

## Query response

### **Somalia: The settlements in Mogadishu**

- Who lives in the settlements in Mogadishu?
- To what degree is a family network in Mogadishu decisive as to whether a person ends up in a settlement?

#### **Introduction**

A significant proportion of the population in Mogadishu, including internally displaced people,<sup>1</sup> live in so-called settlements. The settlements are not homogenous, but are often areas characterized by a lack of infrastructure and where residents have few rights connected to utilization of land (see for example UNHCR 2016, p. 34-39).

The sources Landinfo met during an information gathering mission to Mogadishu in January 2016,<sup>2</sup> agreed that it was difficult to quantify how many people live in the settlements.<sup>3</sup> A study conducted by UNHCR, Somali authorities and various non-governmental organisations (hereafter called the UNHCR study), estimates that in September and October 2015 there were 464,486 people in 80,657 separate households in 486 settlements in Mogadishu (UNHCR 2016, p. 13 and 18). According to an estimate prepared by the UN Population Fund and Somali authorities, approximately 1.65 million people, again including internally displaced people, in the city (UNFPA 2014, p. 31).<sup>4</sup> This means that

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<sup>1</sup> In the UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (OCHA 2004, p. 1) internally displaced people are defined as people who have lost their homes due to armed conflict, widespread violence, breaches of human rights or catastrophes, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border.

<sup>2</sup> This query response is based on information obtained during an information gathering mission to Mogadishu in January 2016. Landinfo did not visit the settlements itself during this trip, however it did have discussions with a number of representatives of local and international organisations working in the settlements, as well as local resource people (see reference list). The sources are anonymised due to their work situation and/or safety.

<sup>3</sup> Source A explained that many people seek out the settlements to obtain assistance from aid organisations without actually living there. The source gave an example of this by explaining that there may be ninety households in a settlement early in the morning but 400 when assistance is distributed. A number of other parties may also be interested in overstating the number of residents to obtain resources (Drumatra 2014, p. 10; Bryld, Kamau & Sinigallia 2013, p. 36).

<sup>4</sup> No one knows with certainty how many people live in Mogadishu.

approximately 30 % of Mogadishu's population lives in the settlements. The settlements are dispersed throughout Mogadishu,<sup>5</sup> however the majority are localised in the outlying city districts of Daynile and Kahda<sup>6</sup> (UNHCR 2016, p. 21).

### **The population in the settlements: background, gender and age**

The settlements are often referred to as “settlements for internally displaced people”, however this is misleading. The UNHCR study estimates that 85 % of the residents in the settlements are internally displaced people (UNHCR 2016, p. 18). The sources Landinfo met during the trip to Mogadishu in January 2016 also agreed that people who lived in the settlements have different backgrounds. Nor is it the case that internally displaced people necessarily end up in the settlements. According to the aforementioned study, 6 % of the population in the settlements can be classified as economic migrants (from Somalia), while 5 % are referred to as people from Mogadishu who have never left their home area. It is further estimated in the study that 1 % of the residents in the settlements are returned refugees. A further 1 % is estimated to be refugees from Ethiopia, Yemen and other countries.

Both sources A and B stressed that it can be very difficult to differentiate internally displaced people from other groups, including economic migrants. Sources A and C explained that many wrongfully claim to be internally displaced to obtain assistance from humanitarian organisations.

Source A also emphasized that the reason as for why people end up in a settlement and the reason why they remain in the settlement are not necessarily the same. The source explained that many internally displaced people adapt to life in the settlements and choose not to return to their place of origin. According to source A, it is also not unusual for households to move between the settlements and their homes to farm the land. This is corroborated by the UNHCR study, which found that approximately 15 % of internally displaced people wish to remain in the settlements due to the potential for work, assistance from humanitarian organisations and other services available in Mogadishu (UNHCR 2016, p. 44-45).<sup>7</sup>

According to sources A and B, the majority of residents in the settlements are from the traditionally agricultural Digil and Rahanweyn clans. However, Darod, Hawiye and other clans are also represented. The UNHCR study provides no direct information on the clan affiliation of the residents. The study demonstrates, however, that the majority of the

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<sup>5</sup> The following map from REACH provides an overview of the settlements:

[http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/system/files/resource-documents/reach\\_som\\_map\\_mogadishu\\_reference\\_map\\_05nov2015\\_a0.pdf](http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/system/files/resource-documents/reach_som_map_mogadishu_reference_map_05nov2015_a0.pdf) [downloaded 3 October 2016].

<sup>6</sup> Kahda is a relatively new district. It lies north of Dharkenley district on the western side of Afgooye Road, the road which connects Mogadishu with the neighbouring town of Afgooye.

<sup>7</sup> According to the study, 47 % of internally displaced people wish to remain. 13 % of these give their reason as work, while 9 % state humanitarian assistance. A further 9 % cite “good public services”. The latter response category is somewhat peculiar, as there are hardly any public services in Mogadishu. Education, health and other services are primarily private or run by aid organisations. “Good public services” probably refers to the opportunities and services that are generally available in Mogadishu.

internally displaced people in the settlements originate from the traditional home areas of the Digil and Rahanweyn clans (UNHCR 2016, p. 24-25).<sup>8</sup>

Sources D and E also stated that people deported from Saudi Arabia have taken up residence in the settlements.<sup>9</sup>

Both source A and source B were of the opinion that more women than men live in the settlements. However, the UNHCR study indicates an equal distribution by gender. The study further estimates that approximately 60 % of the people in the settlements are under 17 years of age (UNHCR 2016, p. 23).

### **What determines whether a person ends up in a settlement?**

Sources A, C, E, F and G believed that neither clan affiliation nor place of origin is decisive as to whether a person ends up in a settlement. The vital factor is whether the person in question has the means to obtain a residence and live outside of the settlements. This can be made possible through a person's own income or through help from relatives inside or outside of Somalia.<sup>10</sup> The family network in Mogadishu is thus not necessarily key to whether a person can establish himself or herself outside of the settlements or whether he or she ends up in a settlement.

Undoubtedly, kinship (clan) has great significance in Somalia, and Somalis generally try very hard to help relatives. Also sources C, E, F and G emphasized that the willingness to help relatives normally is there, both on the paternal and maternal sides. However, the sources explained that lack of resources can limit the ability to help. In this regard, the sources pointed out that a major proportion of the population in Mogadishu and Somalia are generally very poor, and hence it is not a given that all people have the resources to allow relatives to live with them or to provide financial support over time. Source E stated that even people from Mogadishu with affiliation to the Hawiye clans, which dominate the city, live in the settlements. The sources could not provide additional information about their background, but emphasized that their number is limited. Source F claimed that help over time is given primarily to "immediate family". "Immediate family" is here not tantamount to the Western nuclear family consisting of mother, father and child(ren). In Somalia, where women on average give birth to six children (World Bank 2014), it is common to have close bonds also with grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and more distant relatives (see for example Hellander 1989).<sup>11</sup>

For many households in Somalia money transfers from relatives abroad (remittances) are important for being able to manage financially. Several studies indicate that people who live

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<sup>8</sup> The investigation found that 42 % of the internally displaced people in the settlements come from Lower Shabelle, while 27 % come from Bay.

<sup>9</sup> Deportation from Saudi Arabia is discussed in greater detail in a query response from Landinfo of 22 May 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Living costs and the opportunity to obtain work are described in Landinfo's report on social and economic conditions in Mogadishu of 1 April 2016.

<sup>11</sup> This is also evident from conversations Landinfo has had with various Somali sources during fact finding missions and on other occasions throughout the years. In this context it is also worth noting that Somalis use kinship terms like brother/sister, cousin and uncle/aunt also about relatives.

in the settlements receive fewer money transfers than people who live outside the settlements. A study conducted by the organisation Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit, showed that only 5 % of the households in the settlements for internally displaced people in Mogadishu received money transfers from abroad in the time period from January to June 2015, and that on average they received approximately 14 US dollars per month (FSNAU 2015, p. 5-6). Another study by the organisation Building Resilient Communities in Somalia found that a somewhat lower proportion, approximately 2 %, of households among vulnerable groups including internally displaced people in Mogadishu, received money transfers from relatives abroad (BRCiS 2015, p. 57). Comparatively, a previous study by FSNAU found that 41 % of households in Puntland and Somaliland, i.e. population groups that primarily live outside of settlements, received transfers from relatives abroad (FSNAU 2013, p. 13). This does not only support the assessment that it is people with insufficient means who end up in the settlements, but also indicates that members of the Digil and Rahanweyn clans, which constitute the majority of residents in the settlements, have less resources and fewer relatives abroad than members of the other large Somali clans Darod, Hawiye, Dir and Issak.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Lack of resources also reduces the ability to migrate abroad (Haan & Yacub 2009, p. 5-6).

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### Oral sources

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- Source C, representative of an international aid organisation, meeting in Mogadishu, 20 January 2016.
- Source D, representative of an international aid organisation, meeting in Nairobi, 18 January 2016.
- Source E, local resource person, meeting in Mogadishu, 19 January 2016.
- Source F, representative of an international aid organisation, meeting in Mogadishu, 20 January 2016.
- Source G, local resource person, meeting in Mogadishu, 21 January 2016.

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