



2.4. Hirshabelle

2.4.1. Hiraan

Hiraan is divided into three districts: Jalalaqsi, Bulo Burto (also Buloburde, Buulo Barde) and Belet Weyne (also Beledweyne), with Belet Weyne city as the region's capital.[472](#) As of January 2026, Hiraan's population was estimated at 524 876.[473](#) For more background information on Hiraan, see section 2.4.1. 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, Al-Shabaab largely controlled the area west of Shabelle river up to and including the town of Buqda. The remaining area up to the border with Ethiopia and most of the area east of Shabelle river were under mixed control. Al-Shabaab, however, controlled the area along the border to Galgaduud, including Mokoqori and Mahas towns – towns, which at the beginning of the reference period had still been controlled by the 'federal aligned coalition, as indicated by [Map 2](#) of 31 March 2025. A small area east of Shabelle river and along the border to Ethiopia, including Mataban town, remained under control of the 'federal-aligned coalition' as of 31 March 2026.[474](#)

Al-Shabaab recaptured Aborey in April 2025,[475](#) and, in the context of a new offensive, [476](#) several other important locations, including Gumare,[477](#) Moqokori, Tardo, and Mahas in July 2025.[478](#) The group also gained control over the area between Mahas and Mataban as well as the road connecting Mahas with Belet Weyne. Thereby, as of September 2025, the group had effectively cut off government forces and allied clan militia stationed in the capital city, and reversed nearly all gains made by the SNA and allied *Macawisley* clan militia with the support of the USA,[479](#) and Türkiye during their 2022 counteroffensive.[480](#) Critics claimed that political power struggles,[481](#) and lack of support for clan militias contributed to Al-Shabaab's renewed advance.[482](#) Government (-aligned) operations against Al-Shabaab were reported during the reference period, for example, in April 2025 in Aborey,[483](#) in May in El Hareeri,[484](#) in July in Mabab,[485](#) Bulo Hog village,[486](#) and Gumare,[487](#) and in August in Aborey and Mahas,[488](#) including

targeted killings of senior Al-Shabaab members.[489](#) Somali media reported on *Macawisley*-led security operations in Garas Magan in June 2025[490](#) and Mahas in January 2026.[491](#) As of February 2026, authorities claimed to have retaken areas in central Hiraan.[492](#) Kaab TV reported on ongoing inter-clan fighting involving Hawadle and Abgaal and Hawadle and Habargidir clans, respectively.[493](#)

○ Recent security trends

In the period from 1 April 2025 to 27 March 2026, ACLED recorded 352 security incidents in Hiraan region, including battles, explosions or other forms of remote violence, and violence against civilians, causing 1 139 fatalities.[494](#)

Figure 23: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Hiraan per month, based on ACLED data.

Figure 23: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Hiraan per month, based on ACLED data.[495](#)

Figure 24: Evolution of security events in Hiraan per type, based on ACLED data.

Figure 24: Evolution of security events in Hiraan per type, based on ACLED data.[496](#)

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 133 security incidents against Military and Police Forces of Somalia and associated actors (mainly Hawiye-Hawadle sub-clan militias). Moreover, Al-Shabaab was involved in 93 security incidents against Hawiye-Hawadle sub-clan militias. 17 security incidents involved clashes between (sub-)clan militias, and 47 incidents involved violence against civilians, predominantly by Al-Shabaab and various (sub-)clan and unidentified militias and armed groups.

Illustrative security incidents

- Al-Shabaab regained control over Moqokori in early July 2025 following a suicide car bomb attack on a key security checkpoint.[497](#) The group's media claimed that 47 soldiers and Macawisley fighters were killed in the attack, and 65 injured.[498](#)
- At least three civilians were killed in a suspected Al-Shabaab IED attack on a café in Belet Weyne in mid-October 2025.[499](#)

- Armed men killed a man in a village along the border between Hiraan and Middle Shabelle regions in late November 2025, allegedly in the context of an ongoing conflict between Hawadle and Abgaal clans.[500](#)

- **Conflict-related displacement**

According to the UNHCR PRMN, 33 146 individuals were newly displaced from Hiraan region due to conflict or insecurity in the period from April 2025 to February 2026. Most of them were displaced within Hiraan in July and August 2025, moving from Bulo Burto to Belet Weyne district. In the same period, no individuals arrived from other regions to Hiraan.[501](#) UNHCR reported of the displacement of at least 22 800 individuals from Mahas in July 2025, following Al-Shabaab's takeover of the town.[502](#)

Other impacts on civilian life and humanitarian situation

Residents in Al-Shabaab-controlled locations reportedly faced restrictions of movement, enforced taxation,[503](#) forced recruitment, especially of boys and adolescents,[504](#) and the disruption of basic services.[505](#) Fighting in Mahas and Moqokori led to the closure of health facilities, leaving displaced persons without access to health services and treatment.[506](#) The affected population was also in need of shelter, food, and water.[507](#)

A December 2025 map by UNOCHA showed 'very heavy restrictions' regarding humanitarian access in most of Bulo Burto district and in parts of Jalalaqsi and Belet Weyne districts.[508](#) In total, UNOCHA recorded 17 humanitarian access incidents in 2025,[509](#) of which 8 were recorded in the period between July and September 2025.[510](#) Regarding the food insecurity situation as of January 2026, IPC reported that about 55 % of the total analysed population of 524 876 were either in Acute Food Insecurity IPC Phase 2 (stressed, 34 %), 3 (crisis, 17 %) or 4 (emergency, 4 %).[511](#) In early 2026, parts of eastern Bulo Burto district were particularly affected by worsening drought conditions.[512](#) NRC recorded no evictions in Hiraan region in 2025 and early 2026.[513](#)

No current information could be found regarding infrastructure damage.

- [472](#)

UNOCHA, Somalia Administrative Reference Map, as of 20 July 2023, [url](#)

- [473](#)

IPC, Somalia: Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analysis January-June 2026, 24 February 2026, [url](#), p. 4

- [474](#)

PolGeoNow, Somalia Approximate Territorial Control, as of 31 March 2025, n.a.;
PolGeoNow, Somalia Approximate Territorial Control, as of 31 March 2026, n.a.

- [475](#)

Hiiraan Online, Somali forces withdraw from strategic Aboorey in Hiiraan's Buulaburte district, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

- [476](#)

International Crisis Group, Helping Somalia Move Beyond a Shaky Status Quo, 16 October 2025, [url](#), p. 3

- [477](#)

Soufan Center (The), Al-Shabaab's 2025 Offensive and the Unraveling of Somalia's Federal Counterinsurgency, 24 July 2025, [url](#); ACLED, Africa Overview: August 2025, 8 August 2025, [url](#)

- [478](#)

UNSG, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia, S/2025/613, 30 September 2025, [url](#), para. 13

- [479](#)

SG, Al-Shabaab expands territory in Somalia's Hiran region amid government inaction, 11 September 2025, [url](#)

- [480](#)

Soufan Center (The), Al-Shabaab's 2025 Offensive and the Unraveling of Somalia's Federal Counterinsurgency, 24 July 2025, [url](#)

- [481](#)

SG, Al-Shabaab expands territory in Somalia's Hiran region amid government inaction, 11 September 2025, [url](#)

- [482](#)

Horseed Media, Somalia: Al-Shabaab Seizes Key Villages in Hiiraan Days After Capturing Areas Near the Capital, 23 July 2025, [url](#); Caasimada, Maamul taabacsanaa Villa Somalia oo eedeyn culus oo la xiriirta dagaalka u jeediyay DF [The Maamul Taabacsanaa Villa Somalia, a key stronghold linked to the conflict, has fallen to the DF], 7 September 2025, [url](#)

- [483](#)

SG, Somali army engages Al-Shabaab in fierce gunfight as militants capture key town in Hiran region, 8 April 2025, [url](#)

- [484](#)

Horseed Media, Somalia: Al-Shabaab leader among 45 terrorists killed in military operations, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

- [485](#)

SONNA, Somalia's Intelligence Forces Kill 15 al-Shabaab Militants in Coordinated Operation in Hiiraan, 14 July 2025, [url](#)

- [486](#)

AA, Airstrike kills at least 7 al-Shabaab terrorists in Somalia's Hiraan region, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

- [487](#)

Somaliland Standard, Somali Gov't Confirms killing ten Al-shabab fighters in Hiiraan province, 5 July 2025, [url](#)

- [488](#)

SMN, Airstrikes Kill Senior Al-Shabaab Leaders in Somalia's Hiiraan Region, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

- [489](#)

SMN, NISA says senior Al-Shabaab commanders killed in targeted operation in Hiiraan, 4 September 2025, [url](#); ACLED, Africa Overview: October 2025, 3 October 2025, [url](#); Kaab TV, Somali Government Forces Eliminate Senior Al-Shabaab Member in Targeted Hiraan Operation, 13 October 2025, [url](#)

- [490](#)

Horseed Media, Somalia: Clan Militia Kills Senior al-Shabaab Commander, 7 June 2025, [url](#); Horn Observer, Hawadle Clan Militia Kills Senior al-Shabaab Commander in Central Somalia, 7 June 2025, [url](#)

- [491](#)

SONNA, Local Forces Inflict Heavy Losses on Al-Shabaab in Hiiraan Region, 11 January 2026, [url](#)

- [492](#)

AP, Somalia renews its US-backed fight against al-Shabab militant group. Here is why it matters, 18 February 2026, [url](#)

- [493](#)

Kaab TV, Bloody Clan Conflicts Escalate in Southern and Central Somalia, 17 December 2025, [url](#)

- [494](#)

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Somalia, data covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, as of 16 April 2026, [url](#)

- [495](#)

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Somalia, data covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, as of 16 April 2026, [url](#)

- [496](#)

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Somalia, data covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, as of 16 April 2026, [url](#)

- [497](#)

Horn Africa News, Al-Shabaab Captures Moqokori After Fierce Battle as Ma'awisley Militias Mobilize for Counterattack, 7 July 2025, [url](#)

- [498](#)

Soufan Center (The), Al-Shabaab's 2025 Offensive and the Unraveling of Somalia's Federal Counterinsurgency, 24 July 2025, [url](#)

- [499](#)

Hiiraan Online, Three civilians killed in suspected Al-Shabaab bombing in Beledweyne, 15 October 2025, [url](#)

- [500](#)

Hiiraan Online, Elderly man killed in suspected clan revenge attack on Hiiraan-Middle Shabelle border, 26 November 2025, [url](#)

- [501](#)

UNHCR, PRMN Datafile – Somalia, as of 16 April 2026, [url](#)

- [502](#)

UNHCR Somalia, Flash Alert #14 - Thousands Displaced Amid Clashes Between Somali National Army and Al-Shabaab in Mahaas District, Hiran Region, 29 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1

- [503](#)

Garowe Online, Somalia: How Moqokori town can be retaken from Al-Shabaab, 9 July 2025, [url](#); Soufan Center (The), Al-Shabaab's 2025 Offensive and the Unraveling of Somalia's Federal Counterinsurgency, 24 July 2025, [url](#)

- [504](#)

UNHCR Somalia, Flash Alert #14 - Thousands Displaced Amid Clashes Between Somali National Army and Al-Shabaab in Mahaas District, Hiran Region, 29 July 2025, [url](#), p. 2

- [505](#)

Kaab TV, Somalia's Security Setback: How Al-Shabaab Regained Territory Under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, 12 November 2025, [url](#)

- [506](#)

Radio Ergo, Health crisis faces families displaced by conflict in Hiran, 4 September 2025, [url](#)

- [507](#)

UNOCHA, Somalia: Conflict displacement in Hiraaan and Gedo Regions – Flash Update No.2, 4 August 2025, [url](#); FTL Somalia, Crisis in Hiiraan as Over 60,000 Displaced as Conflict Sparks Urgent Humanitarian Emergency, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

- [508](#)

UNOCHA, Somalia Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026, 27 January 2026, [url](#), p. 17

- [509](#)

UNOCHA, Humanitarian Access Snapshot (2025), 8 January 2026, [url](#), p. 1

- [510](#)

UNOCHA, Humanitarian Access Snapshot (July – September 2025), 15 October 2025, [url](#), p. 1

- [511](#)

IPC, Somalia: Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analysis January-June 2026, 24 February 2026, [url](#), p. 4

- [512](#)

UNOCHA, Somalia: 2025 Drought Emergency. Situation Report No. 3, 2 February 2026, [url](#), p. 3

- [513](#)

NRC, Evictions, n.d., [url](#), filter '2025' and '2026', respectively, as year, 'Hiraan' as region. Numbers include data until 31 March 2026, as of 8 April 2026.