



1.5. Origin and composition

In the period 2021-2025, most arrivals in Mogadishu originated from neighbouring regions, notably, in order of number of arrivals, from Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Bay, and Bakool, along with other less substantial inflows coming from other South-Central regions.[44](#) This holds true also for previous periods.[45](#) Currently, according to expert opinions, most IDPs in Mogadishu originate either from Bay and Bakool,[46](#) or from Lower Shabelle and Bay.[47](#)

These trends are also explained by the fact that control over land and production has been traditionally contested in Bay, Bakool, as well as along the Shabelle and Juba rivers, with their original inhabitants often challenged by discrimination, dispossession, and displacement at the hands of various actors, including Al-Shabaab.[48](#) In late years (post-2010), increased investments in cash crops has also forced marginalised groups to sell their land to other more powerful clans, before swelling the ranks of IDPs in Mogadishu. This trend - anticipated by an ethnically similar influx of destitute Mogadishu dwellers from the early 90s - [49](#) can be observed in the Shabelle and Juba Valley, where it particularly affects Bantu groups, as well as in the Bay and Bakool regions, where it affects weaker Rahanweyn subclans.[50](#)

Hence, according to recent analyses, most IDPs currently residing in Mogadishu belong to minority clans and marginalised groups,[51](#) with large portions coming from either Rahanweyn clans (Digil and Mirifle) or belonging to other often racialised minority groups such as Bantu/Jareer.[52](#)

At the same time, according to Ayaan, a scholar specialised in migration and displacement in and out of Somalia, Mogadishu IDP camps may host returnees from both neighbouring countries, such as Kenya or Ethiopia, and from 'Western countries'.[53](#) Returnees from neighbouring countries may be comparatively more likely to enter or transit through IDP settings due to prolonged displacement histories,[54](#) economic vulnerability, and fewer reintegration resources, especially if the return and reintegration packages from international organisations or NGOs are insufficient.[55](#) Returnees from 'Western countries' can end up in IDP camps or settlements in Mogadishu, particularly when they lack strong kinship, or clan-based support networks, sustainable livelihoods, or access to housing upon return.[56](#) Within this context, Dalmar, a Somali expert on migration and return, notes that individuals returning after prolonged absence, may face vulnerabilities that can increase the likelihood of temporary settlement in informal displacement sites.[57](#) Ayaan notes that in some cases, they can end up in the IDP camps because they are simply strangers, foreigners having lived abroad for many years, and with no family members in Mogadishu.[58](#) Further information on returnees from abroad living in IDP camps could not be found within the time limits of the research.

- [44](#)

EUAA analysis based on UNHCR, Operational Data Portal, Somalia – Internal Displacement, n.a., [url](#); see also Crawford, N., at al., The lives and livelihoods of forcibly displaced people in Mogadishu, April 2024, [url](#), p. 12; Bakonyi, J., and Chonka, P., Precarious labour – Precarious lives, 2019, [url](#), pp. 210-212

- [45](#)

Mahad Wasuge et al., Land Matters in Mogadishu, 2017, [url](#), p. 76; UNHCR and FGS, Internal Displacement Profiling Mogadishu, April 2016, [url](#), pp. 24, 49-50

- [46](#)

Expert on Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights, Video interview and email exchange, 17, 19 March 2026. The expert has a longstanding professional experience on Somalia evictions and is based in Mogadishu

- [47](#)

Somalia expert on IDPs reintegration, Email exchange 27, 30 March 2026

- [48](#)

Jaspars, S., et al., Food and Power in Somalia: Business as Usual?, 21 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 21-23; Besteman, C., and Cassanelli, L., The struggle for land in southern Somalia, 1996, p. 16, 42-44, 146-147, 157

- [49](#)

Mahad Wasuge et al., Land Matters in Mogadishu, 2017, [url](#), p. 43

- [50](#)

Jaspars, S., et al., Food and Power in Somalia: Business as Usual?, 21 January 2020, [url](#), p. 25; Chonka, P., Displacement stigma, insecurity and inequality in urban Somalia: the limits of digital financial Empowerment, 30 June 2025, [url](#), pp. 15-16; see also TANA, Informal Settlement Managers: Perception and reality in informal IDP camps in Mogadishu, 2019, [url](#), p. 9

- [51](#)

Crawford, N., at al., The lives and livelihoods of forcibly displaced people in Mogadishu, April 2024, [url](#), p. 12; Chonka, P., Displacement stigma, insecurity and inequality in urban Somalia: the limits of digital financial Empowerment, 30 June 2025, [url](#), pp. 1-2; see also Chonka, P., et al, Mobile money, (dis)empowerment and state reconstruction in Somalia's conflicted digital economy, 6 January 2025, [url](#), p. 126

- [52](#)

SCC, Role of gatekeepers in Somalia, Final report, May 2024, [url](#), pp. 7-8; The New Humanitarian, Powerful networks impose taxes on aid in Somalia. It's time for this to end, 26 October 2023, [url](#); Chonka, P., and Bakonyi, J., Precarious technoscapes: forced mobility and mobile connections at the urban margins, 6 December 2021, [url](#), p. 79; see also Somalia expert on IDPs reintegration, Email exchange 27, 30 March 2026

- [53](#)

Ayaan, Email exchange, 13 May 2025. Ayaan is a scholar based in Kenya, specialised in migration and displacement in and out of Somalia, and with decades-long experience in the humanitarian sector

- [54](#)

Ayaan, Email exchange, 13 May 2025. See also Dalmar, Email exchange 12 May 2026. Dalmar is a Somali expert on migration and return with focus on Mogadishu

- [55](#)

Ayaan, Email exchange, 13 May 2025

- [56](#)

Ayaan, Email exchange, 13 May 2025; see also Dalmar, Email exchange 12 May 2026

- [57](#)

Dalmar, Email exchange 12 May 2026

- [58](#)

Ayaan, Email exchange, 13 May 2025