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## DISCLAIMER

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. All COI Query Responses are compiled in line with the Common EU Guidelines (2008) and the EUAA Methodology (2023). This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. Please refer to all documents cited.

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## COI QUERY RESPONSE

### SOMALIA - WOMEN

A report issued in September 2022 by the *UNHCR* points out that: “Female-headed households are among the most vulnerable groups in Somalia...”<sup>1</sup>

A report issued in June 2023 by the *Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs* notes that: “The main source of protection in Somalia remained the woman’s extended family...When a woman was not with her extended family, her safety decreased.”<sup>2</sup>

This report also notes that: “...the extent to which single women in Somalia could survive economically and their economic room for manoeuvre depended mainly on a few individual factors. The extended family and clan or sub-clan played an important role. Through the family or clan/sub-clan network, the woman could, for example, arrange work or access to financial resources. In addition, the woman’s educational level was important. It was easier for women with a higher level of education to survive economically. The biggest challenge for women in the labour market was often not the fact that they were single, but their lack of education, as education was generally given to boys rather than girls...”<sup>3</sup>

In August 2023 the *European Union Agency for Asylum* states that: “In the case of single women and female heads of households without support/clan network, well-founded fear of persecution would in general be substantiated in the whole of Somalia...”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR (September 2022) International Protection Considerations with Regard to People Fleeing Somalia, p.95

<sup>2</sup> Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (June 2023) General country of origin information report on Somalia, p.53

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, p.53

<sup>4</sup> European Union Agency for Asylum (11 August 2023) Country Guidance: Somalia, p.42

This document also states that: “Women’s rights and freedom of movement are limited by Al-Shabaab.”<sup>5</sup>

A report issued in April 2024 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year points out that: “Women experienced discrimination in credit, education, politics, employment, and housing.”<sup>6</sup>

In March 2024 *Bertelsmann Stiftung* states that: “The country has one of the lowest levels of adult literacy in the world...Various obstacles to education include poverty, insecurity and inadequate safe learning environments (security), as well as the insufficient number of teachers, whether qualified or unqualified. Somalia exhibits one of the highest global poverty rates, exacerbating the prevalence of child poverty and malnutrition, which in turn hinder educational attainment. Literacy rates in private and for-profit education are largely dependent on wealth, thus making education unaffordable for poorer populations.”<sup>7</sup>

In May 2024 the *United Nations Human Rights Committee* comments on: “...discrimination against women as regards their participation in public life, their access to justice, health care, education and employment and the lack of protection against violence afforded to them.”<sup>8</sup>

In May 2024 a publication issued by the *United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights* notes that: “Somalia...has not acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p.73

<sup>6</sup> United States Department of State (22 April 2024) 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Somalia, p.18

<sup>7</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung (19 March 2024) Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) 2024 Country Report – Somalia, p.25

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Human Rights Committee (6 May 2024) Concluding observations on the initial report of Somalia, p.3

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (7 May 2024) Tackling Sexual Violence in Somalia: Prevention and Protection, p.21

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