

# ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING IN SOMALIA

INTEGRATED  
CLIMATE AND  
CONFLICT ANALYSIS  
OF THE NEWLY  
LIBERATED AREAS  
OF HIRSHABELLE  
AND GALMUDUG

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# Executive Summary

*This integrated climate and conflict analysis of the Newly Liberated Areas of Hirshabelle and Galmudug is part of the “Environmental Peacemaking Project in Somalia” led by the European Institute of Peace (EIP) with support from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) of the Federal Republic of Somalia and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From August 2023 to March 2024, the European Institute of Peace conducted an integrated climate and conflict analysis in the Newly Liberated Areas of Somalia, which is described in this report.*

*The main objective of this analysis is to assess both the short and long-term impacts of environment- and climate-related security risks in the NLA and to develop actionable recommendations for environmental peacemaking. These recommendations aim to support the development of actionable strategies, contribute to conflict resolution and prevention, enhance climate resilience, and foster lasting peace in the NLA.*

*The analysis draws from a mixed methodology, combining:*

- 1 – a comprehensive review of academic literature, regulatory frameworks, and past and existing initiatives that integrate climate adaptation and conflict prevention;*
  - 2 – a series of expert consultations with development and humanitarian practitioners, local and federal government stakeholders, and researchers; and*
  - 3 – the organisation of a wider consultation workshop held on Mogadishu, bringing together local and federal government stakeholders across relevant sectors.*
-

## MAIN FINDINGS

**The integrated analysis reveals linkages between climate risks and the underlying conflict drivers in the Newly Liberated Areas of Hirshabelle and Galmudug.** While climate change should not be considered a direct root cause of conflict, climate-induced impacts such as prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, flooding, and other extreme weather events exacerbate resource scarcity, disrupt livelihoods, and heighten competition among communities over diminishing natural resources, primarily land, water, and pastures for livestock grazing and agriculture. These socioeconomic impacts affect all parties to conflicts in the NLA, contributing to unrest and violence even after Al-Shabaab's departure. As climate and security risks collide in the NLA, they generate additional challenges to building lasting peace between communities, as well as opportunities to foster cohesion and strengthen state presence.

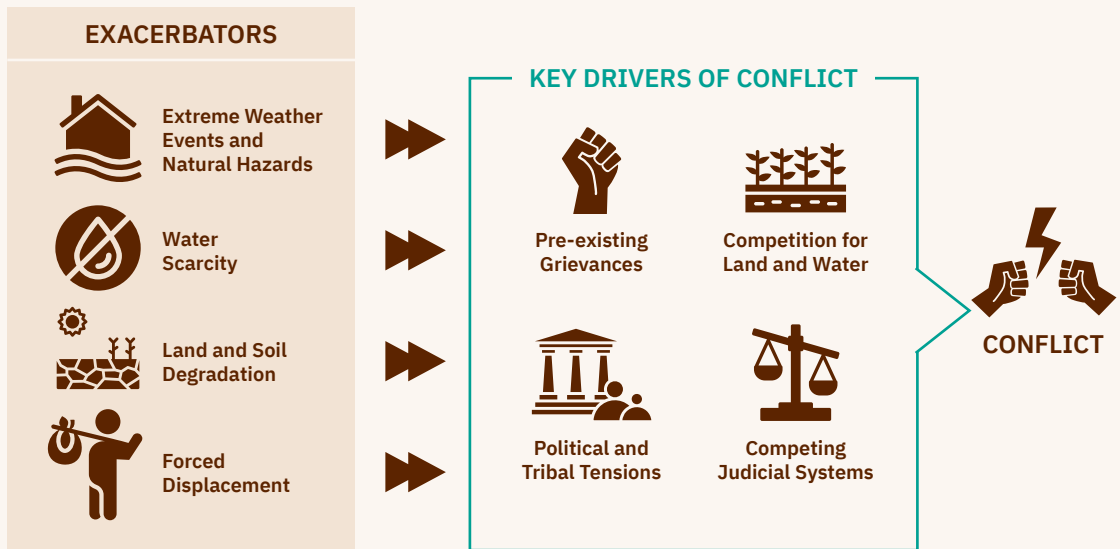
**For environmental peacemaking initiatives to effectively address climate security risks and contribute to lasting peace in the NLA, it is crucial to implement comprehensive strategies that not only focus on immediate conflict resolution and relief but also on long-term resilience and reconciliation.** In particular, initiatives enhancing access and sustainable resource management, and incorporating robust dispute resolution mechanisms offer promising avenues for building trust and cohesion. These efforts should be supported by coherent cross-sectoral institutional frameworks and active participation from local communities, development and humanitarian stakeholders to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability.

**Building on these strategies, it is essential to identify key areas where climate and security risks intersect and to enhance dialogue among development, humanitarian, and government stakeholders.** To facilitate this process, the Institute's report illustrates the climate-conflict nexus through four key pathways, specifically designed to pinpoint areas where collaboration can yield cross-cutting climate resilience and peace benefits. While these pathways alone cannot fully encapsulate the complex interrelations between climate, environment, and conflict in the Newly Liberated Areas of Somalia, they effectively highlight how climate risks compound socioeconomic vulnerabilities, intercommunal tensions, and historical grievances, thereby amplifying the risk of conflict. These pathways aim to foster collaboration between relevant stakeholders and have been paramount in determining recommendations for environmental peacemaking initiatives during consultations and the Mogadishu workshop.

## PATHWAYS ILLUSTRATING THE CLIMATE-CONFLICT NEXUS

The report delineates the four following pathways through which climate risks exacerbate conflict drivers in the Newly Liberated Areas of Hirshabelle and Galmudug:

**Figure 1** – Key inter-related pathways in which climate-related factors influence conflict risk



**Pathway 1: Extreme weather events and natural hazards** such as droughts and floods destroy crops, deplete water reserves, and trigger population displacement, thereby intensifying competition over scarce resources and reigniting historical grievances between communities vying for survival.



**Pathway 2: Water scarcity**, exacerbated by aridity and climate change, strains critical water resources, disrupting traditional resource-sharing mechanisms and creating fertile ground for escalating clan tensions as communities compete for diminishing water access and pastoral rangelands.



**Pathway 3: Land and soil degradation** driven by factors such as drought, deforestation, overgrazing, and salinisation exacerbates resource scarcity and competition over land use, fuelling conflicts between groups like pastoralists and farmers.



**Pathway 4: Climate-induced displacement**, combined with pre-existing economic and social pressures, heightens resource pressures in areas receiving large influxes of displaced populations, increasing the potential for conflicts over land, housing, and public services, particularly in urban settings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the completion of this study and working in close collaboration with development, humanitarian and government stakeholders, the European Institute of Peace has developed a set of recommendations aiming to inform and support institutional and implementing partners at both local and national levels in implementing initiatives that provide dual benefits by promoting peace and enhancing resilience to climate change. Key recommendations outlined in the report include:

- *Fostering inclusive and decentralised governance* to restore trust in institutions during post-Al-Shabaab transition by empowering local communities in decision-making processes, strengthening collaboration between government institutions and traditional authorities, and ensuring equitable representation of all groups, including minority clans, women, and youth.
- *Conducting comprehensive assessments* through community consultations in the NLA of Galmudug and Hirshabelle to understand context-specific climate-security risks, prioritise initiatives, and address immediate needs like water access, sustainable resource management, and climate-resilient livelihoods.
- *Establishing and strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms*, such as inclusive water management committees and community-based dispute resolution councils, to prevent resource-based disputes from escalating into broader communal violence.
- *Restoring the legitimacy of formal and informal judicial systems* by promoting accessible, equitable, and enforceable justice mechanisms that command community trust and respect.
- *Developing proactive contingency plans* through local-level coordination to manage resource pressures during climate shocks, natural disasters, or other disruptions that may intensify conflict risks.
- *Investing in critical infrastructure* like roads, trade corridors, and coastal development to enhance economic integration, build resilience against shocks, and reduce incentives for armed groups to assert control over key resources and transit routes.
- *Implementing a strategic communication* that highlights government efforts to swiftly restore essential services, create economic opportunities, and foster community collaboration on identifying and implementing climate-resilient solutions for lasting peace and development.

Operationalising these recommendations hinges on extensive coordination between the FGS, FMS, local authorities, communities, and international partners. It also requires substantial financial and technical support from donors and implementing agencies to overcome operational barriers like limited access, strained resources, urgent timelines, and lingering security challenges posed by Al-Shabaab.

Ultimately, this report underscores that environmental peacemaking approaches are pivotal for fostering sustainable peace, security, and resilience in the fragile NLA of Somalia. Empowering communities, governing resources equitably, building robust institutions, and addressing the climate-related drivers of fragility and conflict can significantly enhance the prospects for achieving lasting peace and sustainable development through collaborative climate-security initiatives.



# INTRODUCTION

This integrated climate and conflict analysis of the Newly Liberated Areas of Hirshabelle and Galmudug is part of the “Environmental Peacemaking Project in Somalia” led by the European Institute of Peace (EIP) with support from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) of the Federal Republic of Somalia and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**This assessment provides a comprehensive conflict analysis of Hirshabelle and Galmudug after the counter-offensive of the Federal Government of Somalia against Al-Shabaab, integrating climate and environmental drivers of conflict.** The primary goal of this analysis is to assess the short and long-term impacts of environment- and climate-related security risks in the two federal states, to strengthen resilience building against conflict and climate through actionable recommendations for environmental peacemaking. These recommendations aim to contribute significantly to conflict resolution and prevention, stabilisation through enhanced climate resilience, and foster lasting peace in the NLA.

The findings presented in this report focus on the areas reclaimed from Al-Shabaab through the military initiative led by the Somali government since August 2022 (→ *Map 1*). The analysis draws from a mixed methodology, combining:

- (1) *a comprehensive review of academic literature*, regulatory frameworks, and past and existing initiatives that integrate climate adaptation and conflict prevention;
- (2) *a series of expert consultations* with development and humanitarian practitioners, local and federal government stakeholders, and researchers; and
- (3) *a wider consultation workshop* held in Mogadishu, bringing together local and federal government stakeholders across relevant sectors.

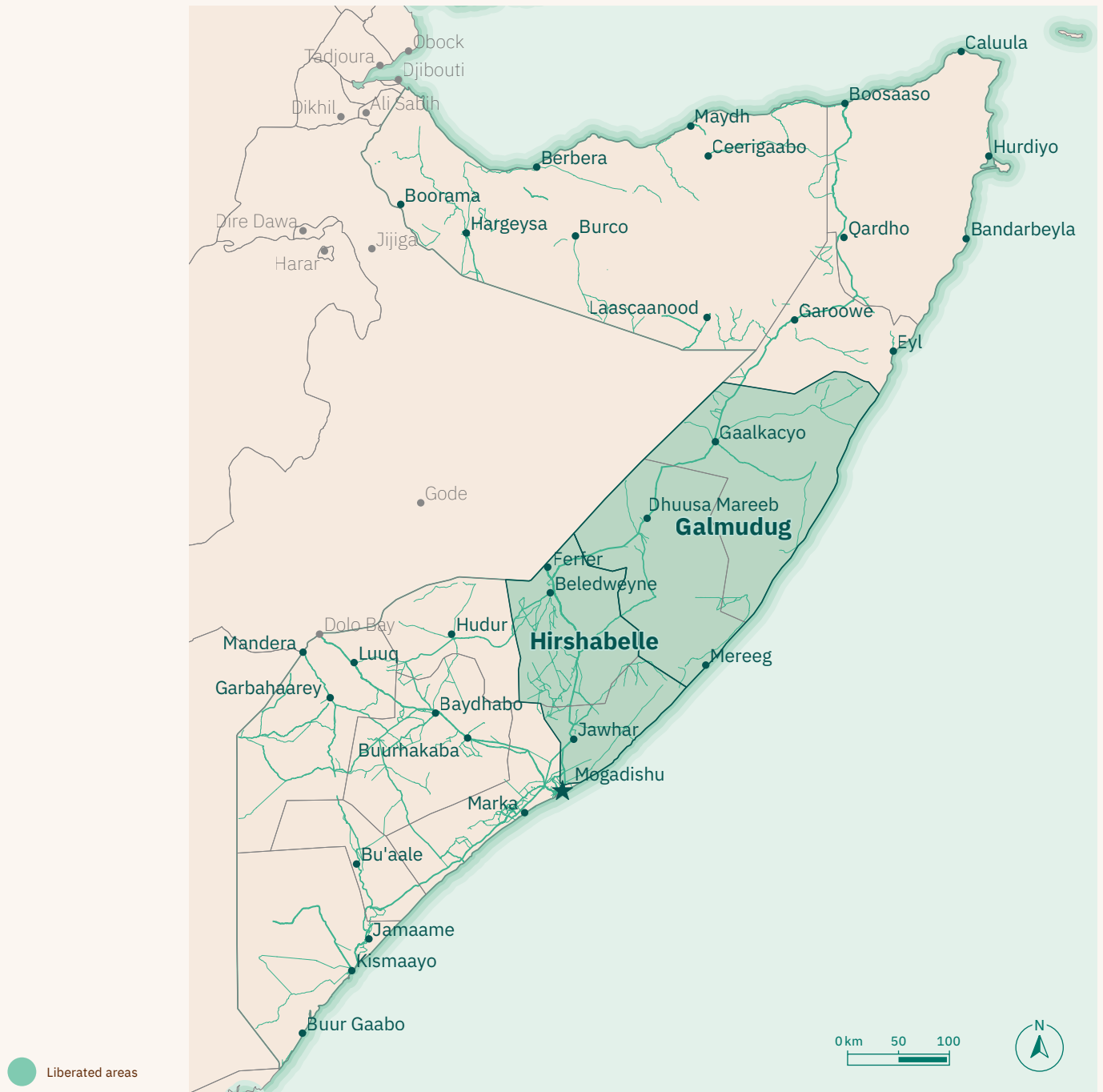
**The analysis has revealed close linkages between climate and conflict risks in the Newly Liberated Areas of Hirshabelle and Galmudug.**

Climate-induced impacts exacerbate tensions among communities, particularly in resource-related competitions such as land and water access. These impacts affect all parties involved in conflicts, contributing to persistent unrest even after Al-Shabaab’s departure. In these contexts, initiatives focusing on enhancing access and sustainable resource management, coupled with robust dispute resolution mechanisms, offer promising avenues for enhancing trust and community collaboration.

Following the completion of this study and working in close collaboration with consultation participants, the European Institute of Peace has developed a set of recommendations (→ *IV Recommendations and entry points for environmental peacemaking*). These recommendations aim to inform and support institutional and implementing partners at both local and national levels in implementing initiatives that provide dual benefits by promoting peace and enhancing resilience to climate change.

Given the volatile security situation in these federal states and the resulting operational challenges, this study has limitations that highlight the need for further analysis. The ongoing conflicts between government forces and Al-Shabaab, along with the dynamic context, create uncertainty about the precise number of liberated localities and the areas under each party’s control. Additionally, conflict hindered field access, preventing data collection from local populations to complement the methodology. Future efforts should prioritise such data collection to deepen understanding of the intersection between climate and conflict risks in local contexts. In this study, ‘Newly Liberated Areas’ (NLA) refers to localities liberated up to the time of the report’s writing.

**Map 1** – Newly Liberated Areas of Somalia in Hirshabelle and Galmudug (NLA). For this report, the areas of liberation are considered at the state level, without disaggregating the status of liberation of each district.





# CONFLICT DYNAMICS IN SOMALIA

## 2.1 — Sociopolitical drivers of conflict

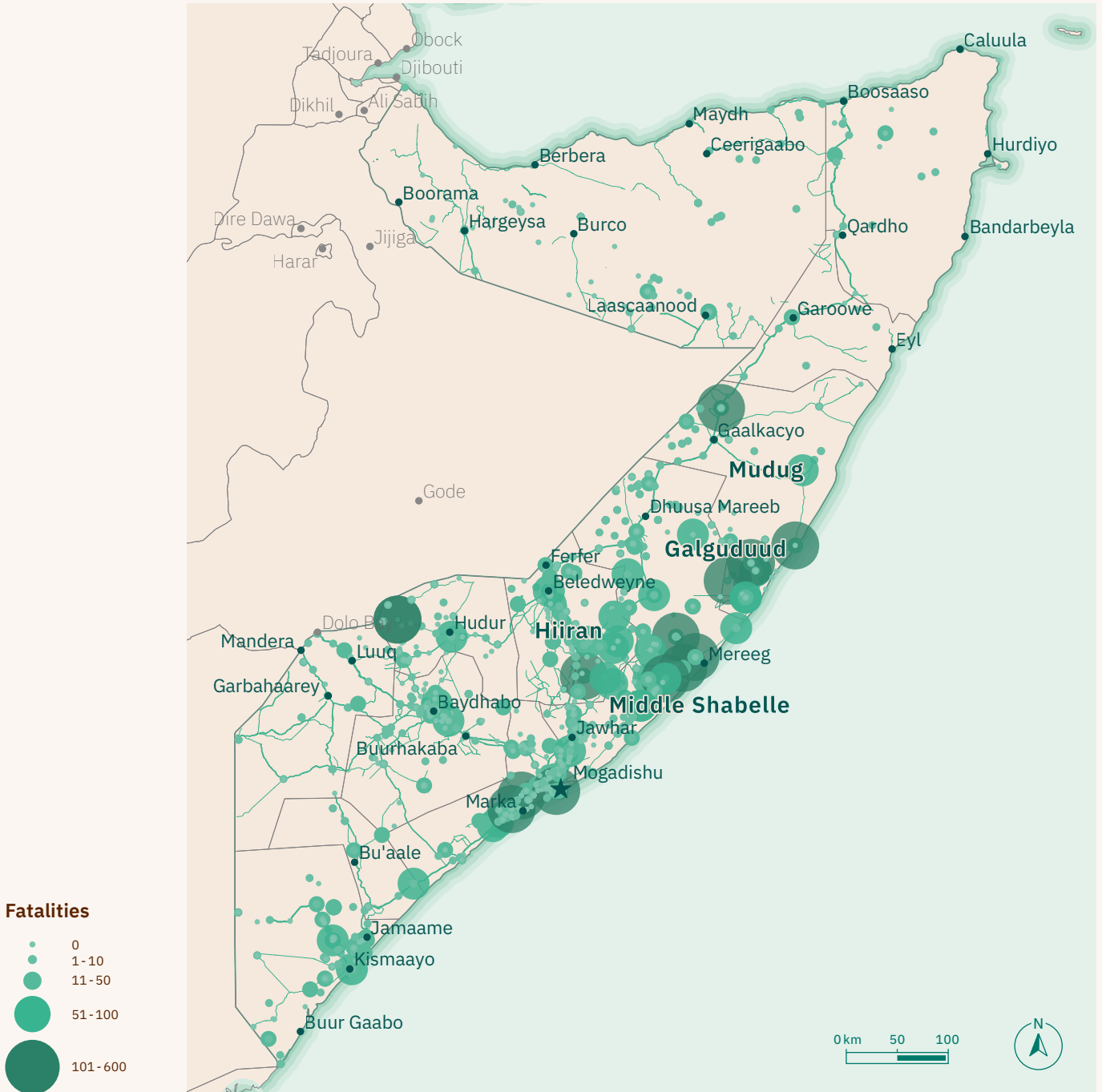
*Since 1991, Somalia has grappled with intricate and ever-shifting conflict dynamics characterised by political rivalries and inter-clan disputes. These conflicts predominantly stem from clannism and the absence of a universally embraced governance framework, spawning competing formal and informal systems for land ownership, resource access, and justice. This predicament stands to worsen as climate change and environmental degradation drive forced displacement and intensify the struggle for water, natural resources, and arable land.*

*In a context where conflict resolution mechanisms prove ineffectual and where interpersonal disputes tend to turn into clan-based conflicts and to perpetuate longstanding grievances, Al-Shabaab further complicates the context by playing on tensions between clans and between federated and federal states. Since August 2022, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and select clan militias have launched an offensive against Al-Shabaab, which is further modifying the delicate equilibrium among political stakeholders and clans in Galmudug and Hirshabelle (→ Map 2).*

*The following section provides a concise overview of the primary drivers of political and inter-clan conflicts and examines their influence on ongoing hostilities.*

**Map 2** – Conflict events in Somalia from August 2022 to May 2024. During this time frame, most fatalities have taken place in Hirshabelle and Galmudug.

Data from ACLED sourced 17 May 2024.



## 2.1.1 — POLITICS

### *Competing state authorities*

A deep mistrust exists between the Federal Member States (FMS) and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) due to the absence of a formal delineation of each institution's mandates and disagreement regarding the extent of state federalisation integration<sup>1</sup>. The challenges in collaboration between the FGS and FMS result in significant fragmentation of institutional capacities across all domains<sup>2</sup>. This distrust is particularly pronounced in areas of natural resource governance and security, posing additional coordination challenges among actors in the offensive against Al-Shabaab<sup>3</sup>.

### *Al-Shabaab*

Al-Shabaab capitalises on political tensions and clan rivalries to infiltrate political and security institutions at both the federal and FMS levels<sup>4</sup>. The substantial involvement of the FGS in Galmudug and Hirshabelle as part of the ongoing offensive may offer Al-Shabaab an opportunity to incite opposition against the Federal Government once again<sup>5</sup>.

### *Local politics*

Local politicians occasionally manipulate inter-communal and land conflicts to further their political interests, with some actively financing such disputes or rallying support from their respective clans for this purpose. The mismanagement of natural resources and land is a pressing concern, perpetuating a perception of corruption among politicians who frequently exploit their political influence for personal and clan-based gains, often at the detriment of the broader community<sup>6</sup>.

### *Climate factors*

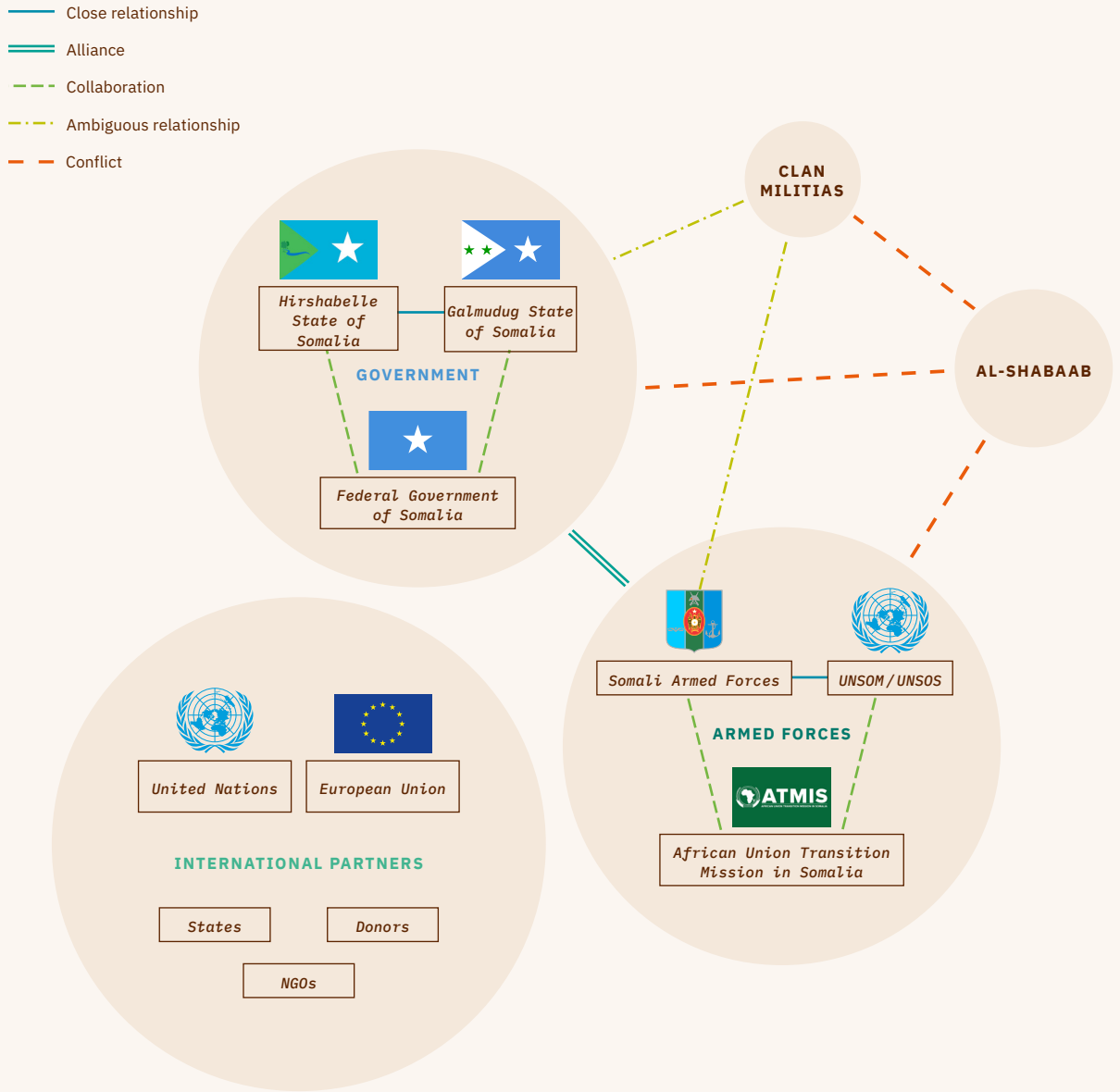
Conflicts, insecurity, and political tensions are exacerbated by the effects of climate change and extreme weather events, which intensify community tensions and socioeconomic vulnerabilities<sup>7</sup>. Over the years, severe droughts, in particular, have increased population pressure in the most resource-rich territories, notably those along the Juba and Shabelle rivers, fuelling conflicts between communities<sup>8</sup>. More recently, the increased rainfall caused by the El Niño phenomenon in the Horn of Africa led to significant floods at the end of 2023. Communities along the rivers were particularly affected, the same areas hosting numerous displaced populations, exacerbating vulnerability and competition for resources<sup>9</sup>.

### *International developments*

Somalia heavily relies on its international partners for imports, especially in agriculture, and in terms of official development assistance. Consequently, the country is extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in the international political and economic climate. The COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine have had a significant impact on the rising prices of agricultural commodities, compounded by below-average rainy seasons and crop failures in Somalia<sup>10</sup>. Foreign support also wields considerable influence on the political balance, with some foreign states providing specific security assistance to certain FMS at the expense of federal authority<sup>11</sup>.

**Figure 2** – Mapping of the main actors.

Source



## 2.1.2 — CLANS

### *Political representation*

Since the country's shift toward a parliamentary system, clans find representation within national political institutions, guided by the 4.5 system, which notably favours major clans (Darood, Dir/Isaaq, Hawiye, and Rahanweyn/Digil-Mirifle)<sup>12</sup>. Beyond constitutional formalities, federal, state, and local governance predominantly hinges upon informal arrangements among clans, closely aligned with territorial distribution and respective socio-political roles. These structures, both formal and informal, cultivate a pronounced sense of exclusion among minority clans across societal strata. The power dynamics between major clans and discontent among less privileged clans serve as fertile ground for the emergence and perpetuation of grievances, ultimately leading to conflicts.

### *Territorial conflicts*

While most clans remain historically associated with specific regions and socioeconomic or religious activities, demographic shifts and population movements can instigate conflicts by disrupting established balances<sup>13</sup>. The Central-South and the Benadir region in particular, have witnessed substantial immigration from other parts of the country over the past three decades<sup>14</sup>. Armed conflicts, food and water insecurity, and extreme climatic events exacerbate population displacement towards internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, consequently sparking conflicts with clans already established in these territories<sup>15</sup>. In these deteriorating conditions, conflicts typically ignite from heightened competition over resources and struggles for power<sup>16</sup>.

### *The «clanisation» of individual conflicts*

Most clan conflicts stem from individual disputes concerning land ownership, territorial boundary expansions, and livestock grazing on agricultural lands<sup>17</sup>. The failure to effectively and satisfactorily manage these individual disagreements esca-

lates them into clan conflicts, frequently involving armed militias. Such conflicts become increasingly common due to the influence of climate change and environmental degradation<sup>18</sup>.

### *Clan militias*

Conflicts involving clan militias consistently account for the most prevalent security incidents in Somalia, a trend further exacerbated by their participation in the campaign against Al-Shabaab<sup>19</sup>. These clashes may be driven by economic, religious, political, or territorial motivations and can result in long-standing enmities or enduring tensions<sup>20</sup>. Militia fighters typically are not professional soldiers but rather individuals involved in farming and pastoralism who take up arms to defend their clans' interests or seek revenge<sup>21</sup>. The FGS is considering providing clans with a more structured pathway into the security forces to mitigate the unpredictability of their behaviour<sup>22</sup>. Nonetheless, some clans may prefer to remain self-organised to safeguard their interests and deter interference from the federal state<sup>23</sup>.

### *Al-Shabaab and clan relations*

Relations between the clans and Al-Shabaab are ambiguous. Over time, the group succeeded in establishing clan and familial ties in the territories under its control, forging what ACAPS aptly described as "loyalties that are not easily broken"<sup>24</sup>. Al-Shabaab capitalises on tensions between clans or between clans and institutional bodies to sow discord and recruit fighters. Concurrently, Al-Shabaab's targeting of specific communities in attacks, the brutality of its practices, the implementation of an extortion system perceived as abusive, and the group's aspiration to supplant traditional law with Shari'ah have generated tensions with numerous clans. Nevertheless, the group continues to recruit, especially from clans harbouring grievances, such as the

### *Diaspora*

Through its investments and active participation in political dynamics, particularly in Mogadishu, the Somali diaspora also plays a key role in exacerbating or resolving conflicts<sup>26</sup>. Strongly influenced by clan affiliations, diaspora groups tend to get involved in conflicts in their regions of origin<sup>27</sup>. This involvement can either result in political, economic, and military support fuelling the conflict or in intermediation, skill-sharing, or fundraising that contributes to reconciliation efforts<sup>28</sup>. Given the diversity of contexts and diaspora profiles, it is not possible to make specific generalisations on their influence, however it should not be underestimated, including their role in supporting or opposing Al-Shabaab<sup>29</sup>.

### *In Hirshabelle and Galmudug*

In parallel with other regions of the country, a significant share of conflicts in Hirshabelle and Galmudug arises from disagreements related to land ownership, the exploitation of natural resources, and access to water. Two studies conducted by the Berghof Foundation further underscore the escalation of these tensions due to recent droughts, which have intensified competition for grazing land and access to water, ultimately precipitating clashes between claimants and landowners. Often, if such conflicts persist, they devolve into clan-based hostilities<sup>30</sup>.

In Hirshabelle, as in Galmudug, the limited social cohesion among various clans fosters the emergence of conflicts, while the absence of satisfactory reconciliation processes fuels clan-level escalation and the development of enduring, even intergenerational grievances<sup>31</sup>. In certain instances, politicians may also be seen as conflict generators, collaborating in the interest of specific clans to the detriment of others<sup>32</sup>.



Dhusamareb, Galmudug. Credit: UN Photo / Mukhtar Nuur, 2024.

## 2.2 — Stakeholder mapping

### 2.2.1 — FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF SOMALIA

#### ROLE IN THE CONFLICT

The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) plays a central role in coordinating the current Somali Armed Forces offensive to liberate territories under the control of Al-Shabaab. In the context of territorial control, significant progress has been realised by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) since 2010 when it only held sway over a small district in Mogadishu. Over time, with vital support from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the FGS has managed to displace Al-Shabaab from a number of urban centres in South-Central Somalia<sup>33</sup>.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud, Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre and National Security Advisor Hussein Sheikh Ali are all personally committed to supporting and communicating the military efforts underway and uniting local authorities around this territorial reclaiming project.

In August 2023, the President of Somalia initiated the expansion of the military campaign into Hiiraan with the objective of securing three significant districts within Galmudug. The government's aim was to complete this operation by the late autumn period but the operations have since been extended<sup>34</sup>.

#### RELEVANT INTERESTS

The objective of the Federal Government of Somalia is to stabilise and unify Somalia, by regaining and maintaining control over its territory and by eliminating the threat posed by Al-Shabaab. It also seeks to strengthen its authority over the Federal Member States and its legitimacy towards local populations.

#### RELATIONS WITH OTHER CONFLICT STAKEHOLDERS

The Federal Government of Somalia has a complex relationship with Federal Member States. While they collaborate on security matters and share common goals, disputes over resource allocation and political influence can strain these relations.

Additionally, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), along with its federal security forces, the forces of Federal Member States (FMS), and various regional entities such as state-level darwish militias, clan militias, paramilitary groups, and specialised police units, collectively engage in operational activities. It is noteworthy that these entities do not consistently align with each other and, on occasion, may even engage in regional-level competition<sup>35</sup>.

The FGS coordinates closely with international actors for financial and logistical support to address the current conflict.

## 2.2.2 — FEDERAL MEMBER STATES

### ROLE IN THE CONFLICT

The Federal Member States (FMS) have varying degrees of autonomy and allegiance to the Federal Government of Somalia. The governments of Hirshabelle and Galmudug are actively supporting the federal government in its offensive against Al-Shabaab, particularly in the social and institutional reconstruction efforts in the Newly Liberated Areas<sup>36</sup>.

### RELEVANT INTERESTS

The FMS have an interest in stabilising the security context in their respective administrative areas. Concurrently, the FMS seek to protect their autonomy, control over regional resources, legitimacy towards local populations and influence in national decision-making which could be threatened by the involvement of the Federal Government of Somalia.

### RELATIONS WITH OTHER CONFLICT STAKEHOLDERS

*Hirshabelle:* A substantial portion of the state's territory is under the control of Al-Shabaab, specifically encompassing the entire northern sector of the Middle Shabelle region, along with strategically significant districts within the Hiiraan region. This presence has resulted in notable disruptions to crucial supply routes. It is noteworthy that the Hiiraan Salvation Council is raising questions regarding the legitimacy of Ali Gudlaawe, the current president of Hirshabelle, thereby indirectly challenging the authority of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). Furthermore, the council is advocating for the separation of the Hiiraan region from Hirshabelle. The security forces in Hirshabelle are primarily comprised of the darwish and state police. Additionally, there have been instances where business individuals were apprehended by local authorities on allegations of providing financial support, in the form of purported 'taxes', to Al-Shabaab<sup>37</sup>.

*Galmudug:* As of 2023, Al-Shabaab controlled almost the entire eastern shore and parts of the centre of Galmudug. Galmudug security forces include the darwish and the State Police; they also integrate a large part of the former ASWJ Sufi militia that used to be the most powerful actor in the state. By the end of 2023, the Somali Armed Forces successfully regained control over a substantial part of Galmudug's territory, particularly along the coast. However, stakeholders interviewed by the European Institute of Peace, deemed these gains as 'fragile'. This perception is rooted in concerns about the government's ability to maintain a sustainable presence of armed forces on the ground and effectively control rural areas<sup>38</sup>.

### 2.2.3 — SOMALI ARMED FORCES

#### ROLE IN THE CONFLICT

The Somali Armed Forces (SAF) are responsible for national defence and counterterrorism efforts against groups like Al-Shabaab. FGS security forces consist of four entities:

*The Somali National Army (SNA)* is responsible for national defence and operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense. The exact number of its operational personnel remains uncertain, with estimates ranging from 16,000<sup>39</sup> to 21,000 soldiers, in contrast to the official figure of 27,000<sup>40</sup>. An Operational Readiness Assessment conducted by the Ministry in 2017<sup>41</sup>, further corroborated by a VOA media report in the same year, appears to suggest even lower actual troop numbers, with only 9,000 to 10,000 troops possessing combat capability<sup>42</sup>.

The Somali armed forces face multiple internal challenges and shortcomings that limit their operational efficiency in the fight against Al-Shabaab<sup>43</sup>. These challenges include a deficiency in training despite various military assistance efforts provided by allied countries and institutions<sup>44</sup>; a shortage of equipment, weapons, and support materials (such as mobility and communication equipment)<sup>45</sup>; a lack of unity and coherence within the military structure<sup>46</sup>; and a low level of soldier loyalty, primarily due to the prevailing clan affiliations that often supersede national identity<sup>47</sup>.

*The Special Forces* include two principal brigades. On the one hand, the US-trained Danab Brigade acts as an elite strike force in the fight against Al-Shabaab in the Newly Liberated Areas<sup>48</sup>. It is one of the only multiclan unit and is kept largely separate from the rest of the SNA<sup>49</sup>. On the other hand, the Gorgor Brigade is a commando force trained by Turkish military assistance. While it has reportedly been used for political manoeuvring in the past<sup>50</sup>, it is now contributing to the operations in NLA where it leads coordinated attacks on Al-Shabaab bases<sup>51</sup>.

*The National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA)* oversees all state intelligence and security matters. The operations against Al-Shabaab are overseen by the security division of the agency in the name of the Danab, Waran and Gaashaan units with its two units Alpha Group and Bravo Group<sup>52</sup>. NISA is present in Mogadishu, Benadir Region, Southwest State, Hirshabelle, and Galmudug<sup>53</sup>.

*The Somali Police Force (SPF)* includes both the federal police and member state police, officially accounting for 32,000 staff<sup>54</sup>. However, this count is largely optimistic and includes the integration of some existing militias and state-level *darwish* groups into the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somali Police Force (SPF) – some of which are not currently recognised within Somalia's security architecture<sup>55</sup>. The police forces have a much weaker presence, especially at the Federal Member State (FMS) level. Recent estimates indicate a total of 6,000-8,000 staff in the police force<sup>56</sup> while the 2019 UN Somalia Country Results Report, the SPF accounted for only 400 staff in the Hirshabelle police services and none in Galmudug<sup>57</sup>.

The Federal Police Force includes a *darwish* paramilitary unit, distinct from the state-level *darwish* militias. Among other missions, this unit is aimed at being deployed to areas liberated by the SNA and AMISOM (currently ATMIS), to ensure law and order, enhance security and pave the way for local civilian police to operate<sup>58</sup>.

**RELEVANT INTERESTS**

The primary interest of the Somali Armed Forces and its components is to ensure national security by defeating Al-Shabaab and other affiliated armed groups.

**RELATIONS WITH OTHER CONFLICT STAKEHOLDERS**

The Somali Armed Forces is led by the Federal Government of Somalia, and its operations are closely coordinated with government policies and objectives. The SAF are receiving logistical support, training and equipment from international partners of the Somali Government such as ATMIS, UNSOS, AFRICOM, etc.

**2.1.4 — AL-SHABAAB**

**ROLE IN THE CONFLICT**

Al-Shabaab is a jihadist armed group formed in 2006 and affiliated with Al-Qaeda since 2010. It has been responsible for numerous attacks, including suicide bombings and assassinations, and exerting control over large areas of Somalia. Before the government offensive, these zones encompass areas on the western bank of the Shabelle River within Hirshabelle and extensive inland regions, as well as the coastal areas of Galmudug. Government statements indicate a potential significant loss of control by Al-Shabaab, notably to the East of the Shabelle River in Hirshabelle. However, the security landscape remains dynamic, making it difficult to accurately assess the true extent of areas currently under the group’s influence<sup>59</sup>.

The Al-Shabaab terrorist group is targeted by a long-standing war by the FGS, the FMS, some clans and Darwish militias as well as international actors such as AMISOM and AFRICOM.

**RELEVANT INTERESTS**

Al-Shabaab seeks to expand and maintain its territorial control, impose its ideology and generate revenue through illicit activities, extortion, taxation and illegal trade. Al-Shabaab also aims to undermine the influence of the FGS, FMS and international actors over their controlled territories.

**RELATIONS WITH OTHER CONFLICT STAKEHOLDERS**

Al-Shabaab rejects the legitimacy and is in direct conflict with the Federal Government of Somalia and the Somali Armed Forces. It conducts attacks against government institutions and security forces.

In its objective to undermine the FGS’s authority, Al-Shabaab may exploit regional and institutional grievances to its advantages. In some areas, Al-Shabaab has been able to infiltrate clans, administrations, and security forces.

## 2.2.5 — INTERNATIONAL ACTORS: ATMIS, UNSOM, UNSOS

### ROLE IN THE CONFLICT

International partners of the FGS such as ATMIS, UNSOM and UNSOS play critical roles in supporting peace, security, governance, and humanitarian efforts in Somalia.

ATMIS forces are entrusted with the mandate of mitigating the threat presented by Al-Shabaab, aiding in the development of the integrated Somali security and police forces, and executing a phased transfer of security duties to the Somali Armed Forces. The process of gradually reducing the troop presence commenced in June 2023 and is anticipated to conclude by December 2024<sup>60</sup>. However, recent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions suggest that the Somali Armed Forces may still lack the requisite training and capabilities to assume security responsibilities in lieu of ATMIS<sup>61</sup>. This situation could potentially imply an extension of the deadline for the full withdrawal.

### RELEVANT INTERESTS

International partners aim to support the Somali Armed Forces in enhancing stability, preventing terrorism, and promoting effective governance in Somalia.

### RELATIONS WITH OTHER CONFLICT STAKEHOLDERS

International actors collaborate closely with the FGS and the SAF in various capacities, including providing financial and logistical support, facilitating political dialogue, and coordinating security efforts. International partners engage with FMS to promote stability, although this cooperation may vary depending on regional priorities. Personnel of ATMIS, UNSOM and UNSOS may be considered targets by Al-Shabaab because of their collaboration with the Somali government.



Dhusamareb, Galmadug. Credit: UN Photo / Mukhtar Nuur, 2024.

## 2.3 — Environmental and climate conditions

### 2.3.1 — ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE FACTORS

#### Historical climate trends, seasonality and variability

Somalia is a country with a hot, arid to semi-arid climate characterised by low annual precipitation levels. Specifically, the regions of Hirshabelle and Galmudug primarily consist of semi-arid to semi-humid zones<sup>62</sup>.

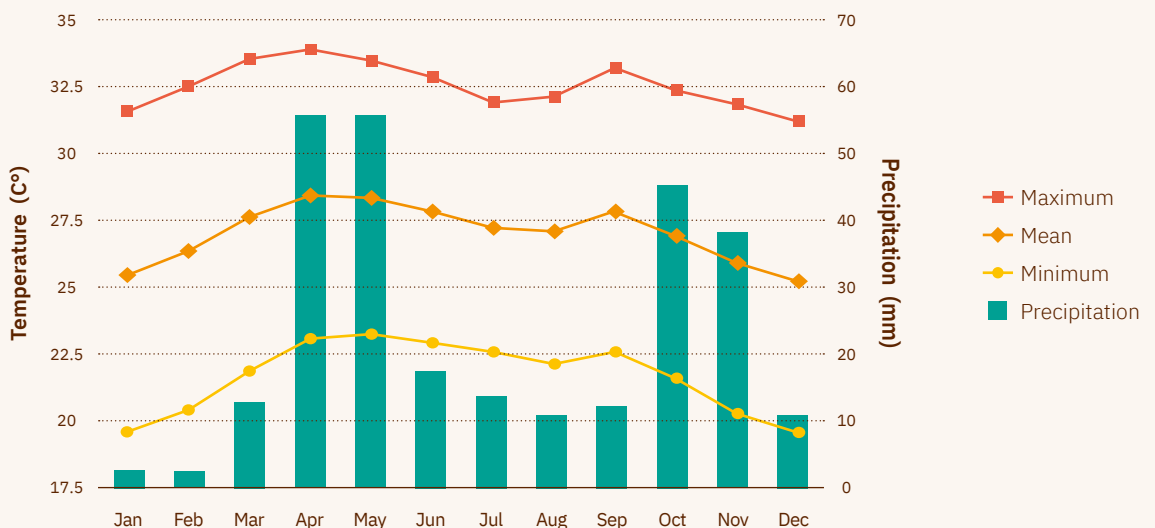
The country has four seasons: Ilaal, a warm, sunny and dry season running from December to mid-March; Gu, the main rainy season taking place from mid-March until June; Haggai: a cool, dry and rather cloudy season starting from July and lasting until mid-September; and Deyr, the secondary rain season running from mid-September to November<sup>63</sup>. These consistent seasons are interrupted by two monsoons, the first monsoon taking place in the Northeast of Somalia from December to February and the second monsoon in the Southwest from May to

October. These staggered monsoons imply variable temperatures between the northern and southern halves of the country (mild temperatures in areas affected by monsoons and very hot the rest of the year).

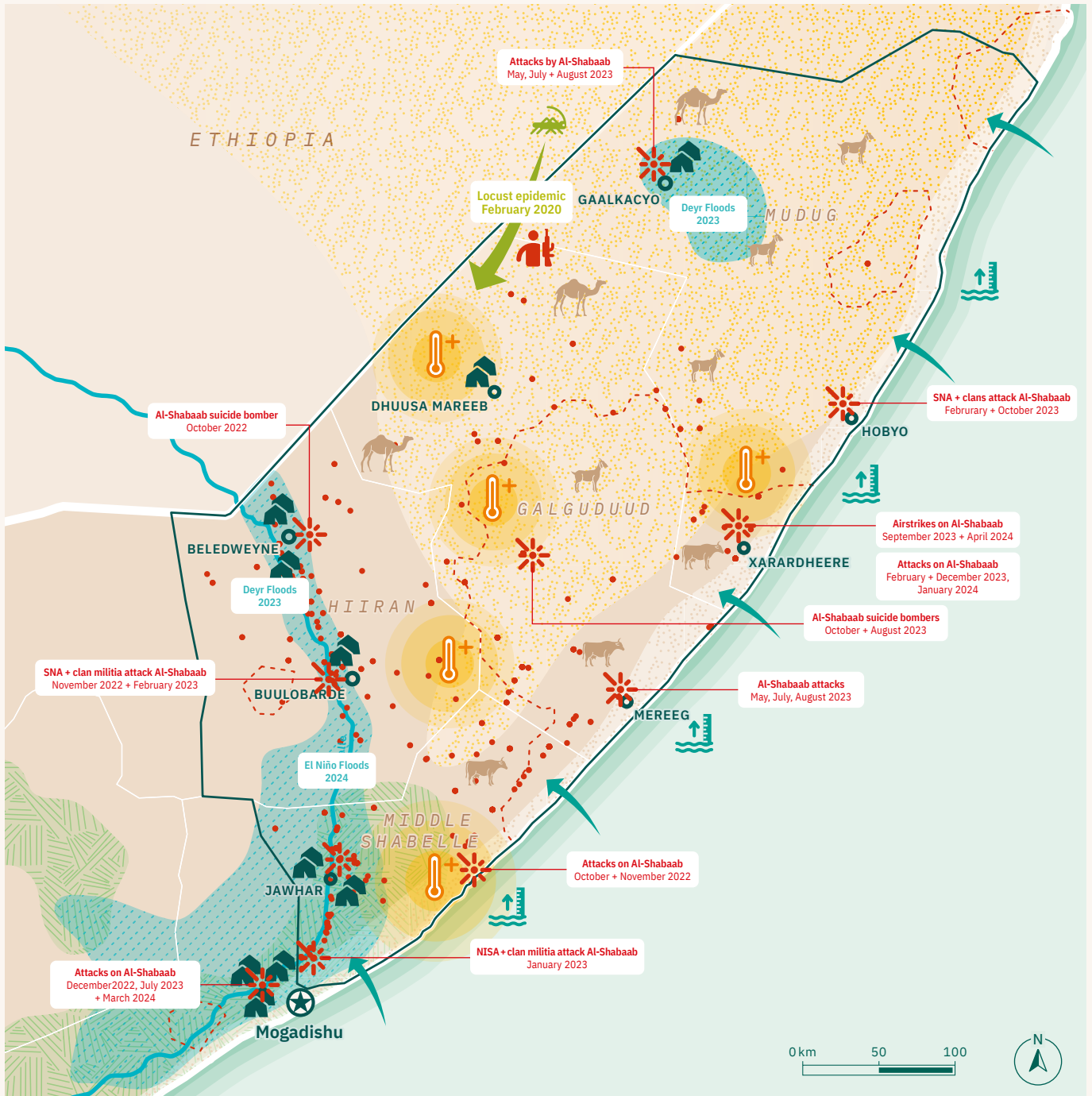
Somalia receives 75% of its rainfall during the Gu season from March to June<sup>64</sup> (→ *Figure 3*). The average precipitation in Galmudug amounts to approximately 200-300mm per year, compared to 300-400mm in the northern part of Hirshabelle (Hiiraan), and even exceeding 500mm in the southern region between Jawhar and Mogadishu<sup>65</sup>. The mean daily maximum temperatures exceed 30°C in most regions of the country, particularly in the inland areas such as Beledweyne and Dhuursa Mareeb<sup>66</sup>.

**Figure 3** — Monthly climatology for temperature and precipitation in Somalia, 1991-2020

World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal: Somalia



Map 3 – Climate Security Risk Map



- |  |                       |  |                                      |  |                           |
|--|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
|  | Capital               |  | Flood area                           |  | Major conflict event      |
|  | City                  |  | Cropland                             |  | Conflict hotspot          |
|  | Newly Liberated Areas |  | Desertification                      |  | Militia                   |
|  | River / Webi          |  | Coastal salinisation                 |  | Al-Shabaab territory 2024 |
|  | Pastoralism           |  | Saltwater intrusion / Sea level rise |  | IDP Camp                  |
|  | Locusts epidemic      |  | Sea level rise                       |  | Heat wave                 |

## Climate shocks

Given its geography, Somalia is prone to extreme weather conditions such as droughts and flash floods and is also severely impacted by climate change effects<sup>67</sup>. As these phenomena are exacerbated by the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle<sup>68</sup>, which is known to accentuate drought episodes and floods in the Horn region<sup>69</sup>, the resurgence of the El Niño cycle starting from 2023 could be an ominous sign for Somalia for the upcoming years<sup>70</sup>. While the whole country has been affected by chronic droughts over the past few years, the state of Hirshabelle is particularly at risk of flooding due to frequent river breakages along the Shabelle river<sup>71</sup>, such as the ones that occurred in October in Beledweyne, Jowhar and Mahaday among others<sup>72</sup>.

**Climate-related shocks and stresses amplify the threats to an already fragile ecosystem in Somalia, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, straining social cohesion, and influencing conflict dynamics<sup>73</sup>.** In particular, the accumulation of successive climate change effects poses a substantial challenge for the already weakened and overstretched governmental and institutional capacities of Somalia. The failure of authorities to effectively respond to these supplementary impacts not only sustains climate vulnerability but also undermines government credibility and amplifies intercommunal tensions. This could be particularly pronounced in scenarios where communities vie for access to essential natural resources, further exacerbating pre-existing grievances and social conflicts<sup>74</sup>.

Climate change exacerbates food and water insecurity, intensifies competition for critical resources, disrupts livelihoods, and undermines the coping mechanisms of communities, thereby negatively impacting the prospects and opportunities for young people. Additionally, climate change and its associated consequences contribute to a rise in forced displacement and rural-to-urban migration, particularly towards the southern cities of Somalia, potentially leading to increased social tensions with local clans and exacerbating the underlying causes of conflict and fragility<sup>75</sup>.

Additionally, climate-related shocks and the scarcity of natural resources can provide an opportunity for armed groups to challenge the legitimacy of institutions, enhance their control over populations and increase the recruitment of fighters. To break the climate-conflict cycle and reduce environmentally induced displacement and conflict in Galmudug, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) are leading an innovative project “Breaking the Climate-Conflict Cycle in Galmudug, Somalia”, financed by the European Union. The project supports communities in adopting climate-conscious conflict mitigation strategies to strengthen agriculture and food security<sup>76</sup>.

### Climate projections

As the Horn of Africa’s most drought-vulnerable nation, Somalia is already grappling with the profound ramifications of climate change. Current climate projections indicate that this trajectory is poised to persist and exacerbate in the forthcoming decades.

Somalia, which presently records some of the planet’s highest temperatures, anticipates a further temperature surge of 1.5°C to 2.3°C by 2050, according to IPCC scenarios<sup>77</sup>. Concurrently, the dwindling river volumes observed over successive years, coupled with the presence of arid or semi-arid soils covering 80% of the nation’s expanse, pose challenges for efficient rainwater absorption. Consequently, prolonged dry spells are likely to persist and intensify. Precipitation forecasts indicate heightened seasonal and annual variability. This may result in an overall increment in Somalia’s annual rainfall on average; however, this elevation comes at the expense of heightened uncertainty and the potential occurrence of recurrent cycles of drought and torrential rain episodes,

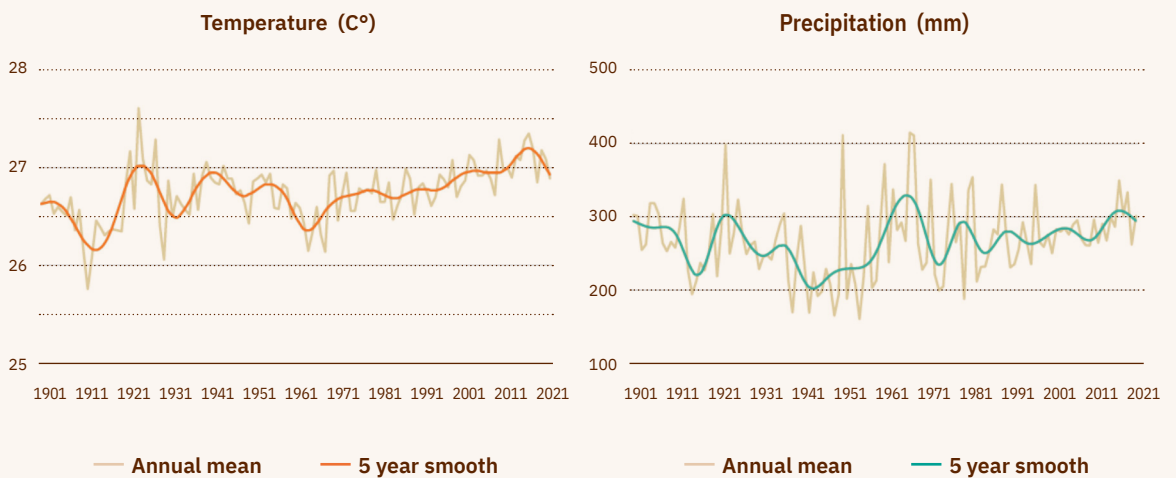
which could amplify hardships for communities and imperil livelihoods.

Due to its geographical location, Somalia is susceptible to the impacts of extreme weather and climatic phenomena, which are particularly sensitive to variations in the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle. Typically, during El Niño events, Somalia witnesses heightened rainfall, resulting in floods and an increased risk of disease propagation<sup>78</sup>. Nonetheless, regional disparities may manifest. For instance, during the 2015-2016 El Niño event, the northern regions of the country faced severe drought, while the remainder experienced substantial rainfall<sup>79</sup>.

The World Meteorological Organisation’s declaration in July 2023 regarding the commencement of a new, moderate-to-strong El Niño cycle highlights the potential for heightened climatic variability and increased risk of weather-related hazards in Somalia during the upcoming months and years<sup>80</sup>.

**Figure 4 — Observed average annual mean temperature and precipitation profiles, 1901-2021**

World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal: Somalia



## Box 1 — ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE FACTORS

As Somalia strives to recover from its worst drought in four decades, the subsequent El Niño rains have brought additional challenges towards the end of 2023, intensifying the hardships faced by already vulnerable communities. Severe floodings caused by El Niño has had significant impact on livelihoods, destroying infrastructure and displacing populations<sup>81</sup>.

The consequences of El Niño in 2024 are challenging to predict and may affect different regions of Somalia in varying ways. While areas like the riverbanks of the Shabelle have been extensively hit by floods, rainfall conditions across the country are uneven<sup>82</sup>. For instance, in Galkaio, dry conditions quickly returned, with no rainfall recorded in December 2023, following the heavy rains of November<sup>83</sup>. The unpredictable nature of climatic conditions and their consequences necessitates nuanced and differentiated management by public authorities and international partners in their areas of operation. These consequences may also affect ongoing armed conflicts, particularly ATMIS operations, influencing the humanitarian situation, notably in refugee camps, and damaging communication and resupply routes for SSF and ATMIS<sup>84</sup>.

IGAD's Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) anticipates heavy rains in the Horn of Africa, including Somalia, from June to September 2024<sup>85</sup>, posing an extended risk of flooding, particularly along the Jubba and Shabelle rivers<sup>86</sup>. As Somalia grapples with the dual challenges of recovering from drought and dealing with El Niño-induced floods, coordinated efforts from both national and international actors are vital to mitigate the humanitarian impact and build resilience against future climate-related crises.

### Effects on livelihoods

Climate change significantly and negatively impacts livelihoods in Somalia, a country already highly susceptible to poverty, conflict, and displacement. This impact is primarily evident through increasingly frequent and severe droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events. As climate change continues, these effects on livelihoods are expected to worsen. While droughts and floods remain the most common and devastating climate-related hazards in Somalia, cyclones and

heatwaves are also becoming more frequent, all of which harm livelihoods by causing crop failures, livestock losses, infrastructure damage, and increased forced displacements<sup>87</sup>. For example, between 2015 and 2022, the nation experienced its most severe drought in nearly four decades, resulting in the displacement of nearly 200,000 refugees from Somalia and South Sudan into drought-affected areas of Kenya and Ethiopia<sup>88</sup>.

## 2.3.2 — STATE OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### Hydrology

Somalia features two enduring surface rivers, the Juba and the Shabelle, originating from the Ethiopian highlands and coursing towards the southern Somali coastline. Across the rest of the nation, characterised by its arid and semi-arid climate, the existence of permanent rivers is not sustainable, as watercourses transiently form during periods of heavy precipitation, only to dissipate thereafter. Among the areas recently liberated (Newly Liberated Areas - NLA), the Hirshabelle region is traversed by the Shabelle river, while Galmudug does not have any permanent rivers within its territory.

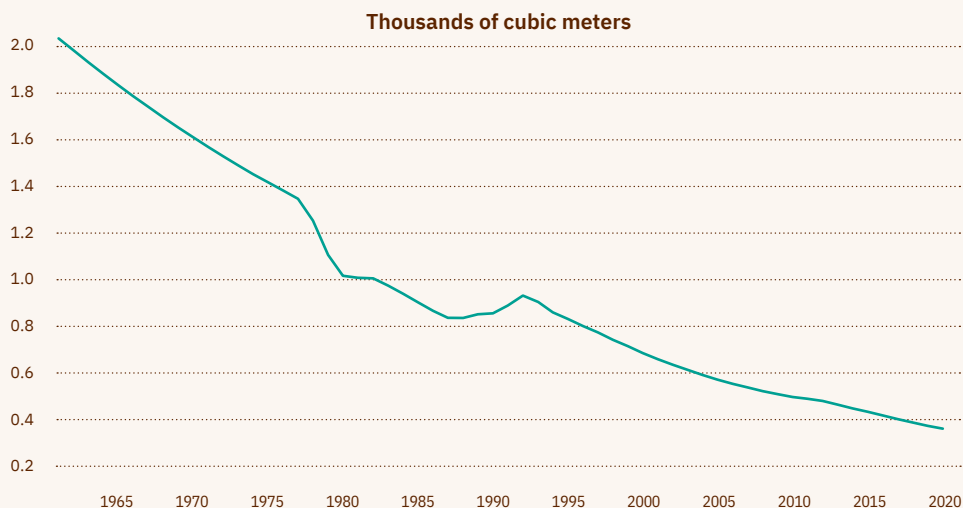
Since 2001, there have been seven operational gauge stations established to monitor the water levels of the Juba and Shabelle rivers. These stations operate under the FAO/SWALIM project, which is funded with the support of the European Union<sup>89</sup>. Current and historical river flow data is accessible through the Flood Risk and Response Information Management System (FRRIMS) on the FAO/SWALIM website<sup>90</sup>.

Given the limited coverage of surface rivers and low precipitation levels, Somalia relies extensively on groundwater sources for its domestic water supply, livestock needs, and small-scale irrigation across much of its territory. Approximately 95% of the population depends on groundwater for their drinking water requirements, including residents of major cities. As precipitation rates remain below renewable levels and the population increases, renewable freshwater resources per capita have steadily declined over the past 60 years (→ *Figure 5*). This decline has resulted in the current availability of less than a fifth of the per capita freshwater resources observed in 1961, significantly impacting water security in Somalia.

Various deep drilling initiatives have been undertaken to expand groundwater reserves; however, due to a lack of prior hydrogeological knowledge, the success rate of such efforts has been notably low. Another prominent concern pertains to groundwater quality, as the majority of these sources exhibit salinity levels exceeding 2,000 µS/cm and are susceptible to contamination<sup>91</sup>.

**Figure 5** — Renewable internal freshwater resources per capita in Somalia, 1961-2020<sup>92</sup>

FAO Aquastat data, accessed 12 January 2024



### Land cover

Similar to the rest of the country (→ *Map 4*), the regions of Hirshabelle and Galmudug encompass only a small proportion of land suitable for cultivation<sup>93</sup>. Consequently, arable lands are scarce, primarily concentrated in irrigated areas along the Shabelle River, with some rainfed crops being more common in Middle Shabelle but significantly less prevalent in other districts of Hiiraan or Galmudug.

Forested areas are rare, having suffered significantly due to climatic conditions, large-scale charcoal production, and grazing pressures. As a result, a substantial portion of the land is

covered by low or semi-natural vegetation, such as shrublands, well adapted to the arid climate. The Galmudug coastline, in particular, exhibits minimal vegetation, with extensive bare areas extending into the eastern portion of the Middle Shabelle coast<sup>94</sup>.

Both the Hirshabelle and Galmudug regions have experienced prolonged periods of drought in recent years, leading to land cover degradation and soil quality deterioration. This has heightened the risk of soil degradation and reduced the soil's capacity to absorb rainfall, therefore increasing the states' vulnerability to further dry spells<sup>95</sup>.

**Map 4 – Land cover in 2022 in Somalia**

Source data from: European Space Agency (ESA) Climate Change Initiative (CCI), 2023.

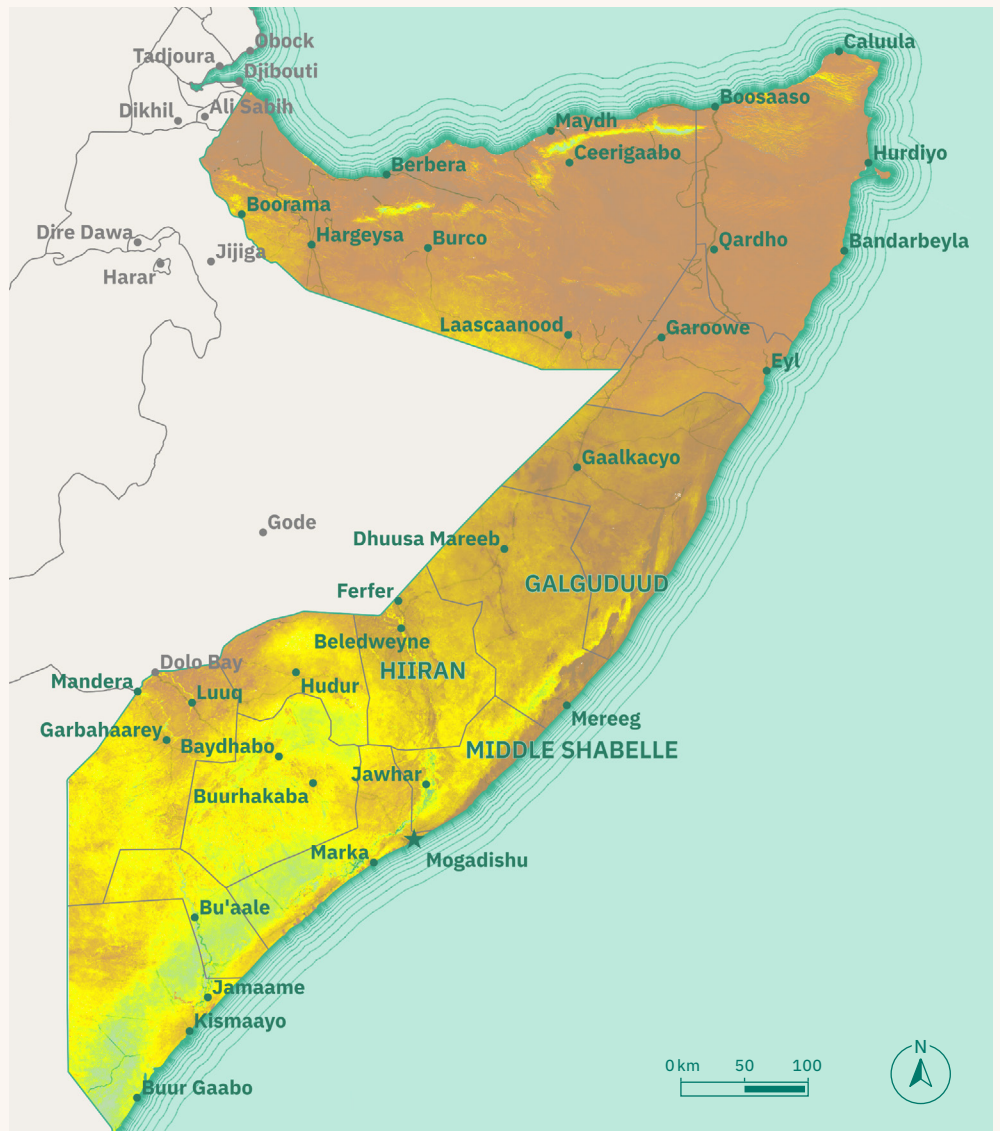


## Natural resources and biodiversity

As a result of climatic and meteorological conditions as well as numerous human induced degradations, Somalia's natural ecosystems are extremely fragile, fragmented and already largely degraded. Biodiversity benefits from little or no protection. The over-exploitation of forests in the south exemplifies this situation.

At the same time, estimating the wealth and extent of biodiversity and natural ecosystems in Somalia remains difficult due to limited access to many areas of the country. The geospatial data available, however, show that the low NDVI coverage and severe drought in almost the entire country do not allow for the existence of fertile and resilient ecosystems (→ Map 5).

**Map 5** – Yearly mean average normalised difference vegetation index (NDVI) Somalia with greener colours indicating vegetation growth and browner colours suggesting dry land.  
 Source data from: NASA NDVI MODIS (250m) 2023.



Similarly, studies assessing the extent of natural ecosystem degradation in Somalia are scarce and typically limited to specific locations, offering a fragmented view that does not provide a comprehensive nationwide assessment. Nevertheless, the threats to natural ecosystems and biodiversity are reasonably well-documented, particularly in light of climate projections indicating rising temperatures and increased precipitation variability across the country. These climatic trends heighten the risks of natural habitat destruction and the depletion of associated natural resources.

Consequently, it is likely that within these already fragile territories, ecosystems experiencing heat and water stress will become even more vulnerable, increasing their susceptibility to biodiversity loss. Incidentally, they will also become more prone to various pests, diseases, invasive species, and additional shocks that may impact them<sup>96</sup>.

The results of the hotspot map of Somalia using UNEP's Strata (→ *Map 6*) indicate an accumulation of environmental, climate and security stresses in Hiiran and the Middle Shabelle region of Hirshabelle, with special emphasis in the more populated areas close to Mogadishu, where exposure and vulnerability may be higher because of the demographic distribution. Similarly, in Galmudug, there is a convergence of environ-

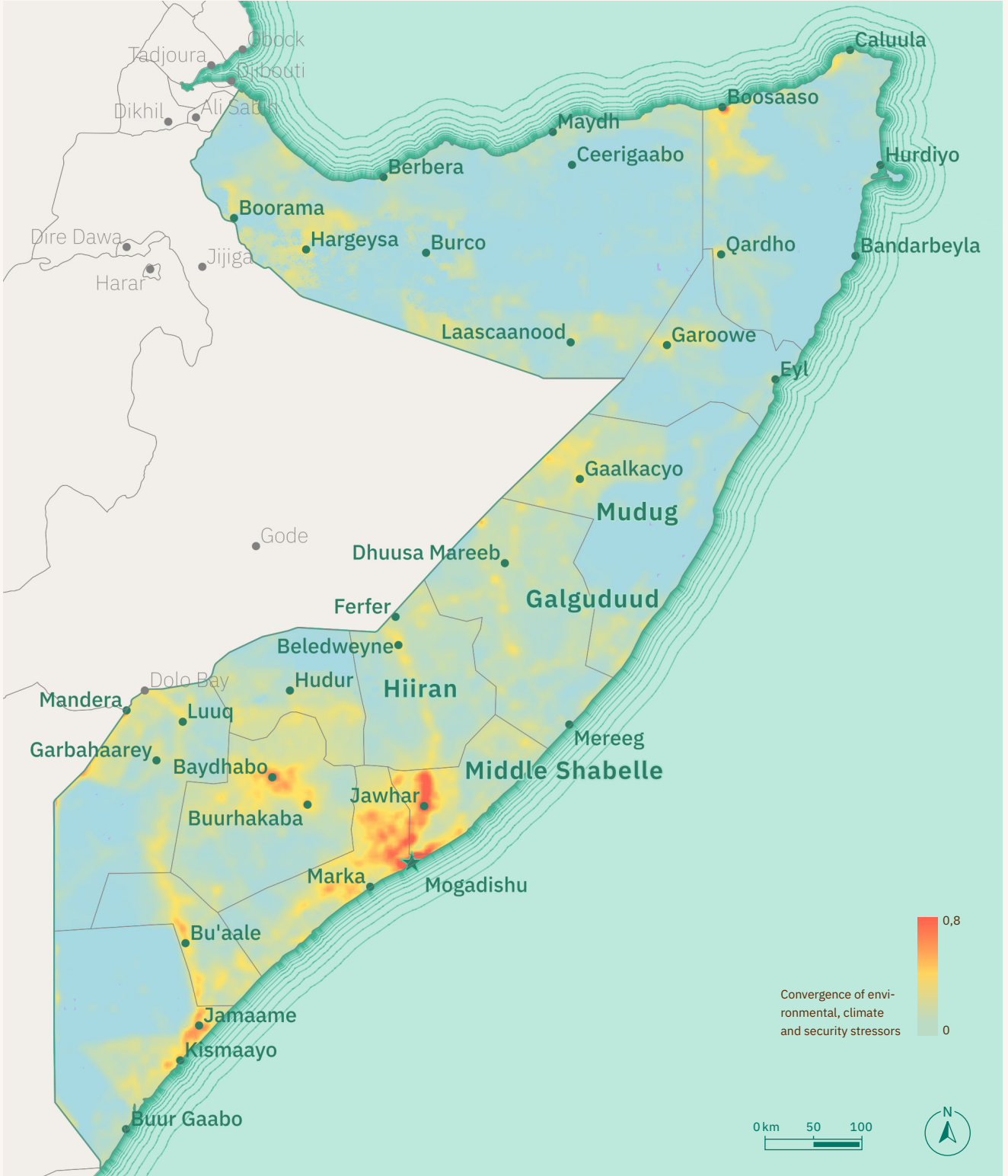
mental, climate and security stresses in the areas surrounding Dhurso Mareeb and Galkaio. The main stressors flagged by Strata in the two states include agricultural drought, heatwaves, food insecurity and water-related risks, and the incidence of conflicts.

Furthermore, the degradation and stresses of the natural landscapes has the potential to escalate tensions and potentially spark conflicts among clans and communities cohabiting a shared territory<sup>97</sup>. Somalia has a protracted history of agro-pastoral and inter-clan conflicts, often exacerbated by competition for land, disputes over ownership, and the exploitation of natural resources<sup>98</sup>. In an environment marked by diminishing resources and a growing number of forcibly displaced individuals, conflicts between users of these resources, as well as between displaced and resident populations, are poised to increase.

Overall, the escalating pressure on natural resources is amplifying the government's difficulties in addressing the population's needs. This situation has the potential to deepen mistrust in state institutions, thereby creating opportunities for contestation by various actors, including Federal Member States (FMS), rival clans, or even Al-Shabaab. Addressing these resource-related challenges becomes integral to fostering stability and peace in the country.

**Map 6** – UNEP's Strata indication of the environmental, climate and security stresses in Somalia. Red indicates higher number of stressors converging while blue indicates one stressor.

Source data from: UNEP, June 2024.



## 2.4 — Conflict resolution, justice systems and reconciliation mechanisms in Somalia

### 2.4.1 — LOCAL AND FMS LEVELS

The conflict resolution landscape in Somalia is shaped by a complex history, diverse cultural practices diversity, and a patchwork of formal and informal institutions. Somalis observe a dual legal system that integrates both the Islamic Shari’ah and the traditional xeer system<sup>99</sup>. Clan elders in particular, play a crucial role in conflict mediation, aiming for reconciliation and peacemaking. The primary objective of the xeer system is to uphold a balance in relationships among individuals and groups, with elders assuming the role of knowledgeable arbiters in xeer. The justice process typically involves family mediators, clan elders, ulama, and statutory judges, collaborating to resolve disputes and regulate access to resources<sup>100</sup>. However, the efficiency of xeer is debated, especially in conflicts between extended clans.

Traditionally, Shari’ah has long been considered a distant religious ideal, but a perceptible shift can be observed, particularly in urban areas and territories under the influence of Al-Shabaab<sup>101</sup>. In these areas, the legitimacy of clan elders under the xeer system has been undermined, and Shari’ah has become the primary source of law, although its application by the Shari’ah courts remains informal and lacks a formal legal code<sup>102</sup>.

On the contrary, the formal justice system supported by the government faces challenges in establishing and maintaining a strong presence across the country<sup>103</sup>. The Heritage Institute for

Policy Studies (HIPS) in 2021, notes the existence of a three-tiered structure in many regions, including the Court of First Instance at the district level, Appeals Court, and State Supreme Court. However, these structures face operational challenges, and the judiciary is perceived by as lagging in institutionalisation<sup>104</sup>.

**In a context where conflicts are frequent and peace mediation is complex, the coexistence of multiple, often competing justice systems further complicates the situation.** The presence of divergent systems, each with its own set of rules and interpretations, tends to escalate tensions between communities and poses a significant obstacle to effective conflict resolution. This is particularly evident in instances where individuals, dissatisfied with a ruling from one system, seek more favourable outcomes through alternative justice mechanisms. For example, in disputes over land, parties may pursue a second ruling from a different judicial system, resulting in conflicting decisions and heightened tensions.

These challenges are exacerbated in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab, where disparities in justice systems, combined with delays in the administration of justice and the lack of enforcement of traditional or formal rulings, have created a perception of greater efficiency in Al-Shabaab-controlled Shari’ah courts. Al-Shabaab often delivers swift justice and enforces it martially, sometimes

resorting to severe measures such as death penalties for non-compliance. The perceived efficacy of Al-Shabaab's justice system, albeit through coercive means, has contributed to the organisation's influence and control in certain regions where the absence of consensus or the lack of enforcement of legal decisions hampered the peaceful resolution of disputes<sup>105</sup>. The competition between justice systems not only impedes lasting conflict resolution but also fosters an environment where **disparate rulings and enforcement methods further escalate tensions within the affected communities.**

In a bid to reconcile the disparities between these competing judicial systems and restore social cohesion, the Ministry of Justice, starting in 2014, introduced an innovative blended justice strategy, instituting Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) centres as a unique mode of justice delivery. The ADR centres offer a distinctive approach to justice delivery, combining traditional dispute resolution with the formal judicial system, including in Hirshabelle and Galmudug<sup>106</sup>. ADR centres hold jurisdiction to adjudicate civil disputes and minor offenses, where resolutions may involve monetary compensation or restitution. In this context, the application of Shari'ah law, principles, and xeer practices is permissible, if they align with established human rights standards<sup>107</sup>.

### *Conflict resolution in Hirshabelle*

Hirshabelle's justice system reflects a nuanced interplay between formal and informal structures, illustrating the intricate nature of conflict resolution in the region. The presence of twelve active statutory courts, organised in a three-tiered structure, highlights attempts from the government to establish a formal judiciary system<sup>108</sup>. However, operational challenges persist, exacerbated by the influence of Al-Shabaab's mobile courts, which provide an alternative framework outside the formal justice architecture.

Central to Hirshabelle's justice landscape is the recognition of customary xeer, where elders play a significant role. This traditional system is valued for its perceived efficiency yet concerns about potential delays for personal gain persist. The inclusion of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) centres in Jowhar, applying xeer in conjunction with formal justice, underscores ongoing efforts to bridge the gap between formal and customary approaches.

District Peace Committees (DPCs) and the influence of religious leaders contribute additional layers to the justice system, highlighting the adaptability required to address complex disputes<sup>109</sup>. The coexistence of various justice mechanisms, including statutory courts, traditional elders, and ADR centres, paints a complex picture of the challenges in reconciling diverse approaches in a region marked by competition for judicial authority<sup>110</sup>.

Despite these efforts, the influence of Al-Shabaab has become more prevalent in recent years. In a 2018 survey conducted in Beledweyne, the Berghof Foundation found that many residents prefer to seek justice in local courts run by Al-Shabaab because they believe that justice is better served there compared to government judicial courts<sup>111</sup>.

The already frequent conflicts in Hirshabelle over land issues, access to water, or pasture have intensified with the prolonged drought and continue to exert a tremendous impact on the lives of the people, leading to loss of life and massive displacement within the state<sup>112</sup>. Regions along the Shabelle River, in particular, have witnessed a significant influx of displaced individuals during droughts and are currently the most affected by the 2023 floods, further exacerbating the pressure on land and natural resources and compounding the risk of conflicts<sup>113</sup>.

### *Conflict resolution in Galmudug*

Galmudug, similar to Hirshabelle, grapples with a complex justice system influenced by both formal and informal structures. In Galmudug as well, **the absence of clear land ownership documents and proper demarcation fuels conflicts over land, water, and pasture, with disputes often escalating to involve clan militias**<sup>114</sup>. The lack of effective governance structures, weak institutions, and political rivalries contribute to the challenges in conflict resolution.

The xeer system plays a significant role in conflict resolution in Galmudug. However, like in Hirshabelle, there are concerns about its comprehensiveness and effectiveness, especially in addressing conflicts between clans. Despite the active involvement of traditional elders and religious leaders, there is a perceived need for more inclusive reconciliation initiatives involving various segments of the population, including youth and women<sup>115</sup>.

Similarly to Hirshabelle, conflicts in Galmudug have far-reaching impacts, including loss of life,

internal displacement, and economic setbacks. The effects extend beyond the visible consequences to include pervasive fear and mistrust among communities. Despite the willingness of various groups, such as women, youth, religious leaders, traditional elders, and the business community, to participate in conflict resolution, their efforts are hindered by a lack of resources and capacity across the state.

However, examples of successful conflict reconciliation do exist, notably demonstrated by the **Galkaio Agreement**<sup>116</sup>. The reunification of the city by the Darood and Hawiye clans, accompanied by the establishment of joint military and police forces, financially supported by Mogadishu, and the creation of a Joint Ceasefire Committee comprising elders from all clans, not only facilitated a return to peace but also addressed underlying conditions of violence<sup>117</sup>. This type of success story is an encouragement to continue our efforts towards inclusive and sustainable peacemaking in Somalia.

## 2.4.2 — NATIONAL RECONCILIATION FRAMEWORK

The Federal government is also actively engaged in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. The 2007 National Reconciliation Conference in Mogadishu marked the initial step toward nationwide social reconciliation in Somalia. Following this, multiple state-building conferences have been held in Mogadishu, reflecting a sustained effort to unite people and reconstruct the country. This ongoing endeavour, led by the **Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) resulted in the development of the first National Reconciliation Framework (NRF)** between 2018 and 2019, which is now part of the broad National Development Plan 2020 to 2024<sup>118</sup>.

Validated in 2019, the first NRF involved extensive national consultations with diverse groups, including 700 representatives from religious, traditional, women, minority, and youth communities<sup>119</sup>. Conceived as a decentralised, consensus-based, community-informed, and non-partisan initiative, the NRF strives to tackle political, social, and religious reconciliation objectives on a national scale. Its scope encompasses the resolution of conflicts related to power-sharing or administration between the Federal Government (FGS) and Federal Member States (FMS), disputes over land and resource-sharing, as well as issues related to sectarianism and violent extremism, including the application of justice<sup>120</sup>.

Despite the government's proactive approach and expressed optimism during frequent national reconciliation conferences and workshops, various obstacles such as political crises, resource constraints, violent extremism, natural disasters, and the COVID-19 pandemic have impeded progress in implementing the NRF<sup>121</sup>. However, all involved actors, including the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR), the Senior Adviser for Reconciliation for the President of Somalia, and the Special Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson (SRCC) for Somalia & Head of ATMIS, have consistently voiced their unwavering support for the NRF, highlighting its potential benefits in stabilising and bringing peace to Somalia<sup>122</sup>.

After a lengthy consultation and review process, in April 2024, MOIFAR presented a renewed version of the NRF policy that incorporated six pillars of work in the reconciliation agenda, and an ambitious plan of approximately 200 activities. With regards to this climate and conflict analysis, it is to highlight that the most notable

points of the reviewed NRF include emphasis on conflict prevention and resolution, integration of transitional justice in the policy, recognition of the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation in conflict, inclusion of religious approaches for conflict resolution, and focus on genuine conciliation in the Newly Liberated Areas.

It is worth noting that the reviewed NRF also identified five levels of underlying causes of conflict in Somalia, including (1) individual grievances, inequality, discrimination and perceptions; (2) social matters such as clannism, tribes, nepotism, injustice, strained customary laws, religious fanaticism; (3) political and economic factors involving fragile institutions, unfair power distribution, unequal resource sharing, shrinking political space; (4) environmental factors such as unsustainable natural resources management (land, mining, water and grazing), environmental degradation, climate change, new villages; and (5) external factors mainly including foreign interference, neighbouring geopolitical agendas, global war on terror, piracy and others<sup>123</sup>.

### 2.4.3 — **NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCS)**

In July 2021, Somalia submitted to UNFCCC its updated NDC which comprehensively presented the country's climate adaptation and mitigation priorities. The government initiated a review process of the NDC in 2023 to enhance the NDC document as well as develop the NDC implementation plan. The reviewed NDC includes climate security as a cross-cutting theme.

While the effects of climate change on conflict were acknowledged in the 2021 version of the NDCs, the 2024 update supposes a significant change geared to the mainstreaming climate security nexus at the policy level, which will be crucial in guiding the country to address climate-related security risks through government planning

processes, policy development, reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts, in a Somali-led and Somali-owned process.

The updated NDCs include proposals to integrate climate security at the institutional, programming, policy-making and financing levels. Across these levels, key aspects of the new policy include strengthened coordination between federal and state-level institutions in environmental and reconciliation, improving policy coherence around cross-cutting themes related to climate change and security, as well as ensuring conflict sensitivity in climate finance and climate adaptation.

#### 2.4.4 — NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN 2024

Building upon Somalia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Framework from February 2022, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) and UNDP are working on a new version of the NAP, to be published in 2024, with an overarching goal of strengthening capacity and coordination for climate change adaptation, planning and implementation.

The program that is undertaking the NAP development process indicated that the rationale behind the NAP is twofold. First, to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience and, second, to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation in a coherent manner into relevant new and existing policies, programmes and activities, in particular development planning processes and strategies within all sectors.

Similarly to the reviewed NDCs and NRF, the forthcoming NAP recognises the security implications of climate change, and the potential of addressing conflict drivers through climate adaptation and resilience-building. A similar recognition is found in the NAP Framework of 2022 which already proposed the need to strengthen adaptation and peacebuilding initiatives by integrating them, as well as improving their sustainability through inclusive and gender-responsive action in adaptation, peacebuilding and state-building efforts.

Given the central role of this policy for adaptation, peace and stabilisation across sectors, the fact that it considers environmental and climate entry points for peacemaking and peacebuilding will be critical for the government and partners to build resilience against conflict and climate, as well as resolving and preventing conflict.

#### 2.4.5 — NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION PLAN 2025–2029

As the National Development Plan (NDP-9) approaches its expiration in December 2024, the Ministry of Planning, Investment, and Economic Development (MoPIED) of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) has initiated the design of Somalia's National Transformation Plan (formerly the National Development Plan) for the 2025–2029 period. The first draft of this new policy was published in July 2024.

The plan's overarching objective is to promote green growth and sustainable food security, strengthen institutional capacity, enhance community resilience, and foster broader ecosystems and economic development, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that Somalia becomes resource-efficient by 2029. These goals are further articulated through six specific objectives, including promoting climate resilience,

enhancing policies and institutional frameworks for climate adaptation, and facilitating high-level negotiations and diplomacy concerning trans-boundary resources.

While the new NTP 2025–2029 does not explicitly discuss the potential for stability and peace that these objectives may bring to Somalia, it is important to note that the anticipated actions across various sectors of the plan can be leveraged to build peace at different levels. For instance, policies and programs aimed at addressing land degradation, improving water resource management, adopting smart agriculture, fostering climate adaptation, and conserving biodiversity can serve as entry points for cooperation and social cohesion, potentially leading to peace dividends in addition to development and economic growth.



**INTEGRATED  
CLIMATE & CONFLICT  
ANALYSIS**

### 3.1 — Cascading impacts of climate-related security risks in peace and security

Marked by its high vulnerability to climate change and environmental challenges, and by protracted conflict, Somalia stands at the intersection of academic research on the connection between climate and conflict<sup>126</sup>. As the discourse on climate change and its repercussions continues to gain momentum in both research and policy-making, a growing number of scholars, policymakers, and donors are voicing heightened concerns regarding the security implications associated with climate change. This concern is particularly pronounced in regions grappling with fragility or persistent conflict, such as Somalia. In academic spheres, an ongoing debate unfolds, with some proponents advocating for a more deterministic causal link between climate change, environmental degradation, and the potential for conflicts<sup>127,128</sup>. However, this discourse tends to be undermined by most recent studies which introduce a more nuanced perspective, thereby challenging simplistic cause-and-effect narratives<sup>129</sup>.

Latest research findings conducted across fragile and conflict-affected settings globally, conclude that while climate change is rarely the main driver of conflicts, it can exacerbate existing tensions, especially in access to resources or competition for land and water, when it leads to, for example, drought, and thus be linked to increased conflict risks<sup>130</sup>. However, this conclusion must also be nuanced as the effects of climate change on dynamics are strongly conditional on a number of economic and political factors. A study further underlines this degree of complexity, highlighting that, depending on context, climate-related disasters can either amplify, diminish, or not significantly impact the intensity of armed conflicts<sup>131</sup>. These findings underscore the need for a nuanced, case-by-case analysis of the climate-conflict relationship. This emerging academic consensus is also mirrored at the regional level, with the African Union acknowledging in its Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan

2022-2032 that “statistical studies have found no direct causal link between precipitation levels and violent conflict”<sup>132</sup>.

**The absence of a universally applicable rule connecting climate change to the risk of conflict highlights the need for a thorough and nuanced analysis of conflict factors and environmental elements within the context of Somalia.** As described in section 2.3, climate change in Somalia manifests through a myriad of meteorological and environmental alterations that impact populations and their livelihoods. The shifting dynamics of these environmental parameters occasionally intersect with conflict drivers, promoting the emergence or re-emergence of armed conflicts between communities. In particular, scholars are placing growing emphasis on resource competition as a pivotal link between climate and conflict. Competition for scarce resources, notably land and water, is influenced by climate change and significantly contributes to conflict dynamics<sup>133</sup>.

While resource competition alone cannot suffice for predicting the emergence or escalation of inter-communal tensions or armed conflicts, its heightened presence, combined with resource scarcity, assumes a pivotal role. These factors, when intertwined with existing grievances, public policies reinforcing deprivations (such as water cuts), or forced displacement, collectively contribute to the initiation and intensification of conflicts<sup>134</sup>. However, once again, this relationship between climate-driven resource competition and conflict risk cannot be reduced to a simple and systematic causality, as academic research involves a significant number of diverse outcomes depending on location- and context-specific conditions<sup>135</sup>. As we delve further into the specific case of the Newly Liberated Areas, we aim to examine and clarify the unique contextual factors that shape this relationship.

## 3.2 — In the Newly Liberated Areas of Hirshabelle and Galmudug

As described in Section 2 of this document, from a military and security perspective, the context of the NLA is extremely complex. Conflict dynamics extend beyond a mere military battle between the government and the Al-Shabaab group. The long-standing presence of Al-Shabaab, its deep roots within local communities, and the intricate and ambivalent relationships between different clans, as well as between FMS and FGS, create a multi-level operational field that combines military operations and influence operations.

Despite the commendable achievements of the Somali Armed Forces and its allies in reclaiming territories controlled by Al-Shabaab in Hirshabelle and Galmudug, these successes do not guarantee the long-term restoration of peace and

social cohesion in those areas. Beyond the risk of a potential resurgence of the Al-Shabaab group, mistrust persists both towards official authorities and among sometimes rival clans.

**Crucially, key conflict drivers preceded Al-Shabaab's arrival and are believed to persist in the NLA post-terrorist departure.** These drivers are numerous, complex, interrelated, and broadly connected to other parts of the Somali territory. Through research and interviews with stakeholders, researchers, and implementing partners, the European Institute of Peace identifies four primary conflict drivers in the NLA. While not exhaustive, this list groups the main reasons explaining conflict emergence or re-emergence in Hirshabelle and Galmudug:

### → *Pre-existing and unresolved grievances:*

The absence of an effective and consensus-based conflict resolution system in the NLA implies that many disputes and conflicts are never truly settled in the eyes of all parties. In many cases, grievances persist and are passed down to subsequent generations. This persistence of grievances, coupled with a tendency toward the "clanisation" of conflicts, tends to heighten the risk of conflicts.

### → *Competition for land and water:*

Conflicts at the communal level stem from resource access or management, particularly land, water, and pastures. Disputes may arise from conflicts over land delineation, resource use conflicts (e.g., pastoralists vs. farmers), resource degradation, or borehole drilling by displaced populations.

### → *Political and communal tensions:*

Linked to unresolved grievances and competition for access to resources, political and communal tensions are frequent in Somalia and the NLA. Most clans harbor grievances against rivals, and clan-based resource management or exclusion from political/administrative positions can be conflict sources.

### → *Competing judicial systems:*

The existence of various judicial frameworks (official, xeer, Shari'ah courts), coupled with the lack of consensus on their usage, undermines the legitimacy of judicial decisions. This encourages disputing parties to seek favorable judgments and secondary rulings from conflicting conflict resolution institutions. In this sense, the departure of Al-Shabaab from the NLA creates a political vacuum that is poised to escalate tensions in the decentralisation of justice.

A notable observation, consistent with recent academic findings, is that climate change is not identified by the populations or stakeholders as a direct factor causing conflicts. However, due to the pronounced political, economic, and environmental fragility of the NLA, these conflict factors are particularly vulnerable and sensitive to meteorological and environmental changes induced by climate. The consequences of climate change, particularly on precipitation variability and the occurrence of natural hazards, significantly impact agricultural and pastoral activities<sup>136</sup>. This, in turn, undermines the livelihoods of a large portion of the population and prompts significant population displacements, as evidenced during recent episodes of droughts and floods in these regions.

**Competition for access and exploitation of land, water, and pastures is a crucial factor underlying conflicts in Somalia as a whole and in the states of Hirshabelle and Galmudug in particular**<sup>137</sup>.

As climate change exacerbates food and water insecurity, it also disrupts the traditional nomadic patterns of pastoral and agro-pastoral communities, giving rise to heightened conflicts<sup>138</sup>. The strategic positioning of Al-Shabaab further complicates the situation, as the group exploits resource competition to establish authority and position itself as a mediator for resource management and dispute resolution<sup>139</sup>.

In various instances, armed groups and political factions leverage weather-related losses and conflict experiences to exploit grievances among the population. This relationship is widely acknowledged in the operations of UNSOM and the strategic framework of the UN Country Team, where a direct causal link is recognised between protracted disagreements related to natural resources and land, and Somalia's deadliest violent clashes<sup>140</sup>. Resource scarcity resulting from extreme weather events, coupled with the loss of homes or family members, plays a central role in generating grievances and strengthens Al-Shabaab's influence over vulnerable populations<sup>141</sup>. Local political elites capitalise on these unresolved or pre-existing grievances, reinforcing their own agendas. This historical context, inter-

twined with clan relations, remains a key driver of conflict dynamics at the national level<sup>142</sup>.

And while the relationship between climatic and environmental factors on one hand, and the risk of conflict on the other hand, is not clearly established in research, **insights from multiple interviews and workshop held with Somali political stakeholders suggest a strong perceived correlation between climate/environment and the risk of conflict**<sup>143</sup>. This perception is based on both the consequences on resource competition and land conflicts mentioned earlier, as well as historical, political, and economic factors specific to the Somali context.

While conflict dynamics remain inherently complex and challenging to predict, **the links between these weather-enhanced fragility factors and the risk of conflicts are increasingly confirmed by research, notably suggesting the significant contribution of climate-related environmental change to conflicts between herders and farmers**. For instance, several studies suggest that as extreme weather events impact the local economy, particularly livestock markets in Somalia, they lower the threshold for individuals facing economic hardship to engage in violence<sup>144</sup>.

Correlation linkages between climate/environment and conflicts are also suggested by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in a 2023 study on the climate-conflict nexus conducted in several countries in the Horn, including the states of Hiiraan and Galmudug in Somalia<sup>145</sup>. By collecting data on conflict intensity, rainfall, and vegetation density, the study concluded a significant correlation between NDVI variance (assessing quantity and quality of vegetation) and the risk of conflict, with an increase of one inch of rainfall resulting in a 7% reduction in the risk of conflict<sup>146</sup>. Such results must be interpreted with caution and warrant particular attention, especially considering the El Niño meteorological phenomenon that increases rainfall variability in Somalia<sup>147</sup>.

In the ongoing efforts to counter Al-Shabaab in Galmudug and Hirshabelle, **it is crucial for political and military decision-makers to recognise the pivotal role of social contracts governing resource sharing and land management in shaping and exacerbating grievances between communities.** The Somali Armed Forces and the federal government must actively contribute to stability, fostering a perception of equitable treatment in the communities' access to land, water, and pastures, as well as in the resolution of conflicts related to their utilisation.

In this context, **the government's reclaiming of Newly Liberated Areas should prioritise fostering a sense of inclusion and empowerment** among local populations.

Additionally, **ensuring facilitated, secure, and equitable access to essential resources for their livelihood is imperative.** The Somali Armed Forces need to be vigilant in avoiding actions that contribute to the escalation of existing grievances and discriminatory practices. Particular attention should be given to maintaining access to water, as instances of water cuts during shortages have been identified as significant contributors to the emergence or re-emergence of violent conflicts<sup>148</sup>. It is essential for military operations to be conducted with an understanding of the potential socio-economic impacts on local communities, ensuring that their actions do not inadvertently intensify existing tensions but rather contribute to sustainable peace and stability.

## Box 2 — CONSULTATION WORKSHOP HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2024

On February 27, 2024, the European Institute of Peace (EIP) held a Consultation Workshop in Mogadishu to present the initial findings of this integrated climate and conflict analysis to key actors with security and environmental mandates at the federal level and at the Hirshabelle and Galmudug States. The workshop convened 30 participants from Federal and Member States Ministries, ATMIS, IGAD, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Berghof Foundation.

The workshop brought together key institutional actors to share information and collaborate on environmental peacemaking issues in the NLA. In addition to confirming initial findings and conclusions stemming from the report, participants provided details on the tangible interactions between climate and conflict risks at local level, allowing for the contextualisation of this relationship within the NLA and emphasising the need for local needs and context assessments to nurture environmental peacemaking programming.

Crucially, participants have also discussed and enhanced the preliminary recommendations outlined in the report, laying the groundwork for collaborative action (→ *IV Recommendations and entry points for environmental peacemaking*).

Participants stated that the Institute's work in Somalia have contributed to enhancing coordination among government institutions, provided a platform for discussion and information exchange, contributed to the integration of climate security in the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and increased awareness and knowledge on climate security and environmental peacemaking in the country.

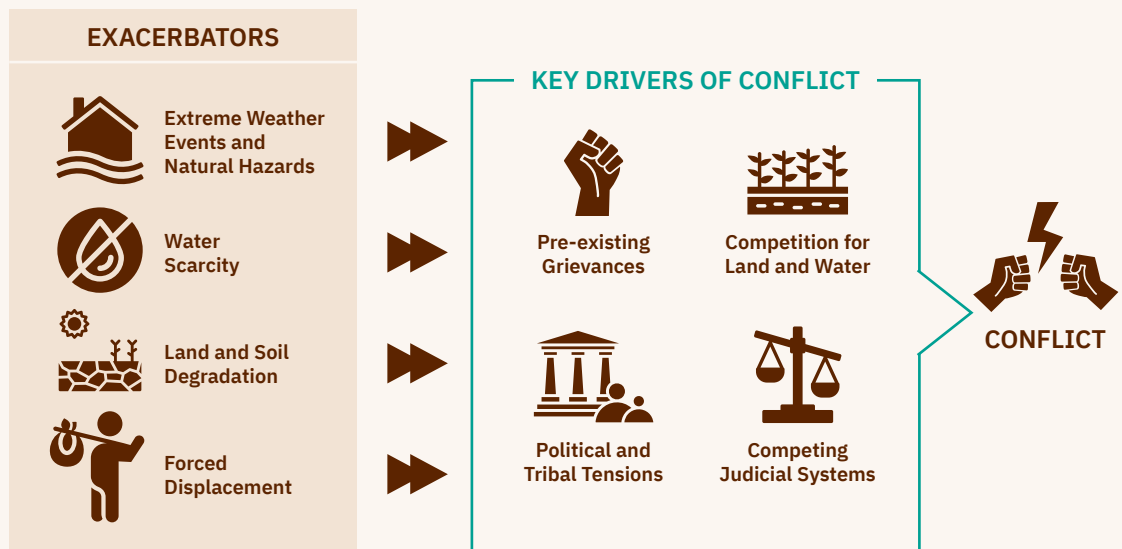
### 3.3 — Pathways linking environmental factors and armed conflicts

Climate change impacts all communities, irrespective of their clan, social, or political affiliations. Addressing environmental issues and their associated social, economic, and political consequences provides policymakers with an opportunity to bolster institutional legitimacy, foster community trust, and reduce the risk of conflict in the NLA.

For this purpose, the European Institute of Peace has delineated four interconnected pathways that exemplify the interplay between climate-related factors such as extreme weather events and their repercussions on local environments and livelihoods, and drivers of conflict within the NLA. Importantly, these pathways do not claim to provide a comprehensive explanation of conflict dynamics or assert a direct causal link between climate and security. Rather, they aim to serve as practical tools to assist policymakers and international partners in identifying areas with substantial cross-cutting benefits between climate and conflict.

These pathways stem from an extensive review of existing literature, consultations with institutional stakeholders, international implementing partners, and insights from local key informants. Each of these pathways has been selected for its role in exacerbating the four context-specific interrelated key drivers of conflicts identified earlier: (a) pre-existing grievances, (b) competition for land and water, (c) political and communal tensions, (d) competing judicial systems. Given its direct and indirect impacts on social, economic, and political dynamics, especially within vulnerable regions and communities, climate change intersects with and intensifies these key drivers of conflict. In the case of the NLA, the examination of climate-related security risks has pinpointed four specific pathways as entry points for implementing effective environmental peacemaking initiatives (→ Figure 6).

**Figure 6** — Key inter-related pathways in which climate-related factors influence conflict risk





## PATHWAY 1: EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND NATURAL HAZARDS

Climate change is reshaping weather patterns in Somalia, leading to a heightened frequency of extreme events such as droughts and floods. These climatic shifts wreak havoc on the land, causing widespread destruction of crops, depletion of water reserves, and triggering population displacement<sup>149</sup>. The resulting impact on livelihoods intensifies competition for essential resources and land, creating a volatile environment<sup>150</sup>.

The escalated competition for resources and land, coupled with pre-existing grievances and tribal affiliations, significantly raises the risk of armed conflicts as it reignites unresolved grievances and fuels political and communal tensions. This risk is particularly pronounced in regions already vulnerable to climate-induced disruptions and those with a history of conflict. In the Newly Liberated Areas in particular, the interaction between climate-induced resource scarcity and pre-existing socio-political tensions creates a volatile nexus that facilitates armed conflict, exacerbated by the presence of Al-Shabaab and a lack of trust in the local government<sup>151</sup>. Additionally, when disputes arise in the NLA, the lack of trust in multiple and competing judicial institutions, coupled with the absence of enforcement of legal decisions, hinders the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Recent research highlights livelihood deterioration as a critical link between climate change and conflict in Somalia<sup>152</sup>. The deterioration in livelihoods is exacerbated by long-standing conflicts, weak governance, and the predominance of agropastoral livelihoods, rendering communities more susceptible to the impacts of climate change<sup>153</sup>. Moreover, armed groups, such as al-Shabaab, challenge relief efforts during droughts, undermining resilience and exacerbating conflicts<sup>154</sup>. Government counter-offensives against these groups further disrupt traditional herding and farming practices, intensifying vulnerability to climate-induced hardships<sup>155</sup>.

Due to these multiple layers of interaction, **addressing the interplay between climate change and conflict requires a comprehensive approach.** Government strategies and development initiatives must integrate climate change considerations into policies and projects related to agricultural production, food security, livelihoods and security.

In the NLA in particular, this integration should be embedded into a conflict-sensitive framework, emphasising trust-building and enabling local communities to identify and address climate-resilient initiatives. This approach aims to prioritise sustainable peace by empowering communities to implement impactful measures aligned with



## PATHWAY 2: WATER SCARCITY

both climate adaptation and conflict resolution. Arid geographical conditions in Somalia, coupled with the scarcity of renewable water resources, create a heightened vulnerability to water scarcity. Repeated episodes of failed rains and drought have further intensified this situation, placing increased strain on water resources and livelihoods. Unsurprisingly, the escalating water scarcity and its agricultural, social, and economic ramifications disproportionately affect communities without readily available access to clean water, which includes extensive regions of Galmudug.

The equation is stark: as water resources diminish and access to clean water recedes, vegetation degradation ensues, leading to diminished agricultural productivity and a shortage of grazing lands<sup>156</sup>. This scarcity, in turn, sparks or reignites conflicts between pastoralists and farmers vying for land uses<sup>157</sup>. In affected areas, the traditional practice of sharing water and pasture among clans becomes strained. The resulting competition for increasingly scarce resources heightens tensions between clans, creating a fertile ground for conflict escalations<sup>158</sup>. Water scarcity exacerbates pre-existing grievances and competition, as communities contend for limited resources, intensifying political and communal tensions. The consequences of these environmental changes extend beyond immediate livelihood losses, to encompass long-term displacement and marginalisation of vulnerable groups, fuelling grievances and violence among and between communities<sup>159</sup>.

Access to water thus becomes a strategic asset for both armed groups and the government, serving as a means of gaining legitimacy by posi-

tioning themselves as guarantors of resource distribution and availability. Control over water access, distribution and management also allows Al-Shabaab to exert additional pressure on the population through the threat of well destruction and water deprivation. Furthermore, due to the absence of a robust and universally recognised rule of law, disputes over water resources lack effective mechanisms for peaceful resolution, further contributing to instability and the use of force to settle disputes.

As recent research emphasises the substantial risk posed by water shortages in regions grappling with water scarcity often acting as significant catalysts for conflict, it is imperative for both the government and the Somali Armed Forces to prioritise the restoration of water access and ensure its equitable distribution among populations in the NLA after the departure of Al-Shabaab<sup>160</sup>. **Beyond providing a positive signal of the state's resurgence in the Newly Liberated Areas, the fair allocation of this vital resource serves to alleviate both inter- and intra-community tensions and enhance food security and livelihoods.**

To bolster its public image and garner trust, the government should proactively communicate its role in restoring water infrastructure, often targeted and damaged by Al-Shabaab during the intervention of the Somali Armed Forces<sup>161</sup>. Additionally, and despite operational challenges in the liberation of the NLA, it is imperative for the government to avoid being associated with water cuts that could adversely affect the population, potentially leading to their discontent and oppositions<sup>162</sup>.



### PATHWAY 3: LAND DEGRADATION

The degradation of soils affects numerous areas in Hirshabelle and Galmudug, impacted by extreme weather events, water scarcity, deforestation, and incursions of saline water. This degradation not only negatively impacts the productivity of agricultural activities and the sustainability of pasture areas but also exacerbates existing resource competition and conflicts over water and land use, leading to livelihood losses and frequent inter-communal conflicts<sup>163</sup>. Moreover, in rural areas surrounding Beledweyne, soil degradation has been linked to movements of violent groups, which strategically exploit climate crisis conditions to shift local power balances and further destabilise the region<sup>164</sup>.

This degradation sets off a self-perpetuating cycle, escalating pressure on existing resources, fostering competition for land, and inflaming existing grievances, ultimately contributing to overall insecurity in the Newly Liberated Areas<sup>165</sup>. Population displacements and urbanisation further

compound the issue, with informal settlements of IDPs often resulting in soil damage and accrued deforestation<sup>166</sup>.

Soil degradation poses a significant challenge throughout Somalia, prompting key stakeholders, including the Federal Government of Somalia, Federal Member States, Al-Shabaab, and traditional leaders, to independently advocate for similar policies and actions to mitigate its impact such as the condemnation of deforestation.

**This shared concern creates opportunities for collaborative agreements and mutually beneficial accords among conflicting parties.** In heavily affected areas, such as the coastal belt of Galmudug, where desertification and soil salinisation present acute challenges, concerted efforts are crucial to tackle these specific issues and address the challenge of soil degradation and its security impacts in the NLA.



Farmland near Jowhar, Hirshabelle State. Credit: UN Photo / Omar Abdisalan, 2021.



## PATHWAY 4: FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Forced displacement in Somalia is a multifaceted challenge shaped by the complex relationship between climate-induced events, water scarcity, and conflict-driven insecurity. The recurring onslaught of droughts and floods, exacerbated by armed conflicts and resource competition, significantly contributes to a complex displacement crisis<sup>167</sup>.

The nexus between climate change, migration patterns, and conflict risk amplifies vulnerabilities across the country<sup>168</sup>. Climate-induced environmental stresses, notably water scarcity in Somalia's arid landscape, act as catalysts for displacement as communities seek areas with more sustainable access to water resources, livelihoods and infrastructure<sup>169</sup>. This reflects not only immediate survival imperatives but also underscores the broader challenges associated with forced migration in response to environmental factors.

A crucial dimension of forced displacement is the subsequent urbanisation driven by rural-to-urban migration patterns<sup>170</sup>. Displaced populations, including IDPs, frequently concentrate in urban and peri-urban areas, thereby intensifying resource strain and exacerbating infrastructure challenges. In rural settings, the establishment of informal settlements often targeting areas where ownership is disputed or

access is temporarily granted by local populations, sometimes comprising family members or clan affiliates of the displaced. However, these settlements frequently transition from temporary to permanent, sparking conflicts over land ownership, land utilisation, and rightful entitlement to these territories<sup>171</sup>.

While it should be assumed that migration has a systematic or direct impact on conflict risks<sup>172</sup>, stakeholder interviews highlighted a pattern in which population concentration in a context of resource scarcity heightens the potential for conflicts over property and livelihoods as displaced communities compete for limited resources in their new urban settings, creating conditions conducive to tensions and disputes<sup>173</sup>.

### **Addressing forced displacement in Somalia requires a holistic and integrated approach.**

Combining climate-resilient strategies, conflict-sensitive policies, and sustainable development initiatives is crucial for effective governance. Recognising and addressing the specific challenges faced by IDPs, particularly in urban settings, becomes paramount. Whenever possible, the government and its implementing partners should attempt to empower displaced communities, fostering sustainable community-led solutions to climate- and security-related challenges.

### 3.4 — Implementing environmental peacemaking initiatives in Galmudug and Hirshabelle

*In the analysis of the complex interactions between climate and conflict dynamics in the NLA – as outlined by the aforementioned pathways – climate change and its consequences should be considered both as risk factors but also as subjects of common interest capable of fostering dialogue and conflict resolution between communities.*

*To facilitate the implementation of environmental peacemaking initiatives, it is essential for all stakeholders involved – including local communities, NGOs, civil society organisations and international donors, starting with the Federal Government and the Member States – should actively engage in local discussions and consultations with all parties to conflict in the NLA.*

*Within these inclusive discussions, the government and its partners should attempt to:*

- ↳ 1. Acknowledge context-specific interactions between climate and conflict dynamics at the community-level;*
  - ↳ 2. Identify the operational modalities and collaboration mechanisms suitable to achieve successful and sustainable environmental peacemaking and;*
  - ↳ 3. Anticipate cross-cutting challenges in the NLA and how to overcome them. This holistic approach strives to address the specific needs of the populations, laying the foundation for the establishment of lasting and sustainable peace.*
-

### 3.4.1 — ACKNOWLEDGING THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CONFLICT DYNAMICS IN THE NLA

As highlighted in the conflict analysis, **conflict in both Galmudug and Hirshabelle tend to arise from deeply rooted issues surrounding land ownership, resource access and political dynamics, often fuelled by the lack of proper documentation and demarcation, leading to territorial disputes among various communities**<sup>174</sup>. Over time, these disputes can escalate, with attacks of retaliation becoming a chronic source of conflict<sup>175</sup>.

Amidst these challenges, the intersection of climate and security risks introduces an additional layer of complexity. The exposure to frequent climate shocks, coupled with the anticipated escalation of rainfall variability due to climate change, heightens competition for critical resources such as water, land, and pasture, leading to an increased risk of conflict and the exploitation of vulnerable segments of the population<sup>176</sup>. Observing these underlying dynamics, combined with the continuous depletion of cultivable land<sup>177</sup> and renewable

freshwater<sup>178</sup> over the years in Somalia, calls for both the full integration of a climate-sensitivity lens into conflict analyses and concerted efforts to address the climate root causes of conflicts as part of mediation and stabilisation processes.

As a subject affecting all communities and entailing numerous unresolved grievances, environmental peacemaking approaches, including mediation over natural resources disputes and peace-positive natural resources management, provide a promising approach to bringing together competing communities. This is especially relevant in the NLA, where conflicts predominantly stem from competition for resources. The environmental peacemaking framework could prove particularly beneficial in this context, facilitating the reestablishment of dialogue between communities, enhancing population resilience to climate shocks through the establishment of resource-sharing agreements, and restoring trust in institutions responsible for these peace accords.

#### Tailoring environmental peacemaking initiatives to NLA contexts

Academic research acknowledges that, just as mismanagement of water and land can contribute to conflicts and negatively impact resolution processes, effective natural resource management may also prove critical in building resilience, reducing fragility and mitigating conflict<sup>179</sup>. These findings underscore both the significant potential of climate and environmental initiatives to contribute to cohesion and peace, but also emphasise the need for great caution regarding the potential adverse consequences of projects that are not tailored to local challenges<sup>180</sup>.

This is due to several factors. Firstly, the environmental consequences of climate change

and exposure to climate shocks exhibit significant variations between regions, including within a single territory, two villages within the NLA could therefore present different needs. Secondly, it is crucial to emphasise that the impact of climate risks on conflict dynamics is inherently context-specific, contingent upon a multitude of historical, social, political, geographical, and economic factors<sup>181</sup>. Consequently, a given climate shock may exert divergent effects on communities and their relationships, sometimes in entirely opposite ways. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to environmental peacemaking, and as a result, all environmental peacemaking initiatives should be preceded by

a comprehensive integrated analysis of climate and security risks to ensure an effective and tailored intervention enabling sustainable peace.

Tailoring interventions can prove to be complex especially in challenging and hard-to-reach areas where community rivalries run high and trust in institutions for mediating roles is lacking. Despite the challenges, this crucial step requires the establishment of inclusive dialogue with the local populations to facilitate information exchange, collaboration with local authorities, and the implementation of customised solutions in coordination with various ministries and implementing partners.

The Institute, in collaboration with researchers, institutional stakeholders, and implementing

partners in the NLA, has compiled a set of recommendations on this, available in the following section. However, it is important to highlight that these recommendations shall be regarded as initial suggestions which will require to be further elaborated and detailed when considering their adoption and implementation.

For example, this would entail factors such as (1) the security and continuity of initiatives in areas where Al-Shabaab remains a threat, (2) monitoring dispute resolution mechanisms with specific and tailored metrics, (3) inclusive engagement of marginalised groups such as minority clans, women and youth, and (4) contingency plans to manage the negative impacts of specific security risks related to environmental and climate impacts.

## Access and security limitations

One of the primary impediments to environmental peacemaking in the NLA stems from the area's historical association with Al-Shabaab. The lack of infrastructure, compounded by the remnants of conflict, poses formidable barriers. Security concerns impede the access of implementing partners to the field, hindering the project delivery. Rebuilding and securitising roads, bridges and other essential infrastructure are paramount to overcoming these challenges. Additionally, investing in the reconstruction of these vital pathways not only enhances security measures but also facilitates the population's reconnection with nearby towns, markets, economic opportunities, and national institutions. This, in turn, contributes to enhancing national cohesion and prosperity.

As Al-Shabaab remains a threat in the NLA, the necessity for the government and the Somali

Armed Forces to maintain their long-term presence is evident. Owing to a deficiency in equipment and human resources, security capabilities face the risk of being overstretched, resulting in a limited presence in urban centres within the NLA<sup>182</sup>. This limitation poses a significant challenge to sustaining security comprehensively across these territories.

Furthermore, the initial successes of the government operation should not overshadow the reality that Al-Shabaab has consistently demonstrated adaptability and resilience in the past<sup>183</sup>. The withdrawal of Al-Shabaab and the de facto regaining of control by the government do not guarantee the immediate cessation of violence in the short or medium term<sup>184</sup>. Therefore, initiatives for security and peace must be strategically planned within a comprehensive, long-term framework.

## Overcoming cross-cutting operational challenges

Implementing environmental peacemaking initiatives in the Newly Liberated Areas (NLA) of Somalia demands a strategic approach to navigate multifaceted challenges. Due to the long-enduring control of Al-Shabaab and the relative isolation of these regions for many years, the government and its partners will face addi-

tional challenges in successfully designing and introducing peace initiatives. These include addressing access and security limitations, navigating political and communal trust concerns, managing financial and accountability challenges, and meeting the urgency for timely implementation.

## Political and communal trust concerns

In addition to security challenges, the government faces heightened trust issues in the Newly Liberated Areas. The existing competition between political actors, conflicting power dynamics among clans and the enduring lack of trust towards institutions are poised to escalate tensions, impeding the stakeholders' willingness to engage with initiatives led by external actors<sup>185</sup>. This poses significant concerns for collaborative environmental peacemaking efforts. It is crucial for the government's actions to be perceived positively, reassuring diverse stakeholders about their role in post-Al Shabaab governance modalities. This reassurance is vital for ensuring the inclusive participation of all actors in mediation processes.

Successfully navigating these challenges demands nuanced strategies that not only acknowledge historical grievances but also actively foster inter-clan dialogue and build trust. Establishing a foundation for sustainable peace involves empowering local actors and ensuring equitable representation of various groups and communities in decision-making bodies. This inclusivity is particularly crucial in resolving disputes related to water, land, and pastures. The peacemaking process and the newly established governance modalities must actively work towards empowering local actors and achieving fair representation, especially in the resolution of disputes concerning essential resources.

## Financial and accountability challenges

Apart from security, finance and accountability challenges are probably the most formidable challenges to overcome in order to achieve environmental peacemaking in the NLA<sup>186</sup>. While already familiar with such challenges in their activities across the broader Somali territory, the government and its partners encounter exceptionally difficult budgetary limitations in the NLA.

In the NLA, peacemaking efforts must be associated with critically urgent needs spanning essential

services like water, energy, transportation, education, health, and more. These pressing priorities must all be carefully considered within a rapid timeframe and with severely restricted financial and technical resources. Despite their familiarity with these challenges in other regions of Somalia, the government and its partners grapple with an unparalleled set of constraints, where competing priorities demand swift attention amid scarce financial and technical resources. The financial intricacies become even more pronounced

in the NLA, requiring meticulous navigation to ensure the effective implementation of environmental peacemaking initiatives alongside vital service provisions, while ensuring transparent and accountable use of available resources.

Recognising the established connection between peacemaking and climate adaptation, the Insti-

tute considers that environmental peacemaking initiatives may offer instrumental avenues for conflict prevention and stability, as well as securing additional funding and unlocking resources to significantly contribute to sustainable and lasting peace in the Newly Liberated Areas.

### Racing against time

In the Newly Liberated Areas, where the government's trust is fragile, and the urgency of service delivery looms large, the race against time becomes a defining factor. **Initiatives embarked upon in these regions must not only yield quick and visible outcomes but also be strategic in setting the right first impression.** The imperative is to make a positive impact swiftly, restoring confidence in the government's commitment to support communities.

Timing emerges as a critical element in gaining trust and delivering tangible benefits to the population. The government faces a narrow and short window to showcase its ability to address the

pressing needs of the communities. This time sensitivity highlights the importance of incorporating immediate actions that yield quick results, complementing the longer-term stabilisation and environmental peacemaking efforts<sup>187</sup>.

**In the NLA, the success of peacemaking efforts is likely to hinge on the government's capacity to satisfy the immediate needs of the population, creating a positive initial impression that paves the way for sustained impact in the future.**

Balancing the need for expeditious action with the imperative of sustainable impact is a delicate task, however, his strategic approach ensures that the government not only meets the urgent demands of

*In conclusion, the successful implementation of environmental peacemaking in the Newly Liberated Areas necessitates a comprehensive approach that addresses access and security limitations, navigates political and communal trust concerns, manages financial and accountability challenges, and carefully addresses timing constraints. These challenges, combined with the remnants of Al-Shabaab's control and the urgent need for service delivery, highlight the complexity of the task at hand. Overcoming these cross-cutting operational challenges is pivotal for fostering lasting peace and sustainable development in the NLA. It will require intensive coordination and interdisciplinary collaboration of all actors across the board, from FGS and FMS ministries to international donors, NGOs, civil society organisations, traditional leaders and local communities, the concerted efforts of all actors are essential for realising lasting positive change in the region<sup>188</sup>.*



**RECOMMENDATIONS  
& ENTRY POINTS  
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL  
PEACEMAKING**

*The integrated analysis of the interrelations between climate risks and conflict risks reveals numerous weaknesses within the NLA, presenting opportunities to strengthen capacities, enhance social cohesion, and achieve lasting peace through collaborative environmental peacemaking initiatives.*

*The following recommendations aim to facilitate dialogue and collaboration among governmental and non-governmental actors by articulating concrete and actionable measures addressing the climate-related root causes of conflicts in the NLA.*

*These recommendations were developed as part of the research, based on a comprehensive literature review and expert consultations, and further refined during the consultation workshop held on February 27<sup>th</sup> in Mogadishu. As such, these recommendations represent a synthesis of the shared ambitions of the stakeholders involved in this project for the implementation of environmental peacemaking in the Newly Liberated Areas.*



## INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE FOR POST-AL-SHABAAB TRANSITION

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p>Involve communities in decision-making and governance processes immediately upon the effective reconquest of Newly Liberated Areas.</p> <p>Communities that have lived under the rule of Al-Shabaab may have mixed feelings toward a new governing entity, which might be perceived as distant or foreign to their concerns.</p> <p>With the aim of restoring trust in institutions, national, state, and district administrations should attempt to quickly establish communication channels and rebuild a trust-based relationship with populations.</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Pursue the government’s ongoing decentralisation efforts.</li> <li>↪ Enhance collaboration between state/district/village authorities and communities to elaborate and develop joint initiatives, thereby fostering trust-building and service delivery.</li> <li>↪ Empower local communities to suggest and lead climate, community-building and security initiatives to ensure lasting benefits, with minimal involvement from the FGS.</li> <li>↪ Ensure that governance systems strengthen the distinctive and mutually beneficial strengths of both formal and informal institutions. Customary institutions excel in conflict resolution and enforcement of rules related to water use and access. Community-level formal institutions are more suitable for day-to-day management responsibilities, such as operating and maintaining water systems.</li> <li>↪ Explore the possibility of setting up peace committees in each district/state, ensuring inclusive community and gender representation in collaboration with elders. Learning from past peace committee experiences, the MOIFAR should integrate the advantages of structured top-down coordination with community empowerment to maximise the likelihood of success.</li> <li>↪ Ensure equitable representation of clans, women and youth, especially for minorities fearing potential domination by large clans replacing that of Al-Shabaab.</li> <li>↪ Ensure joint security maintenance involving the Somali Armed Forces, the Federal Member States (FMS), and local communities to prevent the return of Al-Shabaab.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Community leaders</li> <li>→ FGS MOIFAR</li> <li>→ FMS MOIFAR</li> <li>→ Somali Armed Forces</li> <li>→ ATMIS</li> </ul>

## ASSESSING CONTEXT-SPECIFIC NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p>Conduct assessments of community needs and specific tension factors for each relevant village, acknowledging the diverse contexts in Hirshabelle and Galmudug.</p> <p>There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Initiatives should address concrete needs, enhancing the chances of success and community empowerment. This approach aims to resolve grievances around day-to-day issues while building trust in institutions within the Newly Liberated Areas.</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Assess the primary needs of the population and how the government can address them. These assessments should pay particular attention to basics services infrastructure including water, clinics, streetlights, police stations, schools and youth infrastructure (especially stadiums).</li> <li>↪ Promote coordination between local stakeholders, civil society organisations, FMS and FGS in addressing climate-security risks. This may be achieved by establishing regular coordination meetings, enabling knowledge sharing, project monitoring, operational collaboration and preventing the duplication of efforts between administrations.</li> <li>↪ Collaborate with a broader spectrum of stakeholders to gain a comprehensive understanding of local capacities related to climate stress, conflict resolution, and resilience building, to deepen contextual knowledge on climate-induced triggers and address pertinent issues.</li> <li>↪ Establish secure spaces for local communities to engage in discussions, enabling them to express their concerns. Identify challenges at the intersection of climate change, conflict, environmental issues, and natural resource concerns, and encourage the generation of recommendations and initiatives to address these issues.</li> <li>↪ Strengthen and enhance the local governance system’s capacity to monitor and respond to climate induced conflict risks, through community-led early warning and response systems.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Community leaders</li> <li>→ Religious leaders</li> <li>→ District councils</li> <li>→ Water management committees</li> <li>→ Resource management committees</li> </ul>

## ADDRESSING RESOURCE AND LAND MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES AS ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p><b>Addressing resource and land management challenges as root causes of conflict</b></p> <p>Concentrate efforts on addressing conflict root drivers, namely, access and management of resources and land.</p> <p>The government and implementing partners should prioritise interventions that specifically target land, water, and pasture, identified as significant conflict drivers in the NLA, and ensure that the withdrawal of Al-Shabaab is not followed by heightened disputes surrounding these issues.</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Address land ownership challenges with input from local authorities (land tenure and registration, land dispute resolution)</li> <li>↪ Assess governance and exclusion patterns around resource management practices.</li> <li>↪ Establish dedicated justice authorities and processes at FGS and FMS levels and focus on resolving existing land disputes.</li> <li>↪ Establish inclusive water management committees / resource management committees.</li> <li>↪ Enforce transhumance corridors to reduce the risk of conflict between pastors and farmers.</li> <li>↪ Define pasture-sharing and water-sharing modalities (water rights, land rights, access times, quotas, etc.), agreed by all parties to prevent future disputes or conflicts. Establish and uniformly enforce penalties for offenses against such agreements.</li> <li>↪ Break institutional silos between security and climate-related projects by enhancing climate-sensitivity and conflict-sensitivity to respective projects of MOIFAR and MOECC.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Community leaders</li> <li>→ Water management committees</li> <li>→ Resource management committees</li> <li>→ FGS MOECC</li> <li>→ FMS MOECC</li> <li>→ Community justice councils</li> </ul>

## REBUILDING LEGITIMACY AND CONFIDENCE IN JUDICIAL SYSTEMS

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p>Restore the legitimacy of judicial institutions to restore confidence in institutions and eliminate a rallying factor for Al-Shabaab.</p> <p>In many regions, the lack of trust in judicial institutions preceded the emergence of Al-Shabaab, stemming for a perception of inefficiency or unfairness.</p> <p>The liberation of the NLA should serve as an opportunity to rebuild the community’s trust in these judicial institutions. This reestablishment of judicial institutions can only happen through the acceptance of the population and the improvement of their perception of these institutions. Consequently, the newly established judicial bodies must be rooted locally, facilitate prompt and equitable justice, alongside effective and sustainable enforcement.</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Draw inspiration from Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, combining traditional justice with government support.</li> <li>↪ Promote good governance and local justice.</li> <li>↪ Assess clan dynamics and disputes settlements at local level, to ensure all communities and groups benefit from fair justice.</li> <li>↪ Strengthen traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, by providing skill training to mediators such as community elders, religious leaders, professionals, women, and youth.</li> <li>↪ Demonstrate quick and fair justice delivery to disincentivise alternative justice delivery.</li> <li>↪ Ensure the enforcement of justice decisions to restore trust and respect in judicial institutions.</li> <li>↪ Communicate effectively on justice served to enhance transparency and community awareness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Community leaders</li> <li>→ Religious leaders</li> <li>→ Women, Youth</li> <li>→ Community justice councils</li> <li>→ District peace committees</li> </ul>

## PROACTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT FOR RESOURCE-BASED DISPUTES

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p>Anticipate and establish conflict management mechanisms around resources to prevent tensions in case of climatic disasters or other events intensifying pressure on land or natural resources (armed conflicts, displacement, drought, floods, etc.).</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Establish and maintain a communication network between villages to monitor well levels and pasture conditions.</li> <li>↪ Establish local contingency plans to organise and agree upon resource in the face of disaster or resource scarcity.</li> <li>↪ Enhance equal access to water resources between IDPs and host communities by adopting multi-village level supply systems and resource-sharing agreements to extend services to communities left behind.</li> <li>↪ Improve government handling of displaced populations, notably through the addressing of issues arising from IDP settlements.</li> <li>↪ Strengthen compensation mechanisms for agricultural landowners facing losses due to climate disasters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Community leaders</li> <li>→ Religious leaders</li> <li>→ FMS MOECC / MOIFAR</li> <li>→ FGS MOECC / MOIFAR</li> <li>→ International donors and NGOs</li> </ul>

## PROMOTING NATIONAL UNITY AND PROSPERITY THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC CORRIDORS

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p>The development of road and port infrastructure is critical in opening up rural provinces and reconnecting various communities to economic opportunities and national institutions.</p> <p>Investing in the construction and upkeep of these vital networks not only supports economic growth and national unity but also strengthens resilience in the face of crises. Specifically, these transportation routes are indispensable for advancing trade and facilitating relations between Federal Member States (FMS) and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS).</p> <p>To ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of these infrastructures, it is imperative to also enhance security measures, eliminating roadblocks and informal levies imposed by armed groups on transport and trade.</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Support the activity or the opening of local markets and ensure equal treatment of communities in the access to them.</li> <li>↪ Build and maintain infrastructure to connect villages to markers and major roads.</li> <li>↪ Develop coastal infrastructure to foster the development of the fishing industry and livestock exports.</li> <li>↪ Secure transport routes to reduce the risk of extortion and facilitate trade.</li> </ul> <p><b>Currently funded in Hirshabelle:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beledweyne-Galkaio (GIZ, AfDB, EU)</li> <li>• Mogadishu-Jowhar (Qatar Fund for Development)</li> </ul> <p><b>Currently funded in Galmudug:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beledweyne-Galkaio (GIZ, AfDB, EU)</li> <li>• Galkaio-Garowe (GIZ, AfDB, EU)</li> <li>• Galkaio-Hobyo (GIZ, AfDB, EU)</li> <li>• Hobyo port (to be funded by Galmudug FMS)</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ International donors (World Bank, EU, AfDB, EU, GIZ, Qatar Fund for Development)</li> <li>→ FGS MOTCA</li> <li>→ FMS MOTCA</li> </ul>

## COMMUNICATING ON GOVERNMENT SUCCESSES TO RESTORE TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS IN THE NLA

<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING</b></p>	<p>Building trust in formerly occupied territories can be challenging initially. The government and the Somali Armed Forces should implement an effective communication strategy on their achievements and the benefits for populations in already liberated territories, to facilitate community cooperation in newly liberated areas.</p>
<p><b>ENTRY POINTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↔ Focus on creating “pockets of stability” in the NLA, starting with low-hanging fruits and central markets, with the support of ARMIS and the Somali Armed Forces.</li> <li>↔ Communicate on the economic and security enhancements enabled by the government within those pockets of stability</li> <li>↔ Identify communication relays within community leaders and civil society organisations to disseminate success stories.</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ FGS</li> <li>→ FMS</li> <li>→ Somali Armed Forces</li> <li>→ ATMIS</li> <li>→ Traditional leaders</li> <li>→ Civil society organisations</li> </ul>



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## ANNEX 1

*Relevant localities for environmental peacemaking initiatives as identified during stakeholder workshop.*

### **GALMUDUG**

- Amara
- Cadaado / Laba-galo
- Ceeldheer
- Galcad
- Harardheere

### **HIRSHABELLE**

- Adan-yabaal
  - Beledweyne
  - Bulu-burde
  - Cadalle
  - Elbaraf
  - Jalalaqsi Adale
  - Masjid Cali Guduud
  - Mataban
  - Maxamed Saciid / Masjid Ali Gadud
  - Mogokori
  - Raga Ceel
  - Raga Ele Adan Yabaal
  - Ruun-nirgood
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