



Post-eviction development in urban areas in Somalia

Introduction

Forced evictions can be broadly defined as the permanent or temporary removal of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy against their will and without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection. They constitute gross violations of a range of internationally recognised human rights, including the human right to adequate housing, food, water, health, education, work, security of the person, freedom from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and freedom of movement. Forced evictions are often linked to displacement, the absence of legally secure tenure and an urban developed context, which are essential elements of the right to adequate housing. They generally pose key obstacles to attaining durable solutions, and yet the right to adequate housing and shelter is fundamental to living in dignity and safety. Unsafe housing and insecure housing rights also have serious implications for physical and mental health.

Moreover, threats of evictions and evictions themselves take massive psychological tolls on occupants and imply several protection risks for occupants (violence, coercion, Sexual Gender Based Violence, confiscation of legal identity documents, children abandon school, homelessness, detention, deportation, etc.), and make it difficult for occupants to maintain employment. Women are especially vulnerable to these protection risks. For example, threats of evictions are often associated with heightened domestic abuse and sexual exploitation by landowners and government officials. Additionally, evictions generally pose key obstacles to attaining durable solutions.

According to the [NRC eviction information portal](#), 568,025 forced evictions have taken place in Somalia between January 2019 and December 2021. Forced evictions are frequently associated with a lack of land tenure security when displaced populations settle spontaneously on largely private lands. This precarious settlement pattern intersects with a complex and embedded political economy influencing flows of and access to humanitarian assistance. Additionally, the lack of tenure security is an obstacle to the right of adequate housing for those living in informal settlements. According to the eviction information portal, development-based land or property acquisitions are one of the leading causes of forced evictions in Somalia. Development-related causes are categorised into owner-driven, (private investments) and state-driven development.

As a follow up to [NRC's 2021 study on evictions in Baidoa](#), the NRC field team carried out a post-eviction assessment across 350 IDP sites from which IDPs were evicted. The main objective was to establish what happens to the HLP assets after the eviction has occurred, and to analyse the extent to which the land has been developed. All the sites surveyed experienced forced evictions of IDPs between 2019 and 2020.

Methodology

This analysis applied qualitative methods and approaches to data collection. A short structured questionnaire used to describe the status of the land was used to assess IDP sites. Field observations by NRC ICLA field team and paralegals by physically visiting the sites was the main method of data collection. NRC assessed a total of 350 IDP sites across Banadir Regional Administration (BRA), Jubaland, South West State, Puntland and Somaliland from November 15th to December 2nd 2021. See the breakdown below:

REGIONS	NUMBER OF IDP SITES ASSESSED
Banadir Regional Administration	144
Bay	56
Jubaland	19
Puntland	23
Somaliland	108
Total	350 sites



Overall findings

89% of evictions were carried out by private landlords due to owner-driven development (private investments), while 11% were carried out by the state for government-led development. All evictions were carried out between 2019 and 2020.

- **Developments on land:** In 58% of the IDP sites, development had taken place with new houses, buildings, roads, or shops constructed on the land. Out of this total, in 56 of the IDP sites, new IDP households had settled on the land. In some of the sites some of the landowners had constructed new shelters for rent, while in other sites the newly settled IDP households were paying higher rental fees.
- **Land (re) sold:** In 15% of the IDP sites, the land had been sold to new landowners. Majority of these landowners had either demarcated or fenced their new land. Additionally, in some sites construction of structures such as new buildings, houses, garages, or warehouses had been completed.
- **No development:** In 23% of the IDP sites, no development had taken place with the land left vacant. Majority of these (41 IDP sites) were located in BRA.
- **Ongoing development:** In 3% of the IDP sites, development such as construction of roads or hotels was still ongoing.
- **Location not found:** In one per cent of the IDP sites, the locations were not found. This is due to errors either made during recording of the eviction incident or absence of the local monitor that recorded the incident. The land may have also been abandoned and regenerated vegetation cover making it impossible to re-locate.

1. Somaliland

- 108 IDP sites assessed in Hargeisa, Berbera, Borama, Burao, Burco, Erigavo and Las Anood.
- Out of the 108 sites, 80 faced owner-driven evictions with private citizens being the main evicting entity, while 28 faced state-driven evictions with the state being the main evicting entity.
- Out of the 80 IDP sites that experienced evictions due to owner-driven development:
 - Development took place in 54 sites where new houses and buildings have been constructed on the land. Of these, the rent has been raised in 20 sites and new IDP families have occupied the land.
 - In 20 sites, the land was sold to a new owner and subsequently, construction of new houses, buildings, warehouses or demarcation of the land had been completed.
 - Development is ongoing in three sites with the construction of roads taking place.
 - In two sites, no development that had taken place. In one site the land was vacant while in the other the plot had been demarcated.
 - For one site, the location was not found.
- Out of the 28 IDPs sites that experienced evictions due to government-led development:
 - Development had taken place in 20 sites. Out of these, roads had been surveyed and opened in 18 sites. Furthermore, in one site the military had fenced the area while, on the other new buildings were constructed.
 - In two sites, the land had been sold. In one site, a private company which is the new landowner fenced the land and it is currently being used as a garage. In the other site, the new owner had fenced and demarcated the land.
 - In four sites, no development had taken place. In one of the sites, there are plans to construct a private hospital.
 - In one site, development is ongoing with the construction of a road taking place.
 - For one site, the location was not found.

2. Puntland

- 23 IDP sites assessed in Galkayo, Garowe, and Bossaso.
- Out of the 23 IDP sites, 21 faced owner-driven evictions with private citizens being the main evicting entity, while two sites faced state-driven evictions with the state being the main evicting entity.
- Out of the 21 IDP sites that experienced evictions due to owner-driven development:
 - Development took place in 9 sites. For 7 of these, houses were immediately built on the land. In one site a large hotel was under construction. Additionally, in another site the landowner sold some plots to other people and used the remaining plots to build his house and small garden. There are still empty plots on the land within which new IDP households are occupying.
 - In 12 sites, no development had taken place. For all these sites, the plots of land remain vacant.
- Out of the 2 IDPs sites that experienced evictions due to government-led development:
 - No development had taken place.

3. Jubaland

- 19 IDP sites in Kismayo across six villages were assessed.
- All the 19 sites experienced evictions due to owner-driven development with private citizens being the main evicting entity. Of these:
 - Development took place in 11 sites where new buildings including shops were constructed.
 - In 6 sites, the land was sold. In three of these, new buildings were constructed, while in the other three the plots of land were demarcated and fenced.
 - In 2 sites, no development had taken place with the land remaining vacant. In one of the sites however, the landowner had fenced his plot of land.

3. Bay

- 56 IDP sites in Baidoa and Dinsoor across six villages were assessed.
- All the IDP sites experienced evictions due to owner-driven development with private citizens being the main evicting entity:

- Development took place in 19 sites with the construction of new houses, shops and buildings having taken place. In one site, a communal market has been constructed.
- In 8 sites, the land had been sold. In five of these, the land had been demarcated and fenced by the new landowner, while the other three sites are still acting as IDP camps for the new landowners.
- In 4 sites, the development is ongoing with construction of the new buildings having begun.
- In 19 sites, no development had taken place with the land remaining vacant. In three sites the land is near the Baidoa airport and remains vacant.
- In 5 sites, new IDP households have settled on the land.

4. Banadir Regional Administration (BRA)

- 144 IDP sites in Mogadishu were assessed.
- Out of the 144 sites, 135 faced evictions due to owner-driven development with the private citizens being the main evicting entity, while nine sites faced state-driven evictions with the state being the main evicting entity.
- Of the 135 IDP sites evicted due to owner-driven development:
 - Development had taken place in 50 sites where new buildings have been constructed.
 - In 20 sites, the land was sold. The new landowners have fenced their plots of land.
 - In 41 sites, no development had taken place with the land remaining vacant.
 - In 21 sites, new IDP households have settled on the land.
 - The location of three sites were not found.
- Of the 9 IDP sites evicted due to state-driven development:
 - In 3 sites, the land was rehabilitated. In one site a road had been constructed and opened.
 - In 4 sites, new IDP households had settled on the land.
 - In 2 sites, no development had taken place.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings show that development induced projects either by government or private property owners is a key contributing factor to forced evictions in Somalia. Of the 350 sites assessed, 89% of evictions were carried out by private landlords, while 11% were carried out by the state for government-led development. Furthermore, development had taken place in majority (58%) of the IDP sites with new houses, buildings, roads, and shops having been constructed on the land. Out of this total, in 56 of the IDP sites, new IDP households had settled on the land. In some of the sites some of the landowners had constructed new shelters for rent, while in other sites the newly settled IDP households were paying higher rental fees. In 15% of the IDP sites, the land had been sold to the new landowners. Majority of these plots of land had either demarcated or fenced. Additionally, in some sites construction of structures such as new buildings, houses, garages, or warehouses had been completed. Whereas, in 23% of the IDP sites, no development had taken place with the land left vacant. Most of these (41 IDP sites) were located in BRA.

These findings clearly show that Somalia has an active land market and a pipeline of urban infrastructure projects (including housing and business related developments) by the government and development actors, which has led to increased land values. Likewise, the improved security situation in many parts of Somalia has led to many landowners returning to claim back the land they lost during the civil war for development. It is also critical to note that there are strong linkages between rising land values with rapid urbanisation and infrastructure development. The expansion of major urban centres will continue to absorb the peri-urban areas where majority of IDP settlements are situated. This makes them attractive for private development and other more valuable forms of use hence more susceptible to forced evictions. With land values increasing, a landowner may unexpectedly decide to sell the land or redevelop it.

Contacts

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