



Somalia – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 3 February 2010

Information on whether young women who have children born out of wedlock are in danger of attack by Al Shabab or any other terror grouping in Somalia.

In a section titled “Abuses in Opposition-Controlled Areas” the 2010 *Human Rights Watch* country report on Somalia states:

“Al-Shabaab in particular has grown notorious for abusive and often arbitrary applications of Sharia law, which in at least a few cases have seen alleged crimes punished with amputations, beheadings, and, in October 2008 in Kismayo, the stoning to death of a young woman on charges of adultery.” (Human Rights Watch (20 January 2010) *World Report 2010: Somalia*)

A *BBC News* report on the stoning of a 13-year-old girl by members of al-Shabaab states:

“Asha Ibrahim Dhuhulow was stoned to death for adultery in the southern port city of Kismayo, which was taken control by al-Shabab and its allies in August. Her 62-year-old aunt told the BBC that the teenager had in fact been raped by three armed men - and she took Asha to the police station to report it. Several days later, after two suspects had been arrested, she was asked to return to the station with her niece. To her surprise the girl was taken into custody too. ‘I tried to speak to the police but they said they were not talking,’ she said. Three days later, after Asha had been tried in an Islamist court, she was stoned to death.” (BBC News (12 November 2008) *Somalis grow fearful of Islamists*)

The Guardian refers to this incident as follows:

“Al-Shabaab is considered by many governments to be, at least ideologically, if not materially linked to al-Qaida. Since they overran Kismayo in August, al-Shabaab leaders have restored order. But then began the wholesale violent suppression of the people, particularly women, under their perverse interpretation of Islamic law. To gauge the degree of fundamentalism within al-Shabaab, you need look no further than the stoning to death of 13-year old girl a few days ago in Kismayo. The circumstances of Asha Ibrahim Dhuhulow’s killing could hardly be more brutal. She was first raped by three men but was condemned as ‘an adulterer’ by Al-Shabaab leaders. An anonymous eyewitness told the BBC she was dragged to a stadium weeping. She was buried up to her neck before 50 men stoned her in front of a 1,000 strong crowd.” (The Guardian (13 November 2008) *Somalia’s new frontline*)

A *BBC News* report on the death by stoning of a woman in November 2009 states:

“According to reports from a small village near the town of Wajid, 250 miles (400km) north-west of the capital, Mogadishu, the woman was taken to the public grounds where she was buried up to her waist. She was then stoned to death in front of the crowds on Tuesday afternoon. The judge, Sheikh Ibrahim Abdirahman, said her unmarried boyfriend was given 100 lashes at the same venue. Under al-Shabab's interpretation of Sharia law, anyone who has ever been married - even a divorcee - who has an affair is liable to be found guilty of adultery, punishable by stoning to death. An unmarried person who has sex before marriage is liable to be given 100 lashes. BBC East Africa correspondent Will Ross says the stoning is at least the fourth for adultery in Somalia over the last year. Earlier this month, a man was stoned to death for adultery in the port town of Merka, south of Mogadishu. His pregnant girlfriend was spared, until she gives birth.” (BBC News (18 November 2009) *Somali woman stoned for adultery*)

A report from the Kenya-based newspaper *Daily Nation* states:

“An unnamed woman was stoned to death at Eel-boon in Wajid district, 330 kilometres southwest of Mogadishu, on Wednesday. She was sentenced by an Islamic court after she was found guilty of adultery. The woman was taken to a square, her body half buried and then stoned. A crowd was present as well as officials of al-Shabaab, an Islamist movement that opposes the Transitional Federal Government and controls a large territory in Southern and Central Somalia. A young man, who was also caught in the same adulterous act, received 100 strokes of the cane. According to Sheikh Ibrahim Sheikh Abdurahman, a judge of the Islamic court who sentenced the woman to death and the man to whipping said the cases differed. 'The woman was had been married before and under Sharia (Islamic law) she is to be stoned to death upon proof,' said Sheikh Abdurahman. 'The young man with no previous marriage experience is to receive 100 whips under the same law,' he added.” (Daily Nation (18 November 2009) *Somalia: Woman Stoned to Death for Adultery*)

An *Amnesty International* public statement comments on persons stoned to death by Al-Shabaab as follows:

“On 17 November, a woman was buried to her waist and stoned to death in a village close to Wajid in the Bakool region, while a man accused with her of committing ‘adultery’ was given 100 lashes, the media reported. Her killing and the flogging were reportedly ordered by a ‘judge’ working for Al Shabaab. This follows the stoning to death on 6 November of a man named Abas Hussein Abdirahman in the city of Merka, controlled by Al Shabaab since November 2008. An Al Shabaab spokesperson said that the woman accused with Abas Hussein Abdirahman of ‘adultery’ would also be stoned to death once she has given birth. Information received by Amnesty International indicates that the woman is 32 years old, about six months pregnant and lives in the Afgoye district.” (Amnesty International (24 November 2009) *Somalia: Unlawful killings and torture demonstrate Al Shabaab's contempt for the lives of civilians*, AI Index: AFR 52/009/2009)

A CNN news report on the treatment of women by Al-Shabaab states:

“Militants who control parts of Somalia's capital city are beating women in broad daylight for violating their radical brand of Islamic law, according to

local officials and witnesses in Mogadishu. 'Just today, Al-Shabaab dispatched men with whips to the streets around Bakara market and they are flogging any woman who is found not wearing socks,' according to a female maize trader at the Mogadishu market, who spoke Thursday. She did not want to be named for security reasons. In the past two days, more than 130 people, including women who were not wearing headscarves and men chewing dried khat leaves, have been detained for violating Al-Shabaab's interpretation of sharia, or Islamic law, according to witnesses and officials. Hooded Al-Shabaab gunmen rounded up 50 women on Wednesday from Mogadishu's Bakara market for not wearing the veil that is required for women under some interpretations of Islamic law, according to the maize trader." (CNN (29 October 2009) *Somali women beaten for violating Islamic law, officials say*)

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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