

3rd December 2012

A commentary on the October 2012 Somalia Operational Guidance Note

This commentary identifies what the ‘Still Human Still Here’ coalition considers to be the main inconsistencies and omissions between the currently available country of origin information (COI) and case law on Somalia and the conclusions reached in the October 2012 Somalia Operational Guidance Note (OGN), issued by the UK Border Agency. Where we believe inconsistencies have been identified, the relevant section of the OGN is highlighted in blue.

An index of full sources of the COI referred to in this commentary is also provided at the end of the document.

This commentary is a guide for legal practitioners and decision-makers in respect of the relevant COI, by reference to the sections of the Operational Guidance Note on Somalia issued in October 2012. Access the complete OGN on Somalia [here](#).

The document should be used as a tool to help to identify relevant COI and the COI referred to can be considered by decision makers in assessing asylum applications and appeals. This document should not be submitted as evidence to the UK Border Agency, the Tribunal or other decision makers in asylum applications or appeals. However, legal representatives are welcome to submit the COI referred to in this document to decision makers (including judges) to help in the accurate determination of an asylum claim or appeal.

The COI referred to in this document is not exhaustive and should always be complemented by case-specific COI research.

Contents

2.4 Internal Relocation	p. 2
Humanitarian situation, especially for IDPs in Mogadishu	p. 3
3.6 General country situation in southern and central regions	p. 10
Security situation in Mogadishu	p. 11
Availability of mental health care in Somalia	p. 21
4.2 Minors claiming in their own right	p. 28
Useful sources to consult on the security situation in Somalia	p. 48
Useful sources to consult on the humanitarian situation in Somalia	p. 50
Index of sources	p. 52

2.4 Internal Relocation

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

2.4.2 The UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines (May 2010) conclude that where the examination of an Internal Flight Argument/Internal Relocation Argument is a requirement under domestic law, it should be examined on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of the asylum-seeker within the UNHCR guidelines.³⁹ In accordance with those guidelines, caseowners should carefully consider the appropriateness of internal relocation on a case by case basis taking full account of the individual circumstances of the particular claimant.

Whilst this is an accurate excerpt from the current UNHCR Guidelines of May 2010, the OGN fails to include UNHCR's position in relation to the possibility of internal relocation throughout Southern and Central Somalia as follows (emphasis added):

- [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\), UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from Somalia, 05/05/2010](#)

[...] E. Internal Flight or Relocation Alternative (IFA/IRA)

[...] 2. Southern and Central Somalia

On account of the general unavailability of protection from the State in southern and central Somalia due to the fact that the State has lost effective control over large parts of territory, the situation in southern and central Somalia does not meet the “relevance” test for the application of the IFA/IRA concept. Furthermore, the customary law systems cannot be considered as sources of effective and durable protection due to their fragmented nature, the recent breakdown of traditional clan protection mechanisms, bias towards majority clans and the contradictions between customary law and international human rights law, particularly in relation to the rights of women.

In the absence of a risk of persecution or other serious harm upon relocation, it must also be “reasonable” for a claimant to relocate. Such an assessment must take into account the elements of safety and security, respect for human rights and options for economic survival in order to evaluate if the individual would be able to live a relatively normal life without undue hardship given his or her situation.

In light of the risks to safety and security, ongoing armed conflict and the shifting armed fronts and ongoing widespread human rights violations, it cannot be considered reasonable for any Somali, regardless of whether the individual originates from southern and central Somalia, Somaliland or Puntland, to relocate within or to southern and central Somalia. [...]

Supportive of UNHCR's position that the 'relevance' test of the assessment of internal relocation within Southern and Central Somalia will not be met, the 'Actors of Protection' section of the OGN accepts at paragraph 2.3.13 that “If the ill-treatment/persecution is at the hands of non-state agents, then the provision of state protection is unlikely to be available due to the structural weakness of the security services and the criminal justice system and also the widespread existence of corruption in state institutions”.

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

2.4.3 While travel within Al-Shabaab controlled areas of southern and central Somalia is possible, the existence of frequent Al-Shabaab checkpoints means that those who do not comply with the social norms established by Al-Shabaab or who are considered to be un-Islamic or suspected of opposing Al-Shabaab are at risk of suffering serious harm. In this context, the Upper Tribunal concluded in the country guidance case of AMM and others ((see section 2.5), that travel by land across southern and central Somalia to a home area or proposed place of relocation controlled by Al-Shabaab is not feasible for those who have had no history of living under Al-Shabab, and that internal relocation to an area not controlled by Al-Shabab is in general unlikely to be an option, if the place of proposed relocation is stricken by famine or near famine. Women travelling without male friends or relatives are in general likely to face a real risk of sexual violence.

This above section of the OGN is consistent with the current Country Guidance case *AMM*. In order to assist in researching the humanitarian situation in a proposed site of relocation not controlled by Al-Shabaab, an [Index of useful sources to consult on the humanitarian situation](#) in Somalia has been provided below.

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

2.4.4 AMM and others also considered that for someone at real risk in a home area in southern or central Somalia, an internal relocation alternative to Mogadishu is in general unlikely to be available, given the risk of indiscriminate violence in the city, together with the present humanitarian situation. Relocation to an IDP camp in the Afgoye Corridor will, as a general matter, likewise be unreasonable, unless there is evidence that the person concerned would be able to achieve the lifestyle of those better-off inhabitants of the Afgoye Corridor settlements. However since the determination in AMM and others was handed down there has been a sustained and significant improvement in the situation in Mogadishu and case owners should consider the new country of origin information and the individual circumstances of each claimant to establish whether the guidance contained in AMM in relation to internal relocation to Mogadishu remains applicable to the individual claimant concerned..

This section of the OGN appears to give itself room to depart from the current Country Guidance case of *AMM*. It is not clear whether the ‘sustained and significant improvement in the situation in Mogadishu’ referred to here is meant to apply to the security situation, the humanitarian situation, or the situation in the Afgoye Corridor, or indeed to all of the above. For an analysis of the security situation in Mogadishu and in other locations, see the section [3.6 General country situation in southern and central regions](#) below.

Given the importance of up to date COI relevant to a claimant’s profile in an assessment of the possibility of internal relocation, it is imperative that individualised research is undertaken. The following overview of recently published sources is designed to give an indication of the current humanitarian situation in Mogadishu, which although reported to have generally improved, remains serious for IDPs. It is considered that the situation of IDPs in Mogadishu a useful comparator for the situation for returnees who must relocate there to escape the threat of persecution:

Humanitarian situation, especially for IDPs in Mogadishu

- [UNHCR, Somalia Fact Sheet - November 2011, 26/11/2012](#)
[...] Somali people are facing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world today. One in three Somalis is in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and one in every three children living in the South-Central region is malnourished. [...] Somalia is the most affected country within the Horn of Africa by the ongoing drought, widely regarded as the worst in 60 years. Consecutive seasonal rain failures have led to sky-rocketing food prices, in a country already devastated by two decades of civil war. [...]
- [MSF, Responding to Urgent Nutritional Needs on the Outskirts of Mogadishu, 20/11/2012](#)
[...] Years of intense violence, drought, malnutrition, and infectious disease have wrecked the Somali health system and displaced thousands of Somalis from their homes. While food security seems to have improved since 2011, a Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) assessment shows that malnutrition rates are still alarming in many parts of the country, including the outskirts of Mogadishu. [...] MSF medical staff visited 34 camps hosting more than 15,000 displaced people who live without sufficient access to health care. Many have suffered multiple displacements and are extremely vulnerable. [...]
- [Shabelle Media Network, Somalia Government Resumes Evicting Mogadishu Squatters, 11/11/2012](#)

[...] Somali government has started on Sunday a major operation to remove thousands of people who have been squatting in government buildings in Mogadishu, the capital.

An official has told Shabelle Media that the buildings which they are forcing the people to leave are state assets and the order is from Benadir regional administration under Somali government.

However, the people expressed alarming concern over the evicting mover from the government buildings, saying they have nowhere else to go and dwell. [...]

➤ [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia; Issue 13; 1-31 October 2012, 09/11/2012](#)

[...] The recent surge in economic activity in Mogadishu after years of conflict is a welcome development. But conditions for the city's most vulnerable, including hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs), remain unacceptable. After months of delays, aid workers are implementing a coordinated strategy to improve lives of IDPS.

Access to the displaced has been a challenge, largely because of insecurity, resulting in irregular humanitarian services with varying standards within settlements. The tri-cluster strategy is being supported by the Common Humanitarian Fund bringing together 14 partners, from the Health, Shelter, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Clusters.

The projects aim to ameliorate conditions in Zona-K and 77 settlements located in Hodan and Daynile districts. The two settlements are some of the largest and most congested in the city hosting an estimated 62,000 people and 60,000 respectively. In October, tri-cluster strategy partners completed construction of 1,200 temporary shelters made from corrugated iron sheets. The Shelter Cluster plans to construct a total of 7,000 shelters for 48,000 displaced persons by the end of the year. The new shelters are an improvement from huts made of cardboard, old rags and sticks which are highly flammable and broken into easily.

There were additional displacements into Zona-K and camp 77 from forced evictions in Mogadishu in October, a trend which will likely continue with Mogadishu booming and property values on the rise. Some 473 families in Hodan district were evicted from a former primary school building, their home for the past 20 years. Most moved to existing settlements while others pitched tent in unoccupied land. [...]

On the health and hygiene front, ongoing activities have contributed to a notable decrease in diarrhoeal diseases reported in Mogadishu, with no outbreaks reported during September-October. [...]

➤ [UNOCHA, Mogadishu- Situation Analysis, October 2012, 09/11/2012](#)

Context

[...] There are no recently verified population figures for Mogadishu, but UNDP's 2005 report estimated it at 900,000, while according to the Federal Government of the Republic of Somalia (FGRS), the current population figure is 2.5 million. The October 2011 inter-agency assessment indicates that 184,400 IDPs live in makeshift settlements and abandoned public buildings across the city. Most arrived from the southern and central regions (Lower and Middle Shabelle, Lower and Middle Jubba, Bay and Bakool) during the drought emergency between July to September 2011. Over 40,000 arrived during the military offensive in Afgoyee between February and May 2012.

The nature of the conflict and the security risk in Mogadishu changed from 6 August 2011 following the withdrawal of AS from most of their positions. However, threats to the UN are rising in Mogadishu and across Somalia. The presence of various clan militia groups poses security risks and protection concerns to the local population, IDPs and humanitarian workers. The general security conditions adversely impacted on livelihoods and humanitarian access. The security situation is slightly improving in Banadir region, however.

[...] Growing needs, glaring gaps in the provision of basic services and protection concerns require continued and scaled-up assistance in order to sustain the improvements made. The eviction of IDPs from government-occupied buildings is another impending challenge for humanitarian community.

Humanitarian Needs

Mogadishu is a highly complex humanitarian environment. The prolonged conflict destroyed most of the basic social services infrastructure and the SNG needs international support to renovate and restore necessary services. The IDP settlements are scattered across the city and the limited space in the settlements poses a huge challenge to the delivery of services.

Food Security: Food continues to be the number one priority for all the IDPs. According to the August 2012 Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) report, some 60,000 people in the region are in *crisis*. Malnutrition among Mogadishu IDPs and urban population has improved from *very critical* phase (with GAM of 20-22per cent) in January 2012 to *serious* phase. Current GAM arête is 9.6 per cent for

Mogadishu IDPs and 10.8 per cent for the urban population. The crude death rate for Mogadishu IDPs and urban-dwellers is in the range of 1- 1.49/10,000/day indicating a *critical* situation, and highest in the country, but nevertheless below UNICEF's emergency threshold of 2/10,000/day. The limited coping mechanisms available to the IDPs and other vulnerable people mean that food aid is a continuing requirement. Although livestock prices improved, Somali shilling appreciated against the US dollar and employment opportunities were enhanced. However, with the poor Gu 2012 cereal production, El Niño in the Deyr season (Oct-Dec '12), and the anticipated rise in global food prices combined with prevailing insecurity, a negative impact on the urban food security situation is predicted. An increase in food prices, weakening purchasing power and disruption in trade and commodity movements are likely before the end of the current year. Businessmen are normally reluctant to import food commodities for fear that the humanitarian supply would depress prices.

The IDP settlements in Banadir regions remain in emergency (IPC 4), as demonstrated by the high proportion of IDP households with low food consumption scores (42 per cent with a "poor" Food Consumption Score (FCS)) and the high proportion of IDP households relying on severe to very severe coping strategies (35 per cent of households). In addition, a large proportion of IDPs' incomes in this settlement, that is an average of 85 per cent, is spent on food.

Nutrition: The nutrition situation in Banadir has improved from very critical to serious; however the IDP nutrition situation remains vulnerable due to a dependence on humanitarian assistance, income from petty trade and casual labor opportunities that are closely linked with rural and urban livelihoods. Sustainable nutrition interventions are required to reduce malnutrition.

WASH: The introduction of the tri-cluster in two key camps, Zones K and 77, improved WASH services. WASH activities continue to grow and need regular scaling up as a result of new arrivals and intra-camp displacement. The city lacks a sufficient waste collection system, with many neighbourhoods and IDP settlements often overwhelmed by uncollected garbage. Vulnerable people are at risk of a cholera outbreak during the rainy season.

Health: Under the tri-cluster response mechanism, the Health Cluster closely collaborates with the WASH and Nutrition Clusters in IDP settlements in Zones K and 77. In the camps there is insufficient shelter, overcrowding, bad hygiene conditions, and a limited access to basic services/amenities such as health, clean water, latrines, and health education activities. This resulted in increased cases of communicable diseases such as upper and lower respiratory tract infections, skin infections, outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD), and confirmed cholera and measles cases. The Deyr rains from October to December normally increase the risk of AWD. Immediate clean water, hygiene promotion activities and the strengthening of camp-wide health service delivery were necessary, especially in the large camps. Crude death rates (CDR) are estimated at a critical level of 1.41 per 10,000 people per day. (FSNAU Post Gu 2012)

Shelter and NFIs: Shelter and non-food items (NFIs) remain the second most important need among IDPs. Makeshift shelters are congested and in very poor condition, with a significant number situated in low-lying areas exposed during the Gu rains, and a moderate El Niño is expected between October 2012 and January 2013. [...] Issues of dignity, safety and security remain a priority, with 71 per cent of families living in a 3.14m² single room (equivalent to a two-person camping tent) and 89 per cent of the shelters unsecure with no lock. Under the tri-cluster umbrella, three partners have completed 750 shelters out of a planned 7,000. [...]

Protection: The general insecurity situation in Mogadishu remains a crucial protection concern. Civilian lives are endangered, access to livelihoods is limited, and IDPs are exposed to countless violations including but not limited to, gender-based violence (GBV), rape and murder during movement and aid distribution. They are also exposed to looting of relief supplies, forced early marriages, domestic violence; child labour and forced conscription of minors. [...]

➤ [IRIN, A snapshot of humanitarian challenges, 07/11/2012](#)

[...] Health infrastructure: Somalia faces numerous health challenges, central among them the absence of an effective national health system, according to former acting health minister Abdiaziz Sheikh Yusuf. After the 1991 overthrow of the former government, hundreds of doctors and nurses fled the country, and medical services were taken over by the private sector, the UN and NGOs. Under a new cabinet structure announced on 4 November, the health ministry will now fall under the Social Development Services Ministry, which will be led by Maryan Qasim. This new ministry will also cover education, youth and sports.

Malnutrition: At least 28 percent of Somalia's population - some 2.12 million people - are currently food insecure, a drop from the peak of over 4 million people in 2011. An estimated 236,000 people are acutely

malnourished and in need of specialized nutrition treatment, according to a 26 September Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit report.

While exact figures on national undernutrition prevalence are not available from the government, poor nutrition is recognized as a major problem. Lul Mohamud Mohamed, a Mogadishu-based paediatrician, told IRIN that malnutrition there is worsened by diseases such as measles.

Child mortality: Somalia ranks first in the world in under-five mortality, according to the UN Children's Fund's (UNICEF) 2012 State of the World's Children report. Children face poor healthcare coverage and quality, low immunization rates, high levels of malnutrition and frequent disease outbreaks.

Potable water: Only 30 percent of Somalia's population has access to improved drinking water sources and only 23 percent has access to improved sanitation facilities, according to UNICEF's report. While the government does not know the exact number of Somalis without access to clean drinking water, Yusuf, the former acting health minister, told IRIN that there are insufficient water wells in the country, describing this as one of the most important challenges facing the new government.

Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs): Somalia continues to be the leading refugee source country in the Horn of Africa, mainly due to its insecurity. As of 31 October, over 1 million people had fled Somalia to neighbouring countries; about half of them are being hosted in Kenya, mainly in the eastern Dadaab camps. The rest of the refugees are spread out in countries such as Yemen, Ethiopia and Uganda, according to the UN's Refugee Agency (UNHCR). An estimated 1.36 million Somalis are internally displaced, mainly in the south-central regions. According to UNICEF, an estimated 27 percent of Somalia's population (or about 2 million people), half of whom are children, remain in a state of humanitarian crisis.

[...] Agriculture: Somalia has a land area of about 637,657sqkm, of which 70 percent is considered 'agricultural land', or land suitable for farming and pasture, according to World Bank data. But only 1.6 percent of the total land area is arable, according to Hussein Haji, an agricultural expert and the executive director of the Somali Agricultural Technical Group. And only 10 percent of arable land is currently being cultivated, with farmers in the sorghum- and maize-growing Bay and Bakool regions depending on rain-fed agriculture.

[...] Youth: The country has a significant youth population, with about 42 percent of Somalis being aged 14 to 29. But the youth are mainly idle; unemployment among them stands at a high of 67 percent - one of the highest such rates in the world, according to the 2012 UN Development Programme's Somalia Human Development Report. Youth must be given opportunities, "as their exclusion, resentment and grievances are fuel for conflict escalation and risky behaviours," the report says. [...]

➤ [Refugees International, Gatekeepers and Evictions: Somalia's Displaced Population at Risk, 01/11/2012](#)

[...] Mogadishu's displaced population, however, is not benefiting from the city's current revival. The United Nations estimates that there are around 184,000 IDPs in the city, though the exact numbers are difficult to discern. Tens of thousands of displaced from southern Somalia arrived in Mogadishu last year, seeking refuge from famine and drought. They joined the many others who had been living in the city's camps for years due to protracted food insecurity and repeated bouts of violent conflict. An untold number have been displaced multiple times.

Though some camps are in better condition than others, the majority of IDPs live in dismal, slum-like settlements. All across Mogadishu, makeshift shelters constructed of twigs and sheets are crammed together only a few feet apart. Children play in areas strewn with debris and garbage. [...]

At the Mercy of Gatekeepers

When Al Shabab gave up control of the Somali capital, militia leaders, politicians, and influential landowners re-consolidated their control over various parts of the city. This control extends to the displacement camps where international humanitarian assistance is directed. On site, camp 'gatekeepers,' connected to these local powerbrokers through a complex network of influence, regularly demand a portion of the aid that displaced people receive as 'rent.' Some provide security in exchange for these payments. Others, however, can be merciless – treating the IDPs as commodities for their own personal gain, and even preventing some from returning home if their rent is in arrears. Several humanitarian workers described the system of obligation in some of the settlements as 'quasi-slavery.' As an outside researcher, it can be very difficult to learn from IDPs themselves about the challenges they face since some gatekeepers are known to abuse IDPs who express criticism to aid workers. [...]

Land and Evictions

An additional challenge for Mogadishu's displaced population relates to land tenure. As Mogadishu develops, businessmen, returning members of the Somali diaspora, and government officials are all

seeking to reclaim land where IDPs have settled. While it is very encouraging to see schools and government buildings being reconstructed, it is often difficult to know where the IDPs evicted from these spaces have gone or whether they received any support (or even notice) prior to their eviction. No doubt, wherever they moved, the gatekeepers likely followed. [...]

➤ [IRIN News, Mogadishu IDPs suffer extortion, eviction, 01/11/2012](#)

[...] Aid agencies say despite the withdrawal of Al-Shabab from Mogadishu in 2011, several militia groups continue to operate in the city. This insecurity and the lack of organizational structures within the camps continue to make it difficult to provide a steady stream of support.

"Access to the IDPs remains difficult because of poor security, and humanitarian services are there but irregular. IDPs are coping by setting up bases in several settlements to access all services," Kilian Kleinschmidt, deputy humanitarian coordinator for the UN in Somalia, told IRIN.

"One major shortcoming has been the lack of management and administrative structures within the IDP settlements, many of which are controlled by unscrupulous NGOs and gatekeepers, who may divert funds and supplies [intended for] the settlements. Some have even been known to set up fake camps, organizing for people to be there when aid agencies are visiting when in actual fact no one lives there," he said.

[...] Tough conditions

"Our shelters, which we build ourselves, cannot even protect you from environmental factors like wind and sun, let alone provide our security. Besides this, it is overcrowded, and one is not even able to get enough space to cook or boil water," said Asha Ahmed, an IDP in Mogadishu. [...]

Thousands of IDPs recently demonstrated in Mogadishu to demand better service provision and housing.

"The demonstration was about long-standing issues, and the IDPs are right to express their feelings. We hope that once the [political] transition comes to an end and the government falls into place, humanitarian issues will not be forgotten," Kleinschmidt said. [...]

There are no concrete population statistics on the number of IDPs in Mogadishu, but a 2012 survey by the International Committee of the Red Crescent estimated that the number could be as high as 400,000, with 15 percent being urban poor originally from the city.

"IDPs are living in very bad conditions with few humanitarian standards met. We had hoped that many would return after the end of the 2011 drought, but that has not really happened since many of the IDPs found livelihoods in the booming city," Kleinschmidt said. [...]

➤ [UNHCR, Somalia: PMT Mogadishu Monthly Dashboard - September, 2012, 18/10/2012](#)

[...] Total movements nationwide	24,000
Total movements to Mogadishu	3,700
Total Movements from Mogadishu	300
Leaving Mogadishu	300
To Areas Within Mogadishu	0

[...]

➤ [IRIN News, Food insecurity still a problem, 16/10/2012](#)

[...] In Mogadishu, the cost of a 50kg bag of wheat flour has gone up from US\$22 to \$36 in a month.

"There is not enough supply of wheat flour in the markets because businesses are importing less flour due to storage [problems]," Fatima Hassan, a businesswoman, told IRIN. Wheat flour is the main ingredient used in making anjera, a typical Somali breakfast food. The price of cooking oil has also gone up, with a 20-litre jerrycan selling at \$28.50, up from \$27 last month, though the price of sugar and rice remains largely unchanged, with 50kg costing \$37.50 and \$52, respectively. "A year ago, \$130 was enough for my family of eight, but now I have to pay more than \$200 [per month on food]," said Mowlid Sheikhdon, a pharmacist in Mogadishu. "Our family has been forced to consume less meat," Sharif Hussein, a father of five, told IRIN in Mogadishu. [...]

A rise in insecurity and high import costs could see prices escalate even more as incomes fall. Oxfam found that incomes were two-thirds lower than during a normal April-to-June 'Gu' season because of decreases in livestock, crop and milk production. The 'Gu' season accounts for 60-70 percent of Somalia's cereal harvests, but there have been low harvests in the major sorghum-producing region of Bay, which normally accounts for almost two-thirds of the country's crop. The Middle Juba, Lower Shabelle and Gedo regions have also recorded significantly smaller maize harvests. This year's poor Gu rains followed the 2011

humanitarian crisis, when the country saw devastating livestock and livelihood losses, and two regions experienced famine. [...]

➤ [UNOCHA, Somalia: Mogadishu Humanitarian Snapshot \(September 2012\), 01/10/2012](#)

[...] Displacements

[...] The Population Movement Tracking (PMT) network recorded about 8,300 movements between July and September into Mogadishu and Afgooye. PMT reports indicate that priority needs for the displaced are food, livelihood support, shelter and protection. Most IDPs moved from Lower Shabelle and Lower Juba regions

[...] Urban Nutrition

Recent food security and nutrition assessments indicate that the nutrition situation among the Mogadishu urban population is still *Serious*. The Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit and partners conducted repeat assessments among the urban and the IDP population to closely monitor their situation. The results of the urban population reported Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rates of 10.8% (8.3-13.9) and 1.5% (0.7-3.0) respectively.

The crude and under five death rates remain elevated at 1.23 (0.81-1.85) and 1.54 (0.82-2.85) respectively, indicating a Critical situation although a slight improvement was noted from results in April 2012. [...]

➤ [United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations support to end human rights abuses and combat impunity in Somalia; Report of the Secretary-General, 21/09/2012](#)

[...] 21. In 2011, there was a massive influx into Mogadishu of people who were displaced by the conflict and famine in southern and central Somalia. Most reside in settlements with limited access to shelter, water, sanitation and health services. Poor living conditions combined with malnutrition have led to outbreaks of such diseases as cholera and polio. The diversion of humanitarian aid by agents of the Transitional Federal Government and allied militia members has also been reported. This has particularly affected the right to food of internally displaced persons in Mogadishu. A pattern of systematic extortion at checkpoints manned by armed forces in areas under control of the Government and allied militias has also been alleged.

22. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive policy on displaced persons and a comprehensive approach to urban poverty to improve the living conditions for the internally displaced and local residents alike. The protracted conflict, combined with a weak land tenure system, has impeded durable solutions to displacement. Earlier in 2012 year, long-term internally displaced persons were forcibly evicted from public buildings in Mogadishu, thus creating a homeless population in the capital. It is estimated that evictions in Mogadishu ordered by the Government and by private landlords account for 12 per cent of all displacement. [...]

➤ [UNDP, The Somalia Human Development Report 2012 - Empowering youth for peace and development, 2012](#)

[...] Somalia's Human Development Index (HDI) value, a summary measure of development which takes into account average achievements in health, income and education, is strikingly low at 0.285 out of an ideal of 1. If internationally comparable data were available, Somalia would probably rank among the lowest in the world, at 165 out of the 170 countries in the 2010 global Human Development Report. If one accounts for the level of inequality in the distribution of income, education and health, Somalia's HDI is even worse, with the average loss at 42 percent as measured by the Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI). [...]

In terms of measuring deprivations related to poverty, Somalia's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of 0.47 out of 1 would place it at 94 out of 104 countries in 2010 if comparisons were made to the ranking in the global HDR for that year. An estimated 82 percent of Somalis (99% of the nomadic population) are considered poor across multiple dimensions. The divide between urban and rural populations is significant—61 percent and 94 percent, respectively. In south central Somalia, 89 percent of people are poor across several dimensions, compared to 75 percent in Puntland and 72 percent in Somaliland. [...]

According to a survey conducted to prepare this 2012 Somalia Human Development Report, overall unemployment among people aged 15 to 64 is estimated at 54 percent in Somalia, up from 47 percent in 2002. The unemployment rate for youth aged 14 to 29 is 67 percent—one of the highest rates in the world. Females experienced higher unemployment at 74 percent than males at 61 percent. The majority

of unpaid family workers were young women who were mostly forced to take traditional occupations due to entrenched traditional gender roles. [...]

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

2.4.7 In its May 2010 Eligibility Guidelines, UNHCR considered that the generally deplorable living conditions of displaced persons in Puntland and Somaliland indicates that internal relocation was generally not available for individuals from southern and central Somalia in these territories. However, it also stated that whether an internal flight argument exists in Puntland or Somaliland will depend on the circumstances of the individual case, including whether the individual is a member of a majority or minority clan and whether the individual originates from the territory to which they are seeking to relocate. There are major protection concerns around IDP settlements both in Puntland and Somaliland, which include overcrowding, severe levels of malnourishment, economic exploitation of children and a lack of physical security, rapes, gang rapes and other instances of sexual and gender-based violence. UNOCHA reported in its August 2012 Humanitarian Bulletin an increase of gender-based violence in Galkayo, Puntland, with many of the incidences occurring in the IDP settlements that host minority clans.

2.4.8 The authorities in Somaliland will only admit failed asylum seekers returning from European countries who originate from their territory or those who have close affiliations to the territory through clan membership. In the case of majority clan affiliates, this means those associated with the Isaaq in Somaliland. [...]

As set out in the OGN above, UNHCR considers that whether internal relocation to Puntland or Somaliland meets the 'relevance' assessment will depend on whether the individual originates from the territory to which they are seeking to relocate. However, whilst the OGN at 2.4.8 identifies that Somaliland will only admit failed asylum seekers returning from European countries who originate from their territory or those who have close affiliations to the territory through clan membership, no mention is made of the entry restrictions in Puntland. The country guidance case of *AMM* clearly identifies that Puntland shares the same admittance criteria (emphasis added):

[AMM and others \(conflict; humanitarian crisis; returnees; FGM\) Somalia CG \[2011\] UKUT 00445 \(IAC\)](#)

Country Guidance

[...] Somaliland and Puntland

14) The present appeals were not designed to be vehicles for giving country guidance on the position within Somaliland or Puntland. There is no evidential basis for departing from the conclusion in *NM* and others, that **Somaliland and Puntland in general only accept back persons who were former residents of those regions and were members of locally based clans or sub clans**. In the context of Somali immigration to the United Kingdom, there is a close connection with Somaliland.

15) A person from Somaliland will not, in general, be able without real risk of serious harm to travel overland from Mogadishu International Airport to a place where he or she might be able to obtain an unofficial travel document for the purposes of gaining entry to Somaliland, and then by land to Somaliland. This is particularly the case if the person is female. A proposed return by air to Hargeisa, Somaliland (whether or not via Mogadishu International Airport) will in general involve no such risks. [...]

To assist in researching the reasonableness of relocation to a proposed site in Somaliland or Puntland for a particular profile of claimant, [Useful sources to consult on the humanitarian situation in Somalia](#) are presented below.

3.6 General country situation in southern and central regions

The OGN reflects the main findings of the current Country Guidance case *AMM*, apart from in relation to the security situation in Mogadishu:

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

Conclusion

[...] 3.6.26 In the country guidance case of *AMM* and others (see section 2.5 above) promulgated in November 2011, the Upper Tribunal concluded that:

Mogadishu

(a) Despite the withdrawal in early August 2011 of Al-Shabab conventional forces from at least most of Mogadishu, there remains in general a real risk of Article 15(c) harm for the majority of those returning to that city after a significant period of time abroad. Such a risk does not arise in the case of a person connected with powerful actors or belonging to a category of middle class or professional persons, who can live to a reasonable standard in circumstances where the Article 15(c) risk, which exists for the great majority of the population, does not apply.

Caseowners should note that in reaching that conclusion the Upper Tribunal did not say that the reduction in violence following al-Shabaab's withdrawal from Mogadishu was insufficient to show that there was no longer a general Article 15(c) risk; what they said was that it was too early to show that the reduction in violence was durable. In paragraph 363 of the determination the Upper Tribunal said "Before leaving the issue of Article 15(c) in Mogadishu, it is necessary to say something with an eye to the use that will be made of our country guidance findings in the next few weeks and months. In assessing cases before them, judicial fact-finders will have to decide whether the evidence is the same or similar to that before us (Practice Direction 12). To the extent it is not, they are not required to regard our findings as authoritative. As we have emphasised, it is simply not possible on the evidence before us to state that the changes resulting from Al-Shabaab's withdrawal from Mogadishu are sufficiently durable. Far too much is presently contingent. As time passes, however, it may well be that judicial fact-finders are able to conclude that the necessary element of durability has been satisfied. How, if at all, that impacts on the assessment of risk on return will, of course, depend on all the other evidence."

As Lord Justice Carnwath (now Lord Carnwath) noted in *TK (Tamils – LP updated) Sri Lanka CG [2009] UKAIT 00049* "... country guidance is not inflexible; it must be applied by reference to new evidence as it emerges." The current evidence as set out in the *COIS Somalia Bulletin: Security Situation August 2012* and elsewhere is that the lower level of violence has been sustained over the past year, and that the violence that does exist is generally targeted at government, security forces and international bodies. In the circumstances the situation in Mogadishu should no longer be regarded as presenting a general risk of Article 15(c) harm. Instead, for a claim to succeed under Article 15(c), an individual would need to show that their personal circumstances are such that they would be at real risk and that there was no internal relocation option open to them. A claim under Article 15(c) should succeed if a claimant establishes that particular factors place him or her at additional risk above that which applies to the civilian population generally, such that he or she is at real risk of serious harm from the levels of indiscriminate violence that do exist and that internal relocation to a place where there is not a real risk of serious harm is not reasonable.

It is considered that insufficient COI on the current security situation in Mogadishu has been provided in the OGN to support the above assertion of that "the lower level of violence has been sustained over the past year, and that the violence that does exist is generally targeted at government, security forces and international bodies". This position is also inconsistent with the following COI contained in the OGN:

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

3.6.7 The UN Security Council's Report of 1 May 2012 noted that the security situation remained volatile as military operations continued on the outskirts of Mogadishu and parts of south-central Somalia. Gains against the insurgency continued, although the period also saw an increasing number of non-conventional attacks by Al-Shabab. In the Mogadishu area, Al-Shabaab terrorist attacks remained constant, though many were prevented or failed as pressure mounted from reinforced Government and AMISOM forces. The threat of Al-Shabaab terrorism was heightened by a public statement against the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) on 25 January 2012 and, more significantly, the announcement on 9 February 2012 of a strengthened alliance with Al-Qaida. Some elements of Al-Shabaab reportedly do not embrace the alliance. The UN was directly targeted in three hand grenade attacks against its sites in January 2012, without casualties. Attacks on Villa Somalia, the presidential compound, were carried out on 14 March 2012 by an Al-Shabaab suicide bomber and on 19, 20 and 26 March 2012 with the firing of mortar rounds, claiming several lives. On 4 April 2012, another Al-Shabaab suicide bomber set off an explosion at the National Theatre of Mogadishu, killing 10 people, including several officials of the Transitional Federal Government.

[...]

3.6.11 The UN Secretary General reported in August 2012 that in Mogadishu, armed clashes between Al-Shabaab and AMISOM and the forces of the Somali National Army occurred daily during April and May 2012, but most fighting stopped after late May, when allied forces launched an offensive pushing Al-Shabaab's combat units into the middle and lower Shabelles. On 27 July 2012, a bomb exploded near the venue of the National Constituent Assembly, but did not result in injuries. As the end of the transition approached, tensions rose again in the capital. Terrorist attacks continued, demonstrating Al-Shabaab's persistent covert infiltration and the overstretched capability of the allied forces. Throughout the area of operations, United Nations staff mobility remained an issue of serious concern.

The following non-exhaustive COI is illustrative of the security incidents that have occurred in Mogadishu in the past three months. Whilst expressing cautious optimism, sources continue to document a volatile security situation and report that whilst violence is targeted at government forces, civilians remain at risk at being caught up in such violence. For further information on displacement from and within Mogadishu, see the above section on the [Humanitarian situation, particularly for IDPs in Mogadishu](#).

Security situation in Mogadishu

- [Shabelle Media Network, Soldier Opens Fire on a Civilian Bus in Mogadishu, Kills One, 29/11/2012](#)

[...] Witnesses said that a government soldier on Thursday opened fire on a civilian bus traveling at Tarabunka square in Mogadishu, Somali capital, killing civilian, injuring 2 others. The incident took place after the driver of the vehicle ignored to pay illegal money demanded by the driver the soldier that led the death of a woman on the car. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Unknown Gunmen assassinate Bakaro market merchants' chief, 26/11/2012](#)

[...] Witnesses said Monday that anonymous attackers have shot and killed the chairman of Bakaro Market traders' chairman Ahmed Nur Awdinle and his security guard. Mr.Awdinle was shot in the head and the chest by two men armed with pistols as he was walking inside the Market along with his security guards, according the witnesses. The motive and the identity of the killers have not yet been established by the local police in Bakaro, the largest marketplace in Somalia. The attackers were reported to have managed to escape from the scene before government troops arrived in. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack so far. [...]

- [UNHCR, Somalia Fact Sheet - November 201, 26/11/2012](#)
[...] Most of Somalia continues to be in security level 5 (high), with Mogadishu and other areas on level 6 (extreme). [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Somali Gov't soldiers exchange gunfire in Mogadishu, 2 killed, 23/11/2012](#)
[...] Somali government soldiers have exchanged a heavy gunfire in Mogadishu, killing at least two combatants while others injured, reports said on Friday.
Friday gunfire happened at Suq-Bo'le village in Mogadishu's Dharkenley district, when soldiers tried to remove an illegal checkpoint placed by another soldiers under the Somali government, according to witnesses who spoke with Shabelle Media Network. [...]

- [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Eastern Africa Issue 18; 29 October - 12 November 2012, 12/11/2012](#)
[...] The U.N. Security Council has extended the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia for four months, until 7 March 2013. Unanimously adopting resolution 2073 (2012), the Council authorized AMISOM to maintain its presence in the areas set out in its strategic concept of January 2012 for countering the threat still posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups in coordination with Somali national security forces, in order to establish secure conditions for legitimate governance, reconciliation and the provision of humanitarian assistance across Somalia – which, the Council said in a resolution of 18 September, had recently made great strides in security and governance but still faced great challenges in both areas. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Somalia: Govt Soldiers Exchange Gun Battle in Mogadishu, 11/11/2012](#)
[...] Heavy gun battle has erupted on Sunday in Somali capital Mogadishu as the federal MPs struggling to approve the newly formed 10-member cabinet ministers, proposed by Abdi Farah Shirdon, Somali PM.
Eyewitnesses said the violence sparked when government soldiers exchanged gun-fire at KM4 junction, a busy crossroad in the heart of Mogadishu, accusing unconfirmed losses. The skirmish caused over unknown circumstances.
Authorities in Mogadishu are yet to comment on the clashes. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Somalia: Two People Gunned Down in Somali Capital, 09/11/2012](#)
[...] At least two people were gunned down in Mogadishu overnight by unidentified armed groups, the latest in string of coordinated killings in the capital for the last few months.
Eyewitnesses said assailants armed with pistols have killed a soldier and a civilian at Turcaye village inside the volatile Huriwa district, north of Mogadishu on Thursday night at about 9pm local time and fled from the shooting zone.
The motive and the identity of the assassins were not established yet by the authority in the area. Such incidents have been on the rise as a new federal government took the helm of the horn of Africa strife-town country.
Following the killings Somali government forces mounting in pick-ups have moved in the area and searched all houses to arrest the killers, according to the local residents. [...]

- [UNOCHA, Mogadishu- Situation Analysis, October 2012, 09/11/2012](#)
[...] Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, is also referred to as the Banadir region. The city, governed by a mayor, is divided into 16 districts, each headed by a district commissioner. There are no recently verified population figures for Mogadishu, but UNDP's 2005 report estimated it at 900,000, while according to the Federal Government of the Republic of Somalia (FGRS), the current population figure is 2.5 million. The October 2011 inter-agency assessment indicates that 184,400 IDPs live in makeshift settlements and abandoned public buildings across the city. Most arrived from the southern and central regions (Lower and Middle Shabelle, Lower and Middle Jubba, Bay and Bakool) during the drought emergency between July to September 2011. Over 40,000 arrived during the military offensive in Afgoyee between February and May 2012. [...]
In the middle of 2012, Mogadishu witnessed new political and security developments that offered greater possibilities for peace and security than the country has seen in over 20 years. The transition of power from the eight years of Transitional Federal Government (TFG) rule to a permanent arrangement, with the

drafting of a new constitution, the election of a new President and Speaker of Parliament, and the selection of a new Prime Minister, is a landmark achievement. The current government visualized itself bringing changes through a policy of six pillars: stability, economic recovery, peace building, service delivery, international relations, and the unity and integrity of the country.

The nature of the conflict and the security risk in Mogadishu changed from 6 August 2011 following the withdrawal of AS from most of their positions. However, threats to the UN are rising in Mogadishu and across Somalia. The presence of various clan militia groups poses security risks and protection concerns to the local population, IDPs and humanitarian workers. The general security conditions adversely impacted on livelihoods and humanitarian access. The security situation is slightly improving in Banadir region, however. [...]

Protection: The general insecurity situation in Mogadishu remains a crucial protection concern. Civilian lives are endangered, access to livelihoods is limited, and IDPs are exposed to countless violations including but not limited to, gender-based violence (GBV), rape and murder during movement and aid distribution. They are also exposed to looting of relief supplies, forced early marriages, domestic violence; child labour and forced conscription of minors. [...]

The complexity of the Mogadishu situation, limited capacities and a scarcity of resources makes it extremely challenging for the cluster members to cover existing and emerging needs. Other areas of focus include gender-based violence, where significant efforts are made to systematically document and respond to violations through the establishment and reinforcement of referral pathways, and child protection activities aimed at reducing the impact of the conflict on children. Access challenges remain the biggest obstacle to monitor and respond to protection violations. As population displacement due to conflict in neighbouring regions occurs occasionally, responding to the protection issues of the newly displaced population will require special attention. [...]

➤ [RFI, Somalia: Car Explodes in Mogadishu, 08/11/2012](#)

[...] One soldier was killed and several civilians injured on Wednesday after a remotely controlled car bomb went off near the country's parliament in the capital Mogadishu.

The vehicle full of explosives was left in the car park of a mosque near the Somali parliament building in Mogadishu where lawmakers were holding a session.

The parking area is used by lawmakers during parliament sessions. Security officials said that the vehicle was detonated hours after the lawmakers ended their sessions and none of the lawmakers were harmed in the blast.

It is thought that the lawmakers were the target of the bomb. A number of other cars in the area were destroyed by the force of the blast, which could be heard miles from the site of the explosion. [...]

➤ [Agence France Presse, Strong blast outside Somali parliament, one dead: AFP, 07/11/2012](#)

[...] A strong blast rocked Somalia's parliament Wednesday, with at least one person killed, an AFP reporter at the scene said. The blast, believed to be a car bomb set off close to the parliament, is the latest in a string of attacks in the war-ravaged Somali capital.

A body of a Somali government security official dressed in military uniform could be seen following the explosion. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the blast, but the Al-Qaeda linked Shebab insurgents have conducted a series of guerrilla style attacks in the capital since pulling out of fixed positions there last year.

Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri this week urged all Muslims to support Somalia's Islamist Shebab, who have in recent months suffered several major setbacks with African Union troops wresting several strongholds from them. The insurgents have vowed to topple newly elected President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who took office in September after being chosen by the country's new parliament, bringing an end to eight years of transitional rule.

An offensive led by the 17,00-strong AU force alongside Somali forces has stripped the Shebab of most of the towns they held. But analysts have warned the group are still a dangerous force, reverting to guerrilla tactics and carrying out targeted attacks. [...]

➤ [Agence France Presse, Two suicide bombers attack restaurant in Somali capital, 03/11/2012](#)

[...] Two suicide bombers in Mogadishu attacked a restaurant popular with former Somali exiles on Saturday, wounding several people, police said, and killing one victim, according to a witness.

"There were two suicide bombers who attacked the restaurant. The two of them have died and other people who stayed in the place were injured. We are still investigating the casualties," said Abdi Adan, a Somali police officer.

A witness to the attack, Ahmed Salad Ibrahim, said a security guard at the restaurant had been killed in the blast -- a report police said they could not immediately confirm. [...]

- [Agence France Presse, Somali comedian who poked fun at Islamists shot dead, 30/10/2012](#)
[...] Gunmen assassinated a well-known comedian and musician who poked fun at Al-Qaeda linked Shebab insurgents in the Somali capital, police and colleagues said Tuesday, the latest in a string of attacks against media and cultural figures.
Warsame Shire Awale, a famous composer who had worked with Somalia's national army band before joining Radio Kulmiye as a drama producer and comedian, was attacked by two gunmen late on Monday.
"Gunmen killed him... we are investigating the matter and the killers will be brought to justice," police chief Ahmed Hassan Malin told reporters.
"Two men armed with pistols shot and wounded him near his house in Waberi district, he died shortly after in hospital," said Abdi Mohamed Haji, a colleague at Radio Kulmiye.
The killing, the latest in a wave of attacks on media workers in Somalia, follows the murder of fellow comic Abdi Jeylani Malaq Marshale in August, who also worked at Kulmiye. [...]
- [Garowe Online, Somalia: Poet and Al Shabaab Defector Killed in Mogadishu, 30/10/2012](#)
[...] A former Al Shabaab defector Luul Ali Sabriye was shot and killed in a neighborhood in Wardiigley district by a lone gunman.
According to sources, Luul defected to the Somali government months ago and received many death threats during that time.
Also on Tuesday in Mogadishu, a Somali government soldier opened fired on a bus after he and a civilian on board the bus disputed for some time, according to local sources.
One person was killed and two were injured and rushed to Madina hospital.
At least 4 people were killed in the past two days in Mogadishu. [...]
- [Shabelle Media Network, Grenade attack on wedding party in Mogadishu wounds 10, 19/10/2012](#)
[...] At least 10 people are confirmed to have been injured in a grenade attack on a wedding party in Somali capital, Mogadishu on Friday evening, witnesses and police said.
Ali Mohamed, deputy district police boss, told Shabelle Media by phone that the hand-grenade was lobbed into a house at former Milk factory in Hodon district, where hundreds of men and women were taking part this evening a wedding ceremony.
Mr. Mohamed has immediately accused Al shabab to be behind the bomb attack.
Somalia's capital has been wracked by violence since the United Nations-backed interim government, aided by troops from African Union (AU), ousted Al shabab, in August 6, 2011. [...]
- [UNHCR, Somalia: PMT Mogadishu Monthly Dashboard - September, 2012, 18/10/2012](#)

Total movements nationwide	24,000
Total movements to Mogadishu	3,700
Total Movements from Mogadishu	300
Leaving Mogadishu	300
To Areas Within Mogadishu	0

Top districts receiving people from Mogadishu
Zeylac 100
Hargeysa 70
Borama 40
Gaalkacyo 20
Bossaso 20
Balcad 20
Baki 10
[...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Al-Shabaab attacks Somali govt troops in Mogadishu, 15/10/2012](#)
 [...] Al-Qaeda-inspired insurgents on Sunday night attacked, with rocket propelled grenade launchers on the barracks of Somali government forces in southern Mogadishu on Sunday night, leaving scores injured. The clashes broke out at dawn when heavily armed fighters from the Islamist movement Al-Shabaab launched an attack on soldiers stationed on one of the war-battered city's frontlines in the Hosh neighbourhood.
 Similarly, an attack took place at a government compound in Yaqshid district, north of Mogadishu, sparking a battle between Somali forces and their opposing Al shabab militants.
 There were no immediate reports of any civilians killed or injured in the attacks. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Militant attack on Gov't forces in Mogadishu kills 4, 07/10/2012](#)
 [...] At least 4 combatants were killed in an ambush attack by Al shabab militants on Somali government forces in Mogadishu on Sunday, hours after Somali president named Abdi Farah Shirdon, a political newcomer as the new PM for the fledgling government, reports said.
 The attack happened at a government military base located in Kahda neighbourhood in southern Mogadishu on Sunday, and both rival sides used heavy and small weapons that could be heard in the early hours on Sunday, according to the locals.
 "The fighting was big and intensified across the area. Artillery fire and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) were used during the combat between Somali forces and Al shabab militants. Four soldiers on both sides dead in the skirmish," a resident told Shabelle Media Network. [...]

- [UN News Service, Somalia has made 'quantum leap' in its progress but security threats remain, UN envoy warns, 04/10/2012](#)
 [...] The UN envoy paid tribute to the UN-backed African Union force in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali forces, which last month drove the Al Shabaab out of the port city of Kismayo, in the country's south, and praised the country's transition process which has seen the adoption of a new constitution, the convening of a new parliament, and the selection of a new president in recent months.
 "Ending the transition was momentous because this was a success story which Somalia has not witnessed in the past 21 years," Mr. Mahiga said, using phrases such as "turning the corner" and "quantum leap" to describe the progress made.
 But he warned that the capture of Kismayo does not mean the end of the Al Shabaab, noting that the challenge from a degraded Al Shabaab may continue.
 "We have seen it in Mogadishu. They do what they are best at, terrorist bombs, devices, suicide bombs, roadside bombs. That is likely to continue," he said, noting that there could still be guerrilla warfare and even more conventional warfare in some parts of Somalia. [...]

- [Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Human Rights and Democracy: The 2011 Foreign & Commonwealth Office Report -Quarterly Updates: Somalia, 30/09/2012](#)
 [...] The last three months have seen historic change in Somalia with the election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on 10 September, marking the end of eight years of political transition. For the first time in years, the process was run in consultation with the people of Somalia through their elders. [...] While there has been political progress, the UK remains gravely concerned about the human rights situation in Somalia. It will be important for the new government to commit to human rights and to end impunity. [...] The security landscape continues to shift. The African Union Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), supported by Somali security forces, are making strong advances and many towns have been recovered from Al Shabaab, including Mogadishu, Afgooye, Balcad, Elma'an, Merka, Baidoa, Beletweyne, Afmadow, Miido and Bibi.
 The rise in insurgency attacks conducted by Al-Shabaab has continued, including a bomb attack targeting the new President of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, on 12 September in which at least 8 people died and a restaurant bombing in Mogadishu on the 21 Sept in which at least 14 people were killed. Foreign Office Minister for Africa, Mark Simmonds strongly condemned both attacks and noted that such attacks strengthened UK resolve to continue supporting the progress the Somali people were making towards peace and security after 21 years of suffering.
 The UK is also concerned about targeted attacks on journalists in Somalia. At least nine journalists have been killed in the last three months, eight of which were in August and September. [...]

- [Agence France Presse, Somali port falls, but Shebab's campaign far from over, 29/09/2012](#)
 [...] The odds may be firmly stacked against them, but it is emerging that Kismayo's fall does not spell the end of Shebab.
 "They still control large areas of the countryside in southern Somalia, as well as some secondary towns," said Hammond [senior lecturer at London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)]. "There have been reports of Shebab members fleeing to remote mountainous areas in the contested territory between Somaliland and Puntland.
 "I would expect them to lie low for a while, carrying out indiscriminate attacks like those seen in Mogadishu in recent weeks," she added.
 The change of tactic by Shebab from open military warfare to guerrilla attacks will not only pose a problem for the forces fighting them, but for the new Somali government too.
 Gundel said "Shebab gained a lot of support by playing into the historic rivalries among Somalia's clans... these differences are still strong, and if the new government fails to address them, the Shebab might find a way back." All major clans in Somalia -- such as the Harti, Ogaden, Marehan, Rahanwein and Galjel -- have major interests in the Lower Juba region, whose commercial capital is Kismayo.
 "The only way out of this will be for the new government to invite all these clans into the post-Shebab peace process," Gundel said. [...]
- [Shabelle Media Network, Deadly grenade attack in Somali capital, 27/09/2012](#)
 [...] A deadly grenade attack occurred on Wednesday Somalia's capital Mogadishu, the latest in a string of grenade blasts in the city since Al shabab's withdrawal in August 6, 2011.
 Eyewitnesses told Shabelle Media Network that unknown attacker has hurled a hand grenade on a military vehicle carrying Somali government forces at Km4 junction, a busy street in Somalia's war-ravaged capital, causing unconfirmed casualties.
 Following the attack, the victimized, all civilians who have suffered severe gunshot wounds were immediately rushed to the hospitals for treatment.
 No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but many of such attacks are regularly blamed on the Al-Qaeda linked Al Shebab by Somali officials. [...]
- [UN News, Security Council strongly condemns bombings in Mogadishu, 23/09/2012](#)
 [...] The Security Council has strongly condemned yesterday's bombings in Mogadishu, adding that it is "deplorable" that ordinary Somalis are being targeted after the important gains made in recent weeks in completing the country's transition.
 Suicide bombers set off at least two explosions at a popular restaurant in the capital on Thursday, killing at least a dozen people, including journalists and police officers, according to media reports. [...]
- [United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations support to end human rights abuses and combat impunity in Somalia; Report of the Secretary-General, 21/09/2012](#)
 [...] 12. The Transitional Federal Government, with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and other neighbouring forces (namely Kenya and Ethiopia), recaptured Mogadishu in 2011 and has gradually established authority around the capital as well as areas bordering Kenya and Ethiopia. Nevertheless, a large part of southern and central Somalia remains under the control of the armed group, Al-Shabaab, and has witnessed grave human rights violations, including summary executions and torture (particularly of persons accused of spying for the Government), arbitrary arrest and detention, forced conscription and the recruitment of child soldiers, forced marriages and limitations to freedom of movement and assembly. Al-Shabaab has also been reported to prevent people, particularly boys and young men, from fleeing the areas under its control.
 13. While there has been a significant improvement in the security situation in the areas controlled by the Transitional Federal Government, there have been disturbing reports of incidents in which civilians have been killed or injured in shooting incidents among different units of the Government in Mogadishu or by excessive use of force at checkpoints. Pro-Government militias have allegedly committed seven summary executions of civilians in towns recently recaptured by the Ethiopian defence forces. There have also been reports of torture and arbitrary arrest and detention, including large-scale round-up operations in response to Al-Shabaab attacks, and detention and torture of individuals alleged or perceived to support Al-Shabaab. Civilians have also been wounded or killed by improvised explosive devices and suicide bombings, the responsibility of which was claimed by Al-Shabaab. [...]

- [BBC, Somalia suicide bombing hits Mogadishu - 14 killed, 20/09/2012](#)
 [...] Two suicide bombers have blown themselves up in a restaurant in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, killing at least 14 people, officials say.
 The attack - not yet claimed by any group - took place in the city centre, near the presidential palace.
 The dead included the former editor of Somali National TV, Liban Ali Nur, two other journalists and two policemen. [...] The Islamist militants were pushed out of Mogadishu last year, but they have frequently staged attacks in the city since then. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Heavy shelling in Mogadishu kills 1, injures 10, 20/09/2012](#)
 [...] At least one person was confirmed dead and ten others injured, most of them seriously in an indiscriminate bombardment in Mogadishu on Wednesday night, Witnesses said.
 "Mortar rounds fired from unknown locations smashed over night into residential area in Shibis and Bondhere districts and at least one civilian died and 10 others wounded who were taken to the hospitals for medical treatment," a resident said.
 Somali government officials in the areas of bombardment were unavailable to reach for comments on the shelling and no group has claimed responsibility for the attack. [...]

- [Agence France Presse, New Somali president unharmed after Mogadishu blasts, 12/09/2012](#)
 [...] Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was unharmed after two blasts claimed by Shebab extremists rocked the Mogadishu hotel where he was staying Wednesday, the African Union mission to Somalia said.
 "There has been a blast around the hotel where the president was. The president is safe. All the people who were inside the hotel are safe," Colonel Ali Houmed, a spokesman for the force, told AFP.
 Somalia's Al-Qaeda linked Shebab extremists claimed the attack. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Roadside blast kills 4, wounds 10 in Mogadishu, 12/09/2012](#)
 [...] A roadside bomb hidden under the ground killed four people and wounded 10 others in the Somali capital on Tuesday, police and witnesses said.
 In Tuesday's attack, targeting government soldiers patrolling Yaqshid district, the northern part of Mogadishu, known to be a former stronghold of insurgents, struck a nearby minibus carrying civilian, said a witness.
 "We ran away (from the scene) fearing that we would be arrested as suspects," Said another witness who asked not to be named because of his security. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, 1 Dies in Mogadishu clashes, 09/09/2012](#)
 [...] At least one person was confirmed dead and many more others were injured in heavy clashes between Somalia national army (SNA) and unknown armed groups, police and witnesses said on Sunday.
 Eyewitnesses said the fighting which erupted on Saturday in northern Mogadishu's Hamar Jajab neighbourhood intensified overnight spreading to other parts of the district, waking local residents up from the sleep.
 "The skirmishes which raged on for several hours, began soon after armed men attacked an army base in the district, leaving one civilian dead and five injured who were rushed to hospital," a resident said. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Roadside bomb hits AU forces in Mogadishu, 07/09/2012](#)
 [...] Witnesses said a roadside bomb blast has tore through a military convoy carrying the African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) soldiers in Mogadishu on Thursday night.
 Reports said the attack which was used a remote-controlled landmine destroyed the AU military personnel carrier at Ex-control Balad road, located on the suburbs of Mogadishu, causing an unconfirmed sever casualty. [...]

- [Shabelle Media Network, Grenade attack kills two in Mogadishu, 05/09/2012](#)
 [...] A grenade attack in Somalia's capita Mogadishu on Wednesday has left two people dead, the latest in series of attacks against Somali and AU forces in the city since Al shabab's pull out, according to Eyewitnesses.

On Wednesday, unidentified assailants hurled a grenade into an army checkpoint at Bar-ubax junction in central Mogadishu, killing two.

“The soldiers fired back following the blast, killing two bystanders while several others sustained severe injuries and were rushed to a hospital for proper treatment,” a witness told Shabelle Media by phone from the scene. [...]

➤ [Saferworld, Mogadishu Rising? Conflict and governance dynamics in the Somali capital, August 2012](#)

[...] Key Findings

- There is a widespread perception in Mogadishu that security has improved considerably in the past year, with a decline in terrorism and insurgency-related violence in particular. This is largely due to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) consolidating power after al-Shabaab fighters largely withdrew from the city in August 2011.
- Nevertheless, security remains inadequate and uneven with significant areas of Mogadishu – particularly the city’s northern districts – almost entirely unpoliced. In the absence of state-provided security, residents and officials have formed an array of neighbourhood vigilante groups and private militias to protect themselves and their assets.
- A significant number – reportedly up to 50 percent – of police and military personnel work for private individuals, adding to the large number of freelance armed actors in the city and seriously undermining the security services’ ability to perform their duties. Criminal violence and violent deaths remain common, as do reported incidences of illegal arrests and physical torture.
- Residents are anxious that warlords and influential businessmen not included in the new political order could stage an armed revolt. Already there is evidence that some warlords and business people are arming themselves.
- Land is the most contested resource in Mogadishu and land claims by returnees from the diaspora and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are inflaming an already tense situation. Social unrest and wider instability could be the outcome of conflict over this key resource. [...]

5.1 Tenuous improvement

Though violence remains a daily reality, Saferworld’s Mogadishu-wide survey in July 2012 found that an overwhelming 93 percent of respondents reported an improvement in the security situation in the past 12 months, with 4.5 percent saying it had remained the same and only one percent reporting a deterioration. Fifteen percent said that security had improved in the past three months, 33 percent noted improvement in the last six months and 22 percent said the last nine months were improved. [...]

Two-thirds of those surveyed classed Mogadishu as a middle risk city as of July 2012, meaning they cannot walk around at night, with only six percent labeling it high risk, meaning they cannot walk around during the day (see Figure 3). This confirms information obtained in focus groups and during interviews with officials that suggest security is generally perceived to be improving. [...]

5.2 Criminal activity

Mogadishu residents still face numerous security challenges on a daily basis, including violent deaths, kidnapping and criminal violence. Reports of illegal arrests and torture in detention are extremely high. Out of 800 surveyed, 159 said that at least one member of their household had been arrested illegally in the last 90 days. Most of these reports came from the Dayniile (32) and Hawl-Wadaag (24) districts. One hundred and twenty five households reported that a member had been physically tortured while in detention in the last 90 days. [...]

Incidents of violence, including criminal violence, are also high. Table 4 shows that 10 percent of households (82 households) experienced a violent injury in the last 90 days. Five percent experienced physical assaults, 5 percent armed robbery, one percent kidnapping, and 2 percent rape. [...]

Violent deaths are also common. One hundred and twenty four households out of 800 reported a violent death in the past 12 months. This figure comprises 45 war and weapon related deaths; 36 14 illegal executions; and 65 murders. This equates to 6 percent of interviewed households having experienced a war related death and 8 percent a murder. Insurgency related violence also poses a significant, although declining, threat. Since largely withdrawing from Mogadishu, al-Shabaab has continued to launch attacks against TFG officials, NGO workers, journalists and even critical Islamic scholars. [...]

➤ [Chatham House, Jason Mosley Associate Fellow, Africa Programme, End of the Roadmap: Somalia after the London and Istanbul Conferences, June 2012](#)

[...] When the transition 'ends' and the current government hands over to a 'caretaker' administration, South-Central Somalia appears to be set for more of the same. In terms of leadership, many of the same faces are expected to feature prominently in the new government line-up. In terms of peace and security, the slow expansion of the footprint of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and the consolidation of its presence in existing areas, are set to continue. For the main international backers of the 'Roadmap' – the African Union (AU), United Nations (UN), US and UK – it seems that this is the desired outcome. However, extension of the status quo carries as many risks as opportunities, if not more.

There have been important shifts in the last year; history is not simply repeating itself in southern Somalia. However, lessons from earlier phases of Somalia's post-1991 trajectory appear to have been overlooked or ignored. Most obviously and recently, missteps from Ethiopia's 2006-09 invasion and occupation are being repeated: a political crisis is being approached primarily through a security lens. Decisions about local leadership in territory wrested from Al-Shabaab are imposed in top-down fashion, and overestimation of Al-Shabaab's internal divisions is fuelling a misperception that a military approach is capable of resolving the problem of the group's insurgency.

This is not to understate important developments, especially in terms of the economy of Mogadishu, which may yield significant improvements to people's livelihoods and could significantly open up the space for political and civil society in the capital and its environs. While it is too early to say whether this opening is robust, the leadership in Mogadishu could take advantage of it to improve their legitimacy and deliver services to the population. Whether or not they do so, if it lasts in a way that can benefit citizens it could create new opportunities and potentially positive momentum in Somalia's transition. [...]

On the ground

Although the political processes for ending the transition have been highly contested, there have been some significant shifts on the ground during the past year in particular, which have implications for the post-transition political and security environment. The most obvious of these is the offensive against Al-Shabaab, led by AMISOM around Mogadishu, Ethiopia in the south-west and Kenya in the south. AMISOM's operations since mid-2011 have seen Al-Shabaab lose control of fixed positions in and around Mogadishu, most recently in Afgooye. Intervention by Ethiopia and local allied militia resulted in Al-Shabaab's loss of Beledweyne and Baidoa, among other important towns. The offensive by Kenya and local militia recently restarted, having stalled since late 2011, with the capture of Afmadow – a key outpost opening the way to the port city of Kismayo.

Expectations that Al-Shabaab has been fatally undermined by these offensives are sure to be disappointed. Although not a monolithic group, its internal divisions are frequently overstated. Differences between leaders are longstanding, yet there remains a lack of viable alternative engagements for potential dissenters. The TFG is not viewed as a credible or legitimate interlocutor, although Somali observers often report that informal discussions are taking place between parties within both camps.⁷ Moreover, Al-Shabaab's capabilities and finances have not been as comprehensively compromised as its territorial losses would suggest.⁸ Having withdrawn from positions in Mogadishu from August 2011, the group has continued to carry out targeted assassinations and other attacks in the months since.

A similar pattern is likely to emerge in other key administrative centres coming under the control of AMISOM troops, such as Baidoa or Beledweyne. Al-Shabaab has also shifted part of its resource base northward into the mountainous areas in the Puntland-Ethiopia-Somaliland border region, which is important for maintaining connections to supplies and finances flowing along long-established smuggling routes from Yemen.⁹ There is, nevertheless, a reportedly marked shift in the mood in Somalia, particularly in Mogadishu where gains have been in place the longest. Security remains a challenge, and service delivery from the TFG is largely absent. However, the capital has apparently seen a significant rise in business and reconstruction activity. Commercial flights have resumed on Turkish Airlines, a high-profile signal that the city is open for business. Although many foreign governments and humanitarian agencies working in Somalia have yet to relocate their headquarters from Nairobi, there is a sense of an important shift in Mogadishu. The expansion of AMISOM's mandate and troop levels should enable the force to continue to provide a security buffer in the city, and a new centre of gravity for international engagement and for political dialogue seems to have been established. [...]

Al-Shabaab

The militant group will remain a threat. No doubt its popular legitimacy was seriously dented by its handling of food security crises during 2009-11, and it has lost significant territory. However, the group retains an asset base and the capability to conduct an asymmetrical campaign against AMISOM and the

caretaker administration. Although AMISOM's significantly expanded troop levels will allow it to operate in many areas outside Mogadishu, its presence will nonetheless likely be constrained to major urban areas. More rural areas will continue to be actively contested by Al-Shabaab. In Mogadishu and its surrounding areas, the group has already reverted to the targeted killings, roadside bombings and suicide attacks that characterized its insurgency against the 2006-09 Ethiopian incursion. [...]

With regard to the security situation in Somalia outside of Mogadishu, the *conclusion* for this section of the OGN follows *AMM*:

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

Conclusion

[...] 3.6. 3.6.26 In the country guidance case of *AMM* and others (see section 2.5 above) promulgated in November 2011, the Upper Tribunal concluded that:

[...] Outside Mogadishu

(c) Fighting in southern and central Somalia is both sporadic and localised and is not such as to place every civilian in that part of the country at real risk of Article 15(c) harm. In individual cases, it will be necessary to establish where a person comes from and what the background information says is the present position in that place. If fighting is going on, that will have to be taken into account in deciding whether Article 15(c) is applicable. There is, likewise, no generalised current risk of Article 3 harm as a result of armed conflict.

In order to research the security situation in a particular location or proposed site of internal relocation, an [Index of useful sources to consult on the security situation](#) has been provided further below.

When addressing the question of 'serious harm' and internal armed conflict, it may be useful to include evidence that expressly addresses the legacy of the internal armed conflict in Somalia in terms of 'serious mental traumas', including the mental health/PTSD legacy. COI has been presented below which addresses the impact that the conflict is having on people's well-being and the [Availability of mental health care](#) in Somalia.

The *conclusion* for this section of the OGN also departs from the findings of *AMM* in relation to the possibility of internal relocation:

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

Conclusion

[...] 3.6.26 In the country guidance case of *AMM* and others (see section 2.5 above) promulgated in November 2011, the Upper Tribunal concluded that:

[...] (h) For someone at real risk in a home area in southern or central Somalia, an internal relocation alternative to Mogadishu is in general unlikely to be available, given the risk of indiscriminate violence in the city, together with the present humanitarian situation. Relocation to an IDP camp in the Afgoye Corridor will, as a general matter, likewise be unreasonable, unless there is evidence that the person concerned would be able to achieve the lifestyle of those better-off inhabitants of the Afgoye Corridor settlements.

However, as noted above, the sustained improvement in the security situation in Mogadishu since the Upper Tribunal promulgated its determination is such that it can no longer be said that there is a general Article 15(c) risk in Mogadishu. Case owners should therefore consider the new country of origin information and the individual circumstances of each claimant to establish whether the guidance contained in *AMM* and others in relation to internal relocation to Mogadishu remains applicable to the individual claimant concerned.

This is a similar point to that made in the [Internal Relocation](#) section at paragraph 2.4.4 above, although in that paragraph it was not clear whether the ‘sustained improvement’ related to the security and/ or the humanitarian situation. Given that here it only relates to the security situation, then this section of the *Conclusion* fails to consider the other ‘relevance’ and ‘reasonableness’ considerations that must be taken into account in an assessment of the possibility of internal relocation. See the *Internal Relocation* section above for further analysis, including an overview of the current [Humanitarian situation, especially for IDPs in Mogadishu](#).

Availability of mental health care in Somalia

➤ [MSF, Taking mental healthcare to people who need it, 10/10/2012](#)

[...] Many of the refugees arriving at Dadaab are traumatised by their experiences in Somalia, where violence and drought led to them fleeing their homes. Since 2009, MSF has provided healthcare in Dadaab’s Dagahaley camp, where services on offer include much-needed mental healthcare and counselling. In Kenya, as in other countries where MSF works, psychologists now form an integral part of the medical organisation’s teams.

“In Dadaab, and Africa in general, psychological distress is often not expressed in the same way as in richer countries,” says psychiatrist Pablo Melgar Gomez, who worked in Dadaab from 2009 to 2010 and is now working with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. “People often complain of physical pains. During the consultation, we try to make them understand that these pains are related to their emotional state.”

A couple of consultations are often enough to help people find a way of coping with their psychological distress. But people with more serious mental health conditions – including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder – may not get the treatment they need.

“While I was in Dadaab, I saw dozens of people with mental health problems who’d been chained up or shut away by their families, who were at a complete loss as to how to handle them,” says Gomez. “If we hadn’t intervened, they would be completely without hope of receiving psychiatric care and would still be chained up today.” [...]

➤ [WHO, Mental Health Best Practices in Somalia, 2012](#)

[...] Mental illness is generally denied and discriminated against by Somalis. What’s more considering hospitalization because of mental illness is highly stigmatized in the Somali culture. Usually it is not until someone becomes ill and, for example, is struck by a Psychosis and cannot take care of him/herself that Psychiatric or Biomedical Health Care is considered.

According to the Somali culture, a person is more likely to report physical pain rather than psychosocial symptoms when they are experiencing sorrow or sadness. These psychological symptoms are often explained in the form of physiological complaints such as headaches, chest pain, sweating, forgetfulness combined with sleep deprivation and nightmares.

New concepts such as mental health complaints (caafimaadka maskaxda) together with its treatment (daawayn) are somewhat unknown among the Somali population. The word ‘depression’ has no translation in the Af-Somali language, but is rather described as: qalbi-jab which means in the strict sense and literal translation- ‘a broken heart.’ When discussing mental health illnesses, the Somali mental health service providers often describe the recognized physiological symptoms rather than referring to the diagnosis, such as ‘depression’ (GRT Rapid Assessment 2012). [...]

➤ [International Psychiatry, Volume 8 Number 4, November 2011](#)

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[...] There are not yet any national epidemiological studies of mental illness in Somalia. However, in a community study in Hargeisa, Somaliland, in which 4854 randomly selected persons were screened, the rate of severe disability due to mental disorders was 8.4% among adult males. Exposure to conflict and heavy khat use were correlated with psychotic symptoms (Odenwald et al, 2005). High rates of female genital mutilation (98%) (Gulaid, 2008) as well as suspected high rates of domestic and gender-based violence may prove potent risk factors for mental illness in women.

Mental health legislation and policy

There is no overarching mental health policy or legislation in Somalia. In Somalia-SC national mental health 'focal points' (health service providers nominated by the Ministry of Health) are authorised to provide mental health services (World Health Organization, 2009a) and psychotropic medicines are included on the essential medicines list. In Somaliland mental health is included in the 1999 National Health Policy (a precursor to mental health legislation) and in the essential package of health services (EPHS) at tertiary (referral hospital) level. The Puntland Agency for Social Welfare (PASWE), an autonomous semi-governmental agency, was created to 'develop and promote policies and standards toward protecting and assisting the most vulnerable people' in Puntland (see <http://paswe.org>).

Health funding

There has been a fivefold increase in external funding for the health sector in Somalia over the past decade (Capobianco & Naidu, 2001) but the performance of the health sector remains poor and less than half the population has access to adequate healthcare (United Nations Development Programme, 2001). In Somalia-SC there is no public budget and no public financial management or accountability: most health-related activities are run by private or public institutions or through the unofficial out-of-pocket system (World Health Organization, 2009a). The health budget in Somaliland is only \$750 000. In Puntland, the education, health and water sectors combined receive less than 5% of the government budget. According to government officials, 'resources available to the Ministry are limited and its role has been primarily to coordinate the activities of international agencies and NGOs' (Ministry of Planning and Statistics, 2003).

Mental health services

The civil war destroyed much of Somalia's healthcare infrastructure, which, in addition to the migration or death of health personnel, means that access to healthcare is greatly compromised (Leather et al, 2006).

Traditional and religious healers (mostly herbalists and faith healers) are the mainstay of the general population's access to mental healthcare. There are no data available on their numbers or training, or on patient outcomes, and there is concern that some practices are harmful. Families often feel they have no option other than to restrain people with severe mental illness in homes or local jails (which can occur without a court hearing).

The mental health of patients has often severely deteriorated by the time they are brought to hospital. For example, the onset of mental illness among patients of the Bosaso Mental Health Department (MHD) in Puntland is on average 3.5 years before their first visit. At the time of their first clinic visit, some 85% of patients have been visited at least once by a Koranic healer or by a traditional healer. During the first year of opening of the MHD almost 30% of patients were brought in physically chained (according to the MHD database). Psychotropic drugs are unregulated and family members often rely on the purchase of drugs directly from pharmacies.

Somaliland

There are no psychiatric staff available in general primary or secondary healthcare services, and limited psychotropic medication is available in only two of the general health facilities. Until recently there were only two public psychiatric units in Somaliland, a ward in Hargeisa Group Hospital (HGH) (110 beds) and Berbera Mental Hospital (42 beds), both staffed by auxiliary nurses. The unit at HGH has input from a post-intern doctor and is supported by an Italian nongovernmental organisation (NGO), Gruppo per le Relazioni Transculturali (GRT), and a local NGO, the General Assistance and Volunteer Organisation (GAVO), which provide salary support, medication, supervision and training. The unit in Berbera is supported by GAVO and has access to a general doctor (Syed Sheriff et al, 2010). The newly opened out-patient unit in Boroma is supported by Amoud University and run by one of the former KTSP mental health representatives (see below), and an out-patient clinic and day clinic in Burao for children with intellectual disability is supported by a local NGO. There is a growing number of privately owned, unregulated mental health service providers which have in-patient and out-patient facilities with pharmacies in Somaliland (World Health Organization, 2009b).

Puntland

A ten-bed mental health facility was opened in 2003 in Bosaso. GRT has supported the training of eight staff, including one doctor, the provision of free mental healthcare to in-patients and out-patients, home visits and free medication. In Garowe there is a facility run by a local organisation for 39 male patients that has some nursing staff and sporadic visits from a doctor. There is also a psychological out-patient department run by PASWE. PASWE also runs a 22-bed facility for women staffed by four nurses in Galkayo.

Somalia-SC

There are five public facilities with mental health services in Somalia-SC, two in Mogadishu (53 beds and 170 beds), one in Jalalaqsi (15 beds and an out-patient department), one in Merka providing basic mental health services from the general hospital, and one in Baidoa (35 beds), all staffed by nurses and volunteers with ad hoc mental health training by the World Health Organization (2009a).

Psychiatric training

The Somaliland health sector is largely unregulated and health professionals unlicensed. With the exception of the newly qualified, most doctors in Somaliland work exclusively in the private sector and have not received continuing professional development (Syed Sheriff et al, 2010). In 2000 and 2005, two medical schools opened in Somaliland, in Boroma and Hargeisa respectively, and over 50 students have graduated. [...]

In Somalia-SC the first 20 medical students since 1991 graduated in 2008 (see <http://www.somalianinfo.com/somalian-physicians.html>), although less encouraging was the brutal suicide bombing attack during the diploma ceremony 1 year later. There is no medical school in Puntland. [...]

➤ [World Health Organisation, Mental Health Atlas-2011 Somalia Country Profile, 2011](#)

[...] GOVERNANCE

An officially approved mental health policy does not exist. Mental health is also not specifically mentioned in the general health policy. A mental health plan does not exist.

Dedicated mental health legislation does not exist and legal provisions concerning mental health are not covered in other laws (e.g., welfare, disability, general health legislation etc.).

FINANCING

Mental health and mental hospital expenditures by the government health department/ministry are not available.

Note: Mental health expenditures from government's health departments are nonexistent in South and Central Somalia.. In Somaliland and Puntland mental health expenditures are less than 0.01% of the total health budget.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE DELIVERY

Primary Care

Prescription regulations authorize primary health care doctors to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines. The department of health authorizes primary health care nurses to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines, but with restrictions. Official policy enables primary health care nurses to independently diagnose and treat mental disorders within the primary care system.

The majority of primary health care doctors have not received official in-service training on mental health within the last five years. The majority of primary health care nurses have received official in-service training on mental health within the last five years. Officially approved manuals on the management and treatment of mental disorders are not available in the majority of primary health care clinics. Official referral procedures for referring persons from primary care to secondary/tertiary care exist as do referral procedures from tertiary/secondary to primary care.

Mental Health Services

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable

Availability of mental health facilities

	Total number of facilities/beds	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of facilities/beds reserved for children and adolescents only	Rate per 100,000 population
Mental health outpatient facilities	13	0.14	0	0.00
Day treatment facilities	1	0.01	0	0.00
Psychiatric beds in general hospitals	130	1.39	0	0.00
Community residential facilities	0	0.00	NA	NA
Beds/places in community residential facilities	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mental hospitals	11	0.12	UN	UN
Beds in mental hospitals	390	4.17	130	1.39

Access to care

	Rates per 100,000 population)	Females (%)	Under age 18 (%)
Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	7.71	36%	25%
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	UN	UN	UN
Admissions to psychiatric beds in general hospitals	UN	UN	UN
Persons staying in community residential facilities at the end of the year	NA	NA	NA
Admissions to mental hospitals	10.13	39%	24%

Long term care in mental hospitals (% of persons staying):

Less than 1 year	UN
More than 1 and less than 5 years	UN
More than 5 years	UN

HUMAN RESOURCES

Workforce and training

	Health professionals working in the mental health sector Rate per 100,000	Training of health professions in educational institutions Rate per 100,000
Psychiatrists	0.04	0.00
Medical doctors, not specialized in psychiatry	0.02	0.54
Nurses	0.45	UN
Psychologists	0.00	0.00

Social workers	0.96	0.00
Occupational therapists	0.00	0.00
Other health workers	1.66	NA

Informal human resources (Family and User Associations)

	User	Family
Present in the country?	No	No
Number of members	NA	NA
Participation in the formulation/implementation of policy/plan /legislation?	NA	NA

Note: Some training of mental healthcare workers is provided by the World Health Organization through capacity-building workshops and training courses in mental health. As of January 2010, the WHO workshops have trained 33 nurses and 10 occupational therapists.

MEDICINES

Expenditures for medicines for mental and behavioral disorders at country level

Type of Medicines	Expenditures at country level per year and per 100,000 population (in USD)
All the psychotherapeutic medicines ¹	UN
Medicines used for bipolar disorders ²	UN
Medicines for psychotic disorders ³	UN
Medicines used for general anxiety ⁴	UN
Medicines used for mood disorders ⁵	UN

1 N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

2 N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

3 N05A (excluding N05AN)

4 N05B & N05C

Note: The majority (about 65%) of patients pay out-of-pocket for psychotropic medications.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

	Data on number of people/ activities are collected and reported	Data on age and gender are collected and reported	Data on patient's diagnosis are collected and reported
Persons with mental disorders treated in primary health care	No	No	No
Interventions (psychopharmacological and psychosocial) delivered in primary health care for people with mental disorders	No	No	No

Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Contacts in mental health outpatient facilities	No	No	No
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	No	No	No
Admissions in general hospitals with psychiatric beds	No	No	No
Admissions in mental hospitals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Days spent in mental hospitals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Admissions in community residential facilities	NA	NA	NA

➤ [WHO, Mental Health in Somalia, 02/02/2011](#)

[...] Prolonged conflict and instability have largely impacted on the mental and psychological well-being of its people. One in three Somali's has been affected by some kind of mental illness, a prevalence which is higher than in other low-income and war-torn countries. Many Somali's have experienced beating, torture, rape or have been injured for life. Others witnessed horrific violence against family or friends. Many Somalis with mental illness are socially isolated and vulnerable. The pain of this isolation is felt intensely because Somali culture is traditionally communal and family oriented. The mentally ill are generally chained or imprisoned. The country knows only 5 health centres (Hargeisa, Berbera, Bosaso, Garowe and Mogadishu) that provide mental health care services. [...]

➤ [WHO, A situation analysis of mental health in Somalia, October 2010](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] • Mental health discourse in Somali is strictly embedded in a peculiar context and is influenced by specific socio-cultural patterns. Mentally challenged people are stigmatized, discriminated and socially isolated. Degrading and dangerous cultural practices such as being restrained with chains are not only widespread but also socially and medically accepted. Traditional healers play an important role; however, they are not medically involved in any real rehabilitation of the patients. New forms of distress and disorders have started to appear in the country that needs to be further investigated and addressed. Women and ex-combatants are exposed to a higher extent of development of severe forms of distress.

[...] • The financing scenario of mental health over the past years but especially for the near future is very worrying. No donor has taken the lead in strengthening the sub-sector or do local authorities have the technical, managerial, and financial capacities to implement a sustainable and equitable mental health programme. Too much is left to the communities and a few Diaspora associations, who do not have the means to cover the burden of costs related to it.

- Mental health services in Somalia are insufficient in number, lack proper equipment and geographical coverage is limited for addressing all the needs of the country. Eight facilities were reported to exist and were assessed. They all have a different nature and offer various services according to their locations, qualifications of staff and extent of support from external actors.

- Outpatient services are available in seven of the eight facilities; however, it was not feasible to draw statistical conclusions due to the poor capacity of record keeping and the way the information systems are organized. Additionally, inpatient services are available in a different way in all the facilities where people were reported to have stayed from a period of three weeks up to 18 years!

- Psychotropic drugs, essential for medical treatment and for managing the most acute and initially aggressive cases, are not always available at the facility level. Serious doubts arise regarding the capacity of medical staff to properly prescribe and make use of them. Moreover, the fact that those drugs are available on the unregulated private market, can lead to a worsening of the patient conditions and to a distortion of the professional values of qualified mental health workers.

- The availability of Human Resources, education, preparation, motivation, performances, supervision and monitoring are other areas of concern to strengthen the mental health system and the delivery of quality and equitable mental health services. Only three psychiatrists are reported to be working in the facilities, however, their professional background is not up to the international standards. Very few organizations

have recently focused on the development of educational programmes for mental health and they need to be supported for an extension of their objectives.

- There is a very poor and partial understanding of mental health by the general public. This has a negative impact on the existing difficulties in carrying out an advocacy programme. This also results in the isolation and stigmatization of the mentally ill and on the spreading of dangerous practices and humiliating treatment of patients. [...]

4.2 Minors claiming in their own right

Unlike previous OGNs, the current October 2012 OGN provides an overview of the situation for minors in Somalia:

Excerpt from the October 2012 Somalia OGN

4.2.1 Somalia now has the world's highest mortality rate for children under the age of five. Findings from the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation show that Somalia's child mortality rate in 2010, stood at 180 deaths per 1,000 live births.¹⁷⁵ UNICEF stated in October 2011 that the humanitarian crisis in Somalia has already resulted in the deaths of thousands of children.¹⁷⁶ In July 2012, a year after the UN declared famine in Somalia, UNICEF reported that "Eight million people across Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya are still in need of humanitarian assistance. Children, in particular, are threatened by a combination of poverty, insecurity, malnutrition, and disease" and "in some regions of the South, one in five children is suffering from life-threatening acute malnutrition".¹⁷⁷ According to a 2012 WHO assessment, twenty per cent of children die before they reach the age of five, more than one third are underweight, and almost fifty per cent suffer from stunting.¹⁷⁸

4.2.2 The August 2012 Report of the UN Secretary-General noted that "The intensification of the conflict in southern and central Somalia resulted in an expansion of the scope and gravity of violations of child rights, in particular killing and maiming, rape and sexual violence and the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups involved in the conflict".¹⁷⁹ It further reported that "Continued fighting has rendered children more vulnerable to rape and sexual violence, particularly in open and unprotected internally displaced person settlements and especially in Mogadishu. The Transitional Federal Government and allied militia were the main alleged perpetrators in Mogadishu and border areas".¹⁸⁰ Reports continued of children being in the TFG's national security forces and allied militias.¹⁸¹ In its 2012 annual report Amnesty International noted that "Al-Shabab continued to forcibly recruit boys, some as young as eight, into their forces before and during military operations. Many were sent to the front line. Girls were also recruited to cook and clean for al-Shabab forces or forced to marry its members".¹⁸² Civil society sources in Mogadishu estimate there are between 1,000 and 2,000 children in the ranks of Al-Shabaab.¹⁸³ Reports by UNICEF indicated that in the first half of 2012, a total of 1,382 cases of recruitment of underage combatants were recorded. This shows a significant increase from 937 cases reported in 2011.¹⁸⁴ In February 2012, Human Rights Watch released a report documenting al-Shabaab's targeting of children for recruitment as soldiers, forced marriage, and rape and how the group has targeted students, teachers, and school buildings for attack.¹⁸⁵ It also reported that children have suffered disproportionately from the conflict, are often the main victims of the indiscriminate artillery and small arms fire and are also the most affected by the ongoing humanitarian crisis.¹⁸

The following non-exhaustive COI from 2012 provides further details on the range of human rights violations faced by minors in Somalia, apart from the practice of Forced Genital Mutilation (FGM) against girls, which is specifically addressed in section 3.12 of the OGN. Core sources have been included on each issue and unless specifically mentioned otherwise, it can be assumed that the documented human rights abuses occur throughout Central and Southern Somalia (not including Somaliland and Puntland), are directed against both girls and boys and occur whether or not the child lives with his/her family or community. It is essential that additional COI research is conducting to complement the following COI with the specific profile of claimant in mind.

- [Impact of the armed conflict on children](#)
- [Forced Recruitment \(by Al-Shabaab and Government forces\)](#)
- [Forced Labour and Child Trafficking](#)
- [Child abuse and sexual violence](#)
- [Child and forced marriage of girls](#)
- [Impact of the humanitarian situation on children](#)
- [Juvenile justice](#)

Impact of the armed conflict on children

- [UNICEF, The situation of Women and Children in Somalia, undated current webpage \(accessed 01/12/2012\)](#)

[...] Somalia, one of the world's poorest countries, is also one of the least protective environments for children. The worsening conflict in the Central South Zone (CSZ) has created a climate of impunity and virtually eliminated statutory child protection services. Major protection issues reported by partners include the persistent recruitment and use of children as young as nine in armed conflict. [...]

The internally displaced, children from minority groups, the very poor, orphans, children with special needs, working children, children living in the streets, militia children and children in conflict with the law, are all in special need of protection. In most of these categories, girls are especially disadvantaged. Young people have had little opportunity for education, or have had their education interrupted. They are frequently exposed to violence, risk of HIV and AIDS and drug abuse especially the use of khat. These challenges, coupled with unemployment, have worsened young people's overall vulnerability to different forms of violence and exploitation, and increased their involvement in criminal activities, including piracy and armed conflict, in search of alternative livelihoods. The current generation of Somali children in some areas has come of age without ever having lived through a single year of peace. [...]
- [United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations support to end human rights abuses and combat impunity in Somalia; Report of the Secretary-General, 21/09/2012](#)

[...] 29. Violations of children's rights constitute some of the most egregious human rights violations in Somalia. The ongoing conflict in southern and central Somalia has resulted in the killing and maiming of children, child rape and the recruitment and use of children by the armed forces and groups involved in the conflict. [...]

30. From January to May 2012, the country task force on monitoring and reporting, created pursuant to Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), documented 2,339 cases of grave violations of children rights, as against 1,800 cases in 2011. [...]

31. Net primary school enrolment is estimated at 13 per cent for boys and 7 per cent for girls. The conflict has destroyed most formal primary schooling infrastructure. The right of children to education has been acutely eroded further by a general lack of protection and by displacement, exhaustion, family separation and emotional trauma. [...]
- [Agence France Presse, Five Somali children killed playing with explosives, 27/08/2012](#)

[...] At least five Somali children were killed and more than 10 others wounded in a large blast in a school on Monday, after they played with explosives left over from fighting in the area, officials said.

"There was a heavy explosion, we believe caused by an explosive device that they had been playing with," said Abdi Jinow Alasow, governor for the Middle Shabelle region.

"At least five children have died and more than 10 others were injured," he added. "The death toll could rise as most of the victims have suffered serious injuries."

The explosion in the town of Balad, some 30 kilometres (20 miles) north of the capital Mogadishu, took place shortly after the school opened on Monday morning.

The town was recently wrested from the control of Al-Qaeda-linked Shebab insurgents by African Union troops alongside government forces. [...]
- [UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Shamsul Bari \[A/HRC/21/61\], 22/08/2012](#)

[...] 69. The Independent Expert was informed that the United Nations was continuing its efforts to address violations of children's rights in Somalia. The country task force on monitoring and reporting, created in accordance with Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), continued to document cases of grave violations in this regard. Of particular concern was a pattern of children being increasingly caught in direct attacks and crossfire owing to the intensification of military activities against Al-Shabaab. [...]

➤ [Danish Demining Group, Danish Refugee Council, Teaching Somali children to avoid new dangers of war, 06/06/2012](#)

[...] Educating children and their mothers in Somalia on how to identify and manage threats from unexploded ordnance explosive devices has become increasingly important as the Al Shabaab movement has changes its strategies towards militia warfare using improvised explosive devices. The mine action unit within the Danish Refugee Council aims to reach 225,000 children during this and next year teaching them how to avoid the danger of explosives.

The streets of Mogadishu are not for children. Old and new explosive dangers are luring in the most unexpected shapes and sizes – either they lie hidden underground from previous times of war or they are newly fabricated with the aim of creating as much damage as possible. Many of the potential victims for the explosives scattered around the country are children - not knowing how to recognize danger and how to react to it.

The mine action unit within the Danish Refugee Council, the Danish Demining Group (DDG) is working to change this through educating Somali aid workers in how to teach children about the dangers of new and old explosives. "Decades of conflict in Somalia has resulted in widespread contamination with unexploded ordnance and abandoned and privately stockpiled weapons and ammunition," explains Klaus Ljørring Pedersen, the regional director of the Danish Demining Group's office in the Horn of Africa & Yemen. "The capital Mogadishu is one of the areas where citizens must stay extra alert, even in the relative stability of the last few months. Here, more than 500 dangerous areas have been identified within Mogadishu's 16 districts – and it is crucial to teach children how to navigate safely in this extremely harsh environment."

[...] Cities like Mogadishu and Galkayo are far from the only areas contaminated with explosive remnants of war, such as mines, grenades and rockets. The western border between Somalia and Ethiopia is still heavily mined as a result of the Ogaden War in the 1970s, and the entire South Central Somalia is impacted by ERW and stockpiles of ammunition and firearms. Civilian deaths and injuries are poorly recorded due to limitations in access by humanitarian organisations and mine action agencies. [...]

➤ [United Nations, Children and armed conflict Report of the Secretary-General, 26/04/2012](#)

[...] 100. In 2011, 7,799 child casualties of conflict were registered in the three main hospitals in Mogadishu. The main cause of death among children below the age of 5 were burns, chest injuries and internal haemorrhage caused by blasts, shrapnel and bullets. In addition, the United Nations verified the killing of at least 189 children and the injury of 362 as a result of conflict. For example, in October, in Mogadishu, Banadir region, Al-Shabaab conducted a suicide attack against the Ministry of Education using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. Hundreds of children waiting outside to apply for scholarships were affected; at least 15 children were killed and 18 were seriously wounded. [...]

102. In 2011, Al-Shabaab and militia groups continued to target schools. In May 2011, a teacher was killed by Al-Shabaab in the Hiiran region for opposing the recruitment of children. In August 2011, Al-Shabaab used a school in Elwak district, Gedo region, for military purposes, disrupting the education of over 500 children. Since February 2011, the school has been used intermittently. In December 2011, Al-Shabaab militia attacked and used a secondary school in Merka district, Lower Shabelle region, as an operations centre. Schools in Mogadishu have been reportedly closed or used by Transitional Federal Government forces. [...]

➤ [Amnesty International, Somalia: Protection of civilians and human rights are critical for stable future, 23/02/2012](#)

[...] Children in Somalia are particularly vulnerable in the armed conflict. They continue to be killed – including in recent airstrikes in southern Somalia – while many more lose parents, carers and homes to the fighting. [...]

➤ [Human Rights Watch, No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia, February 2012](#)

[...] Children, defined as anyone under age 18, have suffered disproportionately from the ongoing conflict. Fighting between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and TFG-aligned militias on one hand and al-Shabaab, the Islamist armed group that now controls much of the country, on the other, intensified in the capital, Mogadishu, and other parts of south-central Somalia in mid-2010 and early 2011. In October 2011 the conflict in the southern regions escalated further with the incursion of Kenyan armed forces against al-Shabaab, followed shortly after by the arrival

of Ethiopian forces. Children are often the main victims of the indiscriminate artillery and small arms fire that has long characterized the fighting in Mogadishu. [...]

Schools have featured heavily in al-Shabaab's combat operations as well as its efforts to control Somalis' everyday lives. Many Somali children are no longer in or have never been to school. Somalia has one of the lowest rates of enrollment in the world; however, children and young people who have persisted in attending school have found themselves, their teachers, and their school buildings intentionally targeted for attack by al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab forces have turned schools into battlegrounds, firing at TFG and AMISOM forces from functioning school buildings and compounds, deliberately placing students and teachers in harm's way from often indiscriminate return fire by TFG and AMISOM forces. Al-Shabaab has in some cases bombed school buildings, killing students, teachers, and bystanders. The group has used schools to recruit students as fighters and to abduct girls and young women for rape and forced marriage. [...] The destruction of livelihoods, traditional protection structures, and separation or destruction of families as a result of the length of the conflict, the humanitarian crisis, the number of civilian casualties, and repeated displacement of a significant proportion of the population has left children particularly vulnerable. The numbers of abandoned, orphaned, or separated children and children living and working in the streets has skyrocketed over the course of the last four years. While child labor has long been a part of Somali culture, children are now often the sole source of income to their families or siblings. [...]

Forced recruitment (by Al-Shabaab and Government forces)

➤ [Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Quarterly Updates: Somalia, 30/09/2012](#)

[...] On 6 August the United Nations and Somalia's previous government – the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) – signed an action plan that commits the Somali National Armed Forces, allied militia and military groups under its control to end the killing and maiming of children and uphold the international law and safeguard the rights of citizens in Somalia. This followed the signing by the TFG and the United Nations in July of the first action plan, which was to end the recruitment and use of children by the Somali National Armed Forces. [...]

➤ [U.S. State Department, 2011 Findings on the worst forms of child labor: Somalia, 26/09/2012](#)

[...] Armed groups and militias, particularly al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam, which has merged with al-Shabaab, engage in the widespread and systematic conscription and recruitment of children for armed forces. (3-5, 7, 8, 10, 12-19) Boys as young as age 7 are bribed or forcibly taken from their homes, schools and the streets to serve as soldiers. (7, 8, 16, 19) Conscripted children plant roadside bombs and other explosive devices, operate checkpoints, serve as human shields and suicide bombers, and are trained to conduct assassinations. (3, 7, 12, 19) Some conscripted boys over age 15 are forced to fight or face execution. (10, 19) Girls are recruited by bribery or force for sexual servitude and domestic service. (3, 7, 12, 19) Girls are also recruited to transport weapons and provide intelligence and logistical support. (3, 7, 10, 12, 19) The TFG condemns the use of child soldiers. Although some reports indicate the TFG does not use child soldiers, many reports indicate that the TFG continues to recruit and use children in military operations. (7, 8, 10, 12-15, 18) [...]

➤ [United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations support to end human rights abuses and combat impunity in Somalia; Report of the Secretary-General, 21/09/2012](#)

[...] 12. The Transitional Federal Government, with the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and other neighbouring forces (namely Kenya and Ethiopia), recaptured Mogadishu in 2011 and has gradually established authority around the capital as well as areas bordering Kenya and Ethiopia. Nevertheless, a large part of southern and central Somalia remains under the control of the armed group, Al-Shabaab, and has witnessed grave human rights violations, including summary executions and torture (particularly of persons accused of spying for the Government), arbitrary arrest and detention, forced conscription and the recruitment of child soldiers, forced marriages and limitations to freedom of movement and assembly. Al-Shabaab has also been reported to prevent people, particularly boys and young men, from fleeing the areas under its control. [...]

- [UNOCA, Humanitarian Bulletin Eastern Africa Issue 13; 17 - 31 August 2012, 31/08/2012](#)
 [...] Renewed Protection Concerns in South Central Somalia
 [...] Reports are also being received that Al Shabaab continues to recruit youth in Galguduud region. [...]
- [UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Shamsul Bari \[A/HRC/21/61\], 22/08/2012](#)
 [...] 71. At a workshop held on 6 and 7 March in Mogadishu and organized by the Transitional Federal Government and the United Nations, a draft plan of action was adopted for the release and re-integration of child soldiers from Government armed forces.
 72. At the margins of the meeting of the International Contact Group on Somalia, held in Rome on 2 and 3 July 2012, the Minister for Defence and Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, Hussein Arab Isse, signed a plan of action to end the recruitment and use of children by the Somali National Armed Forces. Concrete steps should be taken by the Government of Somalia to ensure a child-free national army.
 73. The positive developments on the Government side were, however, overshadowed by reports that Al Shabaab militants were forcibly recruiting children. According to reports, the Al-Shabaab militia in Galguduud region took approximately 100 children, aged 12 years and younger, and had sent them to Koranic schools, where they were reportedly taught about jihad and nothing else. According to local residents, when the children returned home, they recited jihad poems and abused those who fought Al-Shabaab. It was, however, reported that, in recent months, Al-Shabaab had lost control of many towns in the Galguduud region. [...]
- [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia Issue 10 1-31 July 2012, 31/07/2012](#)
 [...] Protection funding short of needs, including addressing child recruitment
 The Protection Cluster has received just 21 per cent of required funding. Despite access constraints in the Afgooye corridor, the cluster managed to conduct an assessment in July. The results show that IDPs have crosscutting needs, including for nutrition and health services, WASH interventions and shelter materials. The assessment noted the rising cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) among women and girls with a direct correlation between a lack of livelihoods for young men and enlistment to armed groups.
 Earlier reports by UNICEF indicated that in the first half of 2012, a total of 1,382 cases of recruitment of underage combatants were recorded. This shows a significant increase from 937 cases reported in 2011. The assessment team recommended a fast and integrated response to address these concerns. [...]
- [Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Quarterly Updates: Somalia, 30/06/2012](#)
 [...] The increased defensive action by the government against Al-Shabaab has led to the militant group resorting to a campaign of bomb attacks in the capital, for which it has claimed credit. The increase in pressure on Al Shabaab has led to its increased use of child soldiers, in an attempt to replenish its diminishing numbers of fighters. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have made a considerable effort to address human rights concerns and have looked at preventative measures to minimize civilian casualties, such as the identification of no fire zones and the training of personnel in humanitarian law and the protection of civilians. [...]
- [U.S. State Department, Country report on human rights practices 2011: Somalia, 24/05/2012](#)
 [...] Reports continued of children being in the TFG's national security forces and allied militias. In the absence of established birth registration systems, it was often difficult to determine the exact age of recruits of national security forces. In Mogadishu military "camps" were not clearly defined, and soldiers lived and fought in close proximity to their families. Families--including soldiers' children--were sometimes present in the "camps."
 According to a Human Rights Watch report, the TFG reportedly interrogated children who had been associated with al-Shabaab and escaped or were captured, detaining an unknown number of them in TFG camps and detention facilities.
 In January the then prime minister appointed a TFG focal point to address child soldiering. During her seven-month tenure, the focal point did little to address this issue, citing a lack of resources. On July 15, the army chief of staff issued an instruction to all Somali National Army commanders directing them to ensure children were not among their forces. Toward year's end the TFG appointed two new focal points to address the issue. In addition, in December the army chief of staff appointed a child protection point of

contact to work with the international community on developing and implementing a child soldier action plan. [...]

There were credible reports that children were included in Somalia's numerous clan and other militias. Pro-TFG militias, including ASWJ, frequently fought alongside or intermingled with Somali National Army troops and even wore similar uniforms.

In May UNICEF and the UN special representative of the secretary-general for children and armed conflict reported an increase in the recruitment of children, some as young as eight, in conflict areas in Somalia, largely in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. According to the UN, al-Shabaab recruited children as young as eight from schools and madrassahs. The children were often used to plant roadside bombs and other explosive devices. In Kismayo, Baidoa, and Merka, al-Shabaab forced boys 15 and older to fight as "Mujahideen" or be executed.

Human Rights Watch also reported forcible recruitment of children by al-Shabaab, with al-Shabaab often recruiting the children from schools or while they traveled to or from school. According to information from the NGO, children in al-Shabaab training camps underwent grueling physical training, weapons training, physical punishment, religious training, and had to witness the punishment and execution of other children. Al-Shabaab used children in combat, including by placing them in front of other fighters to serve as human shields, and also used them as suicide bombers. In addition, al-Shabaab used children in support roles such as carrying ammunition, water, and food; removing wounded and killed militants; gathering intelligence; and serving as guards.

On March 18, the TFG minister of information reported that top al-Shabaab leader Hassan Dahir Aweys admitted during a Friday mosque sermon that al-Shabaab was using children in the fight against the TFG. On January 12, the TFG reported it had reunited more than 20 minors with their families after they defected from al-Shabaab. [...]

➤ [Amnesty International, Annual report 2012 The State of the World's Human Rights, 24/05/2012](#)

[...] Child soldiers

Al-Shabab continued to forcibly recruit boys, some as young as eight, into their forces before and during military operations. Many were sent to the front line. Girls were also recruited to cook and clean for al-Shabab forces or forced to marry its members.

The TFG reaffirmed its commitment to prevent the use of child soldiers. However, at least 46 TFG recruits aged below 18 were selected for military training abroad. The TFG detained ex-child combatants with adults in poor conditions and failed to provide effective reintegration opportunities after their release. [...]

➤ [United Nations, Children and armed conflict Report of the Secretary-General, 26/04/2012](#)

[...] 97. In 2011, the United Nations documented 948 cases of recruitment of children, mostly by Al-Shabaab. There were also documented cases of recruitment and use by the Transitional Federal Government and allied militia. Separately, the Transitional Federal Government forces inadvertently recruited 86 children, who were identified and repatriated from Bihanga military training camp in Uganda in April and August 2011. While 11 of these children joined a United Nations-supported reintegration programme, a number of them were reportedly released without undertaking a formal release process, and others reportedly remain in the custody of Transitional Federal Government forces.

98. In June 2011, mass recruitment by Al-Shabaab in Kismayo, Lower Juba region, was reported by a victim of child recruitment, who indicated that the recruitment took place in Kismayo town and that over 80 children remained in the training camp from which he had escaped. Reports were also received of girls recruited and forcibly married to Al-Shabaab combatants. Children were typically recruited by Al-Shabaab from schools and madrasas, particularly in internally displaced person settlements in Somalia and refugee camps in neighbouring Kenya. Forced recruitment increased in 2011 as a result of the escalation of military operations in Somalia.

99. In 2011, 127 cases of abduction were reported. Most abductions and detentions were carried out by Al-Shabaab in South Central zone. [...]

➤ [Danish Immigration Service, Security and human rights issues in South-Central Somalia, including Mogadishu; Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya and Mogadishu, Somalia; 30 January to 19 February 2012, April 2012](#)

[...] 3.1 Human rights issues in Al-Shabaab controlled areas

[...] 3.1.1 Forced recruitment of minors

Regarding forced recruitment by Al-Shabaab, an international organisation (A) explained that this is an ever increasing problem in all areas of S-C Somalia, but only in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab. This increase is due to the pressure put on Al-Shabaab by the AMISOM/TFG forces as well as invading forces from Kenya and Ethiopia.

Bediako Buahene, Policy and Protection, OCHA made the point that he had personally heard some women living in Al-Shabaab controlled areas state that what they feared most was that their sons would be forcibly recruited to Al-Shabaab militias. Forced recruitment in militias is a common feature in Al-Shabaab controlled areas, and as Al-Shabaab is now under pressure in many places forced recruitment is an ever increasing issue. Forced recruitment may take place among teenagers and even persons of 20 to 25 years of age may be recruited.

Regarding forced recruitment by Al-Shabaab, a UN organisation explained that this is a common phenomenon. Sometimes Al-Shabaab undertakes round-ups in villages and recruits youngsters in large numbers. There are reports of Al-Shabaab having recruited between 200 and 250 youngsters at one time. Many of these are forcibly recruited but many are also joining Al-Shabaab through coercion or persuasion. However, it is normally poverty that drives youngsters to join Al-Shabaab as they anticipate a better life by joining. Being an Al-Shabaab fighter is a survival strategy for many children and youngsters. It was added that Al-Shabaab also use schools in S-C Somalia as recruiting ground for its forces.

A significant proportion of Al-Shabaab fighters at the frontlines are minors, according to the UN organisation. It is often in connection with huge losses that Al-Shabaab recruits new fighters, many of them children. As Al-Shabaab is presently under extreme pressure from AMISOM, the TFG, Kenya and Ethiopia, and forced recruitment to Al-Shabaab have become a major issue.

When asked if Somali clans can protect its men/minors against forced recruitment by Al-Shabaab, a UN organisation explained that there is some anecdotal evidence that communities in Al-Shabaab controlled areas have placed huge pressure on clan elders to address mass recruitment by Al-Shabaab of their children, and in some instances clan elders have advocated with Al-Shabaab to release their children but in many instances this is not possible due to fear repercussion from Al-Shabaab. However, what is important is that in many Al-Shabaab controlled areas clans are sympathetic to Al-Shabaab and this together with sheer poverty situations means that children are easy prey for Al-Shabaab recruitment and use. Furthermore, in Somalia a child is only a person under 15, i.e. once 15 they are not seen as children any longer and they can marry, fight etc., and this is contrary to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). According to the UN organisation the issue is not just one of protection but a combination of factors as set out in the CRC.

3.1.1.1 Forced recruitment in Mogadishu

An international organisation (B) stated that Al-Shabaab does not forcibly recruit persons in Mogadishu but this is more likely in other rural areas of south-central Somalia. Al-Shabaab is unable to undertake forced recruitment in areas which it does not control. However, in the rural areas there are IDPs and other poor people who are unable to pay the taxes levied on them by Al-Shabaab and they have, in some cases, had to give their sons to Al-Shabaab who will use them as fighters. Some families have sent their sons to Nairobi or other places in order to avoid their recruitment to Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab actively recruits in Kenya and surrounding countries. In fact Kenyans (non Somali Kenyans) make up a large portion of Al-Shabaab fighters lured by regular pay. [...]

3.2 Human rights issues in TFG/AMISOM controlled areas

[...] 3.2.2 Forced recruitment of minors

A UN organisation explained that recruitment of children is mainly perpetrated by Al-Shabaab. However, in areas liberated by the Ethiopian army, Somali militias are being integrated into the TFG forces. Many of these militias have children within their ranks and the concern is that these children will be integrated into the TFG forces too.

Regarding forced recruitment by the TFG Bediako Buahene, OCHA explained that there are reports that Somali youngsters were sent to Uganda to undergo training in order to be enrolled into the TFG army. However, some of these turned out to be minors and returned to Somalia. When this was reported the TFG stated that it would ensure that minors would not be sent to training in Uganda. Bediako Buahene, OCHA added that the most recent intake of 620 recruits to the TFG army almost exclusively involved highly qualified persons and none of these were minors. Bediako Buahene, OCHA doubted that the TFG recruits minors, but some of its allied militias do so. Whether one can speak of forced recruitment or not is tricky as these youngsters are tempted by the money they might earn as a militia fighter, and most of these militias are not in need of making use of forced recruitment as many youngsters perceive recruitment as an option to make a living. When asked if the Ethiopian forces are recruiting minors in

Somalia a UN organisation expressed concern with the recent involvement of foreign troops in S-C Somalia, and stated that it is difficult to monitor this issue and in particular the issue of how foreign troops can monitor the use of children by Somali militias with whom they are working/fighting with. [...]

➤ [Human Rights Watch, No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia, February 2012](#)

[...] Summary

[...] Although al-Shaabab has long relied on spreading extremist propaganda and material rewards to coerce children to join, since mid-2010 it has increasingly recruited children forcibly to replenish its dwindling ranks. Children have nowhere to hide. Al-Shabaab has abducted them wherever they congregate: schools, playgrounds, football fields, and homes. Schools in particular have been attractive targets—14 of the 21 child escapees from al-Shabaab whom Human Rights Watch interviewed were taken from schools or on their way to school.

Life for children in al-Shabaab training camps is harsh: boys undergo grueling physical combat training, weapons training, and religious and political teaching during which some describe being forced to watch videos of suicide bombings. Boys also described witnessing brutal physical punishments and executions of those accused of spying for the TFG, and those attempting to escape or merely failing to obey orders.

Al-Shabaab militants send children to the front lines, often with little training. Several witnesses spoke of children serving effectively as “human shields” for more experienced fighters during some of the most intense fighting in Mogadishu. Others, including children too young to carry military weapons, were aggressively coerced and threatened into serving as suicide bombers. Besides participating in active combat, al-Shabaab uses children in a multitude of support roles, including carrying ammunition, water, milk, and food to the front lines; removing the wounded and killed; and working as spies, guards, and porters.

Abducted girls are assigned cooking, cleaning, and other domestic duties in the camps. Al-Shabaab uses girls and young women not only for support for combat operations, but also for rape and forced marriage to fighters.

Children, their families, and their teachers who try to prevent recruitment and abduction or who attempt to escape face severe consequences. Al-Shabaab has killed or injured parents who intervened to protect their children although, on occasion, parents and community leaders have successfully negotiated the release of abducted children with local al-Shabaab leaders.

When children “defect” or escape from al-Shabaab into the hands of the TFG or AMISOM, or are captured on the battlefield, they face interrogation by the TFG security services, detention, and an uncertain future instead of being protected as children. While the available information suggests that the TFG itself does not forcibly recruit children, children have found their way into its ranks, often by volunteering for TFG forces or those of aligned militias, manning checkpoints, and taking part in combat. The TFG has to date failed to ensure that stringent and systematic age screening procedures and standards are in place to screen all its recruits and forces. Recruits who have not attended a training funded by the European Union (EU) in Uganda and have been directly recruited from militias are particularly likely to escape screening. Human Rights Watch is not aware of any member of the TFG forces being held to account for the recruitment and use of children. [...]

➤ [Shabelle Media Network, Al-Shabab Abducts 200 Teenagers in Southern Somalia Town, 22/01/2012](#)

[...] The Al-Qaeda affiliated militants of Al-shabab have on Saturday forcibly abducted at least 200 young boys in the town of Afgoye, some 30 km away from Somalia capital, Mogadishu, residents confirmed.

Witnesses said, Al-shabab fighters with military vehicles stormed villages in Afgoye town, abducting hundreds of youngsters whom they wanted to join for their fight against Somalia government based in Mogadishu. [...]

Forced labour and child trafficking

- [UNICEF, Somalia Statistics, undated current webpage \(accessed 01/12/2012\)](#)

[...] Child Protection

Child labour 2000-2010*, total 49

Child labour 2000-2010*, male 45

Child labour 2000-2010*, female 54

[...]

- [U.S. State Department, 2011 Findings on the worst forms of child labor: Somalia, 26/09/2012](#)

[...] Statistics on Working Children and Education

Children	Age	Percent
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Working	5-14 yrs.	9.8
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Attending School	5-14 yrs.	48.9
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Combining Work	7-14 yrs	20.2
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and School.

Children are engaged in the worst forms of child labor in Somalia, many of them in dangerous conditions in agriculture and as child soldiers.(3-10) Children's work in agriculture may involve heavy lifting, the use of potentially dangerous machinery and tools, and the application of harmful pesticides.(11) As Somalia is a nomadic society, children also herd livestock.(3, 10) Children handling livestock may be vulnerable to kicks and falls, being crushed, and infectious diseases transmitted from animals. [...]

Children are forced to break rocks for gravel and perform construction.(3-6, 10) Children are also subject to prostitution and, reportedly, forced prostitution.(3, 10, 20) Children work on the street as beggars and porters. Street children also wash cars, shine shoes, and sell cigarettes, khat (an amphetamine-like stimulant), sweets and toothbrushes.(5, 6, 10, 21) Children working on the streets are exposed to abuse and violence, including sexual violence, as well as diseases such as HIV/ AIDS.(21) [...]

Somalia is believed to be a source, destination and transit country for child trafficking.(3, 19, 22, 23) Children are reportedly trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation by armed militias.(19) Although evidence is limited, children are also reportedly trafficked within Somalia for forced labor in agriculture, livestock herding, construction, sexual servitude, domestic service and commercial sexual exploitation.(19, 20) Children are also reportedly trafficked to Tanzania for prostitution.(3)[...]

Access to education is a critical component in preventing the economic exploitation of children.(24) In Somalia, protracted violence has led to the breakdown of all basic services, including public education.(17, 25, 26) In addition, droughts, floods, and decades of violence have led to the displacement of over 1.5 million Somalis. These constraints as well as the forced recruitment of children from schools by armed forces, have limited children's access to education as schools are either inaccessible or unsafe.(7, 8, 12, 17, 26-29) The cost of tuition, the prevalence of corporal punishment in schools and the lack of educational infrastructure also hinder children's access to school.(25, 26, 30, 31) Access to education is further constrained by the lack of birth registration. [...]

- [U.S. State Department, Country report on human rights practices 2011: Somalia, 24/05/2012](#)

[...] The pre-1991 penal code and the TFC prohibit all forms of forced and compulsory labor. However, TFG authorities lacked the capacity to enforce these laws, and forced labor occurred. Children and individuals from minority clans were reportedly used as porters in the khat trade as well as in farming and animal herding. [...]

Child labor was widespread. Recruitment and use of child soldiers was a problem (see section 1.g.). Young persons were commonly employed in herding, agriculture, and household labor from an early age. Children broke rocks into gravel and worked as vendors of cigarettes and khat on the streets. UNICEF estimated that from 1999 to 2005, 36 percent of children between the ages of five and 14 were in the workforce--31 percent of males and 41 percent of females. The actual percentage of working children was believed to be even higher.

The TFG Ministries of Labor, and Social Affairs, Gender and Family Affairs are responsible for enforcing child labor laws. In Somaliland and Puntland, respectively, the Ministry of Family and Social Development and the Ministry of Labor, Youth, and Sports are responsible for such enforcement. In practice, however, none of these ministries enforced child labor laws. [...]

- [UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo; Addendum; Mission to Somalia \[A/HRC/20/16/Add.3\] 14/05/2012](#)

[...] 30. Somalia is a source and reportedly also a destination country for women and children trafficked for forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. Trafficking occurs through the country's border areas with Ethiopia where a significant number of women and children move to Somaliland and Puntland. There they often find themselves in involuntary domestic servitude or other types of forced labour. Often these women do not speak the language and find themselves with no other options.

31. The Special Rapporteur was informed that along the coastline of Puntland, due to the relatively close proximity with Yemen, many Somali and Ethiopian women are attracted by the opportunity to cross the Red Sea and often find themselves trafficked by pirates who operate along the coast and who are actively involved in commercial sexual exploitation. Often young women are offered jewels and other presents by local Somali women recruiters. They are offered marriage proposals or promised employment to pay their passage across the sea. In many cases, unfortunately, the victims never receive the money promised and end up in exploitative situations. [...]

- [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia; Issue 06; 25 April- 04 May 2012, 03/05/2012](#)

[...] Children exposed to trafficking

Child trafficking is a protection concern across Somalia. In early April nine children, aged between seven and 14 years, were intercepted by the authorities in Bossaso. The children were placed in temporary custody with a local NGO pending reunification with their families. A man was charged and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment on 15 April after he was found guilty of kidnapping. [...]

Child abuse and sexual violence

- [UNICEF, In Somalia, UNICEF supports efforts to push back against a tide of violence against women and girls, 20/11/2012](#)

[...] Young girls and women forced to leave their homes and villages face another ordeal once they arrive at the camps set up for the displaced. There, they are vulnerable to attacks and rape, particularly at night, or when they are out collecting firewood or during food distributions.

Amina has come to Mogadishu to escape fighting. She, her unemployed husband and their four children have ended up in Tarabunka camp. Amina says there are cases of violence against girls and women every day. She has seen a teenager chased by a gang and sexually assaulted. "This happens often here in this camp – and has happened to me," she says.

According to Aisha, 32, who has fled Bossaso for Mogadishu, attacks on children are a common problem. "Every family that has a 9-year-old girl will hide them at night so that she can be safe," says Aisha, who has nine children. "If women go out to find firewood, they are going to be raped, and they are attacked in the middle of the night by gunmen – and there is nowhere to go."

Treatment, support and relocation

UNICEF has supplied post-rape treatment kits to all districts in Mogadishu through four hospitals and maternal and child health centres. Centre workers have been trained in psycho-social support and clinical management of rape. UNICEF is also ensuring that survivors of rape who are still at risk are relocated to safer areas and can access income-generating activities to support their families. [...]

- [UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia \[S/2012/643\], 22/08/2012](#)

[...] 71. The intensification of the conflict in southern and central Somalia resulted in an expansion of the scope and gravity of violations of child rights, in particular killing and maiming, rape and sexual violence and the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups involved in the conflict. By 31 July 2012, a total of 3,048 violations had already been reported and verified (compared to 1,800 in 2011, including 1,415 child recruitments, compared to 948 in 2011). [...]

- [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia Issue 10 1-31 July 2012, 31/07/2012](#)
 [...] Protection funding short of needs, including addressing child recruitment
 The Protection Cluster has received just 21 per cent of required funding. Despite access constraints in the Afgooye corridor, the cluster managed to conduct an assessment in July. The results show that IDPs have crosscutting needs, including for nutrition and health services, WASH interventions and shelter materials. The assessment noted the rising cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) among women and girls with a direct correlation between a lack of livelihoods for young men and enlistment to armed groups. [...]
 Women and girls in Mogadishu remain at great risk of sexual violence while collecting firewood. Children between the ages 5 and 14 are most susceptible. “There are no alternatives for me,” said a 13-year-old girl. “I must go to the bush where the militias hide to collect firewood as I have to cook three times a day for my brothers and father. I will never allow my brothers to collect wood, because they can be killed. Instead, I can just be raped.”
 To increase safety for girls and women and reduce the need for firewood, UNICEF and its partners are implementing two projects to provide fuel-efficient stoves to displaced people in Mogadishu. These projects will both reduce girls’ vulnerability to assault and free up their time, enabling them to return to school. [...]

- [Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Quarterly Updates: Somalia, 30/06/2012](#)
 [...] In May the Foreign Secretary launched a new UK initiative to combat sexual violence in conflict areas, which is of particular relevance to women and children in Somalia. The Foreign Secretary stressed that he wanted to look at practical ways to ensure survivors feel confident to speak out. For this to happen we must work harder to erode the culture of impunity and replace it with a new culture of deterrence. We will continue to use the UK’s influence and diplomatic network to rally sustained international action and to push this issue up the global agenda. [...]

- [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Issue 8, 16 - 30 May 2012, 30/05/2012](#)
 [...] Efforts to reduce violence against girls and women
 The large displacement of people from the Afgooye corridor to Mogadishu raises fears of an increase in sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The Protection Cluster received unconfirmed reports of SGBV cases involving TFG/AMISOM forces. Obtaining data on SGBV remains a challenge for cluster partners as it carries a huge stigma, which is one of the reasons for low reporting among communities. [...]

- [U.S. State Department, Country report on human rights practices 2011: Somalia, 24/05/2012](#)
 [...] Child Abuse: Child abuse and rape of children were serious problems, although no statistics on its prevalence were available. There were no known efforts by regional governments to combat this practice. Children remained among the chief victims of continuing societal violence. [...]
 Sexual Exploitation of Children: Child prostitution was illegal in all regions. In al-Shabaab areas the penalty was flogging or even death by stoning. There is no formal statutory rape law or minimum age for consensual sex. Child pornography is not expressly prohibited. Sexual exploitation of children occurred. For example, girls may have been subject to forced prostitution in Garowe, and girls were also reportedly placed in pirates’ homes to be exploited in sexual servitude. [...]

- [Amnesty International, Annual report 2012 The State of the World’s Human Rights, 24/05/2012](#)
 [...] In July, around 35,000 people fleeing drought in southern Somalia arrived in Mogadishu. Reports of sexual violence against women and girls in IDP camps in the capital increased from July onwards. [...]

- [UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo; Addendum; Mission to Somalia \[A/HRC/20/16/Add.3\] 14/05/2012](#)
 [...] 19. Throughout her visit, the Special Rapporteur was informed of the prevalence of rape used against Somali women and girls in their daily lives. One of the most striking examples was hearing a 12-year-old survivor of rape in Garowe talking with detachment about her traumatic experience of the violation of her bodily integrity, as if such experiences are part of a normal life. For victims of rape, this trauma is not addressed, as medical assistance and psychosocial support services are rare. To address the gap, a pilot project was recently set up by UNDP in Somaliland.⁴

20. Cases of sexual violence appear to be difficult to report to police and courts, and access to the formal justice system appears to be complex for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the formal justice system is inoperative in many areas of the country due to the destruction occasioned by the armed conflict and the general underdevelopment. Also an obstacle is the need to pay police and court officials in order to formally file and process a case. Furthermore, the Penal Code, although it criminalizes rape, considers it as a crime against morals and not a crime against the person and is thus not adequate to substantively address this form of violence against women. As a result, many women do not trust the system, which has failed in the past to hold perpetrators accountable.

21. This situation is further exacerbated by the complex interrelationships among customary, religious and formal systems of dispute settlement. The pre-eminence of clan interests, over formal institutions and accountability mechanisms, has had a particular impact on victims of sexual violence. They find themselves disregarded, as their families and clans tend to settle the violations/harms according to customary practices that favour conciliation rather than punishing the perpetrator and seeking redress for the victim. The Special Rapporteur was also made aware that women's families, following clan lines, prefer to conciliate with the perpetrator's clan mostly because of family and social pressures and perceived economic benefits that the family and victim's clan may derive.

22. The Special Rapporteur heard about victims of rape forced to marry their perpetrators as part of the remedial practices of the traditional justice system. Although authorities and traditional and religious leaders she met denied and opposed this practice, interlocutors stressed that tribal leaders, in the settlements of disputes involving rape cases of single women and girls, often rule that the victim must marry her perpetrator, disregarding the opinion and will of the victim and often her family as well. [...]

25. The Special Rapporteur was informed that Somali women and girl refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries are particularly at risk of being targeted for sexual violence, as during their flight to the border they must pass through areas controlled by insurgent militias. Although these areas are difficult to access because of security conditions, the Special Rapporteur heard of several women, aged 11 to 80 years old, having been kidnapped, raped and forced into marriage by Al-Shabaab militias while trying to flee the fighting in the southcentral area and seek shelter in neighbouring countries. [...]

26. The Special Rapporteur was informed, both before and during her visit, of alarming reports of sexual violence, especially against women in IDP camps in some areas of Somalia.⁶ While acknowledging the context of the conflict and humanitarian crisis, which have had a heavy toll, especially on women and girls, and the particular vulnerability faced by persons displaced by conflict and drought, which further expose women to violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, the Special Rapporteur notes a substantial lack of reporting of sexual violence taking place in IDP camps. The absence of proper statistics to report and document these allegations of sexual violence further adds to the impunity and invisibility of this particular manifestation of violence against women and girls. Furthermore, even in areas with lower security risks, the cases of sexual violence committed against internally displaced women and which are reported to the police do not result in convictions and remain largely unaddressed by the authorities.

27. The Special Rapporteur also received reports of sexual violence against women and girls living in IDP camps in the Mogadishu area. They were allegedly attacked during the night, mainly by men wearing khaki uniforms, of the same type as the ones used by the Somali National Army. Such uniforms are easily found in Mogadishu markets. Allegations of sexual violence were also made against AMISOM soldiers. There was an acknowledgement by AMISOM of two cases of gender-based violence, which had been dealt with by the military courts. Nevertheless, several stakeholders have expressed concern regarding such allegations, the lack of accountability and the absence of redress. [...]

➤ [United Nations, Children and armed conflict Report of the Secretary-General, 26/04/2012](#)

[...] 101. A total of 252 cases of rape and sexual violence were reported in 2011. Continued fighting has rendered children more vulnerable to rape and sexual violence, particularly in open and unprotected internally displaced person settlements and especially in Mogadishu. The Transitional Federal Government and allied militia were the main alleged perpetrators in Mogadishu and border areas. In August and September 2011, the United Nations noted a trend emerging where multiple perpetrators raped the same victims in a group setting. Cases of sexual slavery were also reported, with Al-Shabaab fighters reported to have taken girls as young as 9 years old for marriage. Sexual violence in Al-Shabaab-controlled areas was underreported, given the significant fear of reprisals. [...]

➤ [Human Rights Watch, No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia, February 2012](#)

[...] Rape by al-Shabaab

The issue of rape in Somalia is taboo. There is profound stigma associated with sexual violence and, therefore, victims and their families rarely speak out. Human Rights Watch interviewed one girl and one young woman in the course of this research who described their rape by al-Shabaab members, the former the victim of a gang rape, the latter in the context of a planned forced marriage. A handful of Somali refugees also spoke to us about other incidents of rape perpetrated by al-Shabaab forces, and Human Rights Watch and others have documented sexual violence by TFG forces and TFG-affiliated militias. [...]

Given the situation of widespread violence and impunity in which rape takes place, girls, young women, and their families often have very little power and means, notably in al-Shabaab controlled areas, to resist rape or to speak out against the violation. [...]

Victims of rape and, at times, their families may also face severe stigma and repercussions in their communities. The mother of the 17-year-old victim of rape told Human Rights Watch how she was attacked after speaking out about the rape of her daughter. [...]

Facing stigma, insecurity, and lack of access to the necessary health facilities, flight is often the only option. [...]

[UN General Assembly, Conflict-related sexual violence: report of the Secretary-General \[A/66/657-S/2012/33\], 13/01/2012](#)

[...] Somalia

42. Numerous reports have been received of Harakat Al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (Al-Shabaab) fighters committing sexual violence, including forcing women into marriages and acts of sexual slavery. Women were reportedly stopped at checkpoints and informed that a certain fighter had selected her for marriage. Families, fearing retaliation, generally comply.

43. Since the current influx of displaced persons into Mogadishu, exacerbated by the famine, a significant number of reports of sexual violence have been received. The majority of the reported victims are women and girls who live in internally displaced persons' camps in Mogadishu, having arrived mostly from the Bay and Bakool regions. Testimonies collected from the victims reveal that most women are subjected to violence, including multiple acts of sexual violence, at night while they sleep in their huts. Such violence is perpetrated by groups of armed men in military uniforms. Victims generally are unable to determine the identity of their attackers.

For instance, militias under the command of district commissioners or regional administrations wear the same type of uniforms as Transitional Federal Government troops. Further, owing to the lack of or poorly functioning armouries, members of the armed forces and the police reportedly maintain possession of their weapons while off-duty, which could lead to their use by non-authorized individuals. The Transitional Federal Government has committed itself to establishing a task force with the United Nations to develop a strategy to prevent and respond to the phenomenon of sexual violence. [...]

Child and forced marriage of girls

➤ [UNICEF, Somalia Statistics, undated current webpage \(accessed 01/12/2012\)](#)

[...] Child marriage 2000-2010*, married by 15	8
Child marriage 2000-2010*, married by 18	45

[...]

➤ [Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre, Somalia: Al-Shabaab and forced marriage, 06/07/2012](#)

[...] The information about what occurs in the Shabaab-controlled areas is limited, and it is difficult to obtain written sources that discuss Shabaab members and marriages in the areas this movement controls. The UN-appointed special advisor on human rights in Somalia refers to marriage between foreign Shabaab members and local women in their reports from 2009 and 2010 (UNHRC 2009, 2010). Somali resource persons and individual advocates for international organisations Landinfo met in Nairobi in March 2011

also discussed such marriages. The information at the time showed signs of being somewhat anecdotal, similar to other information regarding conditions in the Shabaab areas. In meetings with both local and international resource persons in Nairobi and Mogadishu in February 2012, however, several of Landinfo's interlocutors believed that forced marriages were spreading in the areas where Shabaab has control. Originally, the girls were married off to foreign jihadists, but today, marriage to Somali Shabaab soldiers is much more widespread. This information is also anecdotal, but it is consistent with information from a number of female refugees who have recently arrived at the Dadaab camps in Kenya (UNHCR 2012).

Traditional marriage: forced marriage – arranged marriage

Arranged marriages are the norm in Somalia, and few women oppose their family's choice, which is to say their father or guardian's choice (Abdullahi 2001). The difference between an arranged marriage and a forced marriage can be subtle. Among nomadic groups, marriage to members of neighbouring clans is important for building alliances in order to ensure access to water and pasture areas. There is also a long tradition of peace arrangements between clans, sealed with an exchange of brides between the parties.

The social pressure for entering marriage is strong, especially for a first marriage, and for many young women it is almost unthinkable to oppose being married, because marrying and raising a family is fundamental in society. In conversations with both Somali and international resource persons during stays in Nairobi in 2002, 2004 and 2005, everyone pointed out that women who refuse to marry their family's choice may risk being exposed to violence. The extent of such violence is unknown. Those who do break with the traditional social standards cannot expect help or protection from family or other clan members. However, killing women is not socially accepted, and so-called "honour killings" of women have no tradition in Somalia.

[...] Al-Shabaab and forced marriage

[...] However al-Shabaab's religious and ideological platform has its roots in the dogmatic Wahhabism, and in line with this movement, it advocates a strict interpretation of Islamic rights and Islamic traditions. This tradition is foreign to most Somalis, but those who do not live in accordance with this interpretation are infidels in Shabaab's eyes. As mentioned, arranged marriages are the norm in Somalia. The bride and groom's parents and relatives often make decisions without consulting the girl, and therefore forced marriages are not a phenomenon that came with Shabaab.

A Somali theologian and other Somali resource persons Landinfo met in March 2011 believed that Shabaab distorts Islam, and introduces practices that break with Somali tradition. The impression conveyed by the oral sources was that the forced marriage problem in Shabaab areas is complicated. The impression was unchanged after conversations in Nairobi and Mogadishu in February 2012.

Neither the woman nor her guardian usually has any real choice if a Shabaab soldier has decided on a woman. The soldier will usually approach the woman more than once, and he will usually ask her father to marry her, in keeping with local tradition. But if the girl and her father refuse, he will take the law into his own hands. Should Shabaab claim the father is an infidel, this method becomes even easier.

However, there are some examples of women having refused to marry a Shabaab soldier without known consequences. The examples discussed come from Baidoa,² and the prerequisite for success is that one belongs to a large and important local clan (conversation with the representative of an international organisation in Nairobi, 21 February 2012). This report confirms the impression that there are local variations that particularly depend on the Shabaab administration, or the commander, having local clan ties. There are many stories of Shabaab and forced marriage. A Somali resource person was able to tell about family members who live in settlements for internally displaced people in the Afgoye corridor. This area was Shabaab-controlled at the time,³ and the family's four daughters were sent to Mogadishu for education (since Shabaab does not allow girls to go to school), and to avoid Shabaab marriage. Another relative had received a despairing phone call from a family member in Beled Weyne⁴ because a Shabaab soldier wanted to marry their daughter, and they dared not refuse (conversation in Nairobi 24 February 2012).

It is Shabaab's position of power and people's experience of powerlessness and fear of reprisals that make such behaviour possible. Some women are subjected to brainwashing, while other women see a marriage with a Shabaab soldier as their contribution to jihad. There is also talk of cases where girls are abducted and married (interviews in Nairobi in March 2011). As Shabaab weakened, their propaganda and rhetoric became more powerful. All families must contribute with their boys as soldiers and girls as wives and mothers for more future recruits (conversations in Nairobi, 21 February 2012 and 22 February 2012 in Mogadishu).

Young Shabaab soldiers ready for combat get married – the marriage signals, amongst other things, that a suicide bomber is prepared, and it is important that combatants have descendants. However, the woman

is not aware that the marriage may be short-term. An international representative stated that a local Somali NGO had noticed in general a number of young, pregnant women and women with small children who had been abandoned by their husbands. The men were young Shabaab soldiers who had gone to the front and possibly been killed, or had abandoned the wife in favour of a new wife. Regardless of the reason, these young girls were left on their own, without money or opportunities to support themselves and the child. However, the source believed that the girls would be taken care of by their families, if they chose to go back to them (conversation in Nairobi, March 2011).

Marriage between Somalis and non-Somalis, or across ethnic lines, have traditionally not been common in Somalia (even if both parties are Muslims), but the foreign jihadists are almost completely free to choose wives, according to some observers (interview in Nairobi, March 2011). However, many of the foreign jihadists must have left Somalia in recent months (conversations in Nairobi and Mogadishu in February 2012), and this means that even more women and children are left on their own.

Some families see a benefit in a Shabaab-affiliated in-law because it provides protection and opportunities, this is particularly true among minority groups and small clans. This category of marriage differs little from the so-called black cat marriages (mukulaal madoow) in the warlord days. Those in power today have only put on a different hat – the religious one. However, many of today's Shabaab soldiers themselves belong to marginalised minority groups or small clans, and for some of them, marriage with women from majority clans may be perceived as a form of revenge or prestige.

According to various sources, Shabaab has also introduced its version of widow inheritance (dumaal). In Shabaab's eyes, all Shabaab soldiers are brothers, and therefore Shabaab members can invoke this tradition and marry the widows of fallen comrades, regardless of biological relation. These marriages follow a pattern in which the new husband has the same rank as the deceased. Neither the woman nor her family can oppose such a marriage, unless they have a high-ranking Shabaab officer in the family. The only way out for a woman in such a situation who wants to avoid marriage is to leave her native country (interview in Nairobi in March 2011). [...]

- [U.S. State Department, Country report on human rights practices 2011: Somalia, 24/05/2012](#)
[...] Child Marriage: Child marriage was prevalent. The minimum legal age for marriage was 15. However, in rural areas parents often married off their daughters as young as 12. In areas under al-Shabaab control, al-Shabaab arranged marriages between their soldiers and young girls and used the lure of marriage as a recruitment tool. [...]
- [UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Rashida Manjoo; Addendum; Mission to Somalia \[A/HRC/20/16/Add.3\] 14/05/2012](#)
[...] 23. Early and/or forced marriages still persist, particularly in rural areas, as parents perceive a girl child as a source of wealth for the dowry which the prospective husband is expected to pay. The payment of the dowry, along clan lines and not directly to the family, is another factor that increases such practices. The custom of polygamy may also encourage men to marry several women in order to use them for income generation. [...]
- [Danish Immigration Service, Security and human rights issues in South-Central Somalia, including Mogadishu; Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact finding mission to Nairobi, Kenya and Mogadishu, Somalia; 30 January to 19 February 2012, April 2012](#)
[...] 3.1 Human rights issues in Al-Shabaab controlled areas
[...] Regarding forced marriage EPHRC, a local NGO in Mogadishu explained that there are many young women and girls who are being forced to marry Al-Shabaab fighters.
Bediako Buahene, OCHA stated that forced marriage is a huge issue in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab. Girls and women are being married off to fighters in an attempt to ensure that fighters do not defect from Al-Shabaab.
A UN organisation explained that it has received reports of Al-Shabaab encouraging its young fighters to marry girls in order to ensure that the fighter does not defect. Such marriages are often not voluntary. The UN organisation has also received reports of young girls being forced into marriages with adults and much older men. Al-Shabaab believes that it is much more difficult for a married fighter to defect as he would have to leave his wife and children behind. In addition, by this strategy Al-Shabaab also ensures that it has a potential defector's wife and children as hostages, thus making it difficult to defect.

On the other hand there are also examples of elderly Al-Shabaab fighters and commanders forcing young women, including minors to marry them. If the family of the woman or girl declines, or if the woman or girl herself declines she risks being killed by Al-Shabaab. Girls and women have been stoned to death on such accounts and this occurs even today.

When asked if Somali clans can protect its women/girls against forced marriage with Al-Shabaab fighters/members a UN organisation explained that they do not have much information on this issue, save that in Al-Shabaab controlled areas clans do not seem to have much power to protect girls from forced marriage. However, there is some anecdotal evidence that communities in Al-Shabaab controlled areas have placed huge pressure on clan elders to address forced marriage with Al-Shabaab fighters/members, and in some instances clan elders have advocated with Al-Shabaab to prevent the marriage but in many instances this is not possible due to fear repercussion from Al-Shabaab. However, what is important is that in many Al-Shabaab controlled areas clans are sympathetic to Al-Shabaab and this together with sheer poverty situations means that women/girls are easy victims for forced marriage with Al-Shabaab fighters/members. Furthermore, in Somalia a child is only a person under 15, i.e. once 15 they are not seen as children any longer and they can marry, fight etc. [...]

3.2 Human rights issues in TFG/AMISOM controlled areas

[...] 3.2.3 Forced marriage and rape

EPHRC, a local NGO in Mogadishu stated that even in the TFG-controlled [areas of] Mogadishu young women and girls are subject to social and financial pressure to get them married against their own will. Women's rights are not respected, but there are a number of local NGOs which assist women who do not wish to marry or who have been divorced. [...]

➤ [Human Rights Watch, No Place for Children: Child Recruitment, Forced Marriage, and Attacks on Schools in Somalia, February 2012](#)

[...] Al-Shabaab members have assaulted girls and young women in schools, public spaces, and their homes. Because perpetrators of rape and other violence in Somalia enjoy almost total impunity, the victims and their families often have very little power to resist, and those who do face great risks. Victims of rape and their families rarely have anywhere to turn to for support and are at times stigmatized and ostracized within their own communities. Flight is often the only form of protection that remains: many refugee families told Human Rights Watch that one of the main reasons they left Somalia was fear of forced marriage.

Rape by al-Shabaab occurs both within the context of such forced marriages and outside.

Forced and Early Marriage by al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab has imposed forced and early marriage as part of the group's effort to impose its harsh version of Sharia on every aspect of the personal lives of women and girls. The practices described to Human Rights Watch were not simply the actions of individual fighters taking advantage of impunity to impose marriage on individual girls. Rather, both girls who were targeted and other eyewitnesses consistently described a more organized practice in which al-Shabaab preached marriage with fighters to girls still in school (see below), and abducted and detained girls under the group's auspices for this purpose. [...]

Girls and their families have very limited means of protection against abduction for forced marriage. Some girls drop out of school and are often then confined to the home. Girls also move, although generally temporarily, to their extended family or acquaintances in the TFG controlled areas.

Fleeing to Kenya or another part of Somalia is often the only choice families have to protect their daughters. [...]

Impact of the humanitarian situation on children

➤ [UNICEF, The situation of Women and Children in Somalia, undated current webpage \(accessed 01/12/2012\)](#)

[...] Women and children in Somalia are at increased risk of disease and malnutrition, face limited access to basic services, and routinely experience human rights violations. [...]

The child and maternal mortality rates for Somalia are amongst the highest in the world; one out of every ten Somali children dies before their first birthday. While comprehensive information is not available, it is

believed that leading causes of infant and child mortality are illnesses such as pneumonia (24 per cent), diarrhoea (19 per cent), and measles (12 per cent), as well as neonatal disorders (17 per cent). [...]

Somalia has some of the highest malnutrition rates in the world. Young children suffer repeated illness, especially diarrhoea, and have poor feeding and home management practices. Children and women have poor access to quality food as a result of conflict, displacement drought, flooding. Nationwide some 236,000 children under the age of five are malnourished (September 2012), more than two thirds of them in the south where conflict and restricted humanitarian access combine to create some of the highest child mortality rates anywhere.

Survey data suggests that even in years of improved food production and relative stability, rates of acute and chronic malnutrition remain high in certain regions, indicating that other underlying causes play a significant role. [...]

- [UNHCR, Somalia Fact Sheet - November 2012, 26/11/2012](#)
[...] One in three Somalis is in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and one in every three children living in the South-Central region is malnourished. [...]
- [MSF, MSF nutritional assessment in camps reveals alarming malnutrition rates, 20/11/2012](#)
[...] One in four children living in camps on the edge of the Somali capital are malnourished, according to an assessment conducted by the international medical organisation Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF). In response to the critical situation, a team from MSF launched an emergency three-day intervention to provide urgent nutritional treatment and on-site medical care to children under the age of five.
MSF medical staff visited 34 camps hosting more than 15,000 displaced people living with insufficient access to healthcare. Many have suffered multiple displacements and are extremely vulnerable.
Over three days, 1,500 children were screened for acute malnutrition and 396 were admitted to MSF's nutritional programme, 70 of them with severe acute malnutrition. [...]
- [IRIN, A snapshot of humanitarian challenges, 07/11/2012](#)
[...] Child mortality: Somalia ranks first in the world in under-five mortality, according to the UN Children's Fund's (UNICEF) 2012 State of the World's Children report. Children face poor healthcare coverage and quality, low immunization rates, high levels of malnutrition and frequent disease outbreaks. [...]
According to UNICEF, an estimated 27 percent of Somalia's population (or about 2 million people), half of whom are children, remain in a state of humanitarian crisis. [...]
- [Refugees International, Gatekeepers and Evictions: Somalia's Displaced Population at Risk, 01/11/2012](#)
[...] Though some camps are in better condition than others, the majority of IDPs live in dismal, slum-like settlements. All across Mogadishu, makeshift shelters constructed of twigs and sheets are crammed together only a few feet apart.
Children play in areas strewn with debris and garbage. Through July, the UN Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) had raised about half a billion dollars for emergency relief throughout Somalia in 2012. Unfortunately, despite security improvements, there remain major challenges to delivering that relief in Mogadishu. [...]
- [IRIN News, Food insecurity still a problem, 16/10/2012](#)
[...] Most vulnerable
Many regions are facing severe water and food shortages, with children and pregnant women the most vulnerable, according to Oxfam. "Of the families surveyed, almost 50 percent had experienced a recent death in the family, and of those deaths almost 60 percent were pregnancy-related or of pregnant women," Alun McDonald, Oxfam's media and communications officer for the Horn, East and Central Africa region, told IRIN in an e-mail, adding that more analysis is needed to determine why this number is so high. "The figure is clearly very concerning, and from the survey it seems linked to the lack of health facilities in some areas," he said. "Anaemia, hypertension and excessive loss of blood during pregnancy were all mentioned as major problems for pregnant women - which could all be dealt with if there were adequate health services."

Health facilities are insufficient in southern regions such as Bakool, Gedo, Mudug, Middle Shabelle and Lower Juba. According to a 26 September Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit - Somalia (FSNAU) report, an estimated 236,000 Somali children are acutely malnourished and in need of specialized nutrition treatment. Among them, 54,000 are severely malnourished, requiring immediate life-saving interventions. Seventy percent are from the southern regions, where vital basic services are not easily accessible. This still represents a drop from August 2011, when an estimated 450,000 children were acutely malnourished. Despite the declining trend, FSNAU warned that "life-saving humanitarian assistance remains crucial between now and December 2012."

At Oxfam's feeding centres in Mogadishu - which is not the worst affected area - some 3,000 children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and 5,000 with global acute malnutrition (GAM) are treated per month, said McDonald. GAM refers to the total rate of acute malnutrition in a given population, while SAM is a sub-category of GAM. SAM is life threatening. [...]

➤ [United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations support to end human rights abuses and combat impunity in Somalia; Report of the Secretary-General, 21/09/2012](#)

[...] 17. Somalia has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Years of conflict have resulted in the destruction of virtually all basic facilities, such as referral hospitals and maternal and child health facilities and services. Al-Shabaab has reportedly also destroyed water wells and other related facilities. [...]

➤ [UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia \[S/2012/643\], 22/08/2012](#)

[...] 52. The humanitarian situation in Somalia remains critical, with 3.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and essential livelihood support. Mortality and malnutrition rates continued to improve in the second quarter, but remain among the highest in the world. One in five Somali children under the age of 5 is acutely malnourished. [...]

➤ [UNICEF, Horn of Africa crisis one year on – famine reversed, countless lives saved, but situation of millions of women and children still grave, 20/07/2012](#)

[...] A year ago today, the crisis in the Horn of Africa reached boiling point when the United Nations declared famine in two regions of southern Somalia. The extraordinary international support, coupled with favourable rains, helped save countless lives and reverse the famine. However, the crisis is far from over. Eight million people across Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya are still in need of humanitarian assistance. Children, in particular, are threatened by a combination of poverty, insecurity, malnutrition, and disease. "While our life-saving interventions and supplies reached millions of children and their families, many could not be reached and remain extremely vulnerable," said UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, Elhadj As Sy. "This was, and continues to be a children's emergency. We must continue to provide emergency assistance where needed, but must also work more closely with communities to boost their capacities against future shocks." [...]

With a third of the population, or 2.5 million, still in need of emergency assistance, Somalia remains the worst affected country. In some regions of the South, one in five children is suffering from life-threatening acute malnutrition. [...]

➤ [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia; Issue 06; 25 April- 04 May 2012, 03/05/2012](#)

[...] The Protection Cluster working group is also concerned over reports of increases in the abandonment of children in IDP settlements and children living on the streets in towns. [...]

➤ [WHO, Child Health in Somalia: Situation Assessment, 09/03/2012](#)

[...] Executive Summary

[...] The last three decades of armed conflicts, lack of functioning government, economic collapse, and disintegration of the health system and other public services - together with recurrent droughts and famines - has turned Somalia into one of the world's most difficult environments for survival. This is bluntly reflected in the poor child health conditions, as twenty per cent of the children die before they reach the age of five, more than one third are underweight, and almost fifty per cent suffer from stunting. Child mortality and morbidity

The under-five mortality in Somalia is estimated at 200 deaths per 1,000 live births, which is one of the highest in the world. Approximately one third of these are neonatal deaths, occurring during the first

month of life, predominantly caused by birth complications and neonatal infections. The high neonatal mortality is at least partly maintained by the fact that ninety per cent of deliveries take place at home, without professionally skilled attendance or mandatory follow-up at a health care unit. Infections are the main cause of death during remaining infancy and childhood. Pneumonia and diarrhea are the main killers, each contributing to 20-25 per cent of all under-five mortality. Measles, albeit decreasing through vaccination catch-up campaigns, still accounts for five per cent of the under-five deaths. The high mortality rate as a consequence of infections and neonatal disorders are largely due to the synergistic effect of malnutrition. On the good side, the prevalence and mortality from malaria and HIV/AIDS are actually lower than elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Surveys reveal a generally high disease burden among Somali children, and malnutrition is over-represented among the sick. The main morbidities of Somali children largely follow the patterns for mortality. Data shows that under-fives most commonly seek health care for respiratory infections, followed by diarrhea, intestinal parasites, skin conditions, eye infections and anemia.

Main determinants for child disease and mortality

The most important determinant for morbidity and mortality of Somali children is undoubtedly the huge prevalence of malnutrition, including deficiency of important nutrients or insufficient breastfeeding. Malnutrition is the underlying cause of up to fifty per cent of all under-five mortality – making otherwise benign conditions fatal. The extent of malnutrition varies over time but current stable figures show that almost half of the Somali children are either underweight and/or stunted. Recent screening has shown that 60 per cent of the under-fives are anemic, mainly due to iron deficiency, and almost 40 per cent lack sufficient levels of vitamin A, causing impaired immune function and increased susceptibility to infections. In contrast to the universal recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding the first six months of life, more than ninety per cent of Somali mothers introduce alternatives - such as sugar water, tea or formula (prepared with unsafe water) at this stage, causing early onset of diarrhea, subsequent malnutrition and increased risk of mortality.

Only one third of Somalis have access to an improved water source. The availability and use of an appropriate sanitary facility is equally low and the overwhelming majority of Somalis practices open defecation. Poor Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) standards and practices strongly accelerate the spread of infectious diseases, particularly diarrhea and intestinal parasites. An estimated 90 per cent of under-five mortality from diarrhea is caused by inappropriate WASH conditions, and even simple improvements, such as hand washing with soap, could make a big positive difference.

Other determinants of child mortality are widespread poverty, a poorly functioning health system, low level of education, and the ongoing conflict with all the insecurity and hardships that it brings. Approximately 40 per cent of the population lives in extreme poverty, and economic hardships have worsened with galloping inflation and elevated prices for food, fuel and transports. Only one of four school-aged children attend primary school and less than 40 per cent of the adults are literate. For young adults that figure is even lower, due to the last decades deterioration of the educational system. The low level of education and knowledge not only counterfeits child survival, but it is also a huge problem for the health system in itself, as there is a severe lack of trained health professionals. In fact, more than half of the Somali health work force does not have any formal medical education or training.

Socio-cultural and traditional aspects also add to the high level of morbidity and mortality. There is a generally low propensity to seek conventional health care and in rural areas there is often a preference for traditional healers with potentially harmful practices. Gender inequalities often put the mother's, and thereby also the children's, interests aside. Family planning and deliberate birth spacing is literally non-existing, making the fertility rate of Somali women one of the highest in the world. Every child is therefore facing fierce competition for the already scarce resources and its own survival. The high proportion of home deliveries is not only caused by lack of better alternatives, but also by a cultural preference for giving birth in the family nest. Female genital mutilation is a deeply rooted and widespread cultural practice, endangering both the immediate health of the young girls and their future pregnancies and deliveries. [...]

Juvenile justice

- [United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations support to end human rights abuses and combat impunity in Somalia; Report of the Secretary-General, 21/09/2012](#)

[...] 56. In Mogadishu, the Human Rights Unit has conducted monitoring visits to Mogadishu Central Prison. At the time of the most recent visit, the facility hosted a population of nearly 800 inmates, including 32 children (20 of them detained for conflict-related offences) and 12 women (five for conflict-related offences). The Unit also participated in the assessment of Mogadishu Central Prison, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, UNODC and UNICEF. According to information provided by the Ministry of the Interior, 80 per cent of all detainees fall under the jurisdiction of military courts, which raises questions about judicial guarantees. Most inmates sentenced to death or life imprisonment are not granted affordable access to legal counsel. The Unit also investigated cases of women and girls detained for disobedience to their parents, which is not a punishable offence under Somali law. The release of two of these female inmates was obtained through a habeas corpus procedure. [...]
- [UNOCA, Humanitarian Bulletin Eastern Africa Issue 13; 17 - 31 August 2012, 31/08/2012](#)

[...] Renewed Protection Concerns in South Central Somalia
[...] The Protection Cluster received unconfirmed reports of continued arrests and detentions of children/youth allegedly associated with Al Shabaab in areas recently taken over by TFG / AMISOM forces. [...]
- [UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia, Shamsul Bari \[A/HRC/21/61\], 22/08/2012](#)

[...] 33. The Independent Expert conveyed his dismay to the Minister for Justice that, despite his earlier calls, both young girls and boys were still being put in jail for disobedience to their parents. The Minister acknowledged that secular tradition and customary practices would not disappear overnight; however, since the inception of the current regime in 2010, efforts had been made to adopt and apply a juvenile law. As a result of awareness-raising campaigns for parents, the number of cases had dropped significantly. He added that the Government had established a special section for the rehabilitation of children within the Ministry of Justice to deal with children in conflict with the law. [...]

74. The situation of juveniles in detention centres in Somaliland remained a matter of concern. An assessment conducted in August 2011 by the Ministry of Justice of Somaliland found that, of a total of 104 children in prison at the time, 10 per cent were female. A total of 59 per cent of all children in prisons were convicted by courts mainly for rape, drug possession and gang-related offences, as well as for other minor offences, while the remaining 41 per cent were on remand. The assessment concluded that the juvenile justice law, which called for the establishment of children's courts, pretrial detention centres and rehabilitation centres remained unimplemented. [...]
- [UNOCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin Issue 8 16 - 30 May 2012, 30/05/2012](#)

[...] Displacement raises fear of a rise in cholera
The displacement of thousands of people from the Afgooye corridor is leading to even greater pressure on limited sanitation facilities and access to clean water. WHO warned that further population displacement could accelerate the spread of suspected cholera in Banadir. Rising cholera cases in Mogadishu is indeed a key challenge for the WASH and Health Clusters in the capital. Twice as many cases were reported in 2012 compared to 2011 over the same reporting period. In 2012, during week 20 (19-25 May), there were 333 cases compared to 140 cases in 2011. The number of deaths is also higher this year, raising concern over the disease's severity and effective case management. Of the 333 confirmed cases, 220 were children under 5 years of age while 130 were women and girls. [...]
- [U.S. State Department, Country report on human rights practices 2011: Somalia, 24/05/2012](#)

[...] In prisons and detention centers, juveniles frequently were held with adults. Female prisoners were separated from males. Pretrial detainees were often not separated from convicted prisoners, particularly in the south and central regions. The incarceration of juveniles at the request of families who wanted their children disciplined continued to be a problem. [...] The practice of "asi walid," a custom whereby parents placed their children in prison for disciplinary purposes and without any legal procedure, continued. Many of these juveniles were incarcerated with adults. [...]

Useful sources to consult on the security situation in Somalia

Source	Type of source	Website's search function
AlertNet Somalia pages	Humanitarian news site from Thomson Reuters providing information on natural disasters, conflicts, refugees, hunger, diseases and climate change. Country pages include sections on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At a Glance ○ In detail ○ Timeline ○ Links ○ News 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country page ● Advanced search function which allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keyword search ○ Searches limited by source; content partner; aid agency; country; topic; sub-topic; crisis and by time frame ○ Search results can be organised by date
All Africa Somalia pages	Repository of news articles organised by country and by theme. Country pages include sections on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Headlines ○ Topical focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country page does not have a search function ● All Africa has a simple search function which allows for Keyword searches only, but does order search results in date order (recent first)
International Crisis Group, Somalia page	The ICG is a leading independent NGO recognised as a source of analysis and advice to governments and intergovernmental bodies such as the UN on the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict. It publishes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thematic reports ○ Crisis watch (a monthly bulletin which briefly summarises developments in situations of current or potential conflict, including on Somalia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple search function which allows for keyword and BOOLEAN searches (AND, OR, NOT) and searches for phrases ("...") only (cannot order search results by date)
OHCHR Somalia Country page	Key documents Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security Council Resolutions ○ Reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council ○ Country visits by Special Procedures ○ News archives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advanced search function which allows for searches by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phrase; ALL words; ANY words ○ Limits search by categories and date range
Relief Web Somalia country page	Relief Web is a database of reports from international and non-governmental organizations, governments, research institutions and the media for news, reports, press releases, appeals, policy documents, analysis and maps related to humanitarian emergencies worldwide. Provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-depth profiles, updates and reports on countries and disasters ○ Maps ○ Database of who's reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country and thematic pages ● Advanced search function which allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BOOLEAN searches (AND, OR, NOT) ○ Searches for phrases ("...") <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limits searches by: Country; source; theme; content format; feature; disaster type; vulnerable groups; published date (by month); language
Shabelle News	Shabelle News is a privately owned radio and news organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Under tab 'Archive' you can search per year, month and date
Somalia Report	Somalia Report is a privately funded, non-partisan website that hires Western editors to work with Somali journalists inside the country to cover all aspects of the region: piracy, conflict, terrorism, government, local news, culture and key issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple search function which allows for Keyword searches only, but does order search results in date order (recent first)

<p>UN News Centre Focus: Horn of Africa Crisis</p>	<p>Provides news and key UN resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Latest developments ○ Maps of the region ○ Statement from the UN Secretary General; Security Council; General Assembly ○ Aid/development: UN Agencies & Programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country page does not have a search function ● UN News Centre has an advanced search function which allows for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 distinct key word/set phrases ○ Searches within time frames ○ Searches limited by subject
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Useful sources to consult on the humanitarian situation in Somalia

Source	Type of source	Website's search function
AlertNet Somalia pages	Humanitarian news site from Thomson Reuters providing information on natural disasters, conflicts, refugees, hunger, diseases and climate change. Country pages include sections on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At a Glance ○ In detail ○ Timeline ○ Links ○ News 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country page ● Advanced search function which allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keyword search ○ Searches limited by source; content partner; aid agency; country; topic; sub-topic; crisis and by time frame ○ Search results can be organised by date
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) Somalia country page	The IDMC is an international body which monitors conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide. Its country pages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statistics ○ Maps ○ Internal Displacement Profile ○ IDP News alert ○ Key documents; news and reports from other organisations on the situation and treatment of IDPs and returnees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country and thematic pages ● Advanced search function which allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BOOLEAN searches (AND, OR, NOT) ○ Searches for phrases (“...”) ○ It is not possible to search within particular time frames
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Somalia news	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The ICRC focus in Somalia is on providing emergency aid and relief operations, concentrating its operational presence where armed clashes are recurrent and essential services are non-existent. It provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reference Documents ○ Latest News ○ Annual report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country pages ● Simple search function which allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ keyword searches ○ organises search results by relevance and date
IRIN News Somalia Country page	A service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. It provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Humanitarian news and analysis by country and theme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country and thematic pages ● Advanced search function which allows for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keyword searches (Exact Wording; All the Words; Any Words) ○ Limits searches by Services; Country; Theme; Report Type ○ Searches within time frames (From: To)
Oxfam, Somalia/Somaliland pages	Oxfam is an international NGO. Its country pages provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conflict ○ Drought ○ Oxfam's work in Somalia/Somaliland in depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Search Oxfam publications by country ● searches can be limited by subject, publication type and date
Relief Web Somalia country page	Relief Web is a database of reports from international and non-governmental organizations, governments, research institutions and the media for news, reports, press releases, appeals, policy documents, analysis and maps related to humanitarian emergencies worldwide. It provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-depth profiles, updates and reports on countries and disasters ○ Maps ○ Database of who's reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country and thematic pages ● Advanced search function which allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BOOLEAN searches (AND, OR, NOT) ○ Searches for phrases (“...”) ➤ Limits searches by: Country; source; theme; content format; feature; disaster type;

		vulnerable groups; published date (by month); language
UNHCR Somalia country page	<p>UNHCR country pages provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statistical snapshot ○ Latest news ○ UNHCR fundraising reports ○ Background, analysis and policy ○ Statistics ○ Maps, including Population Movement Tracking Dashboards and an interactive map of UNHCR's operations in Somalia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country page does not have a search function ● UNHCR home page has an advanced search function which allows for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BOOLEAN searches (AND, OR, NOT, ALL) ○ Keyword by title ○ Limits searches by category, country of origin, country of asylum ○ Searches within time frames
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Somalia pages	<p>Provides the latest news, studies, reports and assessments relevant to humanitarian and development issues in Somalia. It includes information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weekly Situation reports ○ Humanitarian monthly overviews ○ Monthly access reports ○ Thematic and reference maps ○ Clusters on: Agriculture & Livelihood; Health; Education; Food Aid; Protection; Water & Sanitation; Nutrition; Logistics; Shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country pages ● Simple search function which allows for keyword searches only
World Food Programme (WFP), The Market Monitor	<p>This bulletin provides information on price changes for the most commonly consumed staples and their potential impacts on the cost of the basic food basket</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Published quarterly

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