
World Watch Research

Somalia: Persecution Dynamics

December 2024



Open Doors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

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World Watch List 2025 – Top 50

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	14.4	98	96	98	96	94
2	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.7	11.1	94	93	92	91	92
3	Yemen	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	10.6	94	89	89	88	87
4	Libya	16.0	16.2	15.9	16.2	16.4	10.6	91	91	88	91	92
5	Sudan	14.1	14.2	15.5	14.9	15.3	16.1	90	87	83	79	79
6	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.9	12.2	89	89	89	88	88
7	Nigeria	13.5	13.9	14.6	14.9	14.5	16.7	88	88	88	87	85
8	Pakistan	13.6	13.9	15.0	15.0	12.9	16.7	87	87	86	87	88
9	Iran	15.0	14.6	13.5	15.9	16.5	10.9	86	86	86	85	86
10	Afghanistan	15.6	15.9	15.9	16.4	16.7	5.0	85	84	84	98	94
11	India	12.2	12.9	13.3	14.9	13.9	16.5	84	83	82	82	83
12	Saudi Arabia	15.2	15.3	14.8	15.8	16.6	3.3	81	81	80	81	78
13	Myanmar	12.6	11.1	13.5	14.1	12.9	16.5	81	79	80	79	74
14	Mali	11.1	10.1	14.7	13.0	15.2	15.6	80	79	76	70	67
15	China	13.2	10.1	12.8	14.6	16.1	11.1	78	78	77	76	74
16	Maldives	15.6	15.3	13.7	15.8	16.5	0.7	78	78	77	77	77
17	Iraq	14.2	14.4	14.3	14.8	13.9	6.1	78	79	76	78	82
18	Syria	13.5	14.4	13.9	14.4	14.3	7.0	78	81	80	78	81
19	Algeria	14.7	14.3	11.5	14.7	16.0	6.3	77	79	73	71	70
20	Burkina Faso	11.7	9.7	13.2	11.5	14.0	15.6	76	75	71	68	67
21	Morocco	13.2	13.8	11.6	12.9	14.3	8.3	74	71	69	69	67
22	Laos	11.8	10.7	13.5	14.1	13.9	9.8	74	75	68	69	71
23	Mauritania	14.6	14.2	13.8	14.2	14.2	2.8	74	72	72	70	71
24	Bangladesh	12.4	10.6	12.7	11.3	10.4	16.1	74	71	69	68	67
25	Uzbekistan	14.6	12.7	13.5	12.4	15.5	4.4	73	71	71	71	71
26	Cuba	13.2	8.5	13.9	13.3	15.1	9.1	73	73	70	66	62
27	CAR	10.3	8.6	13.9	9.6	14.0	15.6	72	70	70	68	66
28	Niger	9.4	9.6	14.5	7.7	14.6	15.7	72	70	70	68	62

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
29	Turkmenistan	14.3	12.3	13.6	13.9	15.3	1.5	71	70	70	69	70
30	Nicaragua	12.4	7.6	13.7	13.3	14.1	9.6	71	70	65	56	51
31	Mexico	11.7	9.0	12.5	11.8	11.0	14.6	71	68	67	65	64
32	Oman	14.5	14.1	10.9	13.8	14.1	3.0	70	69	65	66	63
33	Ethiopia	9.9	9.7	12.6	10.4	12.1	15.6	70	69	66	66	65
34	Tunisia	12.4	13.2	10.1	12.6	13.8	8.1	70	69	67	66	67
35	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	10.8	14.5	16.1	70	67	67	66	64
36	Bhutan	13.2	13.2	12.3	14.1	14.2	2.2	69	68	66	67	64
37	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	13.9	8.4	12.5	15.9	68	68	68	65	63
38	Kazakhstan	13.3	11.6	12.2	12.8	14.2	4.3	68	65	65	64	64
39	Tajikistan	14.1	12.7	12.7	13.2	13.7	1.9	68	66	66	65	66
40	Egypt	12.7	13.7	12.1	12.4	10.9	6.3	68	68	68	71	75
41	Qatar	14.2	14.2	10.5	13.2	14.4	0.7	67	67	68	74	67
42	Comoros	12.7	14.0	11.2	12.4	14.2	2.6	67	66	66	63	62
43	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	8.4	13.1	16.1	67	66	65	65	64
44	Vietnam	10.8	9.5	12.2	14.1	14.1	5.9	67	68	70	71	72
45	Turkey	13.0	11.7	11.7	13.2	11.5	5.4	67	64	66	65	69
46	Colombia	11.0	7.9	12.7	11.5	10.5	12.6	66	68	71	68	67
47	Kyrgyzstan	13.5	10.3	11.7	11.4	12.4	6.9	66	59	59	58	58
48	Brunei	14.8	14.8	10.8	10.8	14.0	0.6	66	66	65	64	64
49	Chad	11.0	8.2	10.2	9.9	10.3	15.9	65	61	58	55	53
50	Jordan	12.9	14.3	10.4	12.2	12.8	2.4	65	65	65	66	64

World Watch List 2025 – Ranks 51-78

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
51	Malaysia	12.8	13.7	11.7	12.4	11.2	3.0	65	64	66	63	63
52	Azerbaijan	13.3	10.2	9.6	12.2	13.7	5.6	65	60	59	60	56
53	Kenya	10.3	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	13.9	64	63	64	63	62
54	Nepal	12.2	10.6	9.5	12.6	12.3	5.9	63	62	61	64	66
55	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	15.4	63	62	63	61	58
56	Russian Federation	12.7	7.9	10.7	13.1	14.1	4.4	63	58	57	56	57
57	Djibouti	12.3	12.6	12.7	10.1	12.1	1.7	61	61	60	59	56
58	Kuwait	13.1	13.6	9.4	12.0	12.2	0.9	61	61	64	64	63
59	Indonesia	10.9	11.9	10.9	11.6	10.2	5.7	61	66	68	68	63
60	UAE	13.3	13.4	9.5	11.3	12.8	0.6	61	61	62	62	62
61	Sri Lanka	12.7	8.7	11.5	11.5	8.5	7.6	60	60	57	63	62
62	Palestinian Territories	13.1	13.3	10.3	10.7	12.1	0.2	60	60	60	59	58
63	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.4	9.8	9.7	14.6	59	57	55	52	48
64	Rwanda	9.4	7.7	9.0	10.4	12.1	9.4	58	58	57	50	42
65	Honduras	7.9	4.7	11.7	7.3	9.9	13.1	55	55	53	48	46
66	Togo	9.2	6.7	10.4	7.1	11.5	9.3	54	52	49	44	43
67	Bahrain	12.0	13.2	8.6	11.3	8.5	0.6	54	55	55	57	56
68	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	8.3	10.5	8.9	54	52	48	43	47
69	Ukraine	6.8	5.0	7.8	12.5	13.5	7.2	53	44	37	37	34
70	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	11.5	11.4	8.3	53	52	52	51	46
71	Venezuela	6.3	4.4	11.1	10.0	10.8	9.6	52	53	56	51	39
72	Uganda	8.1	5.0	7.4	6.7	8.8	16.1	52	52	51	48	47
73	Ivory Coast	12.0	6.5	8.7	5.9	8.0	9.6	51	44	44	42	42
74	Lebanon	11.5	10.1	7.0	6.2	6.7	7.2	49	48	40	35	34
75	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.9	8.8	8.9	4.4	48	47	44	44	43
76	South Sudan	5.7	4.4	7.0	6.3	8.1	15.6	47	46	46	43	43

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
77	Belarus	9.9	3.7	5.0	10.8	14.1	3.1	47	46	43	33	30
78	Philippines	9.2	6.6	6.6	6.1	5.7	8.5	43	40	32	34	26

Copyright, sources and definitions

World Watch Research has divided up the previously named Full Country Dossier into two separate documents:

- [Background country information](#) (published annually in summer)
- Persecution dynamics (published annually in January).

These documents are the property of World Watch Research (WWR), the research department of Open Doors International. They include data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD). Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the end of each document under the heading “External links”. These documents may be used and distributed free of charge, but please always acknowledge the source as: © Open Doors International.

The definition of persecution used in WWL analysis is: “Any hostility experienced as a result of one’s identification with Christ. This can include hostile attitudes, words and actions towards Christians”. This broad definition includes (but is not limited to) restrictions, pressure, discrimination, opposition, disinformation, injustice, intimidation, mistreatment, marginalization, oppression, intolerance, infringement, violation, ostracism, hostilities, harassment, abuse, violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide.

The latest update of WWL Methodology can be found on the research pages of the Open Doors website: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.

Reporting period

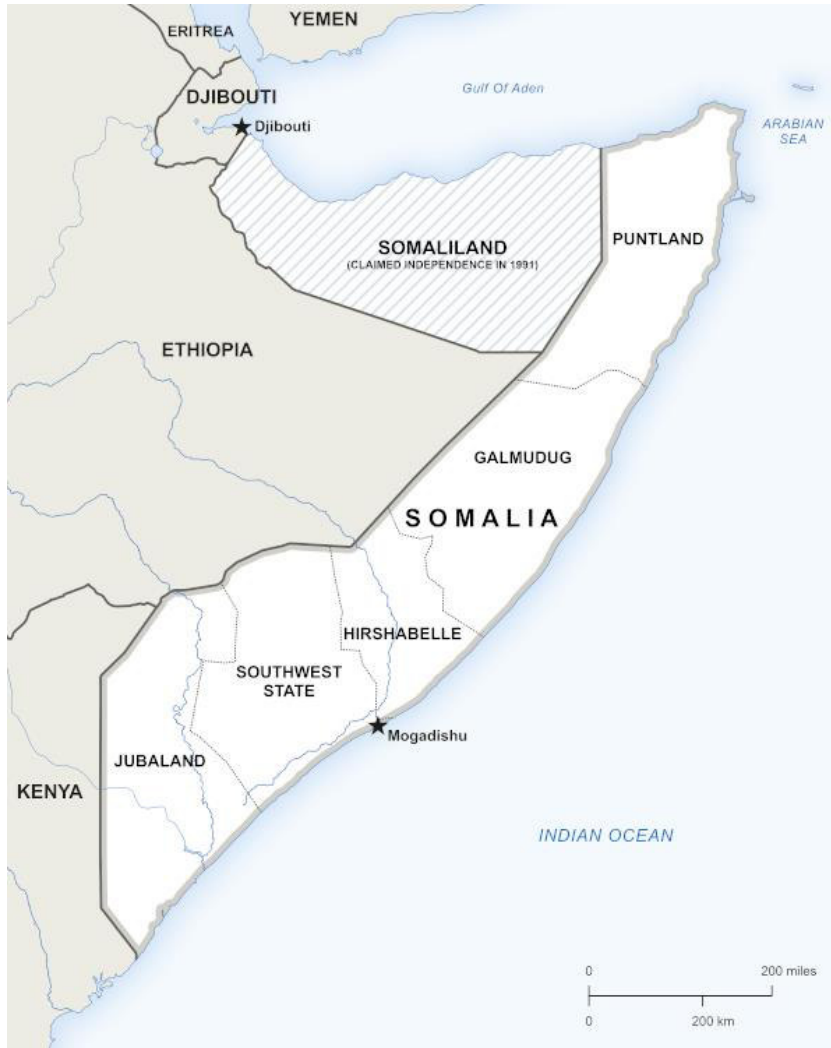
The WWL 2025 reporting period was 1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024.

Brief country details

In the table below, the number of Christians shown is an Open Doors (OD) estimate.

Somalia: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
18,707,000	hundreds	-

Map of country



Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Somalia:	
Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Islamic oppression	Non-Christian religious leaders, Violent religious groups, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs, One's own (extended) family, Organized crime cartels or networks, Government officials
Clan oppression	Ethnic group leaders
Organized corruption and crime	Organized crime cartels or networks
Dictatorial paranoia	Government officials, Political parties

Engines and Drivers are listed in order of strength. Only Very strong / Strong / Medium are shown here.

Brief description of the persecution situation

Somalia is one of the most hostile nations for Christians and Christianity. Christians in the country find themselves in an exceedingly precarious situation, marked by multiple layers of threats. Despite suffering military setbacks and facing rebellion from some clans, al-Shabaab remains a potent force, controlling large swathes of the country. It has infiltrated federal and local authorities and even extends its reach to neighboring countries like Kenya. The group vigorously advocates a strict form of Sharia law and is committed to eradicating Christianity from Somalia. In this grim landscape, Christians discovered practicing their faith have often been killed immediately.

Particularly vulnerable are Christians with a Muslim background, who are viewed as high-value targets by al-Shabaab operatives. Foreign jihadists are also present in Somalia, further increasing the risks faced by Christians. However, the threats are not solely from radical Islamic groups; Islamic family members, extended family, and the community at large also pose significant challenges to Christians. Conversion to Christianity is considered the ultimate betrayal of one's Somali family and clan, leading to harassment, intimidation, and even execution by family members and clan leaders.

Over the years, the dangers have escalated. Islamic militants have increasingly focused on identifying and eliminating Christian leaders. Attempts to establish or re-open churches have been met with fierce resistance. For instance, an attempt to reopen a church in Hargeisa, Somaliland, in August 2017 failed after the government was pressured by the local Islamic population to shut it down. As a result, 'church life' is simply not possible in Somalia. This pattern of persecution is so extreme that it places Somalia high in the category of countries where extreme persecution occurs.

The societal atmosphere in Somalia adds another layer of peril. The community is overwhelmingly conservative, and even the suspicion of conversion from Islam to Christianity can lead to life-threatening danger. In every sphere of life—private, family, community, and national—being identified as a convert to Christianity will often lead to immediate execution. The situation is further exacerbated by the overall instability in the region, fueled by al-Shabaab's activities and influence, making Somalia one of the most dangerous places in the world for Christians.

Summary of international obligations and rights violations

Somalia has committed to respect and protect fundamental rights in the following international treaties:

1. [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#)
2. [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\)](#)
3. [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment \(CAT\)](#)
4. [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#)

**Somalia has a reservation on CRC Art.14 protecting children's freedom of religion or belief.*

Somalia is not fulfilling its international obligations by regularly violating or failing to protect the following rights of Christians:

- Christian converts are killed on the spot if their conversion is discovered or merely suspected (ICCPR Art. 6)

- Christian parents cannot raise their children according to their religious values (ICCPR Art. 18 and CRC Art. 14)
- All Somali are assumed to be Muslim and forbidden to leave Islam (ICCPR Art. 18)
- Women converts are forcibly married and pressured to recant their beliefs (ICCPR Art. 23 and ICESCR Art. 10)

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

No details about specific incidents of violations of rights can be published since doing so could potentially endanger the life of converts from Islam to Christianity in the country.

Specific examples of positive developments

In some areas, government forces successfully pushed back al-Shabaab and regained territorial control.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians: Since this group is restricted to chaplaincies for foreign soldiers (e.g., among officers of the now disbanded African Union Mission – AMISOM), foreign workers in Mogadishu and some refugees in Hargeisa (Somaliland), it is not treated as a separate category for WWL analysis and scoring.

Historical Christian communities: These do not exist in the country. One of the biggest Roman Catholic cathedrals in Africa was built in 1928 in Mogadishu. However, this building has been a ruin since 2008.

Converts to Christianity: Christians with a Muslim background face the most severe violations of their fundamental rights and are considered a high-value target by al-Shabaab operatives. In the country's very recent history, converts - or those accused of being converts - have often been killed on the spot when discovered.

Non-traditional Christian communities: These do not exist in the country.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

No area is safe for Christians in the country. However, the harshest places are the areas under the control of al-Shabaab. These are particularly in the southern and south-western region and include areas around Kismayo, Jamaamee, Marka, El Hur and many other places. Christians are not safe even in relatively peaceful and stable places like Puntland and Somaliland.

Position on the World Watch List

Somalia: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	94	2
WWL 2024	93	2
WWL 2023	92	2
WWL 2022	91	3
WWL 2021	92	3

The rise in Somalia’s overall persecution score was due to an increase of violence from a score of 10.6 points in WWL 2024 to 11.1 points in WWL 2025. The pressure on Christians remained consistently at an extreme level. Clan leaders, elders and family members closely monitor any individual suspected of converting to Christianity. This situation is aggravated by the broader instability in the region, particularly due to the activities of al-Shabaab. In Somali society, identifying as a Christian is often seen as a direct affront to social norms. Documenting acts of violence against Christians proves to be a significant challenge. Were violence against Christians in Somalia to reach maximum levels, the country would likely occupy the top rank for persecution globally.

Persecution engines

Somalia: Persecution engines	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	Very strong
Religious nationalism	RN	Not at all
Ethno-religious hostility	ERH	Not at all
Clan oppression	CO	Very strong
Christian denominational protectionism	CDP	Not at all
Communist and post-Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Very strong

The scale for the level of influence of Persecution engines in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. For more information see WWL Methodology.

Islamic oppression (Very strong)

Somalia is a majority Muslim nation and society expects all Somalis to be Muslim. Imams in mosques and madrassas (as well as the leaders of al-Shabaab) state publicly that there is no room for Christianity, Christians and churches in Somalia. The country's Constitution declares that Islam is the state religion. The violent non-state actor, al-Shabaab, targets and kills Somalis who are suspected of being converts to Christianity. Foreign jihadists are also present in the country. However, *Islamic oppression* is not limited to militants only. Christian converts also face serious violations of religious freedom from family, extended family members and the community at large. To be Christian, especially a convert from Islam, is a huge challenge and can lead to brutal death at the hands of radical groups.

Clan oppression (Very strong)

The clan is a major factor in Somali society and orders the way daily life is run and how one community is related to another. This clan structure also has a profound impact on how the federal government is structured and how elections are conducted, as was evident in the 2017 Somali election: The president was elected by a parliament that was itself elected by 14,025 clan elder-appointed delegates. A similar process took place in May 2022, when Former President [Hassan Sheikh Mahmud](#) was elected president for the second time (CNN, 16 May 2022). Al-Shabaab is also relying on the same clan-based structure to gather intelligence, recruit members and advance its ideology. It uses this structure to force sheiks and imams to teach jihad or face expulsion or death. According to many Somalis and clan leaders, Somalis are Muslims and therefore conversion to Christianity is a betrayal of the Somali family and clan. As a result, if Somalis are suspected of being converts, family members and clan leaders will harass, intimidate and even kill them.

Organized corruption and crime (Very strong)

In the current fragile and lawless situation, crime and corruption is rampant in Somalia. The federal government controls only some cities and towns and leaves the majority of rural Somalia to be controlled by al-Shabaab. Militants collect taxes and fund their operations through illegal trade. This situation has made life for Christians very delicate as they have no protection whatsoever. The organized nature of this engine means that, at times, militants have networks in government positions as well. The country ranked last (#180) in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2023 by scoring 11/100 points ([CPI 2023](#)).

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

Christians in the country also face pressure from the government. It is the government that sets the laws that limit Christians' rights in the country. The government in all Somalia (Puntland, Somaliland and Somalia) are denying Christians their rights. Over past years, both in Somaliland and Somalia, government agencies have remained active in silencing Christians either through denying basic rights via legal means and/or creating a hostile environment. (An example that reached the media in a previous reporting period occurred on 5 October 2020, when the authorities in Somaliland [arrested](#) a married couple for Christian proselytizing. The arrest prompted calls from some Somali religious leaders for the two, who were converts from Islam to Christianity, to be charged with apostasy under Sharia. On 5 November 2020, the couple was 'deported' to Mogadishu upon the order of a Somaliland court. Source: Somaliland Sun, 21 November 2020)

Drivers of persecution

Somalia: Drivers of Persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	VERY STRONG			VERY STRONG				MEDIUM	VERY STRONG
Government officials	Medium							Medium	
Ethnic group leaders				Very strong					
Non-Christian religious leaders	Very strong								
Violent religious groups	Very strong								
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Very strong								
One's own (extended) family	Very strong								
Political parties								Medium	
Organized crime cartels or networks	Very strong								Very strong

The scale for the level of influence of Drivers of persecution in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. Please note that "-" denotes "not at all". For more information see WWL Methodology.

Drivers of Islamic oppression

- **Violent religious groups (Very strong):** Islamic militants operate freely in many regions. Al-Shabaab militants kill Somalis who are suspected of being converts to Christianity. This driver is so potent and dangerous that it even drives violence and violations of religious freedom outside Somalia, particularly in Kenya where the group has been responsible for the death of hundreds of Christians in the last years. Al-Shabaab is considered a threat to the peace and security of the whole region and is a designated terrorist organization globally.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Very strong):** Muslim religious leaders state publicly that there is no room for Christianity.
- **Family / Ordinary citizens (Very strong):** Society in general and family members are against any thought of conversion to Christianity and will treat converts harshly.
- **Organized crime cartels or networks (Very strong):** This driver is closely linked to violent religious groups as well. It is organized crime that is helping the jihadists finance their oppression.

- **Government officials (Medium):** Government officials have shown their anti-Christian attitude on many occasions. For example, any form of Christmas celebration has been prohibited by the government.

Drivers of Clan oppression

- **Ethnic group leaders (Very strong):** Clan leaders do not want to see any conversions to Christianity. They do not want to see Christian symbols in the country.

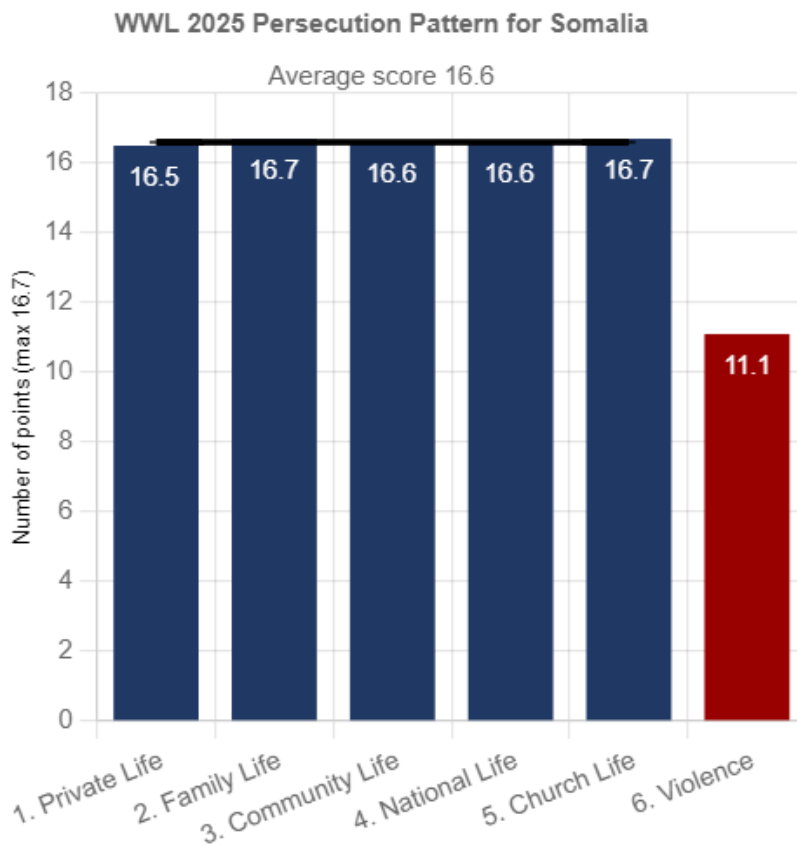
Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- **Organized criminal cartels (Very strong):** Criminal networks profit from the lawlessness in Somalia. They work with a network of illegal trade routes. These cartels have a strong connection to al-Shabaab or they are being operated by al-Shabaab itself. The money that these cartels generate buy weapons that are used to kill Christians and other civilians.

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials / Political parties (Medium):** Some government officials are those who enforce restrictive laws in the country. In addition, some of the members of the government and their parties also harbor anti-Christians sentiment. They believe that Somalia should only be a home for Muslims.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2025 Persecution Pattern for Somalia shows:

- Average pressure on Christians in Somalia stands at 16.6 points, similar to WWL 2024. This is an extremely high, almost maximum, level.
- Pressure is at an extreme level across all spheres of life: The highest pressure with a maximum score of 16.7 points is to be found in the *Private, Family and Church spheres of life*. But pressure in the *Community and National spheres* is only 0.1 of a point lower. This indicates the immense pressure on converts from family and community, as well as the national situation for Christians.
- The violence score increased to 11.2 points, up from 10.6 points in WWL 2024, indicating a rise in violent incidents.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

In each of the five spheres of life discussed below, four questions have been selected from the WWL 2025 questionnaire for brief commentary and explanation. The selection usually (but not always) reflects the highest scoring elements. In some cases, an additional paragraph per sphere is included to give further information deemed important. To see how individual questions are scored on a scale of 0-4 points, please see the “WWL Scoring example” in the WWL Methodology, available at: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (4.00 points)

Conversion to Christianity in Somalia is extremely serious and can lead to death or other severe forms of persecution. Christians, whether suspected or confirmed converts, are forced to live in secrecy, constantly facing the threat of fatal consequences. The mere suspicion of conversion brings significant danger, with practicing Christianity in any form involving extreme risk. Experts and firsthand accounts consistently confirm this dire reality, illustrating that Christians in Somalia navigate a landscape of severe restrictions, threats, and life-threatening challenges.

Block 1.2: It has been risky for Christians to conduct acts of Christian worship by themselves (e.g. prayer, Bible reading, etc.). (4.00 points)

Private worship for Christians in Somalia is dangerous, with even the most basic expressions of faith carrying significant risks. Christians encounter a complex array of challenges while attempting to practice their faith discreetly. The hostile environment is intensified by the Persecution engines *Islamic oppression* and *Organized corruption and crime* which contribute to targeted attacks and grave dangers. Converts face ostracism, pressure to renounce their faith, and relentless scrutiny.

Block 1.3: It has been dangerous to privately own or keep Christian materials. (4.00 points)

For Christians in Somalia, privately possessing or keeping faith-related materials is highly dangerous. Severe restrictions dominate their private lives, compelling many to live in secrecy to avoid serious repercussions. The environment poses significant threats, rendering the possession of religious materials hazardous and exposing individuals to suppression, danger, and possible death. Thus, it is

not uncommon to encounter Christians who go to great lengths to avoid possessing any Christian materials.

Block 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (4.00 points)

In Somalia, Christians encounter severe restrictions when revealing their faith, including via blogs and social media. The risks tied to such private expressions are immense, leaving individuals exposed to danger and severe consequences. Many are compelled to remain anonymous to avoid serious repercussions.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.1: Babies and children of Christians have automatically been registered under the state or majority religion. (4.00 points)

In Somalia, registering children as Christians would present a severe risk for parents. This situation is reinforced by the government, which consistently asserts that Somalis are Muslims. Clan leaders and community figures uphold this understanding, reinforcing the default registration of Christian children as Muslims and making it nearly impossible for Christians to register their children according to their own faith.

Block 2.2: Registering the birth, wedding, death, etc. of Christians has been hindered or made impossible. (4.00 points)

Severe restrictions make these fundamental milestones of life nearly impossible to document as Christians. Amid widespread oppression, organized crime, and relentless persecution, many are forced to handle these events in secrecy. Family life is thus closely tied to suppression and constant vulnerability. Clan leaders and community figures uphold and enforce this stance, making virtually any form of registration as a Christian impossible.

Block 2.5: Burials of Christians have been hindered or coercively performed with non-Christian rites. (4.00 points)

Christian burial practices are nearly impossible to carry out openly. Christians cannot even request a proper burial for their loved ones, often resulting in the deceased being buried according to Islamic rites alongside Muslims. It is frequently too dangerous to disclose that the deceased was a Christian, as doing so could lead to targeting and retaliation against the family members.

Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (4.00 points)

Raising children as Christians in Somalia presents profound risks, both for the children and their parents. Islamic hostility, organized crime and clan-driven persecution create an environment where imparting Christian beliefs is fraught with danger. Parents must often resort to secrecy in their efforts to nurture their children's faith, facing constant threats of retaliation. The complex and hostile context not only suppresses religious freedoms but also exposes families to potential harm, highlighting the immense challenges of upholding Christian convictions in Somalia.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.1: Christians have been harassed, threatened or obstructed in their daily lives for faith-related reasons (e.g. for not meeting majority religion or traditional dress codes, beard codes etc.). (4.00 points)

Christians in Somalia navigate a climate of oppression that permeates every aspect of daily life. As members of a religious minority, they are exposed to constant vulnerability and mistreatment within their communities. Persecution takes many forms, including ongoing harassment, threats, and severe restrictions that limit their ability to live freely. The primary task for Christians in the country is to conceal their faith to avoid detection. The pressure to conform is immense; even minor deviations from expected norms, such as differing dress codes or beard styles, can lead to immediate harassment. This constant scrutiny subjects Christians to an atmosphere of fear and isolation, forcing them to tread cautiously to avoid threats or disruptions in their daily lives.

Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (4.00 points)

Christians in Somalia are subjected to pervasive monitoring by a network that starts with family members and extends to relatives, the local community, clan leaders, and even al-Shabaab operatives. This multi-layered surveillance creates an environment steeped in fear and constant scrutiny. Their actions are closely observed, with neighbors and community members quick to report any deviations from societal norms. Communications, both telephone and online, are monitored through covert means, leaving no aspect of their lives free from oversight. Religious non-conformity often serves as a trigger for others to shadow their movements and document their interactions.

Block 3.3: Christians have been under threat of abduction and/or forced marriage. (4.00 points)

Abduction is a grim reality for Christians in Somalia, with the threat extending even to Christian communities in neighboring countries, such as Kenya. Al-Shabaab, in particular, targets Christians for abduction as part of its broader strategy to enforce religious conformity and suppress Christianity. In Somalia, these acts often lead to forced conversions and marriages, serving as a coercive tool to dismantle Christian communities and instill fear. Somali Christians, whether genuine converts or merely suspected of deviating from the dominant religion, remain especially vulnerable to such extreme measures. This targeted aggression reflects a deliberate attempt to eradicate their faith and secure strict adherence to the prevailing religious norms.

Block 3.6: Christians have been hindered in participating in communal institutions, forums, etc., for faith-related reasons. (4.00 points)

In Somalia, Christians—whether suspected or otherwise—face almost total exclusion from communal institutions and forums due to their faith, reflecting the deep-rooted persecution they endure. This systematic marginalization prevents them from engaging with their communities, cutting off essential social interactions and opportunities for integration. Experts note that Christians are often unwelcome in communal spaces, with their perspectives dismissed solely because of their religious affiliation. This exclusion is not a mere social inconvenience; it represents a fundamental barrier to their sense of

belonging. Christians are thus forced to choose between conforming to societal norms, which may involve renouncing their faith, or maintaining their beliefs and facing ongoing isolation and worse.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

Block 4.1: The Constitution (or comparable national or state law) limits freedom of religion as formulated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (4.00 points)

Christians in Somalia face severe challenges within a legal and cultural environment that starkly contrasts with the religious freedom principles outlined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The law designates Islam as the state religion, inherently relegating others to second-class status or rendering them as if they do not belong. This bias is reinforced by the government's repeated assertions that Somalia and Christianity have nothing in common, further entrenching the status quo. Rooted in a historical legacy of intolerance, this discrimination creates a hostile atmosphere, exposing Christians to constant fear of violence and persecution while severely limiting their ability to participate in society.

Block 4.4: Christians have been hindered in travelling for faith-related reasons. (4.00 points)

Christians attempting to travel, especially for faith-related reasons, are exposed to the risk of violence, making even the simplest journey a matter of life and death, since they are often targeted by al-Shabaab for killings. This pervasive threat, combined with cultural intolerance, national laws and communal norms, creates a hostile environment that severely restricts their freedom of movement.

Block 4.5: Christians have been discriminated against when engaging with the authorities (local administration, government, army, etc.) for faith-related reasons. (4.00 points)

The pervasive discrimination against Christians in Somalia deeply affects their interactions with those in power. This systemic bias, grounded in cultural norms, national laws and historical precedents, creates a hostile environment for Christians whenever they attempt to engage with the authorities. In a society where minority faiths are marginalized, Christians—whether known or merely suspected—face severe discrimination: They encounter skepticism, distrust and hostility, making these interactions exceptionally difficult.

Block 4.7: Christians have been hindered in running their own businesses without interference for faith-related reasons (e.g. personnel policy, client admission policy). (4.00 points)

In Somalia, Christians or those suspected of being Christian face severe interference in their business activities. They are often restricted in terms of what they can sell, when they can operate, and how they conduct their trade. Certain goods may be off-limits, while selling items associated with Christian practices can invite threats or violence. Even the timing of their business operations is scrutinized, forcing them to comply with restrictions. This targeted control undermines their economic independence and reinforces a broader pattern of exclusion.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (4.00 points)

In Somalia, church activities are subject to intense scrutiny, interference and obstruction. There are no officially recognized churches in the country; Christians are forced to gather in secret house churches for worship which, where suspected by authorities and extremist groups, face constant surveillance. Even the hint of a house church operating can lead to raids, harassment and acts of violence.

Block 5.2: It has been difficult to get registration or legal status for churches at any level of government. (4.00 points)

In Somalia, the registration of churches is not possible. The absence of any officially recognized churches in the country underscores the extreme limitations faced by the Christian community. Authorities consistently obstruct any efforts to establish a church, reflecting deeply entrenched cultural, religious and legal barriers. Even the idea of church registration is met with immediate rejection, leaving Christians with no option but to operate in secrecy.

Block 5.3: Christian communities have been hindered in building or renovating church buildings or in claiming historical religious premises and places of worship which had been taken from them earlier. (4.00 points)

In Somalia, the notion of building or renovating church structures, or reclaiming historical religious sites, is a distant luxury given the severe challenges faced by the Christian community. Christians are not only barred from constructing new places of worship but also find it impossible to claim or restore historical premises that were taken from them in the past. Any attempts to establish or maintain such spaces are met with swift and decisive obstruction from both authorities and societal pressures. This reality reflects the deeply entrenched barriers against Christian expression, where even the most basic rights to worship are denied, rendering the idea of physical places of worship almost inconceivable.

Block 5.4: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities inside their place of worship. (4.00 points)

This issue is particularly severe for Christians in Somalia, where even house churches—often the only form of gathering since there are no official church buildings—are restricted from organizing any Christian activities. These small, secret gatherings face constant monitoring and interference, making it nearly impossible to hold prayer meetings, worship services, or educational activities within these private spaces. The hostile environment, marked by surveillance and the threat of immediate repercussions, forces Christians to practice their faith in fear, denying them the fundamental right to gather safely for worship.

Violence

Violence is defined in WWL Methodology as the deprivation of physical freedom or as bodily harm to Christians or damage to their property. It includes severe threats (mental abuse). The table is based on reported cases as much as possible, but since many incidents go unreported, the numbers must be understood as being minimum figures. The following points should be considered when using the data provided in the Block 6 table:

1. Some incidents go unreported because the Christians involved choose not to speak about the hostility being faced.

Possible reasons for this may be:

- *Doing so would expose them to more attacks. For example, if a family member is killed because of his/her faith, the survivors might decide to keep silent about the circumstances of the killing to avoid provoking any further attacks.*
- *In some circumstances, the reticence to pass on information may be due to the danger of exposure caused by converts returning to their previous faith.*
- *If persecution is related to sexual violence - due to stigma, survivors often do not tell even their closest relatives.*
- *In some cultural settings, if your loved one is killed, you might be under the obligation to take revenge. Christians not wishing to do that, may decide to keep quiet about it.*

2. Other incidents go unreported for the following possible reasons:

- *Some incidents never reach the public consciousness, because no one really knows about it; or the incident is simply not considered worth reporting; or media coverage is deliberately blocked or distorted; or media coverage is not deliberately blocked, but the information somehow gets lost; or the incidents are deliberately not reported widely for security reasons (e.g. for the protection of local church leaders).*
- *In situations where Christians have been discriminated against for many years, armed conflict can make them additionally vulnerable. Christians killed in areas where fighting regularly takes place are unlikely to be reported separately. Examples in recent years have been Sudan, Syria and Myanmar.*
- *Christians who die through the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care (due to long-term discrimination) are unlikely to be reported separately. Christians are not always killed directly; they can be so squeezed by regulations and other oppressive factors that they die – not at once, but in the course of years. This often includes the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care, or exclusion from government assisted socio-economic development projects. These numbers could be immense.*

3. The use of symbolic numbers:

- *In cases where it has been impossible to count exactly, a symbolic round figure (10*, 100* etc.) is given and indicated with an asterisk. A symbolic number of 10* could in reality even be 100 or more but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 100* could go well over 1000 but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 1,000* could go well over 10,000 but, again, the real number is uncertain. The same applies for symbolic numbers 10,000*, 100,000* and 1,000,000*: Each could indicate much higher numbers, but WWR chooses to be cautious because the real number is uncertain.*

4. The symbol “x” in the table:

- *This denotes a known number which cannot be published due to security concerns.*

Somalia: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	x	x
6.2 How many churches or public Christian properties (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	x	x
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	x	x
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	x	x
6.9 How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.10 How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	x	x

For security reasons, no details about violent incidents can be published

5 Year trends

The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

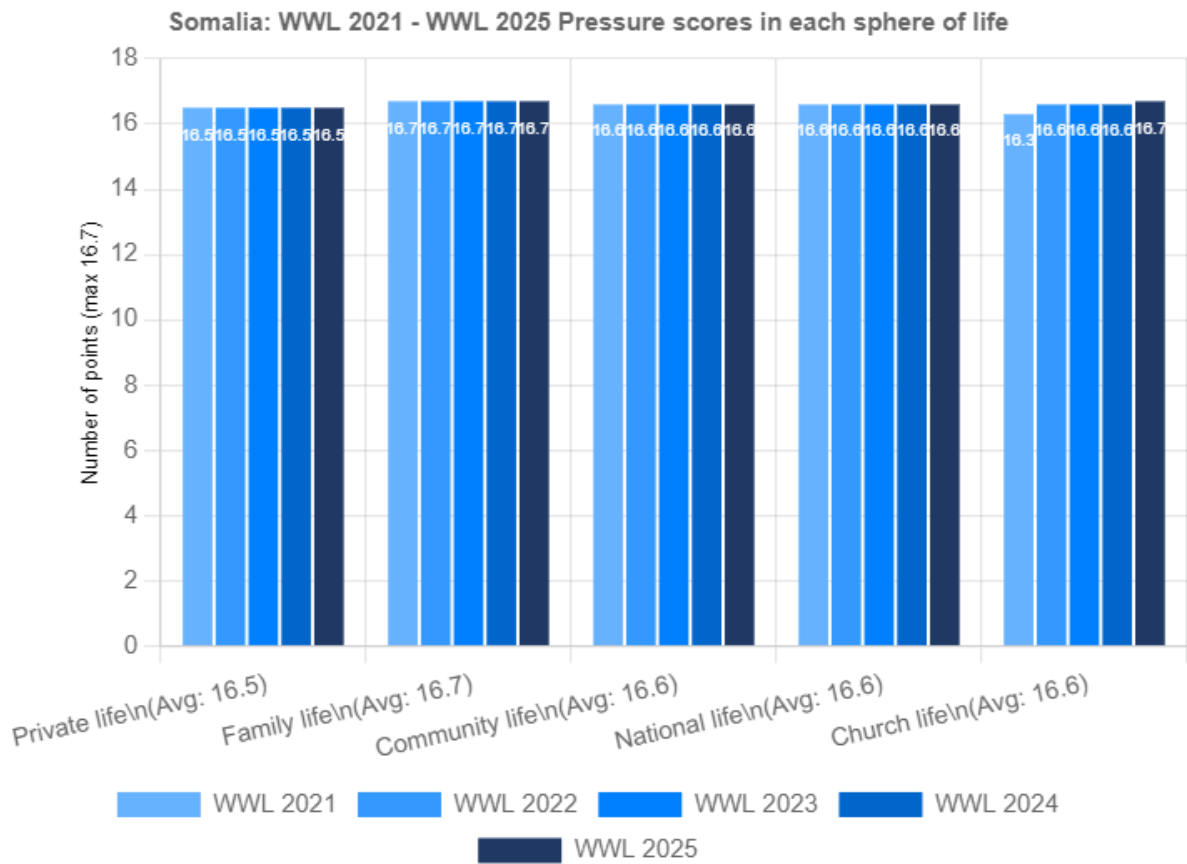
5 Year trends: Average pressure

Somalia: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	16.6
2024	16.6
2023	16.6
2022	16.6
2021	16.5

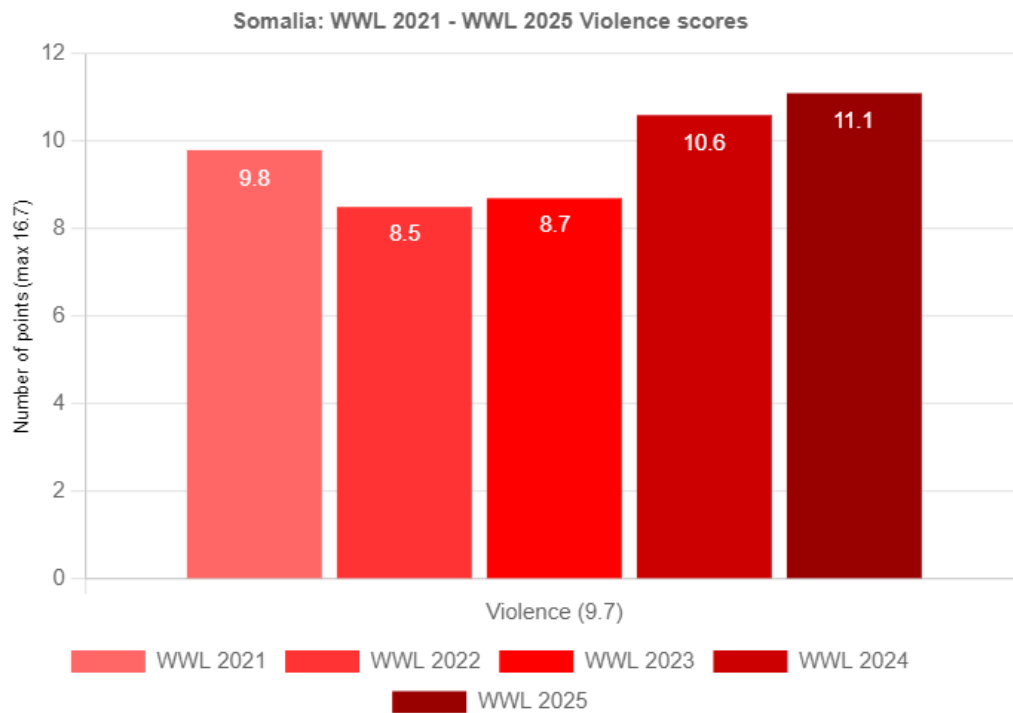
Over the last five WWL reporting periods, extreme levels of pressure have been consistently recorded, with the average pressure score never falling below 16.5. This figure reflects the severe difficulty of living as a Christian in the country, where even a mere suspicion of Christianity can lead to deadly consequences. Any behavior deemed 'abnormal' can be interpreted as abandoning Islam, resulting in serious repercussions. Christians live under a constant threat: If discovered by al-Shabaab, conversion is effectively a death sentence. In regions like Somaliland, locals who are identified as Christians may be arrested and prosecuted under anti-conversion laws, further illustrating the pervasive risk Christians face.

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life

The chart below shows that the extreme levels of pressure on Christians in all *spheres of life* are more or less stable, all averaging 16.5 points or above. The highest average score (16.7 points) is found in the *Family sphere*. Three other spheres of life have average scores of 16.6 points, and the *Private sphere of life* is lowest with 16.5 points. This reflects the fact that persecution in Somalia is everywhere and is hence a nationwide phenomenon; Christians lack meaningful space in society and protection by the government. Christians find themselves in an environment where meaningful participation in society is limited, and any safeguarding mechanisms offered by the government are notably lacking.



5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



The average violence score over the past five years is 9.7 points. Compared to the pressure charts, the scores for violence are lower, due to a large extent to the country's inaccessibility and difficulties in

reporting incidents. Despite this, violence scores have consistently fallen within the "very high" category. Since WWL 2022, the violence score has shown a progressive increase. If Somalia had scored higher in violence, it would likely be a strong contender for the No. 1 position on the WWL.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Somalia	Female Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abduction Denied access to social community/networks Denied custody of children Discrimination/harassment via education Enforced religious dress code Forced divorce Forced marriage Forced to flee town/country Incarceration by family (house arrest) Violence – death Violence – physical Violence – psychological Violence – sexual

Women and girls in Somalia are the group most affected by nearly three decades of conflict, insecurity, political fragility, recurrent environmental disasters and mounting economic pressure. Somalia ranks fourth lowest in the gender equality index. Maternal and infant mortality rates are one of the highest worldwide. At least 98% of Somali girls between the age of 9 and 15 years old have undergone female genital mutations, and gender-based violence is highly prevalent. Moreover, 35% of girls go through child marriage, and there is no legal framework to stop it in courts ([Relief Web, 8 March 2023](#)). Natural hazards combined with widespread security threats have caused one of the world’s largest displacement crises, with 3.8 million IDPs recorded at the end of 2022 ([UN Migration, 2023](#)). A spike in gender-based attacks has further compounded the plight of displaced women and girls with physical violence, intimate partner violence and rape being the most common types of violence that women and girls are subjected to in IDP communities. A lack of food and sanitation leaves individuals susceptible to blackmail and rape ([VOA News, 9 May 2023](#)). In Somalia, social life is primarily clan-based, and almost exclusively Islamic-oriented. As a result, women in Somalia mostly lead prescribed lives with little leeway for personal belief or expression. A woman does not have a voice in her community and is dependent on men. Young female converts to Christianity remain one of the most vulnerable populations. A woman suspected of Christianity could be humiliated in public, kept under strict house arrest, raped, abducted, forcibly married to a radical sheikh or killed. If already married, she will likely be divorced and have her children taken away to ensure that they are raised in an Islamic way.

According to a [BBC report](#) published on 23 March 2023, women are increasingly falling prey to the underground world of sex work, particularly in Somalia’s capital, Mogadishu. The women interviewed left home at a young age, a rare occurrence in Somali society where young women generally do not

leave home before they are married. However, abuse or irreconcilable differences with other family members can push some away; this appears to be a growing phenomenon. The women describe how they have become addicted to opioids and have turned to sex work to maintain their addiction. As sex work is illegal in Somalia, many of these young women find themselves in precarious situations with no recourse to the authorities.

Forced and early marriages are commonplace (and legally permissible) in Somalia. As such, forced marriage – often to much older men – is easily accessible as a means of coercion to restore converts back to Islam. Some are pressured by families, whilst others are abducted by radical Muslims for the purpose of forced conversion, marriage and sexual slavery. The constant threat of abduction and forced marriage leads many to flee their homes and to go into hiding. Although all civilians are at threat, there is an added level of violence against Christians because there will be no consequence of perpetrators. Sharia law encourages members to marry off underage girls and to forcibly impose Islam on non-believers. In the context of jihad, abduction of non-believers is one of the ways of protecting Islam from ‘infidels’.

Insecurity in the country due to the operations of al-Shabaab and clan militias has seen a concerning [80% rise in sexual violence](#), primarily against girls (Forbes, 9 October 2021). As one country expert explained: “A Christian school girl was raped inside her own school after her class mate exposed that her mother is a Christian”. Indeed, rape is identified as the most violent form of persecution that female Christians face, and it is particularly alarming that it occurs at the hand of close relatives. [Education](#) is often brief for girls, with only 5% making it to high school enrolment (No Ceilings: The Full Participation Project, accessed 3 November 2022). In education, Christian girls can be pressured into attending Islamic Duksi classes and dressing in al-Shabaab compliant burkas. In combination with discriminatory inheritance practices, this can exacerbate women’s economic vulnerability, which is often exploited. Christian women also suffer when their husbands are imprisoned or killed; widows tend to be forced to marry Muslim men, property is confiscated, and the widow is left at the mercy of the man's family. Many are taken advantage of by male relatives and young daughters married off. The family often ends up impoverished.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Somalia	Male Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	Enforced religious dress code Imprisonment by government Military/militia conscription/service against conscience Violence – death Violence – physical

“A Somali first identifies himself as a Muslim then a Somali.”: this common understanding of male identity means that within the tight social controls of the patriarchal clan society, men and boys merely suspected of conversion to Christianity face extreme violations of their fundamental rights. They are at risk of being physically assaulted, imprisoned, heavily threatened, tortured, abducted, or killed in

abhorrent ways. These are no idle threats and fear is a constant companion for Somali Christian men and boys. The constant threats facing male converts in Somalia leads them to distrust even their own family members.

Men face more hostile treatment because they are perceived as leaders who ought to represent the Islamic faith; expected to lead their family in religious matters, they can consequently be blamed if a family member converts. Leadership positions are removed and they lose their wives and children. For those suspected of conversion themselves, pressure is applied on them to conform by their local community. For instance, they may be deliberately selected to lead the Mosque prayers and be expected to grow a beard, marry more than one wife or perform Islamic rituals in public. These are means of testing suspected converts.

Additionally, boys are expected to own and operate weapons, and many are abducted and indoctrinated by al-Shabaab. Families forcefully send their young men, including converts, to Islamic rehabilitation centers to be trained as al-Shabaab militia, and consequently, “forced into radicalism” as one expert shared. If exposed within this context as Christians, they face further dangers; as one country expert notes, “the family unit is usually the first point of attack or persecution of Christians especially converts.” Other forms of persecution include murder, loss of inheritance rights, and coercion to renounce their faith. Overall, men and boys in Somalia encounter various threats and pressures that compromise their safety and religious freedom.

If discovered, Christian men are also denied their inheritance and boys are denied education. In Christian families, the whole family and community is affected if the husband is killed or compromised, for men tend to be the financial providers. When the men are killed, their family is often left unprotected, labeled *kafir* and seen as a stain on the community. The underground church also suffers greatly when the men are persecuted or killed because most of the other men opt to go deeper underground, leading to leadership crises.

Persecution of other religious minorities

No religious groups other than Sunni Islam have any meaningful rights in Somalia. In areas controlled by al-Shabaab, the situation has become so extreme that even Shia Muslims keep a very low profile. Moderate Sunnis are also targeted. Laws in Somalia prohibit the propagation of any religion other than Islam and prohibit Muslims from converting. The Constitution also states that all laws must comply with the general principles of Sharia. In this context, any other religion except (Sunni) Islam will experience severe challenges.

Trends Summary

1) Somalia is known for being hostile to Christians

The country has been on the World Watch List since 1993 and looks set to continue to be listed high up. Violations of religious freedom are particularly severe for Christians with a Muslim background. The deeply entrenched clan system, with its strong influence on societal structures and norms, perpetuates an environment inherently hostile towards religious diversity.

2) Somalia is a failed state and the government is weak

Somalia is a failed state: The international community and the African Union (AU) tried to establish different governments on more than two occasions. Although a new president was elected in 2022, the election process exposed the deep divide in Somali political culture. Nevertheless, it seems that the Somali Federal Government is heading towards becoming a functioning government and is supported by AU forces and is backed by the UN Security Council. Despite this, al-Shabaab remains powerful enough to conduct deadly attacks even in Mogadishu - the seat of the federal government.

3) Al-Shabaab continues to pose a significant threat

It is a well-known fact that Somalia is home for one of the most radical and deadly jihadist groups in the world. Jihadism in the Horn of Africa/East Africa is not new. There were even groups that were formed in the early 20th century to establish an Islamic state in the modern-day Somalia. Al-Shabaab has remained very potent and conducts serious, organized attacks in the country including the capital city where hundreds of people have been killed in recent years. Some are suggesting that engaging in dialogue with al-Shabaab might be the best way of solving a crisis which otherwise has no end in sight.

4) Clans are showing discontent with al-Shabaab

Although it is early to know how this will progress, the 2023 protests against al-Shabaab in [Mogadishu](#) (Al-Jazeera, 13 January 2023) and other forms of clan [opposition to al-Shabaab](#) suggest that the government is getting significant support in its fight against the group (The Economist, 3 November 2022). If this is maintained, it is possible that the threat of al-Shabaab could be reduced - however, it would be unrealistic to consider any possibility of the group being eradicated in the short term.

Further useful reports

Further background information per country and a selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the Research & Reports pages of the Open Doors website:

- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-background/>
- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.

External Links

- Copyright, sources and definitions: Background country information - <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-background/>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>

- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cat.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention on the Rights of the Child - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- Persecution engines description: Hassan Sheik Mahmud - <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/16/africa/somalia-elects-new-president-intl/index.html>
- Persecution engines description: CPI 2023 - <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/somalia>
- Persecution engines description: arrested - <https://somalilandson.com/somaliland-apostate-couple-accused-of-spreading-christianity-released-and-deported-to-somalia/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Relief Web, 8 March 2023 - <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/policy-position-paper-for-gotten-rights-somali-women-girls-bearing-brunt-crisis#:~:text=Somalia%20ranks%20fourth%20lowest%20in,based%20violence%20is%20highly%20prevalent>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: UN Migration, 2023 - <https://dtm.iom.int/somalia#:~:text=Natural%20hazards%2C%20including%20drought%20and,at%20the%20end%20of%202022>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: VOA News, 9 May 2023 - <https://www.voanews.com/a/in-somalia-spike-in-gender-based-attacks-compounds-plight-of-displaced-women-girls/7085771.html>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: BBC report - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-65026793>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: 80% rise in sexual violence - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2021/10/09/sexual-violence-in-somalia-on-the-rise/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Education - http://www.noceilings.org/child-marriage/?utm_source=CeilingBreakers&utm_medium=Web&utm_campaign=NoCeilings%22%20%5C%20%22SOM%22%20%5C%20HYPERLINK%20%22http://www.noceilings.org/child-marriage/?utm_source=CeilingBreakers&utm_medium=Web&utm_campaign=NoCeilings%22%20%5C%20%22SOM%22%20%5C#SOM
- Trends Summary: Mogadishu - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/13/hundreds-rally-against-al-shabab-in-somali-capital-mogadishu>
- Trends Summary: opposition to al-Shabaab - <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2022/11/03/somali-clans-are-revolting-against-jihadists>