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1.5.2. Clan revenge and vulnerability in clan conflicts

☐ (a) For men

Most of those directly involved in clan (or lineage, or family) conflicts are men between 15 and 40 years old, approximately. Children and men around between 15 and 25 would typically be mobilised by elders to form lineage or clan militias, engage in attacks or put up defence positions.549

Perceived acts of humiliation deriving from clan conflicts or linked to any other triggers mentioned above, can result in revenge killings. These acts usually target the perceived perpetrator(s), however, if the clan refuses to hand them over, other members of the clan may be targeted.550 For more background information on clan revenge for men see EASO COI Report - Somalia: Targeted profiles (September 2021).

☐ (b) For women and girls

Women, children and the elderly are rarely directly targeted in feuds and clan conflicts.551 Members of these groups are traditionally referred to as ‘sacrosanct’ - in Somali bir ma geydo, which means literally ‘spared from the spear’. However, while they can still be incidental victims of attacks, they can also be subject to acts of targeting or indiscriminate violence at the hands of younger militiamen who often do not comply with traditional rules and codes of conduct.552

Moreover, women can also be commodified as subjects of negotiation, whereby one or more unmarried girls from the murder’s family are offered for marriage to the victim’s group, on top of the compensation in livestock or the equivalent. This tradition, still

practiced in certain parts of the country, is called godob reeb, or ‘godobtiir’ depending on the areas.553 For more information on the position and situation of women, including how they are specifically impacted by clan conflicts and reconciliation processes, see EASO COI Report - Somalia: Targeted profiles (September 2021).554

More in general, women often play an important role as peace promoters in clan conflicts, although not yet acknowledged by other influential community actors, such as clan elders and religious scholars.555 Historically and more recently the have substantially contributed to various reconciliation processes throughout Somalia.556 Despite this, women are still side-lined in the decision-making processes.557 Conversely, women can also engage in conflicts and incite or demand revenge for the harming or the killing of their clan members and relatives.558

In the reference period, women were directly targeted in the context of acts of clan revenge on several occasions. Intercepted and reported instances include:559

- on 22 April 2023, Habar Gedir Sa’ad sub clan militia assaulted and raped six females from the Hawadle clan near Dhabad village in Cabudwaaq (Galgaduud); 560
- on 30 August 2024, overnight, Habar Yoonis-Muse Ismail sub-clan ambushed vehicles carrying Dhulbahante-Naleeye Ahmed sub-clan in Ceerigaabo town (Sanaag), killing, among others, a woman and injuring other people;561
- on 11 September 2024, Habar Gedir Ayr sub-clan militia killed two civilians including a woman from Habar Gedir Saleban sub-clan in Lamatuka area in Gaalyeel village near Dhuusamarreeb (Galgaduud);562
- on 3 October 2024, Habar Gedir Duduble clan militia attacked civilian pastoralists from another clan in Gaalo village near Dhuusamarreeb (Galgaduud), injuring, among others, a women and a young girl;563
- on 25 January 2025, overnight, Marehan clan militia killed two pastoralists including a woman from Habar Gedir clan near Cabudwaaq town (Galgaduud);564
- on 16 February 2025, Hawadle clan militia killed one woman from the Habar Gedir Ayr sub-clan in the Madah Maroodi area, near Belet Weyne (Hiraan);565
- on 18 February 2025, Mursade clan militia attacked civilians from Habar Gedir-Ayr sub-clan in between El-Yaasiin and El-Bahaay, near Wahbo, Eel Buur (Galgaduud), causing the death of two civilians, including a woman.566

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  HIPS, Galmudug – Governance, State Formation, Conflict Dynamics, and Reconciliation, March 2024, url, p. 27

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  HIPS, Galmudug – Governance, State Formation, Conflict Dynamics, and Reconciliation, March 2024, url, p. 27

- 558

  Agency for Peacebuilding, Conflict analysis, Garowe and Galkayo, September 2024, url, p. 39, footnote no. 72

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with clan militias as Actor 1 vs clan militias as Actor 2, filter ‘revenge’, second filter ‘women’, ‘girl’, or ‘female’

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  EUAA analysis based on ACLED data. Curated Data Files, Somalia, 21 March 2025, url, SOM40139

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  EUAA analysis based on ACLED data. Curated Data Files, Somalia, 21 March 2025, url, SOM45576

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