



2.2.2. Bay

Bay region is divided into four districts: Baidoa, Buur Hakaba, Qansax Dheere, and Diinsoor. The region's capital is the city of Baidoa.[351](#) As of January 2026, Bay's population was estimated at 1 297 550.[352](#) For more detailed background information on Bay, see section 2.2.2. of the EUAA COI Report Somalia: Security Situation (May 2025).

○ **Actors presence and conflict dynamics**

According to [Map 3](#) Somalia – Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 March 2026 and [Map 2](#) Somalia – Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 March 2025, Al-Shabaab controlled the towns of Labatan Jirow and Bulu-Fulay, as well as large swaths of rural territory in the region's northeast, stretching from the vicinity of Lego to the Labatan Jirow area. Most of the southern half of Bay, except the environs of Diinsoor, likewise remained under the Al-Shabaab control. Meanwhile, the cities and towns of Qansax Dheere, Diinsoor, Baidoa, Buur Hakaba and Berdale all remained under the control of the 'federal-aligned coalition'. Meanwhile, the reference period saw a shift in the control of Lego town and its immediate surroundings from full Al-Shabaab control to mixed control between the militant group and 'federal-aligned forces'. The remaining rural areas of Bay continued to be under mixed control between Al-Shabaab and the federal-aligned coalition.[353](#) On 30 March 2026, the SNA took full control of the city of Baidoa,[354](#) ousting the South-West State President Abdiaziz Laftagareen, who announced his resignation. As of the end of the reference period, Ethiopian AU troops remained stationed in Baidoa[355](#) and Diinsoor.[356](#)

The SNA conducted security operations in rural areas[357](#) and engaged in clashes with Al-Shabaab,[358](#) including around Buur Hakaba, where the insurgency intensified in late 2025/early 2026.[359](#) Overall, Bay was one of the regions with the highest numbers of reported IED incidents, affecting civilians both as direct and indirect victims.[360](#) At the same time, several Al-Shabaab members surrendered to the FGS authorities in Baidoa.[361](#)

Amid a rise in localised conflicts in parts of Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle,[362](#) deadly clan-related clashes broke out in October 2025 in villages near Diinsoor town and spread to the district centre, leaving civilians trapped between the front lines.[363](#)

As tensions between the South-West State administration and the FGS escalated in March 2026, Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud deployed military reinforcements to Buur Hakaba, which subsequently entered Baidoa[364](#) with the backing of Turkish forces. While there were initial heavy clashes,[365](#) most of Laftagareen's troops decided to stand down and Ethiopian AU troops in the city refrained from siding with the South-West President.[366](#)

○ Recent security trends

In the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, ACLED recorded 358 security incidents in Bay region, including battles, explosions/other forms of remote violence, and violence against civilians, causing 403 fatalities.[367](#)

Figure 17: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Bay per month, based on ACLED data.

Figure 17: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Bay per month, based on ACLED data.[368](#)

Figure 18: Evolution of security events in Bay per type, based on ACLED data.

Figure 18: Evolution of security events in Bay per type, based on ACLED data.[369](#)

In the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, the following actors (coded as either 'Actor 1' or 'Actor 2') were, among others, involved in security incidents: Al-Shabaab was involved in 209 security incidents against Military and Police Forces of Somalia (including South-West State police forces). The group was further involved in 30 incidents of violence against civilians, while Military and Police Forces of Somalia were involved in nine such incidents. (Sub-)clan militias were involved in eight incidents against Military and Police Forces of Somalia, 13 instances of clashes with other (sub-)clan militias, and three incidents of violence against civilians.[370](#)

Illustrative security incidents

- In late October 2025, clashes erupted between militias of two clans in Diinsoor district over a series of sexual assaults allegedly perpetrated by community militias. The fighting left at least 15 people dead and 21 others injured.[371](#)

- **Conflict-related displacement**

According to the UNHCR PRMN, 2 873 individuals were newly displaced in Bay region due to conflict or insecurity during the period from April 2025 to February 2026. The majority of them (1 255) were displaced from areas located in Diinsoor district. Overall, most displacement in Bay occurred within the same region (2 344). During the same period, 1 185 displaced individuals arrived in Bay from other regions.[372](#) Conflict and drought led to the displacement of multiple households from parts of Qansax Dheere and other rural areas of Bay around the first quarter of 2026.[373](#) The region continued to witness displacement due to blockades imposed by Al-Shabaab.[374](#) Fears of impending clashes between the SNA and South-West regional forces[375](#) prompted 50 766 residents of Baidoa to flee the city in late March 2026.[376](#)

Other impacts on civilian life and humanitarian situation

A December 2025 map by UNOCHA showed ‘heavy’ and ‘very heavy restrictions’ regarding humanitarian access across most areas of Bay, except in the towns of Baidoa, Buur Hakaba, Qansax Dheere and Berdale and their surrounding rural areas.[377](#) UNOCHA recorded 14 humanitarian access incidents over the year. The partial lifting of blockades in Qansax Dheere and Diinsoor eased some of the humanitarian access constraints and the movement of civilians and goods.[378](#) As of January 2026, the IPC reported that about 74 % of the total analysed population of 1 297 550 were either in Acute Food Insecurity IPC Phase 2 (stressed, 34 %), 3 (crisis, 25 %) or 4 (emergency, 15 %).[379](#) Clan-related clashes left civilians in Diinsoor district caught between the front lines facing a shortage in food, safe shelters and medical aid.[380](#) The end of the reference period saw a worsened food and nutrition situation in Bay due to droughts[381](#) which prompted a significant rise in water prices during the last quarter of 2025.[382](#) NRC recorded the eviction of 15 503 individuals in Bay region in 2025 and early 2026.[383](#)

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