-Shabaab is likely to shift their activities to areas where things until now seemed to be less tense, as for example places in Puntland and Somaliland, such as Garowe, Bossaso, and Hargeisa, with the 20 April attack in Garowe providing living proof for this assumption.

The objective of Al-Shabaab is to destabilize the situation in the newly reclaimed areas. Al-Shabaab has the capability and intent to carry out attacks where ever there is a political process going on in the cities,

thereby maximizing the destabilizing effect of the attacks. The degree of success will largely depend on the inhibiting context, i.e. the security measures put in place to mitigate any such possible attack.

In Mogadishu Al-Shabaab target hotels where high ranking political figures and business people often gather. An attack on Central Hotel was carried out by a Somali employee of the hotel with Dutch citizenship who had been working 4-6 months at the hotel. Given the success of this attack, it is likely that in future Al-Shabaab will more intensely seek to employ such infiltration tactics of a longer term preparation phase before carrying out such an attack.

Large scale attacks directly targeting civilians in areas claimed by AMISOM/SNAF have not been reported.

It was emphasized that not all murders and assassinations in for example Mogadishu should be attributed to Al-Shabaab. Due to the current dynamic and volatile political climate in many areas of S/C Somalia a lot of personal scores are being settled in the rivalry for power, money and resources. The fact that Al-Shabaab's political and financial influence has diminished or even disappeared in many towns across S/C Somalia has created a space for local politicians and business people who want to make the most of the situation. This leads to conflicts that can turn violent.

In Mogadishu it could even be small local businesses that are in a fierce competition with each other that could lead to a murder. The business people involved would not oppose to having that murder being pinned on Al-Shabaab and neither would Al-Shabaab as they would benefit from the fear created by such actions.

The fact that many Somalis return from abroad to start businesses can create violent conflicts and even murder. One such example could be a local tailor or cobbler in Mogadishu that would feel threatened by the competition from a new tailor with experience from abroad.

There have not been many documented cases of Al-Shabaab attacks on local Somalis working for the UN but it cannot be ruled out that it happens. The local Somali UN staff fear Al-Shabaab and they take care not to be associated with the UN. Even families of UN staff would be targeted. Reference was made to a local Somali working for an NGO in Galkacyo. He was in charge of setting up streetlights in an area of the city. He was almost killed by a bomb placed in his car. It was deemed likely that Al-Shabaab was responsible.

Al-Shabaab is cautious when it comes to targeting local people with no or a very limited relation to AMISOM, the government, UN or NGOs, such as tea sellers or tailors. If such people were systematically killed it would make Al-Shabaab extremely unpopular and turn the local Somalis in the area against Al-Shabaab. Further, the killing of nationals might keep international donor money out of the country, which is not in Al-Shabaab's interest. The preferred target is international staff from AMISOM, UN or the NGOs.

The main targets for Al-Shabaab attacks are AMISOM, UN, NGOs, representatives of the Somali Police and the District commissioners, other state employees and representatives of the government. Although there are civilian casualties as a consequence of these attacks, civilians are not the target. Al-Shabaab is increasingly going after soft targets and the attack on a UN Minivan in Garowe is an example of that.

International organisation working in S/C Somalia (B)

Anything outside the centre of a town with AMISOM/SNAF presence should be considered as an Al-Shabaab controlled area, with a fluent transition between the areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence and the Al-Shabaab controlled areas.

So far, there has not been a focus by AMISOM on securing the surrounding areas of liberated towns and the population living in these surrounding areas.

Question: From the meetings we had in Nairobi and Mogadishu it was our understanding that the following is true for several towns in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence, such as Qoryooley, Baraawe, Luuq, Baidoa, Ceel Buur, Belet Weyne, Kismayo and Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of the towns' administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals.

AMISOM/SNAF forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of a city, with surrounding villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides. Would you agree?

Answer: Yes, I agree.

Mogadishu was officially cleared of Al-Shabaab a long time ago but still attacks occur on a regular basis. Al-Shabaab maintains a clandestine presence in Mogadishu and all towns in S/C Somalia.

Al-Shabaab is able to demand taxes in the areas it controls but also in all other areas, including towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence. Even in Mogadishu Al-Shabaab taxes markets and traders. This is particularly the case for businesses that require goods and services from other parts of Somalia, so that a relationship with Al-Shabaab is necessary for the business to be conducted.

In Mogadishu, some known local security firms have so far never been attacked by Al-Shabaab, which is why one can assume that they are paying taxes to Al-Shabaab.

In Dhuusamarreb there is now a conflict between two factions of ASWJ, one aligned with the government in Mogadishu and the other aligned with the local administration. This has erupted into armed clashes over political power and government revenues.

Xudur was supposed to have been cleared of Al-Shabaab two years ago, but last year in 2014 Al-Shabaab started attacking AMISOM/SNAF in the town and the security situation is now unstable.

Some times smaller towns or villages are completely retaken by Al-Shabaab but the news does not reach the media until the fighting to take back the town begins.

It would be very unlikely that Al-Shabaab would be able to retake Kismayo under the present circumstances.

Question: What about other towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence? Would it also be unlikely for Mogadishu, Belet Weyne, Baidoa, Luuq, Baraawe?

Answer: Unlikely for Mogadishu, but I am uncertain about the others.

Al-Shabaab have realized that they cannot win in open confrontations with AMISOM and neither are they able to force AMISOM out of cities or territories where AMISOM is present in order to win back the territory they held in 2010. That is why Al-Shabaab uses a tactic of destabilization and asymmetrical warfare in order to instill fear in the UN and other international actors and thereby disrupting the current political process. The ultimate goal is that Somalia will fall back into chaos with no international assistance and no political development.

The ambition of Al-Shabaab seems to be to carry out spectacular attacks, such as in Garissa in Kenya, that gains worldwide media coverage. Also, this attack might be interpreted as an attempt to destabilize AMISOM, since Kenya is a major contributor to the AMISOM forces. It is also to force Kenya to withdraw from AMISOM or to punish it for being part of it

Al-Shabaab suicide bombers are on standby in Puntland and in other areas where they were not thought to be present before the attack on UNICEF in Garowe. The Garowe incident probably is not isolated, since Al-Shabaab most probably would not have deployed a single suicide bomber, but rather will have established a support system in the area prior to the attack.

Al-Shabaab has a recent presence in the Galgala Mountains and caves in Puntland. Al-Shabaab presence in Puntland must be much more spread out than was assumed until recently.

The clan structures/composition of the surrounding areas of towns in S/C Somalia generally reflects the clan structures/composition within that town.

Basic medical care is available in the larger urban centres of S/C Somalia such as Baidoa. However, the quality and access can be subject to local differences and instability. For more serious health needs most people would travel to Mogadishu and carefully consider whether the trip is worth the risk of road travel in S/C Somalia.

In Baidoa, there has also been some success with establishing courts, schools and local police. The areas of Luuq and Doolow in Gedo region are in general considered to be relatively stable and safer than other areas in S/C Somalia and with little or no Al-Shabaab activity. The UN was in early May 2015 able to work across Gedo region on projects that aim to build resilience in the local communities by establishing livelihoods and self-sufficient populations, self-employment and self-education opportunities. However, by mid June 2015, Gedo region was considered a high risk area. .

Al-Shabaab attacks high valued targets like AMISOM, Government, in particular Villa Somalia and the UN in Somalia in Mogadishu. They do not directly target civilians but civilians get killed as collateral damage in the attacks on those targets.

The UN is perceived by Al-Shabaab to be supporting the government of Somalia. Therefore, Al-Shabaab targets the international staff of UN organizations.

There have not been reported many attacks against International NGOs or national NGOs. Many of the National NGOs pay taxes to Al-Shabaab, the so called security tax that can be as much as 30 %.

UN does not accept to pay this tax and the UN will not work with NGOs paying the tax.

It is not known whether Al-Shabaab threatens or pressures local UN staff by threatening to do harm to family members.

The operational environment for UN organisations in S/C Somalia is increasingly difficult. At the moment international staff is confined to the MIA with limited visits to the UNCC. Freedom of movement for UN personnel is extremely limited.

Regarding the attack on UNICEF in Garowe, this was not a chance attack, since people had reportedly been observed doing surveillance at the UNICEF compound before the attack.

There are no reports of forced marriages to Al-Shabaab fighters in cities and towns with an AMISOM/SNAF presence. This happens in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab.

In 2011 and 2012 Al-Shabaab reportedly forcefully picked up random girls in the areas they controlled. The girls would be raped and their fathers killed. Now the fear of Al-Shabaab is so great that these kinds of actions are no longer necessary.

Al-Shabaab carries out forced recruitment on a regular basis in the areas under its control. The source receives information from all areas about these issues.

Al-Shabaab may forcefully recruit young boys and girls instead of payment or by offering money to the families. In case the family refuses, Al-Shabaab will kill the family members.

In order to recruit young men and girls Al-Shabaab give an ultimatum to a village according to which each family has to provide Al-Shabaab with one child, otherwise there would be consequences. Then the village elders will get together and decide to oblige in order to avoid the consequences. Since the villages would ultimately oblige, it is not possible to say what the consequence de facto would be in case a village tried to withstand Al-Shabaabs pressure.

Forced recruitment also takes place in areas not controlled by Al-Shabaab and even in towns with AMISOM/ SNAF presence.

The source considered any recruitment of minors as forced recruitment.

Forced recruitment of minors is often conducted at the religious schools – madrassas in S/C Somalia, where the teacher introduces Al-Shabaab, so no one makes a big noise about it. The teacher might have a connection to Al-Shabaab, or might be scared not to follow the order by Al-Shabaab. By promoting Al-Shabaab ideology on the young it is not difficult to recruit them. However, after some time the youngsters become disillusioned with the actual work and training they have to do for Al-Shabaab.

Other children are easy to recruit if they come from a very poor family. Many families in S/C Somalia barely have sufficient resources to provide daily meals for the household. In these situations having a young man or boy from the family recruited by Al-Shabaab could be the best alternative in terms of better access to food and other resources. For the young man promises of a phone and guns would also be an incentive, as well as some money that can be send home to support his family. For many young men, a gun is associated with responsibility.

In the mind of the person joining Al-Shabaab it could be seen as the only viable choice and it would mean his family would be safer, e.g. his sister will not be raped, etc.

For the young men it does not matter if they have to join Al-Shabaab, other militias, or the governmental forces. Many young men will see either recruitment as means of making a living, with the difference that Al-Shabaab will pay them for their services, while the government has become known to be less reliable regarding the payment of monthly wages.

In the absence of sufficient state structures, young men will prefer to be a man with a gun and not actively refuse to be recruited to Al-Shabaab.

Traditionally Al-Shabaab has recruited a lot of young Bantu men. As a minority group, Bantus might hope to gain security and social status by joining Al-Shabaab.

UN organizations in Somalia operates reintegration centers in Baidoa, Afgoyee, Beletweyne, Mogadishu, Kismayo for children that have worked for or lived with Al-Shabaab, or any other armed groups and armed forces in the areas surrounding Baidoa.

It is impossible for these children to travel back to the Al-Shabaab areas surrounding Baidoa in order to visit their family. It would be too dangerous as Al-Shabaab would kill them if they were noticed.

The risk goes both ways when travelling back and forth between Al-Shabaab controlled areas and areas with an AMISOM/SNAF presence. Harassment and violence is also reported at AMISOM/SNAF checkpoints.

If AMISOM/SNAF suspects someone to be affiliated with Al-Shabaab he will be handed over to the Somalia Intelligence service NISA. The international organizations do not know what happens to persons in NISA

custody and that is why it is being reported as abduction. Some people wind up in the Serindi Camp in Mogadishu where Al-Shabaab prisoners are kept for interrogation purposes and for rehabilitation.

The source had seen reports of minors defecting from Al-Shabaab to areas with an AMISOM/SNAF presence being tracked down and killed or threatened. The minors defecting would not be high ranking Al-Shabaab operatives and would lack any knowledge about Al-Shabaab operations that would motivate Al-Shabaab to track them down and kill them.

However, in Baidoa Al-Shabaab did kill a 13-14 year old boy in the middle of the city. He was killed in order to state an example of their ability to kill anyone they want.

Question: Was this boy a defector? When was this?

Answer: Yes he was. 2013

Likewise, the source had heard of an 18 year old girl that was tracked down and shot.

Question: Was this girl a defector from Al-Shabaab? When and where was this?

Answer: Yes. In Baidoa and in 2014

These examples illustrate that there is a difference between the operational importance of killing a high ranking defector and the mere possibility to establish an example with any other, not high ranking defector.

In general children are not considered important enough for Al-Shabaab to go to lengthy efforts in order to track them down.

Although everyone knows where Serindi camp is located it has never been attacked by Al-Shabaab. This goes to show that Al-Shabaab is deliberately not interested in doing so, because if it was in their interest they would. Therefore one can assume that the individuals held at Serindi are regarded low risk defectors by Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab can and will kill someone in order to make an example out of it. They do not systematically kill people in areas with AMISOM/SNAF presence but they do so occasionally.

If there is a sufficiently important operational reason they can and will kill anyone anywhere.

Most murders in Mogadishu are not related to Al-Shabaab, although Al-Shabaab take credit for them. The locals will always know if the murder was in fact Al-Shabaab or due to business, politics, ordinary crime or other reasons.

Al-Shabaab does not enforce their strict interpretation of Sharia law in areas outside of their control, including cities and towns with AMISOM/SNAF presence.

Regular travel between Al-Shabaab controlled areas and areas with an AMISOM/SNAF presence is considered to be extremely dangerous due to the many checkpoints along the route.

Ordinary Somalis travel between towns at great risk, and only do so when they do not have other options, e.g. during health emergencies or food insecurities.

International organization working in S/C Somalia (C)

The representative frequently travels to different areas of S/C Somalia.

Situation in selected cities with AMISOM presence

Al-Shabaab are not taking on AMISOM in open battle, neither do they attack the big AMISOM-convoys. Instead, Al-Shabaab is targeting the "soft" targets, as for example civilians working for the government, diaspora, or, as seen recently, members of international NGOs.

When the Ethiopian AMISOM forces advanced, they took one town after another but then because they were overstretched they could not hold every town. Al-Shabaab took advantage of this by circling around and retaking those towns that were not held by SNA or AMISOM.

Question: When was this? Do you have information about which village? Does this happen often at the moment?

Answer: This was in Bakol. The town was Radburre

Question: It is our understanding that most people would say Al-Shabaab will never be able to retake Mogadishu. Do you agree? Would you also consider it impossible or highly unlikely that Al-Shabaab will succeed in retaking any of the towns where AMISOM/SNAF currently have a presence, such as Kismayo, Belet Weyne, Ceel Buur, Dhuusamareeb, Baidoa, Luuq, Baraawe, Qoryooley?

Answer: Unless the situation drastically changes, Al-Shabaab does not have the capability to take Mogadishu. The same is true for most of the rest but since my information is not complete, I cannot confirm whether it is true for all.

AMISOM's operational capacity is overstretched, which means that AMISOM is not able to hold towns including the surrounding areas. Supply routes between towns with AMISOM presence are volatile to Al-Shabaab attacks. The humanitarian situation for civilians in towns with AMISOM presence can thus deteriorate accordingly.

Question: Which towns would you say AMISOM is not able to hold towns, and which supply routes are volatile? Please provide names.

Answer: Here, I would not respond due to lack of information.

In *Mogadishu* there is a presence of AMISOM, SNAF, the police and NISA. The town is generally secure, yet there still is a constant threat from Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab is targeting hotels, which is why returning Somalis from the Diaspora increasingly have been victims of these attacks. Al-Shabaab is currently attacking UN personnel and other targets and hotels frequented by politicians and other government representatives. Al-Shabaab is not targeting civilians in general.

In *Kismayo* (Lower Juba) the interim Lower Juba administration is supported by Kenyan AMISOM troops and claims to control of the town within a 12 km radius around the town.

There are reports of targeted killings.

Question: would these be by Al-Shabaab or from other actors with perhaps political motives etc?

Answer: There is no clear answer on targeted killings. Al-Shabaab is responsible for some but revenge killing between clans and sub-clans in addition to killing over disputes, especially monetary ones is not uncommon across Somalia.

Minority groups in Kismayo are reportedly victim of human rights abuses by actors with a majority clan background.

In Belet Weyne (Hiraaan) there is a presence of Ethiopian and Djiboutian AMISOM forces, SNAF as well as Etihiopian non-AMISOM forces. Hiraan in general is experiencing a period of instability, in which Al-Shabaab

is not an actor anymore. Currently there is an on-going political powerstruggle between local groups who either support Somali federalism or independence. Each group wants to maximize their gain regardless of the outcome. This political power struggle has been on the edges of violence, but large scale violence has so far not broken out.

In Dhuusamareeb struggles and competition over the allocation of governmental financial funds has led to high intra-clan tensions within the local Hawiye clans. The existence of long standing land conflicts is also a source of conflict.

In Ceel Buur (Galgaduud) there is a presence of Ethiopian non-AMISOM forces. Factional clan clashes are common, partly due to long-standing land disputes. Clans are finding themselves in a defense struggle, trying to not lose their current power and influence.

In Baidoa (Bay) plus its surroundings the situation can be regarded as relatively safe. However, throughout Baidoa district, even close to Baidoa, Al-Shabaab still has a presence and influence in several areas ("pockets") where it is able to force the local population to pay taxes. In these pockets of influence, Al-Shabaab will disappear as soon as AMISOM forces come forward, but will re-appear as soon as the AMISOM forces have left the area.

In Luuq (Gedo) the Ethiopian forces have always maintained a strong presence and keep a supply line to Doolow. In Gedo clan-struggles have re-surfaced over the recent years. Different clans have positioned themselves against Al-Shabaab, but are not getting along with each other. This makes it difficult to operate for Al-Shabaab.Gedo is relatively safe for people from Gedo that live within their own clans.

In Baraawe (Lower Shabelle) Al-Shabaab has successfully blended in with the local communities, who traditionally have been supportive of Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab here is seen as beaten, but it still maintains a military presence which can be called up. Still, this is usually not done.

In lower shabelle Al-Shabaab has melted back into the civilian communities but maintain a hidden presence all over the region.

Al-Shabaab has pockets of control in Hiraan, Galgadud and Ceel Buur regions. Pockets of Al-Shabaab are located in Hiraan region along the main supply road running between Mogadishu and Beletweyne. The city of Bulo Burde in Hiraan was at a time practically under siege from Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab's main remaining stronghold is Middle Juba.

Question: From the meetings we had in Nairobi and Mogadishu it was our understanding that the following is true for several towns in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence, such as Qoryooley, Baraawe, Luuq, Baidoa, Ceel Buur, Belet Weyne, Kismayo and Mogadishu.

Al-Shabaab, while no longer in control of any of the towns' administrative zones, retains the capability to carry out asymmetric warfare through guerrilla-style improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne IED attacks, as well as targeted assassinations against prominent individuals. Would you agree?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Would you agree that AMISOM/SNAF forces and Al-Shabaab continue to engage in recurrent battles, armed confrontations and violent attacks over territory within the immediate outskirts of a city, with surrounding villages changing hands intermittently in response to retreats and regroupings from both sides?

Answer: No. AMISOM/SNAF has not lost territory. Because they are over stretched they cannot maintain a presence in every town or village and Al-Shabaab sometimes exploit these gaps to retake towns which are undefended or lightly defended. But in the majority of cases, most major towns and areas have not been retaken by Al-Shabaab and AMISOM/SNAF is still holding them.

Livelihood

Generally, any minority group is under threat from majority groups in all of Somalia. Threats would in most cases involve the loss of land.

Regarding the Shabelle clans, there has been a surge in violent conflict due to disputes over farming land between majority and minority clans. These disputes are common every year when the Shabelle river floods and a scarcity of land follows. In such a situation the weaker clans become vulnerable and risk losing land.

The weaker clans are now arming themselves, which can be seen as an Al-Shabaab phenomenon, since Al-Shabaab is striving to empower the weaker clans in an area. The arming of the weaker clans makes the land disputes bloodier but it does not change the outcome.

In areas where AMISOM forces are present they can and do help protect the weaker clans in such conflicts. However, AMISOM forces are moving through the villages in an area by day but they retreat to their bases at night, which allows majority clans to harass minority clan members without any consequence during the night. In these situations, minority clan members will move closer to AMISOM facilities during the night in hope for protection.

Somalis living surrounded by members of their own clan in the area where they originate from are generally considered to be living in relative security, even in otherwise instable areas. This does not apply for members of minority groups.

In Hiraan there is a great variety of clans and the politically and militarily dominating clan is not the majority clan. A person's safety depends on whether one's own clan is allied to the dominant clan.

In Bay/Bakool the same clan is habituating all around, but there are various sub-clans. In the town of Baidoa you would find the same clans as in the surrounding area and in the other towns in Bay/bakool region.

In Gedo/Juba a very mixed clan structure exists and all clans from Somalia are represented in this region. Along the Juba River it is possible to find areas in which the Bantus constitute the majority.

In Marka but also other parts of Lower Shabelle each district has its own clan composition.

Al-Shabaab tried unsuccessfully to abolish the clan system, but they are now themselves victims of clan divisions within their own ranks. In Somalia everything is about clan, except when it comes to money. That is why the role of the clans has become less important in Mogadishu, since Mogadishu is the main commercial center in Somalia.

One third of the Somali population is considered Diaspora, sending home 1,6 billion $ in remittances annually.

55% of the Government is Diaspora and the Diaspora element is also very strong in Al-Shabaab. Some of the Diaspora remittances support Al-Shabaab and piracy. There are also numerous examples of Somalis from the Diaspora carrying out suicide missions for Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab Targets

The main target of Al-Shabaab is currently AMISOM and the UN. Civilians are not generally targeted, but there is a risk of collateral damage affecting civilians when Al-Shabaab targets and attacks AMISOM/SNAF/UN in all of Somalia. Al-Shabaab often uses IED's which creates a large number of civilian casualties. Due to such collateral civilian damage and other measures, such as forced taxation of local population, Al-Shabaab is currently losing popular support, and thus getting more desperate.)

Defections of, especially, high ranking Al-Shabaab members has recently been taking momentum. These defectors are very often not only wanted by Al-Shabaab, but also by the clans that have been involved in

fighting with Al-Shabaab. If a person has killed someone during his time with Al-Shabaab the family of the dead will want to have their revenge and may kill the person.

Also, high ranking defectors might be wanted by countries such as for example Kenya, for playing a part in attacks against these countries' interests or assets. Less than 50% of the targeting killings of high ranking Al-Shabaab defectors are carried out by Al-Shabaab, but by other actors. Clan conflicts might also be the reason behind such killings.

On the contrary, middle ranking Al-Shabaab members are currently becoming more powerful due to defections and targeted killings of high ranking Al-Shabaab members, and might thus not have an incentive for defection.

Al-Shabaab might target low ranking defectors, but this would depend on the individual circumstances. In some cases, Al-Shabaab might decide to state an example and to enforce rule of fear when the possibility arises. This might also include attacks on immediate family members of the defectors. However, this would not be the norm with every case of defection, and would depend greatly on how Al-Shabaab estimated the advantages to be gained by such an action in each individual case.

Question: Does this apply in cities under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF?

Answer: Yes. Al-Shabaab, with its experience in targeted assassinations and intimidation can potentially do so. But Al-Shabaab is probably overstretched as well and might only focus their resources where it provides them the most advantage. They have, in any case, not been able to kill many defectors or intimidate/attack their relatives.

Al-Shabaab may forcefully recruit young boys and girls in lieu of payment or by offering money to the families. In case the family refuses, Al-Shabaab will kill family members. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the current generation of young Somali men has grown up sourrounded by men wearing arms, which is why it for many will not matter if they had to join Al-Shabaab, other militias, or the governmental forces. Many young men will see either recruitment as means of making a living, with the difference that Al-Shabaab will pay them for their services, while the government has become known to be less reliable regarding the payment of monthly wages.

Question: Does this apply in cities under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF?

Answer: Al-Shabaab have more recently been recruiting from weaker clans/minorities or those who are disgruntled. It is less likely to happen in cities under AMISOM/SNAF control but does happen from time to time. Do not forget, Al-Shabaab also recruit from the Somali diaspora, particularly in the West.

Freedom of Movement

Ordinary citizens have to pay anybody at checkpoints along the major roads, including Al-Shabaab, AMISOM, SNAF, and local warlords. Al-Shabaab will harass and detain people at checkpoints only in areas where they have stable control.

Travelling by flight is the most common means of transportation for ordinary people in Somalia, even despite the higher cost involved. In case a person does not have the personal means to pay for a flight, one would borrow money from one's clan or even beg the clan to cover the expenses.

The road between Mogadishu and Baidoa used to be relatively safe, but recently there has been an increase in attacks.

International organization working in S/C Somalia (D)

Humanitarian access to cities in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence is extremely difficult. This is due to Al-Shabaab's tactic of encircling towns and newly recovered areas, road blockages or attacking convoys along the main supply roads. Air transport is sometimes the only way to access these cities.

Baidoa cannot be reached by road for humanitarian purposes because UN convoys are being targeted by Al-Shabaab. Commercial traffic might be possible to some extent, but it is very risky, lengthy and costly. Long stretches of the road from Mogadishu to Baidoa are very dangerous, since the risk of Al-Shabaab attacks is high. This is also the case for other cities in S/C Somalia with AMISOM/SNAF presence.

Humanitarian organizations continue to face tremendous challenges while providing life-saving assistance to vulnerable people in Somalia, mainly in south and central regions. Despite this, aid organizations work in all 18 regions of the country. Assistance continues to be channeled through local partners in areas where international organizations have no presence and access. However, hundreds of thousands of people in need mainly in rural areas and outskirts of main towns that remain under the control or influence of non-state armed actors continue to be beyond the reach of humanitarian organizations.

Road access to large parts of S/C Somalia remains a challenge due to road blockages linked to the Al-Shabaab economic embargo on the towns that were recovered by AMISOM/SNAF in 2014, insecurity and illegal checkpoints. Road access remains severely constrained in 28 districts in S/C Somalia and in Buuhoodle district of Sool region in northern Somalia.

While secure road access in S/C Somalia remains a key humanitarian priority, slight improvements have been registered in some hard-to-reach areas in Bay, Gedo, Hiraan, Lower and Middle Juba and Galgaduud regions as a result of enhanced engagement with local authorities and community networks.

The prioritized main supply routes are still not open to humanitarian access. Aid organizations continue to use back-stopping measures to move humanitarian supplies and intend to continue using the same measures to sustain humanitarian operations as opposed to opting for the last resort, i.e. use of AMISOM escorts. Current road access situation along the major supply routes is as follows;

- Mogadishu – Belet Weyne: Not open to humanitarian access. While Belet Weyne can be accessed by the northern access route through Puntland, humanitarian organizations have not been able to make any deliveries by road to Buulo Burte.
- Mogadishu - Baidoa: Not open to humanitarian access. There is Al-Shabaab forces along the road that still carry out hit and run attacks as well as multiple unauthorized checkpoints manned by a range of armed actors. Commercial transporters are paying their way through.
- Doolow – Baidoa: The route is too dangerous and no attempts have been made so far.
- Doolow - Luuq: Route is open and traffic flow is okay.
- Waajid: Remains inaccessible to humanitarian supplies by road although some commercial cargo is trickling in. The supplies are being moved by use of small trucks and donkey carts.
- Xudur: The route to Xudur from Ceel Barde is open, although there are checkpoints; they are manned by people who are aligned to the government.
- Mogadishu – Kismayo: Not open to road traffic. Aid organizations access Kismayo by sea and air

The attack on a marked UN vehicle in Garowe on 20 April puts into stark relief the dangerous and challenging humanitarian operating environment in Somalia.

Somalia continues to be one of the most complex humanitarian emergencies in the world. There has been a gradual improvement in food security since the end of the famine in 2012. However, since February 2014 the number of people unable to meet their basic food requirements increased by 20 % to 3 million. This includes about 730,000 people who are unable to meet their most basic food needs and an additional 2.3

million people at risk of sliding back into the same situation. 1-2 external shocks could create another emergency, as the situation remains very fragile and the scope and scale of the emergency is massive.

There has been an increase of forced evictions of IDPs and the urban poor from public and private land and buildings in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Luuq, Bossasso and Baidoa due to increasing land prices, returning Diaspora with money and the fact that authorities have been gaining areas previously under Al-Shabaab control. The most worrying evictions in terms of scale continue to take place in Mogadishu where over 39,000 persons were forcefully evicted from public and private land and buildings in Mogadishu during the first quarter of 2015 while significant numbers remain at risk of forced eviction. The vast majority of IDP's has been evicted from areas in Mogadishu have been pushed further into the outskirts of Mogadishu along the road to Afgoye where access to basic services is limited.

Until the present conflict in Yemen there have been decades of population movements from Somalia to Yemen With the onset of the Yemen crisis, this flow has now been reversed and both Somalia refugee returnees and people of other nationalities fleeing the impact of the Yemen conflict are now arriving in Somalia. Approximately 3000 new arrivals from Yemen had arrived in Somalia (mainly in Somaliland and Puntland). The ordinary population travels mainly by minibus, but this is very costly and dangerous due to the many check-points along the main roads in S/C Somalia.

In all cities of S/C Somalia, including Mogadishu access to basic social services are limited for the general population. The IDPs are among those worst affected by this lack of social services.

The development of a social infrastructure in areas recovered from Al-Shabaab is slow

In some areas recovered from Al-Shabaab there is an increased sense of safety compared to the time when Al-Shabaab controlled the district, but in many areas there are a lack of food, lack of medical services, and possibly also less access to education. For an overview of food insecurity in S/C Somalia reference was made to data from the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) managed by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Most parts of S/C Somalia is considered to be Phase 2: "Moderately/Borderline Food Insecure". However, there are pockets where the situation is described as Phase 3: "Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis". Phase 5 is famine.

Remittances are flowing into Somalia from the Diaspora and are an important factor in the economy. The recent closure of bank accounts of Somali money transfer operators could also further exacerbate the situation. An estimated 40 per cent of Somalis depend on remittances that are estimated at US$1.3 billion annually.

Basic health facilities or clinics are available in some towns in S/C Somalia. They are often run by NGOs Transportation to health facilities can be a problem due to check-points and distance. In Baidoa and elsewhere, the funding for health facilities is soon running out.

Somalia's Gross Domestic Product and living standards are among the lowest in the world. The population is dependent on foreign aid. It remains unrated in comparison with the other developing countries due to severe lack of reliable data caused by ongoing political instability.

Somalia remains one of the most dangerous operating environments for aid organizations. National staff is impacted by a vast majority (over 90 percent) of the violent incidents that affect humanitarian organizations.
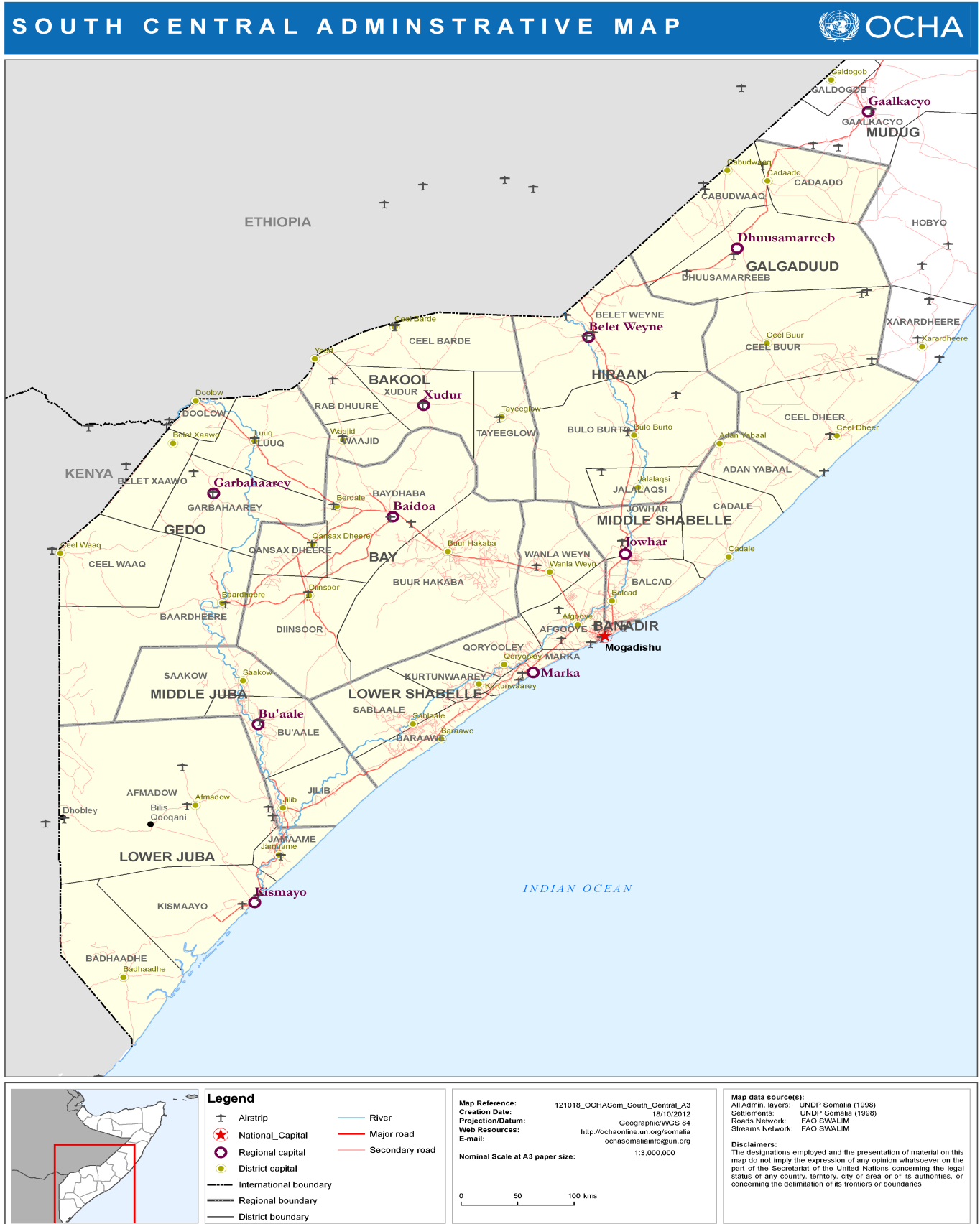
The clan composition in the outlying areas of cities and towns in S/C Somalia is in general the same as within that city or town. If people from an outlying area of Beled Weyne moved into Beled Weyne, they could expect to find members of their own clan.

The source does not always have access to rural areas outside of towns with an AMISOM/SNAF presence but there are people who relocate to these towns from Al-Shabaab controlled areas. Indicators for this are IDP settlements outside such towns, which have been observed by the source.

It is not possible to clearly define how far the influence or control of AMISOM/SNAF stretches from a town centre. Where and when Al-Shabaabs influence or presence begins is fluid and unpredictable. Al-Shabaab will have a clandestine presence in the areas outside most towns in S/C Somalia.

Annex B – Map of Somalia

Somalia Reference Map - South Central Zone[139]

Annex C – Terms of Reference

1. Detailed and up to date information, including security, in selected cities under the control of AMISOM/SNAF and scope of control/influence, including surrounding areas and small towns

- Mogadishu (Middle Shabelle)
- Kismaayo (Lower Juba)
- Belet Weyne (Hiraan)
- Ceel Buur and Dhusamareeb (Galgadud)
- Baidoa (Bay)
- Luuq (Gedo)
- Baraawe and/or Qoryooley (Lower Shabelle)

2. Access to livelihood in selected cities effectively controlled by AMISOM/SNAF

- Situation for newly arrived persons with regard to access to accommodation, medical care, (self) employment, education etc.
- Importance of presence of clan and/or nuclear family in this regard/Possibility to access livelihood in a town where a person has no or merely few family members
- Both including persons with no relation to the specific area and single women with or without children

3. Targets of Al Shabaab or other armed actors in cities under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF

- Target group(s) for deliberate attacks by Al Shabaab or other armed actors in major cities, i.e. on Al Shabaab defectors
- Women unwilling to marry AS fighters targeted?
- Prioritization of target (high profile/low profile), capability and willingness to pursue these targets
- Forced recruitment to AS in cities under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF

4. Areas not under the effective control of AMISOM/SNAF and/or allied forces

- Scope of AS control (administrative control, i.e. taxation, extrajudicial punishment, etc.)
- Forced marriages – common practice? (AS fighters, AS elders)
- Intensity of indiscriminate violence, violation of basic human rights by AS and other armed actors
- Individuals targeted by AS or other armed actors
- Returning persons from abroad – specifically targeted group by AS and other armed actors

5. Freedom of movement for non/ low profiled (ordinary) Somali citizens

- The different options of travelling/means of transportation between villages and cities across S/C Somalia and the risks involved
- Possibility to travel from Al Shabaab controlled areas to liberated areas and/or cities
- Groups at special risk while traveling, including westernized persons.

6. Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

- Possibility to evade FGM/C, including assessment of possibility to withstand peer/family pressure and consequences hereof, i.e. social exclusion and stigmatization. Including parents´ possibility to prevent their daughters from being exposed to FGM and the situation if a family returns from a western country.
- Control with FGM. Whether for example a family member controls whether a girl has been exposed to FGM or not, including the situation where a family returns from a western country, and whether the possible control differ in rural and urban areas.