

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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> Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment, please email the [Knowledge and Information Management Unit](#).

10 November 2016

SOM105678.E

Somalia: Information on the Ujejen sub-clan, including distinguishing features, locations, occupations and position in the clan hierarchy; treatment (2014-November 2016)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Name Variants

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a senior lecturer of the Development Planning Unit of University College London, who has conducted research on evolving political settlements in Somalia, noted that spelling variants of Somali clans "can be very variable" (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016). Name variants for this sub-clan include: Ujejen (UN 2004, 1; Ambroso Mar. 2002, 78; *Africa Confidential* 1 Nov. 2016), Ujeedeen (Somali Programme Advisor 7 Nov. 2016), Ujeejeen (Somali Analyst 8 Nov. 2016), Ujudeen (Abbink 2009, 27), Ujejeen (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016), Ujeien (ibid.), Ujudayn (ibid.), Ujujeen (ibid.), and "many others" (ibid.).

2. Place in Somali Clan Genealogy

Sources indicate that the Ujejen belong to the Hawiye clan family (Somali Analyst 2 Nov. 2016; Abbink 2009, 26-27; UN 2004). The Senior Lecturer noted that the Hawiye are one of the major clan families (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016).

According to *The Total Somali Clan Genealogy* by Jan Abbink, of the African Studies Centre of Leiden University, the "Ujudeen" sub-clan is part of the "Gurgate" [also spelled out as Gorgate, Gorgarte, or Gorgaate] clan, which is part of the "Bah Girei" "clan 'moiet[y]'" (uterine/territorial division), which is part of the Hawiye clan family (Abbink 2009, 26-27).

According to a genealogical table of Somali clans prepared by UNHCR Somalia in 2004, the "Ujejen" are part of the "Mudulod" clan, who are part of the "Gorgarte," who are part of the Hawiye (UN 2004, 1).

According to a genealogical chart compiled by Guido Ambroso, a UNHCR field/repatriation officer in Somalia, the "Ujejen" are a subgroup of the "Mudulod," who are part of "Hirab," who are part of "Mohamud," who are part of "Gorgate," who are part of Hawiye (Ambroso Mar. 2002, 78).

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a Somali Analyst who specialises in the Somalia region, stated that the Ujejen are part of the "Mudulod" clan and "Hirab" (Somali Analyst 2 Nov. 2016). She also noted that the Hirab is the largest clan of the Hawiye (ibid.).

The Senior Lecturer stated that the Ujejen are "a part of the Gorgaate branch of the Hawiye family, alongside Habr Gidir [also spelled out as Habar Gidir] and Abgaal [also spelled out as Abgal]. They tend to be more closely associated with the Habr Gidir group" (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016). The same source also

indicated that "[t]he Ujejen, although not a particularly powerful sub-clan, are generally considered a central part of the Hawiye clan group, and enjoy status in their own areas as a result" (ibid.).

Regarding the larger clans with which the Ujejen is affiliated, the Somali Analyst noted that Hirab is the largest clan within Hawiye and Somalia, and that the Mudulod are a populous clan within south central Somalia (Somali Analyst 2 Nov. 2016). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a Somali Programme Advisor for Saferworld [1], who provided information based on his personal experience, stated that the Ujejen have "a close ethnic affiliation to the Abgal-Hawiye clan, which numerically and geographically constitutes one of the most dominant clans in Mogadishu" (7 Nov. 2016). An article in *Africa Confidential* similarly describes the Ujejen as "a clan close to the Abgal" (*Africa Confidential* 14 June 2002).

3. Distinguishing Features and Size

The Somali Programme Advisor noted that the Ujejen "do not have any particular distinguishing features from other Somali clans" (Somali Programme Advisor 7 Nov. 2016). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Sources indicate that the Ujejen are a relatively small sub-clan (ibid.; Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016; Somali Analyst 2 Nov. 2016). The Somali Analyst indicated that they are a "small sub-clan" in the region where they live (ibid.). Information on the exact number of people in the Ujejen could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. According to the Somali Analyst, "[s]tatistical data and census on population and clan make up is not available in Somalia" (ibid. 3 Nov. 2016).

4. Locations

Sources indicate that the Ujejen live in the following areas:

- the Hiran [Hiraan] region of Somalia (UN 2004, 1; Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016; Somali Analyst 2 Nov. 2016);
- the Ethiopian borderline zone five (ibid.);
- Mogadishu (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016); and
- Ethiopia (ibid.; UN 2004, 1), in the Somali region (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016).

The Somali Programme Advisor noted that the Hiran region is part of the recently formed Federal Administration of Hir-Shabelle (7 Nov. 2016).

The Somali Analyst explained that the Ujejen have more than eight neighbouring clans in the Hiran region and that each clan in the area has their own customary laws and their own relations with respect to the other clans (Somali Analyst 2 Nov. 2016). She indicated that the following clan-families and clans are neighbours to the Ujejen:

- Hawiye: Xawaadle, Habar Gidir, Ceyr, and Jijele;
- Darood: Marehan and Ogaden;
- Dir: Abdalla;
- Jareer: Makane; and
- Shanta Sheikh, such as Reer Awxasan Kalweyne (ibid. 8 Nov. 2016).

Further information on the Ujejen's neighbouring clans in Hiran could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

5. Occupations

According to the Senior Lecturer, "[t]he sub-clans of the Hawiye and other 'noble' lineages tend to associate themselves traditionally with pastoralism, though increasing numbers have settled in cities and, in some cases, moved into agriculture" (1 Nov. 2016). The Somali Programme Advisor stated that despite their small size, the Ujejen are "relatively influential as its members are known to be highly urbanized and comparatively well-educated" (Somali Programme Advisor 7 Nov. 2016). He noted that the first democratically elected President of Somalia was Ujejen, as well as the Mogadishu mayor (ibid.). Further information about Ujejen occupations could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

6. Treatment

The Senior Lecturer stated that the Ujejen "are not a traditionally weak or marginalized sub-clan. They situate themselves firmly within the 'noble' lineages, and enjoy significant advantage from residing in central areas, surrounded in large part by other groups from within the Hawiye family" (Senior Lecturer 1 Nov. 2016). The same source expressed the opinion that the Ujejen would "be able to call on Hawiye alliances when needed" (ibid.). However, he noted that "[c]lan alliances do tend to be quite fluid" (ibid.).

According to the Somali Programme Advisor, "[a]s a minority clan, the Ujeedeen might feel marginalized, which is common in all smaller Somali clans" (Somali Programme Advisor 7 Nov. 2016).

Based on interviews with ten local clan elders [2], the Somali Analyst found that the Ujejen had respectful relations with some clans, but felt marginalized by others, specifically the Ogaden (Darood clan-family) and the Xawaadle (Hawiye clan-family) (Somali Analyst 9 Nov. 2016). The same source found that the Ujejen do not receive respect from the Xawaadle and experience issues with grazing and water disputes (ibid. 8 Nov. 2016). The Somali Analyst indicated that the Darood respects customary laws with Hawiye, but when there are issues with territorial expansion and water and grazing rights, the Darood "show their strong power to Ujeejen," and also "sometimes" do not pay "Dhiig" and "Diyo" [translates as "blood" and "restitution"] when there are troubles with fighting (ibid.). Regarding the Dir/Abdalla, the Somali Analyst said that there is respect between them and the Ujejen (ibid.). However, the same source noted that the Ujejen use their power to gain potential support from Hiraab sub-clans in their interactions with Abdalla, Jaree/Makana, and Jijeele (ibid.). The source indicated that the Habar Gidir "fully respects the Ujeejen because of kinship" (ibid.). In addition, the Ujejen have "good relations" with the urban Shanta Sheikh, and the Makana and Ceyr clans (ibid. 9 Nov. 2016). Corroborating information about their interactions with specific clans could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Notes

[1] Saferworld is a UK-based "independent international organization working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives" (n.d.).

[2] The Somali Analyst interviewed clan elders from the Ogaden, Marehan, Ceyr, Xawaadle/Agoon, Ali Maaxweyne, Jijeele, Makane, Dir/Abdalla, and Shanra Sheikh (9 Nov. 2016).

References

Abbink, Jan. 2009. *The Total Somali Clan Genealogy (Second Edition)*. [Working Paper, African Studies Centre, Leiden University. No. 84](#). [Accessed 28 Oct. 2016]

Africa Confidential. 14 June 2002. "[And the Arms Flow On](#)." Vol. 43, No. 12. [Accessed 1 Nov. 2016]

Ambroso, Guido. March 2002. [Clanship, Conflict and Refugees: An Introduction to the Somalis in the Horn of Africa](#). [Accessed 1 Nov. 2016]

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Senior Lecturer, Development Planning Unit, University College London. 1 November 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Somali Analyst. 9 November 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

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Somali Analyst. 2 November 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Somali Programme Advisor, Saferworld. 7 November 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

United Nations (UN). 2004. High Commissioner for Refugees, Somalia. "[Genealogical Table of Somali Clans](#)." [Accessed 28 Oct. 2016]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Associate Professor, International Development Group; Center for Research and Dialogue; Doctoral Candidate, History and African Studies, University of Oxford; Feinstein International Center, Tufts University; Minority Rights Group International; Professor of political science, Davidson College; Reader in development studies, SOAS, University of London.

Internet sites, including: All Africa; Amnesty International; ecoi.net; Freedom House; Hiiraan Online; Human Rights Watch; International Crisis Group; IRIN; Minority Rights Group International; Norway – Landinfo; UN – Refworld; US – Department of State.

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