



2.3. Benadir and Mogadishu

Benadir (or Banadir/Benaadir) is located on the south-eastern coast of Somalia and shares internal borders with Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle regions.[424](#) It covers the same area as the municipality of Mogadishu and effectively constitutes a territory under direct FGS administration.[425](#) As of September 2025, Benadir's population was estimated at 3 289 438.[426](#) For more detailed background information on Benadir and Mogadishu, see section 2.3. of the EUAA COI Report Somalia: Security Situation (May 2025).

○ **Actors presence and conflict dynamics**

Benadir, the seat of the Federal Government, was described as featuring multiple armed and security actors, with the administrations in its various districts being influenced by dominant clan interests.[427](#) AUSSOM troops were stationed in the capital [428](#), while Türkiye used the TURKSOM military base to train soldiers for the SNA's Gorgor special forces and the Haram'ad paramilitary police force.[429](#)

Between February and April 2025, Al-Shabaab gained ground in Middle and Lower Shabelle,[430](#) advancing to within 50 kilometres of Mogadishu.[431](#) By July 2025, the militants had reportedly encircled most of the city,[432](#) leading security analysts to speak of a serious threat of Al-Shabaab taking control of the capital.[433](#) Several country experts, however, refuted this assessment in October 2025, stating that the group lacked the military and human resources to attack Mogadishu, while the capital was hosting thousands of government troops and had international military support.[434](#) The advance by Al-Shabaab towards Mogadishu reportedly slowed in July 2025, while AUSSOM forces, together with Somali security forces, retook and defended several towns near the capital.[435](#) Al-Shabaab attacks within Mogadishu have reportedly declined since 2023, evolving from recurring bomb attacks to less frequent high-profile attacks aiming at undermining government authority.[436](#) Similarly, a UN report noted that between July and December 2025, Al-Shabaab attacks focused on military targets and were largely directed at security installations and government officials.[437](#) Such high-profile attacks on government installations carried out by Al-

Shabaab occurred in May 2025,[438](#) in July 2025[439](#) and in October 2025.[440](#) Other security incidents during the reference period included several rocket and mortar attacks,[441](#) impacting Aden Adde International Airport,[442](#) Halane base camp housing AUSSOM troops,[443](#) as well as neighbourhoods near the Presidential Palace.[444](#)

At the end of July 2025, a large number of NISA personnel as well as Somali Police Force was deployed in Mogadishu as part of a revised security plan for the capital. The aim of the deployment was to deter mortar attacks and prevent the infiltration of IEDs, reportedly contributing to a decrease in attacks.[445](#) An April 2025 report by the Geneva-based NGO Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime (GI-TOC) detailed how despite Al-Shabaab's lack of control in the capital, it maintained a wide intelligence network and taxation apparatus in Mogadishu. By levying illicit taxes on imports into the city and extorting local businesses, it was reportedly able to gain a generous revenue.[446](#)

○ Recent security trends

In the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, ACLED recorded 354 security incidents in Benadir region, including battles, explosions or other forms of remote violence, and violence against civilians, causing 225 fatalities.[447](#)

Figure 21: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Benadir per month, based on ACLED data.

Figure 21: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Benadir per month, based on ACLED data.[448](#)

Figure 22: Evolution of security events in Benadir per type, based on ACLED data.

Figure 22: Evolution of security events in Benadir per type, based on ACLED data.[449](#)

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 156 security incidents, 129 of them against Somali Military Forces and Police Forces. Moreover, Somali Military Forces and Police Forces were involved in 123 security incidents against civilians. 22 security incidents involved attacks by Al-Shabaab militants on civilians.[450](#)

Illustrative security incidents

On 19 April 2025, several mortar shells struck neighbourhoods near the presidential palace, killing two and injuring three other civilians.[451](#)

On 18 May 2025, an attacker targeted young men outside the Damanyo base, killing about a dozen people⁴⁵² and injuring over sixty.⁴⁵³ The men were would-be recruits looking to join the SNA.⁴⁵⁴

On 9 July, a suicide bomber targeted Jaalle Siyad Military Academy⁴⁵⁵, reportedly causing 4 fatalities and six injuries.⁴⁵⁶ Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴⁵⁷

On 4 October 2025, Al-Shabaab fighters infiltrated a prison in central Mogadishu. This resulted in several hours of gunfire exchange.⁴⁵⁸ The attack reportedly happened mere hours after the FGS had lifted several roadblocks in the city which had been there for several years to protect government sites.⁴⁵⁹

In December 2025, an attempted suicide bomb attack on a military camp was foiled.⁴⁶⁰

Conflict-related displacement

According to the UNHCR PRMN, 17 individuals were newly displaced from Benadir region due to conflict or insecurity in the period from April 2025 to February 2026. In the same period, 7 636 individuals arrived from other regions, most of them (7 421) from Lower Shabelle, with more than half originating from Afgooye district.⁴⁶¹

According to the UN Panel of Experts, 90 % of conflict-related displacement recorded during between September 2024 and October 2025 was linked to Al-Shabaab.⁴⁶²

Radio Ergo noted in September 2025 that hundreds of families who had fled fighting between government forces and Al-Shabaab in Lower Shabelle were facing food and water shortages in IDP camps in Mogadishu.⁴⁶³

Other impacts on civilian life and humanitarian situation

A December 2025 map by UNOCHA showed 'very limited' to 'limited' restrictions regarding humanitarian access in central parts of Mogadishu, but 'heavy' restrictions in parts of the outer districts of Kaxda and Daynile and 'very heavy restrictions' in Wadajir bordering Lower Shabelle.⁴⁶⁴ In total, UNOCHA recorded 18 humanitarian access incidents in 2025,⁴⁶⁵ of which 7 were recorded in the period between July and September 2025.⁴⁶⁶ Regarding the food insecurity situation for January 2026, IPC reported that about 45 % of the total analysed population of 3 289 438 were either in Acute Food Insecurity IPC Phase 2 (stressed, 34 %), 3 (crisis, 9 % in) or 4 (emergency, 2 %).⁴⁶⁷ Benadir was reportedly hosting the largest concentration of IDPs in the country with an estimated IDP population of 1.06 million at the end of 2025.⁴⁶⁸

Between January and August 2025, 115 020 individuals were reportedly forcibly evicted in Benadir.⁴⁶⁹ NRC recorded 149 452 evictions in 2025 and 8 574 in the first three months of 2026.⁴⁷⁰ Inequitable aid distribution was reported to create tensions

between IDP and host communities in Daynile, Kaxda and Garasbaley, with locals reporting exclusion from service lists and youth gangs limiting safe access to WASH, healthcare and markets.⁴⁷¹ No current information could be found regarding infrastructure damage.

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