

Sector III Profile



Baidoa



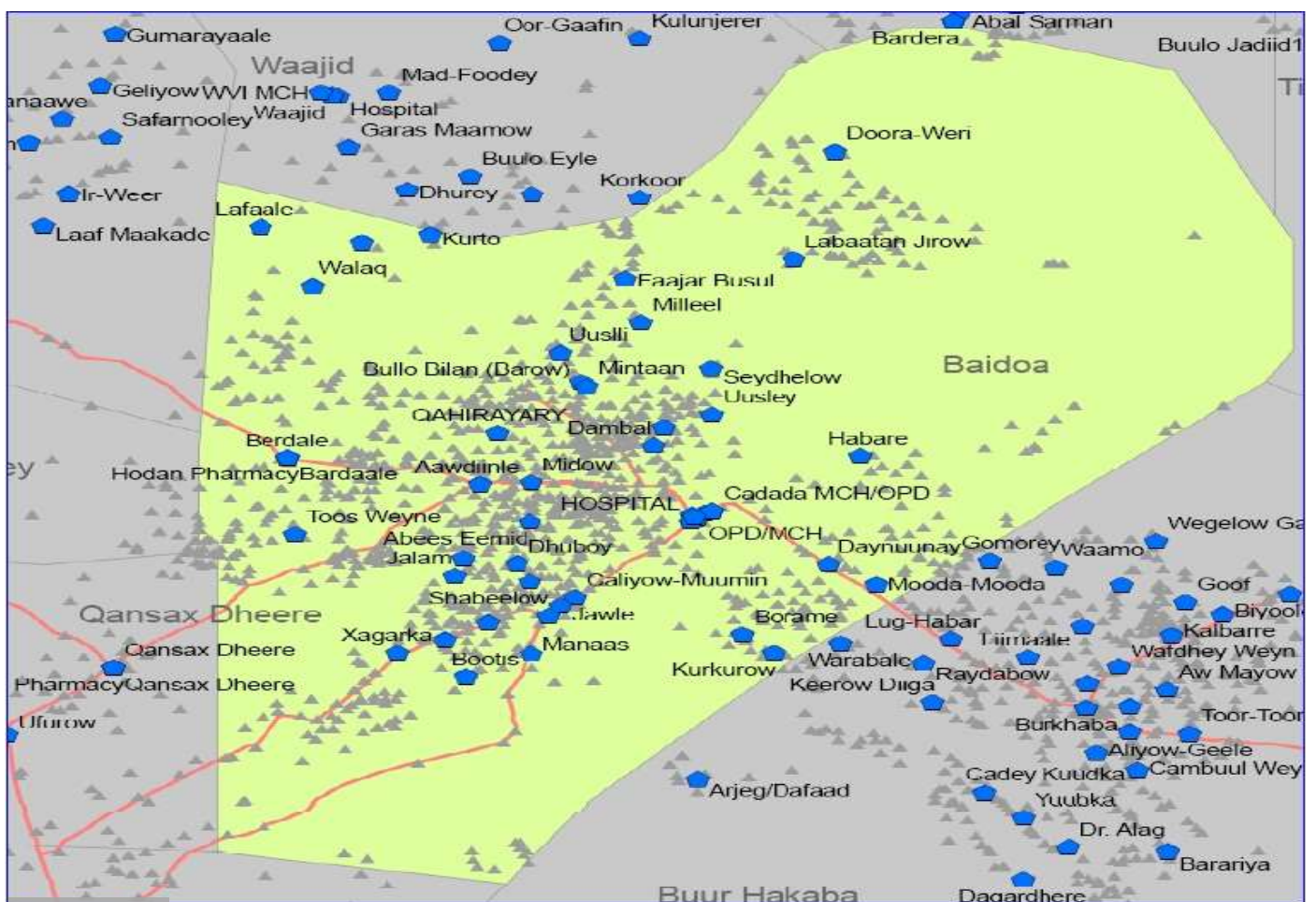
Overview

Baidoa or Baydhabo, as is locally known is the capital of the Bay region, a strategic town in south-central Somalia situated approximately 250 kilometres west of Mogadishu and 240 km southeast of the Ethiopian border. It is traditionally inhabited by the Digil and Mirifle clans also called Rahanweyn.

The town is divided into four quarters, namely Isha, Berdaale, Horseed and, Hawl Wadaag. Each quarter is further divided into six sections each consisting of two subsections and the smallest subsection represents 50-350 households

The city is traditionally one of the most important economic centres in southern Somalia, conducting significant trade in local and imported cereals, livestock and non-food items. The combined effects of drought and on-going crisis in Baidoa have had a harmful impact on economic stability and livelihoods, leading to a chronic humanitarian situation and major displacements of population.

Baidoa has traditionally been a major economic center of southern Somalia. In 2006 it became Somalia's provisional capital before Al-Shabaab took control of the city for three years from 2009 to February 2012 when the group was driven out from Baidoa by TFG forces heavily backed by the Ethiopian army.



Security



From July 2008 to January 2009, Al-Shabaab militia laid siege to the headquarters of the TFG in Baidoa. Following the siege, Baidoa stayed under Al-Shabaab control for three years.

In 2012, The Ethiopians and Somali troops finally drove Al-Shabaab out on February 22, 2012. Because of its strategic importance in terms of location and business interests, Baidoa represented a big loss for Al-Shabaab.

In April 2012, an advance joint-contingent of Ugandan and Burundian soldiers serving with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) deployed to Baidoa and is currently stationed in the surrounding area and the Baidoa airstrip.

Following the departure of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces from some areas of Baidoa in July 2013, AMISOM established QRF(quick response forces) that patrol the town at night and are on standby to reinforce SNAF in the event of an attack by AS forces.

The troops have made a significant difference to the security situation, especially the road between Mogadishu and Baidoa. They have cleared remnants of AS from the main supply route, and taken over control of new strategic towns located in both regions of Lower Shabelle and Bay.

In April this year, the Somali government forces with the support of African Union Troops successfully completed the last leg of their 241km advance from Mogadishu to Baidoa opening a supply route which has freed up movement of people and the provision of humanitarian aid.

Economic Activities:



Baidoa is traditionally a major economic centre of southern Somalia, with strong economic links to neighbouring rural and urban centers, including Mogadishu's Bakaara market, Merka, and Qoriyoley (Lower Shabelle region), Bardera and Beled Hawa (Gedo region) and Hudur and Wajid (Bakool region).

The region is also one of the most important markets in southern Somalia, conducting significant trade in local and imported cereals, livestock and non-food items. Main economic activities in the town include small, medium and large scale business, casual labour, self-employment, and livestock and agricultural trade.

Baidoa is the main sorghum trading market of Somalia's Sorghum-Belt. The Bay region has the highest surplus sorghum production in Somalia. Bay regional surplus sorghum is traded through Baidoa markets, supplying surrounding southern regions, as well as Somalia's northeast regions and parts of neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia.

Livestock trade (camel, cattle, sheep and goat) is a major profitable business within Baidoa. Livestock are transported from surrounding districts within the Bay region, as well as from Bakool, Gedo and the Lower Shabelle regions. Baidoa also serves as a transit point for cattle trade to Kenya's main northern livestock market, Garissa.

Political

The administration of Bay region is composed of a Governor, Deputy Governor and the District Commissioner. Abdi Adan Hoosow is the governor of Bay region and his deputy Shine Moalim Nurow

Local Media



There are three radio outlets broadcasting in Baidoa: **Radio Baidoa** 89.5 FM, **Radio Mogadishu** 90.0FM and **Radio Bar-kulan** 92.0FM which all broadcast in Baidoa through their own transmitters, with only one having its headquarters in Baidoa (Radio Baidoa).

Al Shabaab is able to broadcast in Sector 3 via Radio Andalus in Buuloburde and in Baardheere. There are also websites visited by readers in these areas. They include:

1. ishabaydhaba.com
2. bar-kulan.com
3. hiiraan.com