

Summary Report: Institutionalized Marginalization of Banadiri and Minority Clans in Somalia

<https://baanadirorphan.com/>

Moq: 9/9/2024

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Somalia's Banadiri and other minority clans endure systematic marginalization, dispossession, and violence. This report explores the root causes and manifestations of their oppression, particularly focusing on dispossession and persecution, daily injustice and violence, and the struggles of minority youth. These communities face entrenched socio-economic exclusion that stifles opportunities for development and exacerbates cycles of poverty and insecurity.

Despite their deep historical roots and contributions to Somali society, they endure daily injustices, violence, and widespread discrimination. This report sheds light on the hidden and systematic mechanisms that perpetuate their marginalization, fueled by the entrenched dominance of clan-based, armed opposition groups and exclusionary practices embedded in Somalia's sociopolitical framework.

The Banadiri community, primarily concentrated in coastal cities such as Mogadishu, Merka, and Brava, boasts a rich cultural and mercantile history. Similarly, other minority clans, including the Bajuni, Gaboye, Eyle, and Tumul, have distinct traditions and economic contributions. However, their minority status has rendered them targets of oppression and exploitation, dating back to colonial times and persisting through successive Somali administrations.

Clan-based oppression has been institutionalized, with dominant clans monopolizing political power and resources while systematically excluding minority groups from decision-making, employment opportunities, and land ownership.

Systematic Oppression: Dispossession and Persecution, armed groups from dominant clans have engaged in calculated land grabs, forcibly displacing minority communities from their ancestral homes. The Banadiri, in particular, have been dispossessed of prime coastal properties, often under the guise of "reallocation" during periods of conflict or instability. Exclusion from Governance the 4.5 clan power-sharing system, a cornerstone of Somalia's political framework, marginalizes minorities by allocating them a fraction of representation in political institutions. This system reinforces structural inequalities, ensuring that Banadiri and minority voices are systematically excluded from governance and decision-making.

Daily Injustice and Violence

Minority clans face widespread violence, including targeted killings, gender-based violence, and systematic looting. Women from these communities are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and assault, with little to no recourse to justice. Armed groups often target minorities with impunity, knowing that their marginalized status prevents them from seeking redress. Economic and social marginalization economic opportunities are skewed in favor of dominant clans, leaving minority groups trapped in cycles of poverty. Discrimination in employment, education, and access to services is rampant. Many Banadiri families rely on remittances or small-scale trade, yet face extortion and harassment from clan groups.

Clan-based, armed opposition groups perpetuate a covert network of oppression aimed at solidifying dominance and erasing minority voices. These groups use ongoing instability to seize lands and resources belonging to minorities. Also influence judicial and security systems to prevent minorities from accessing justice, suppress stories of oppression and marginalization to maintain the illusion of clan base unity. Impact on Minority Communities the cumulative effect of systemic oppression has left minority clans in Somalia marginalized in every aspect of life. They suffer social alienation and treated as second-class citizens, minorities face stigma and lack of access to land, education, and employment creates entrenched poverty. Psychological trauma constant exposure to violence and persecution takes a heavy toll on mental health.

The Banadiri and other minority clans in Somalia are oppressed in their own homeland. The daily injustices, violence, and dispossession they face demand urgent action. Without structural reforms and genuine political will, these communities will continue to suffer, further destabilizing Somalia's fragile society. It is time for the nation and the international community to address this deep-seated inequality and work toward justice and inclusivity for all. (<https://pundlandpost.net/2022/07/13/oppressed-in-their-homeland>)

Clan-Based Networks and Powerful clan-based alliances use on daily to political influence, armed violence, and control of institutions to suppress minority voices and maintain dominance. Dominant clans exploit legal systems to justify land and economic exclusion, Law enforcement often acts as enforcers of oppression rather than protectors of minorities. Minority communities request several times to the judicial reform and establish independent bodies to ensure unbiased legal processes. Also Anti-Discrimination Campaigns to raise awareness about the contributions of minority clans to Somali society.

Our research and monitoring interviews of the minority clans are often derogatorily referred to as “second-class citizens.” This deep-rooted stigma fuels everyday discrimination, from denial of access to justice, healthcare to unequal treatment in schools and workplaces. Minority clans are frequently victims of targeted attacks by police and armed groups. For instance, in 2023, a series of violent raids on Banadiri fishing communities in the Lower Shabelle region left dozens dead and displaced hundreds.

Gender-Based Violence women and girls from Banadiri communities are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, with perpetrators often enjoying impunity. These attacks are not only physical but also psychological tools of oppression. As well as extortion and exploitation to Small-scale businesses run by minorities are regularly extorted by militias or Al Shabab is subjected to arbitrary taxation, reducing their profitability and sustainability. Such as violence in Mogadishu, armed groups frequently target Banadiri businesses, looting their assets and threatening their owners. In 2024, a prominent Banadiri shopkeeper was killed in a dispute over extortion payments, sparking protests from the community. Despite public outrage, no arrests were made.

Minority youth face a multitude of barriers, including limited access to education, high unemployment, and systemic exclusion from leadership opportunities. Schools in minority-dominated areas are underfunded, and youth often drop out due to financial constraints or discrimination. Unemployment and discrimination in hiring practices leaves minority youth disproportionately unemployed, forcing many to rely on informal or exploitative labor. The lack of opportunities makes minority youth vulnerable to recruitment by militias, who exploit their desperation. The marginalization of minority youth perpetuates cycles of poverty and exclusion. Many young people grow up without a sense of belonging, fostering resentment and hopelessness. Banadiri Youth in the city of Brava and Marka, Banadiri youth face high unemployment

rates and limited educational opportunities. A lack of investment in the region has left many young people disenfranchised, with some resorting to migration or joining armed groups for survival.

Clan-Based Power Dynamics: Dominant clans wield significant influence over Somalia's political and economic systems, perpetuating cycles of oppression to maintain their dominance. Addressing these challenges requires urgent action, including political reforms, economic empowerment, and community-building initiatives, without targeted efforts to dismantle entrenched systems of oppression, Somalia risks perpetuating cycles of inequality and instability. The time for action is now, to ensure justice, equity, and inclusion for all Somalis. Looting and forced displacement to minority communities are frequent targets of raids by armed groups, who destroy property, seize assets, and displace families. Killings and assassinations against Banadiri leaders and activists are common, deterring organized resistance.

Authorities, often aligned with dominant clans, may deny entry to regions or suppress findings critical of the government. Victims of violence and discrimination are often reluctant to speak out, fearing retaliation from local authorities or militias. Underreporting of violations in many cases of abuse go unreported due to fear, lack of trust in the justice system, or limited channels for filing complaints. Also local media, often controlled by dominant clans, rarely highlight injustices against minorities, further silencing their plight, market extortion of Banadiri merchants in Mogadishu's Bakara Market report regular harassment by armed groups demanding "taxes." Those who refuse to pay face violence or destruction of their goods. One merchant described losing her entire inventory after refusing a payment, leaving her family in dire poverty. In early 2024, women from a Banadiri communities in Janale village in Lower Shabelle reported being subjected to sexual violence by local clan militias. In spite of community protests, no arrests were made, and victims received no medical or psychological support. In Brava, Banadiri families were forced to flee their homes due to repeated attacks by armed groups claiming their lands. These families now live in makeshift camps without basic necessities, facing constant threats of eviction. In many areas, militias act as de facto authorities, enforcing their own rules and exploiting vulnerable populations.

Human rights monitoring groups have historically concentrated on broader conflicts involving dominant clans, overlooking the unique struggles of minority communities. Existing reports often generalize human rights violations, failing to highlight the systemic discrimination and targeted violence against minorities. : Many human rights organizations lack the resources to dedicate personnel or establish offices in minority-dominated regions. Data collection challenges: poor infrastructure and communication networks hinder efforts to gather accurate and timely data from remote areas. <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/joint-multi-cluster-needs-assessment-banadir-somalia-june-august-2020>

Humanitarian aid often bypasses minority communities, as their needs are underrepresented in assessments by international agencies. The failure to acknowledge and document violations reinforces the institutionalized oppression of Banadiri and minority clans, perpetuating cycles of violence and exclusion. Local authorities labeled these killings as "clan disputes," and no investigations were launched. The ongoing marginalization of Banadiri clan members in Marka and Baraawe represents a grave injustice that demands immediate attention. Through intimidation, violence, and systemic neglect, these communities have been stripped of their rights and heritage. Addressing this crisis requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes security, legal protections, economic empowerment, and cultural preservation. Without urgent action, the Banadiri risk losing not only their lands but also their identity and future.