



NATURE, DIMENSIONS AND DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE IN EASTERN SOMALILAND REGIONS

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	6
1.1	Background	6
1.2	Methodology	7
1.2.1	Research context and data collection methods	7
1.2.2	Research site selection	8
2	SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF CONFLICT IN EASTERN SOMALILAND	8
2.1	Clan composition of Somaliland	8
2.2	The Conflict Between Puntland and Somaliland	9
2.3	Overlapping territorial claims and visits by political figures.	10
2.4	The emergence and dissolution of the Khatumo	11
2.5	The Existence of ISIS and Al-Shabab	12
2.6	Conflict, resource allocation and exclusion	13
2.7	The militarization of the contested Eastern regions.	14
2.8	Nexus between conflict and drought in Eastern Somaliland.	14
2.9	Displacement of pastoralist communities	16
3	NATURE, DIMENSIONS AND DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE IN EASTERN SOMALILAND REGION....	17
3.1	Disputes over land ownership in urban and rural areas	17
3.2	Rural enclosures, clan dominance and conflicts	18
3.3	Land use contestations in Eastern Somaliland	19
3.4	Increase in the number of districts and regions.....	21
3.5	Charcoal burning and export	22
3.6	Disputes over petroleum exploration	23
3.7	The failure to uphold peace treaties	24
4	EXCLUSION AND MARGINALIZATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN EASTERN SOMALILAND.	25
4.1	Traditional elders and conflict resolution in Eastern Somaliland.....	26
4.2	The absence of women in peace-building processes	26
4.3	Participation of young people in peace and reconciliation.....	27
5	CASE STUDIES OF CONFLICTS IN EASTERN SOMALILAND.....	28
5.1	Conflict in Buhoodle	28
5.1.1	The course and dynamics of the conflict	28
5.1.2	Incidental actors and dynamics of the conflict	29
5.1.3	Peace efforts in Coodanle.....	30

5.1.4	Future Outlook.....	31
5.2	Conflict in Adhi-Caadeeye, Sool area	31
5.2.1	The course and dynamics of the conflict	31
5.2.2	Obstacles to reconciliation Adhi-Caadeeye	32
5.2.3	Future outlook	33
5.3	The Ceerayan, Sanaag situation	33
5.3.1	The course and dynamics of the conflict	33
5.3.2	The Obstacles to sustainable conflict resolution.....	34
5.3.3	Future outlook	35
6	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	35
6.1	Summary.....	35
6.2	Recommendations.....	36
6.2.1	Inclusion of women in conflict resolution processes.....	36
6.2.2	Youth empowerment and deradicalization	36
6.2.3	Youth involvement in conflict management	36
6.2.4	Strengthening government involvement in conflict management	37
6.2.5	Promotion of transparency and accountability in natural resource management.	37
6.2.6	Enforcement of peace agreement.....	37
6.2.7	Formation of community-led peace committees	37
6.2.8	The implementation of the National Land Policy	38
6.2.9	Community led mediation efforts.....	38
6.2.10	Continuous demilitarization.	38

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Climate change has led to protracted droughts and famines which have interacted with deep-seated cultural, political, and clan issues to undermine peace in Eastern Somaliland. This publication, therefore, explores the conflict dynamics and presents recommendations for sustainable conflict resolution and stability in Eastern Somaliland. Part one of the publication introduces the background to the conflict and clan tension and explains the research methodology employed in the study.

Part two of the publication explores the socio-political context of conflict in eastern Somaliland. This section maps out the contested regions of Eastern Somaliland and identifies the key actors. Specifically, the section examines how overlapping claims between Somalia and Somaliland have led to conflicts in the region and how clan affiliation with either of the three powers has contributed to violence and undermined peace prospects. This section equally examines how terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Al-Shabaab have taken advantage of the weak state presence in the region to recruit and train young people. The extent to which underlying factors such as youth exclusion and joblessness have contributed to youth resentment and boosted terrorist recruitment is also explored.

Part three takes this conversation further by examining the nature, dimensions, and dynamics of violence in the eastern Somaliland region. It identifies disputes over land ownership, nomadism, disputes over oil exploration, inter-clan conflicts, and failure to adhere to the terms of peace treaties as the key driving forces of the conflicts in Eastern Somaliland. The section equally explores how disputes over land ownership in urban and rural areas, unregulated enclosures, contest over water wells and charcoal burning have led to open hostilities in Eastern Somaliland.

Part four of this report looks at the exclusion and marginalization of vulnerable groups in conflict resolution in Eastern Somaliland. This section starts by examining the role of elders and customary law in conflict management and mediation in Eastern Somaliland. It then examines how these processes exclude and marginalize certain groups such as women and youth. Although the youth and women are the primary actors and victims of violence respectively, conflict resolution spaces in Somaliland have largely excluded them a practice that has undermined the sustainability of peace settlements in the region.

Part five analyses specific cases of conflict in Eastern Somaliland. Specifically, it explores Conflict in Buuhoodle (Togdheer region), conflict in Adhi Caadeeye (Sool region) and the Ceerayan conflict (Sanaag region). The section highlights the key actors and drivers of the conflicts, actions undertaken towards conflicts, challenges and opportunities as well as the relationship between these conflicts and broad Somaliland and regional security and economic issues. Notwithstanding their differences, clannism, competition for pasture and boundary-related dispute characterize all the conflicts.

Part six of the report concludes by identifying key policy recommendations that when acted upon could help address the conflicts. These are; Inclusion of women in conflict resolution processes; youth empowerment and deradicalization; Youth involvement in conflict management; Strengthening government involvement in conflict management; Promotion of transparency and accountability in natural resource management; Enforcement of peace agreement; Formation of community-led peace committees; The implementation of the National Land Policy; Community-led mediation efforts and continuous demilitarization.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

On May 18, 2021, Somaliland observed the thirtieth anniversary of its unilateral withdrawal from the 1960 union with Somalia. The withdrawal from Somalia marked the end of a decades-long union that had existed between Somaliland and Somalia (APD, 2021). Over the course of the three decades of independence, advancements were made in several sectors. These include; the cessation of hostilities among the people of Somaliland, the rebirth of Somaliland as an independent and sovereign state, the rebuilding of state institutions and organizations from the ruins of the old, and the orderly transition from a clan-based governance system to a multiparty system, which was followed by free, fair and credible elections (APD, 2021). In contrast to other methods (which were mostly utilized in Somalia's state-building process), Somaliland's approach to establishing peaceful and a functional state was distinctive in that it was culturally grounded, democratically negotiated and started from the ground up (Jhazbhay, 2010).

Somaliland has enjoyed continued economic progress after thirty years of political stability and twenty years of a multiparty system. Despite the existence of a neo-patrimonial system in which a select group of elites (business, political, and traditional) take control of the economy by monopolizing key economic sectors, Somaliland has enjoyed continued political stability and economic progress. However, inter-clan conflicts that are centered on land administration still exist in the eastern half of Somaliland (Togdheer, Sool, and Sanaag) and, to a lesser extent, in the western part of the country as well (Sahil, Maroodi-jeex, and Awdal). The frequency of inter-communal disputes is currently the major challenge for the Somaliland government. These conflicts not only affect the security of the country as a whole but also undermine the development of the regions in which they take place.

According to the historical and structural elements, inter-communal conflicts have resulted in a) insecurity; b) the displacement of citizens; c) damage to personal property; d) the installation of an unending animosity; and e) the disruption of government services.

Inter-clan conflicts tend to be more unpredictable in the Western parts of Somaliland (Sahil, Maroodi-Jeex, and Awdal). These clan-based disputes have not only affected the security of Somaliland, but have also spread into neighbouring regions of Somalia, most notably Puntland. As a result, they pose a threat to the cross-border security cooperation between Somaliland and the rest of Somalia.

The clan-based violent conflicts that are common in the eastern regions of Somaliland, the recurrent droughts that cause people to be internally displaced from their homes in the rural areas, and the mismanagement of natural resources are all factors that have contributed to the ongoing inter-communal conflicts in the region. Because of the scarcity of natural resources like water, pasture, and land ownership, inter-communal conflicts have been a major issue in the eastern parts of Somaliland.

In view of the above, this research sought to understand; a) Why land management and administration have been a source of conflict in Eastern regions of Somaliland; b) How land-based conflict transforms into clan-based warfare that causes the deaths of dozens and displaces hundreds of pastoral communities, and c) How inter-clan reconciliation processes are structured to cease hostility among pastoral communities and create an environment that is conducive to the peaceful settlement of inter-clan disputes.

To respond to these questions, the Academy for Peace and Development (APD) conducted research in the eastern regions of Somaliland, including Togdheer, Sool, and Sanaag. The research sought to explore; a) The wider contextual factors that influence clan-based recurrent conflicts in the Sool, Sanaag, and Togdheer; b) The key players who could support or obstruct peacebuilding processes; and c) The capacity requirements to redress the recurrent conflicts. The results of this research will serve as the foundation for the Road to Sustainable Peace program (financed by SIDA and SDC and undertaken in collaboration with a collection of Somali-owned research institutes, including APD). The findings of the study will be utilized to guide the execution of a program intervention in Somaliland, with a particular emphasis on the country's Eastern regions.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Research context and data collection methods

This research was conducted in Somaliland's Togdheer, Sool, and Sanaag regions over the course of 15 days of fieldwork that took place between 2nd and 28th April 2022. Specifically, the data collection was done in the following towns and villages; Buhoodle, Widh-Widh, Qorilugad, Lasanod, Adhi-cadeeye, Yogori, Fadhi-gaab, Erigavo, and Ceeryaan. A total of 177 research participants were sampled. The data was collected using participatory research tools which included; Key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and case studies based on the personal experiences of the male and female candidates in the just concluded combined elections. During the course of the fieldwork, two teams collaborated to carry out a total of 18 KII, 8 FGDs and case studies. The focus group discussions (FGDs) took place in both urban and rural settings. Each discussion had 6 participants and lasted for between 45 and 60 minutes.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the structural origins of inter-clan disputes, as well as their drivers, players, and effects with a particular emphasis on rural areas. The study made considerable use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) by conducting individual interviews and FGDs.

Majority of the research participants came from non-elite groups, including ordinary women, elderly people, and young people living in peri-urban areas. The study also compared the perspectives of various social groups, such as males and females, elite and ordinary, rural and urban, young and old generations, conservatives and liberals on women's barriers and opportunities in political leadership and

representation. Perspectives from candidates who vied for positions in the just concluded national elections were also sought. To understand people's experiences during the elections, the 2021 combined elections were utilized as a case study for the research.

The research team traveled to the Eastern regions of Somaliland to participate in consultation meetings with key stakeholders as well as a variety of interest groups that collectively represent several different social sectors. To obtain a better understanding of local players, interest groups, capacities, and conflict sources, several meetings were organized. The goal of these meetings was to determine the causes of conflicts and identify sustainable peaceful resolution strategies. The intersection between conflict and widespread drought in Togdheer and Sool, which together make up the majority of Somaliland's livestock industry, was also explored.

1.2.2 Research site selection

No active peace-building projects are being carried out in the greater Buuhoodle district, which is one of the reasons why the Togdheer region was selected as the location. Since the collapse of the Central government in Mogadishu, there has been inter-clan conflict in the Buuhoodle region, specifically between the Dhulbahante and Habar Jeclo subclans. As for Sool, the Yagoori District was chosen, and more specifically Adhi cadeeye town. This town is the location of long-running battle between the Fiqishine subclan of the Hawiye clan and the Reer Elmi subclan of the Dhulbahante clan in that region. Over the course of the last few years, this conflict has been responsible for a significant number of homicides, injuries, and losses of property. The Ceerayan in Sanaag was selected because of its history as a battleground between two subclans of the Habar Yonis tribe: the Basambuur and the Muse Ismail subclans.

2 SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF CONFLICT IN EASTERN SOMALILAND

This section explores the key players and the historical account of structural conflicts in the regions. It maps out the political, military and non-military actors and explains how climate change and environmental actors interact with clan identities to fuel conflict in the region.

2.1 Clan composition of Somaliland

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Somaliland has a population of 4.5 million people with pastoralists making up 55 percent of the population (Mesfin, 2009). Isaaq, Dir, and Darood/Harti are the three most prominent clans in Somaliland. Of these clans, the Isaaq clan is the most powerful, hence it is also the name of the country. It is estimated that members of the Isaaq clan make up 66 percent of the population, members of the Dir clan (which also includes Ise and Gadarbursi) make up 15 percent while members of the Darood/Harti clan (which also includes Dhulbahante and Warsengeli) make up 19 percent (Mesfin, 2009). The Ise and Gadarbursi clans of Dir dominate the western portion of the country,

while the Dhulbahante and Warsengeli of Darood/Harti live in the eastern part of the country. Most members of the Isaaq clan live in the country's central region.

Somaliland has been able to perform all the functions of a state. It has been successful in establishing and running functional government institutions and processes such as free and fair elections, a functional army, police, currency and passport. The country has entered into trade deals with foreign investors and developed a national identity including a national flag, fixed population, identifiable boundary and national symbols. Despite these gains, the country has had difficulty gaining recognition from the international and regional community.

2.2 The Conflict Between Puntland and Somaliland

The Somali National Movement (SNM), a group of freedom fighters composed primarily of members of the Isaaq clan, made the declaration of Somaliland's independence following the overthrow of Siad Barre's dictatorial government in 1991. The collapse of the Siad Barre regime resulted in the dissolution of the voluntary union that had been formed between Somalia and Somaliland on July 1st, 1960 (Mesfin, 2009). The declaration of independence was made at a clan conference held in Burco on May 18, 1991, and attended by members of the SNM and representatives of all clans from northern Somalia (APD, Pillars of Peace, 2015).

The Darood-Harti confederation's homeland, the Puntland, was founded in 1998 during a Garowe Constitutional Community Conference to serve as a homeland for the confederation [5]. Puntland, unlike Somaliland, is an autonomous state that falls under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government of Somalia. The people of Puntland are members of the Darood/Harti familial clan. Explaining the nature of Puntland's political standing within Somalia, Berouk Mesfin narrates;

"Puntland is in favor of the reconstruction of Somalia as a Federal and United State that includes autonomous regions and stays within the borders that were established in 1990. In the meantime, Somaliland maintains its position as an independent sovereign state and is opposed to the unification initiative being undertaken by Somalia. The territory of Puntland extends to the areas that are specified in its own constitution (Mahmood, 2019).

The regions highlighted by Berouk include; Bari, Nugaal, Sool, South Togdheer (Buuhoodle District), Mudug, with the exception of the Districts of Hobyo and Harardheere; the Sanaag Region, with the exception of the District of Ceel Afweyn and the Northeast of Ceerigaabo District; and Togdheer, South (excluding the Buuhoodle District) (Mahmood, 2019). Garowe, the capital city of Puntland, and Hargeisa, the capital city of Somaliland, are at odds with one another over the territorial governance of Sool, Eastern Sanaag, and the Togdheer district of Buuhoodle.

Political differences between Puntland and Somaliland have in the past led to armed conflict between the two cities. These conflicts have mostly affected the Dhulbahante and Warsangali sub-clans of the members of the Darood and Harti clans since they live within the contested areas. These contestations have also been experienced in Sool and Sanaag. The Dhulbahante are the predominant inhabitants of Sool and Buuhoodle, whilst the Warsangeli live in Eastern Sanaag. Sool and Sanaag were once a part of the British colonial territory and thus fall within the borders of Somaliland. However, Puntland also lays claim to Sool and Sanaag based on their ethnic and tribal affiliations (Mahmood, 2019).

2.3 Overlapping territorial claims and visits by political figures.

Visits by political figures to the contested territories often inflame the rival territorial claims over Sool, Sanaag, and Buuhoodle. For instance, during his campaign for re-election in 2002, Dahir Riyale, the then President of Somaliland, traveled to Lascanood. Being that this was the first trip of its kind by a president of Somaliland to the region, Puntland officials found the visit as offensive and saw it as furthering Somaliland's territorial claims. As a consequence of this, Puntland men assaulted Riyale's retinue, and Riyale was compelled to flee to Ainabo. The conflict paved the way for Puntland to conquer Lascanood the following year. Up until 2007, Puntland was in control of the region. However, due to tensions between Dhulbahante leaders of Sool and Puntland's president Abdullahi Yusuf (Mahmood, 2019). Somaliland forces were able to take control of Lascanood and the towns that were located in its immediate vicinity in 2007. Puntland's Army withdrew to the town of Tukaraq, located around fifty kilometers east of Garowe where it remained until 2018. Tukaraq serves as an important commercial corridor between Puntland, Sool, Sanaag, and eastern Ethiopia. Despite Somaliland's takeover of Lascanood, residents continued to resent the control of a Dhulbahante territory by the Isaaq of Somaliland (Mahmood, 2019)

When Somaliland took control of Tukaraq in January 2018, the Somalia government ordered its armed forces to launch an assault on the city. Thus, in May 2018, Puntland forces made an unsuccessful attempt to retake Tukaraq (International Crisis Group, 2019). The fighting that followed caused the death of between 200 and 300. A few flare-ups have since been reported between the two forces but no major conflict has taken place. Notwithstanding these realities, Somaliland's footprint in the region has grown significantly.

Consideration of visits by senior political figures as an advancement of territorial claims has continued to undermine Somaliland and Puntland relations. For instance, in 2018, Somalia's Minister of Planning, Hassan, visited his hometown, Badhan, a contested town in Sanaag (ICG, 2019). This was the first tour by a Minister of Somalia since 1991. The Somaliland administration viewed Hassan's unexpected visit to Badhan as an attempt by Somalia to undermine Somaliland's territory and legitimacy (ICG, 2019). Recurrent conflicts between Somaliland and Puntland have resulted in the underdevelopment of the contested areas, tensions and rivalries amongst communities and poor service delivery.

2.4 The emergence and dissolution of the Khatumo

For several years, the leaders of Dhulbahante and Warsengali voiced their dissatisfaction with the administrations of Puntland and Somaliland. As a result of these grievances, attempts have been made to establish a political administration for the Dhulbahante and Warsengali communities in Sool and Sanaag. In 2009, the elites of Dhulbahante made a concerted effort to bring about the formation of the Sool, Sanaag, and Cayn (SSC) administration. Even after engaging in multiple battles with Somaliland and Puntland forces, the SSC was unable to dislodge Somaliland from Dhulbahante territory (ICG, 2019). Internal conflicts and rivalries however led to the dissolution of SSC in 2011.

During a clan meeting in 2011, Dhulbahante leaders established the Khatumo state with its headquarters in Taleh, Sool. The meeting was attended by between 3,500 and 5,000 members of the Dhulbahante clan. Compared to the SSC, the Khatumo initiative had a higher level of legitimacy because it was backed by Dhulbahante leaders both locally and across the diaspora [18]. A previously fractured community was thus brought together by Khatumo to free Lascanood, coordinate a union with the Federal Government of Somalia, and expel authorities from Puntland and Somaliland from Dhulbahante lands (Muse, 2021). In their efforts to achieve their goal of liberating the region, Khatumo militants briefly seized control of Tukaraq from Puntland in the year 2012. However, the Somaliland army launched an assault on Khatumo forces, which resulted in the retreat of those forces, and Puntland regained control of Tukaraq. The fact that Puntland and Somaliland were seen to be working together against the Khatumo state was evidence that the latter's chances of survival were slim. The Somaliland National Army and Khatumo state engaged in several conflicts including in Buhoodle in the year 2012, (Web, 2012). The international community however intervened to mediate and restore calm.

Ali Khalif Galaydh was selected to serve as President of Khatumo for a 5-year term that would lapse in 2014. In 2015, Mr. Galaydh commenced discussions for a political settlement with Somaliland. The terms of the settlement would include the incorporation of Khatumo into Somaliland but constitutionally expand Dhulbahante's power-sharing in the country (Mahmood O. S., 2019). This was done despite opposition from elites within the Dhulbahante community. Galaydh's engagement with Somaliland was seen by the chiefs of the Dhulbahante clan as motivated by personal interests. The chiefs instead preferred a political engagement with the Puntland government.

During President Silanyo's regime, Somaliland made an effort to address the political grievances of the Dhulbahante clan. Thus in 2016 and as part of these efforts, Silanyo selected Yasin Faradoon, a member of the Dhulbahante clan from the Sool region, to the position of Minister of Interior. This appointment was meant to pacify the Dhulbahante clan and integrate them into the mainstream Somaliland polity.

The discussions between Khatumo and the Somaliland government resulted in an agreement that was signed in Ainabo in October of 2017. The term of the agreement was five years. The agreement included the establishment of a power-sharing mechanism that would increase Dhulbahante representation within the three arms of government (Mesfin, 2009)

The signing of the agreement between Somaliland and Khatumo marked the end of the outfit. Khatumo was thus unsuccessful in achieving its goals of uniting Dhulbahante regions under a Dhulbahante leadership and in finding answers to problems regarding the future of the clan. At the same time, the fall of Khatumo presented the Somaliland government with a window of opportunity to increase its level of control over Sool.

2.5 The Existence of ISIS and Al-Shabab

The conflict between Puntland and Somaliland has created an environment in which terrorist organizations like al-Shabab and ISIS can flourish and establish a foothold in the region. There is very little hard evidence to imply that Al Shabaab or ISIS are present in Sool or eastern Sanaag, respectively. However, there is growing evidence to support the hypothesis that ISIS and Al-Shabaab are conducting operations in Sool and Sanaag (Ahmed S. , 2022). In Lascanood, there have been assassinations of government officials, leaders of the Dhulbahante, and merchants. Locals estimate that up to 100 assassinations have been carried out by these groups. These killings often take place in populated settings (official, 2022). Al Shabaab is considered to be in charge of Sool's telecom companies and collection of taxes from the city's enterprises. They also have access to residents' personal information.

Being that Al-Shabaab has not publicly claimed responsibility for the attacks, the assassinations have caused inter-clan tensions and suspicions thus aggravating the conflict situation (Adan, 2022). For instance, when someone is murdered, the members of the victim's family, as well as the wider clan, will often blame the rival clan. This results in revenge killings.

The security challenges in Sanaag are complicated by the fact that an Al Shabaab splinter group that broke away and joined ISIS in 2015 operates from Sanaag, specifically in the Galgala Mountains. Because the Galgala highlands are steep, difficult to access, and remote, neither Somaliland nor Puntland has complete sovereignty over the region. This absence of a formal government presence has left a vacuum that has been filled by ISIS which uses the mountains as their training and operational grounds.

Due to its connections with smuggling networks, ISIS has been successful in obtaining a continuous supply of weapons and explosives from Yemen. At the same time, local clan leaders often collude with ISIS and Al- Shabaab in a symbiotic arrangement in which they provide political cover for the two groups in exchange for weapons. According to one security official interviewed by the European Institute of Peace, "ISIS and Al Shabaab have reached agreements with some of the clan elders and smugglers that allow them to operate across the Red Sea in exchange for a certain percentage of smuggled weaponry," (EIP,

2018). This arrangement is particularly prevalent among the terrorist groups operating in Galgala Mountains, Shidan, and Laasqooray in the Sanaag region (EIP, 2018).

Due to poverty, disillusionment, radicalization and exclusion, many Somalilanders have joined both Al Shabaab and ISIS in Somalia and Yemen. At the same time, fighters from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Iraq, and Syria as well as from other parts of Somalia often use Somaliland as their transit point to Puntland, (EIP, 2018).

Despite its citizens joining these groups, political stability in Somaliland has made it less vulnerable to attacks carried out by both Al Shabaab and ISIS (Horton, 2019). The European Institute of Peace has specifically noted that "ISIS has established links with human traffickers based in Somaliland and regards it as something of a collection point and transit hub for new recruits," (EIP, 2018). This reality has been confirmed by the Somaliland authorities' indication that ISIS has recruited followers to act as facilitators and set up businesses to fund its activities. These businesses also act as a platform to laundering funds from its supporters in Libya and Syria, (Ibid). Interventions by Somaliland government since 2018, has slowed down acquisition of weapons by both ISIS and Al Shabaab.

2.6 Conflict, resource allocation and exclusion

Generally, the relationships between the Central and Eastern regions of Somaliland have been uneasy and sometimes tense. This situation is a product of deep-seated resentments over unequal distribution of national resources and foreign aid. Most of Somaliland's national budget is spent on recurrent expenditures, leaving only limited resources for the development budget. United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations often undertake development projects through foreign aid. However, there is not a consistent framework for the allocation of these funds. Most funds are thus spent on various initiatives and projects located in the middle of Somaliland, specifically in the cities of Hargeisa, Berbera, and Gabiley. The outlying regional communities, particularly those in the east (which is where resistance to the Somaliland government's writ has been the strongest), are largely of the opinion that the international agencies have neglected them, and that the central government has not been acting in good faith in its dealings with them either. These sentiments are strongest in the areas around Las Anod in the eastern parts of Somaliland, which is regarded by many international aid agencies as being unsafe.

The presence of extremist groups in Sool and Sanaag, disputes between Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, as well as frequent local conflicts over resources, have created security risks that have further limited the operations of international organizations in these two regions (official, 2022). This has in turn undermined the implementation of development projects by international organizations in these regions (official, 2022). Additionally, the limited investment made by the Somaliland government in the two regions has further estranged the two regions and widened economic inequality between the western and eastern regions of the country. At the same time, the conflict between Garowe and Hargeisa

regarding the two regions, as well as the increased militarization and securitization of Sool and Sanaag over the course of the years have undermined development plans in the eastern regions.

2.7 The militarization of the contested Eastern regions.

The increasing militarization has heavily undermined development and created political instability in the Eastern regions of Somaliland. Parts of Tuqaraq (in the Sool region) and Badhan (in the Sanaag region), both of which are recognized as disputed territories by international organizations, have been affected by the militarization of the Sool and Sanaag regions as well as the armed confrontations between Somaliland and Puntland, (UN, 2018). Although Michael Keating, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, has in the past committed to help mediate these conflicts, not much has been achieved. Because of this, aid and development projects into these regions, by both the government and international organizations, have been scaled back significantly.

This militarization has also undermined diaspora remittance into these eastern regions. This is because diaspora remittance often comes in to initiate investment. Since the recurrent conflicts have reduced investments, they have also indirectly slowed down remittance (Interview with Traditional elders in Sool, 2022). Because of this, unemployment rates are high, and commercial activities have dropped significantly, (Traditional Elder, 2022).

The militarization of Sool and Sanaag increased significantly following the conquest of Tukaraq in 2018, the increasing military deployments in Sanaag in 2019 and the election of Muse Bihi as President of Somaliland. At the same time, Mr. Bihi has not fully implemented the power-sharing agreement between his predecessor, Mr. Silanyo and Galaydh, the leader of Khatumo. Although the agreement has been constitutionally formalized, there is continued underrepresentation of clans from the east in parliament and government generally (Mahmood O. , 2019)

2.8 Nexus between conflict and drought in Eastern Somaliland.

More than 30 percent of Somaliland's Gross Domestic Product comes from the livestock industry, making it the country's primary economic driver, (Bank, New World Bank GDP and Poverty Estimates for Somaliland , 2014). Production and trading in livestock are particularly essential to Somaliland's pastoralist-based economy due to the substantial amount of GDP that each contributes (Bank, Somaliland Poverty and GDP report, 2014). According to Somaliland's National Vision of 2030, the raising of livestock would play a role in the country's long-term development plan (Development, 2010). The National Development Plans I and II also emphasize on commercial cattle production and exchange (government, 2011 and 2016).

Notwithstanding the above policy foundation, climate change, repeated droughts, and a lack of access to water and pasture are all factors that are negatively contributing to the fall in the production of cattle, which in turn has a negative impact on trade.

Pastoralism is the primary economic activity in the three eastern regions of the country. Repeated droughts in Somaliland have thus affected livelihoods due to the loss of cattle occasioned by limited grazing land and lack of water, (Nations, Global Perspective Human Stories, 2022). According to the FAO's Somalia Water and Land Information Management (FAO SWALIM) November update, drought conditions have worsened significantly across Somaliland following three consecutive failed rainy seasons and the poor performance of the 2021 Deyr (October to December) rainy season, (FAO, 2021). Weather forecast indicates that the rainfall in 2022 will be below average, thus worsening the situation.

By November 2021 local administrators and humanitarian actors around the country had reported widespread severe water shortages that had affected more than 2.6 million people in 66 out of 74 districts of the country (FAO, 2021). This resulted in a decreased supply of food and pasture, which in turn triggered major migrations of pastoralists. In 2021, drought displaced about 113,000 people, most notably in the central and eastern regions of Somaliland (FAO, 2021). The displaced families migrated into camps, a reality that often worsened their financial situations. This pressure on nomadic lifestyle has undermined livelihoods and diminished opportunities for economic advancement. As a result, some nomads have been compelled to look for other ways to make a living, such as becoming members of armed militant groups like Al-Shabaab or the Islamic State.

The diminishing grazing lands and water resources have worsened inter-clan conflicts in Eastern Somaliland. During a focus group discussion in Lasanod a participant indicated that; “the reasons for conflict can be various, such as cattle, grazing land, and water wells.... Specifically, water wells are the most prevalent cause of conflict in any given area,” (Geele A. , 2022). The increased migration by pastoralists often causes competition for food and pasture thus fueling clan conflicts between incoming pastoralists and local inhabitants. At the same, time reduced grassland has resulted in overgrazing which has further destroyed the environment, especially in the Nugaal region, (Bihi, 2022).

Resource-related clan conflicts have been worsened by the increased privatization of water wells where individuals, aware of the rising demand for water, construct a water pumping unit in public wells and commercial water access by selling water. This reality has been blamed lack of enough resources to facilitate supervision of public wells, laxity and negligence by Ministries of Public Work and Water. Thus, instead of overseeing the operations of public wells, the Ministry of Water would only construct them and provide staff members with instructions on how to operate them. These staff members either appropriate them or allow other people with commercial interests to build pumps and commercialize them. Although the generator pumps allow for efficient and speedy access to the water supply, hence reducing the amount of time that consumers are required to wait, people have to pay to access the

water. Poor people are thus excluded from water access (Ahmed I. , 2022). FGD participants across the eastern regions lamented that despite being aware of this practice, the government has not done anything to stop it. (Traditional Elder, 2022). Complaints lodged against the Ministry of Public Works and that of Water in Sool for giving private individuals ownership of public wells have thus largely been ignored. This privatization of water often leads to conflict between the proprietor's clan and that of the individual denied access to water or between the proprietor and the immediate community.

The increased drought and commercialization of water sources has made communities to exclusively rely on aid which is not only inaccessible but also insufficient.

2.9 Displacement of pastoralist communities

Available data indicate that up to 80% of the livestock have perished due to the ongoing drought, (Vision, 2016). This has in turn resulted in disruption of livelihoods, with approximately 4.7 million (38% population) considered to be food insecure, (IDMC, 2020). As of October 2017, the drought had displaced about 9 million people from their homes, and as many as 6.7 million were in need of humanitarian aid (IDMC, 2020). However, many of the one million people who fled the effects of a drought named SIMA, which translates as "equal", have been unable to find durable solutions and are still living in displacement camps. It is believed that there are 84, 000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in settlements across Somaliland, with the majority of these people coming from the Sool and Sanaag regions (UNHCR, 2013). Accordingly, internally displaced persons (IDPs) have ultimately been forced to resort to privatizing public grazing land and establishing informal campsites in close proximity to areas rich in water resources in order to both qualify for assistance from international aid organizations and make the most of the natural resources that are located in their immediate surroundings.

The presence of IDPs has created tensions with local communities. During a focus group discussion in Burco, a female participant stated that, "IDPs have brought a number of challenges with them. They are made up of people or groups that represent the same community, and they settle down in an area without the agreement of anyone in authority or any planning from the government. Second, another group would also take land in a similar fashion, adjoining the first community in order to receive humanitarian support, and this would lead to a conflict because of the proximity of the two communities. In addition to this, many of these displaced people are pastoral nomads who, under normal circumstances, would be involved in a conflict owing to competition for natural resources (Wais, 2022)." It was also noted that the sub-clans that settled in the camps had no interest in relocating and often had an agenda of using the available resources to the exclusion of other clans. Within this context, the communities that currently reside in these camps have established new water resources and constructed private buildings in the lands that surround them in order to demarcate the territorial boundaries of their clans. These IDP camps have thus become an additional fault line for clan conflicts. One FGD participant observes; "The

settlements of IDP camp sites have become another form of privatizing public grazing lands and have resulted in countless intense conflicts between clans that are primarily based on natural and water-based resources," (Ahmed A. , 2022)(FGD,).

3 NATURE, DIMENSIONS AND DYNAMICS OF VIOLENCE IN EASTERN SOMALILAND REGION

This section, investigates the main factors that drive and shape inter-clan conflicts in Sool, Sanaag, and Togdheer. The section examines the manifestation of enclosures in rural and urban spaces and explores how the proliferation of districts and settlements is both a factor and an impact of clan conflicts in Eastern Somaliland.

3.1 Disputes over land ownership in urban and rural areas

Since urban and rural land disputes are distinct in their characteristics and root causes, they call for dissimilar courses of action to be taken to resolve them. Land conflicts typically emerge at the frontiers of clan territories in rural settings, whereas urban land disputes center on individual claims to ownership of parcels of land (APD, Dialogue to Peace: From Plunder to Prosperity, 2007).

Land conflicts in urban spaces in Somaliland are often driven by the financial incentives that are tied to the value of the land. Rapid urbanization that took place after the conflict in Somaliland's major towns increased the market value of land, making it to be one of the main sources of financial resources in urban regions (RVI, 2020). However, there is less contention regarding urbanization as a result of interventions made by traditional structures in addition to institutions of the government (APD, Pillars of Peace, 2015).

Land in pre- 1991 Somalia was owned by the state. However, the power vacuum that existed between the fall of the former central government of Somalia in 1991 and the establishment of the Republic of Somaliland in the same year created an environment that was conducive to widespread looting and chaotic land grabbing in urban areas (Geele, 2022). In this regard, private and public lands were seized by individuals and armed groups. Communally owned land in and around urban centers as well as public properties, such as buildings and plots owned by the government, were also grabbed and sold. As a result, the sale of land became the most lucrative business in Somaliland.

Actors in land disputes include individuals, armed militias, clan leaders, and government officials. In the immediate period following the breakaway from Somalia, the Somaliland state was not very strong, (Bradbury, 2008). This state weakness undermined state efforts to protect public land and resolve land disputes. In fact, in some instances, the state stoked land disputes by issuing duplicate land ownership titles for the same plot to different people. This practice was particularly spearheaded by corrupt state

officials. As one participant explains; "It is normal practice for individuals to steal land and fabricate unlawful documentation claiming it as their own.... individuals sometimes forge ownership documents. Most of the time, the local government authorities do not verify the legitimacy of the papers and, in other instances, they even validate and condone the unlawful possession of land for the sake of financial benefit." (Ali H. , 2022).

Although land enclosures are common in rural areas, they also exist in major urban centers like Burao, Las Anod, and Erigavo. In these places, the government has given licenses to wealthy business magnates or members of the diaspora to enclose areas of at least 15 kilometers in length with a boundary fence for commercial purposes (Omar, 2022). This kind of land acquisition is a potential fault line for conflict between families, clans, individuals, and the government. One elder from Sanaag explains;

“Enclosures are a major problem in the Sanaag region, mainly because the management of public land has disappeared since the fall of Siad Barre’s administration, and the judiciary’s inability to adjudicate on the matter. As a consequence of this, the scope of government responsibilities almost never goes beyond fighting fires.”

Some of the strategies employed by the state to implement temporary solution to land conflict (what the elder calls fighting fire) include, the establishment of ad hoc conflict resolution mechanisms such as facilitating cease-fires and encouraging mediation to end violence.

However, despite the risks of violence, the government has largely been unwilling (or unable) to intervene into situations of land enclosures. The government’s failure to intervene has been attributed to a number of factors including; a) the absence of law enforcement; b) failure to implement the land policy; c) the limited financial capability of the government institutions to enforce policies and laws; and d) complexity of the interrelationship between state institutions and organizations on the one hand, and modern constitutional institutions on the other hand.

3.2 Rural enclosures, clan dominance and conflicts

Land-related conflicts in Rural eastern Somaliland have become a major source of conflict and competition among clans, resulting into the displacement of citizens. One feature of land contests in rural areas involves the enclosures. These are established when people fence and claim ownership of large swaths of land for animal grazing or commercial purposes. The Togdheer, Sool, and Sanaag regions are home to a significant number of people who regularly engage in the practice of constructing enclosures. Generally, the development of new clan settlements through enclosures is decided over by the whole clan through consensus- (Ceshiimo in Somali). The exclusive jurisdiction of the clan means that government does not play any role in the establishment of rural enclosures. Instead, the government is meant to control grassland reserves, also known as Seerayaal. However, clans have often appropriated this role, taken over the reserves and transformed them into clan territory, (Abdi, 2022). Three types of enclosures exist

in Eastern Somaliland: farmed enclosures, private grazing lands, and public grazing lands (APD, Somaliland National Land Policy, 2017).

The absence of title deeds, coupled with the poor regulation of grazing lands in rural areas has seen clans compete over land boundaries. This competition, which often prevails during periods of drought has resulted in violent confrontations between neighboring clans. One participant explains during an FGD in Lasa nod “There are no laws and standards in place that are crystal clear to arbitrate land dispute. All of these illegitimate and unregulated land grabs have resulted in the destruction of the environment and are a contributing factor to the problem that pastoral communities face (Abdi, 2022).”

The fact that portions of land are often set aside for the burning of charcoal and the digging of water wells (berkeds) generally aggravates land scarcity. As indicated earlier, water wells and pasture grounds are increasingly commercialized, in eastern Somaliland, a reality that further intensifies inter-clan conflicts. This practice is particularly common with major clans. These large clans are generally able to own property due to the leverage that human capital provides to them. Through their numbers, they are able to fight and displace smaller clans. This widens the divide between the land grabbers, who are typically members of major clans, and the pastoralist nomad minor clans that lack enough numerical strength to fight.

Recurrent conflicts in rural Eastern Somaliland have thus undermined economic development. Failure by the government to perform its regulatory roles has thus compelled communities to assert their sovereignty over rural land. Additionally, some clans use the property for settlements in the hopes of gaining access to voting centers for use in upcoming elections, (Ahmed, 2022).

3.3 Land use contestations in Eastern Somaliland

Generally, enclosures for farming are small in size and are thus less likely to cause conflict (APD, Somaliland National Land Policy, 2017). These types of enclosures are rooted in the National land Policy and are quite popular among the citizens of Eastern Somaliland. (APD, Somaliland National Land Policy, 2017). Most agricultural lands comprise of irrigated fields that make use of berkeds as a means of water storage for the dry months. Rain-fed farms are not nearly as productive as irrigated fields because they can only be utilized during the rainy season. Due to irregular rainfall patterns, enclosures for farming are generally few. However, farming is sometimes used as an excuse to enclose large tracts of land which are then used for grazing.

Disputes often emerge between the nomads tending the pastoral areas and agriculturalists who enclose their land for farming. On one hand, pastoralists are generally interested in converting farming land into grazing land while agricultural clans often seek to convert grazing land into farming land. These conflicting aspirations often lead to conflict, (Ibrahim, 2022). One FGD participant explains;

“The pastoralist community makes use of public grazing lands under the assumption that the land is their own territory, Additionally, pastoralists travel with their animals in search of grassy fields on which to graze,” (Ali H. , 2022).

As a result of these dynamics, agricultural enclosure is restricted in the three eastern regions due to a) the predominance of pastoralist groups, b) the paucity of technical farming capabilities, and c) the inaccessibility of water.

The arrival of investors from the diaspora is altering these realities. These investors have developed innovative plans to enclose and cultivate vast grazing grounds and transform them into commercial farms. The disagreement between commercial farmers and pastoralist communities has now emerged as a new form of conflict (Dhuux, 2022). In addition, the relevant Ministries are poorly coordinated. For instance, the Ministry of Agricultural Development has been blamed for issuing agricultural licenses to private individuals for property that is classified as public grazing land. This practice has created conflict with pastoralist communities that have sworn to defend their public grazing lands from the investors. The areas of Sanaag, Togdheer, and Sool are home to the vast majority of these conflicts. At the same time, members of the Somaliland military operating in Eastern Somaliland have been accused of being involved in the appropriation of public land (Ibrahim, 2022). Most incidents of land related conflicts between the Somaliland military and the local communities have not been resolved.

Historically, the distance of land that may be privately owned was limited to no more than 10 kilometers from each town. However, ever since the fall of the central government and the end of civil war in 1991, each town has begun fencing off a perimeter of fifty kilometers square in order to develop businesses. In addition, the Ministries of the Interior, Public Works and Agriculture each handed out licenses to private citizens and public organizations to enhance investment in land and improve the economy.

Conflicts can also be triggered by informal enclosures. Informal public enclosures are portions of land that are used for farming, grazing resources or charcoal burning. Owning informal enclosures enables a family to have a source of livelihood. Because enclosures are not constructed according to a predetermined plan, there are no maps that show the distinct borders of these structures. Communities that share grazing land, natural resources, and water may be more susceptible to the effects of enclosures. Additionally, the absence of government rules and laws, or the lack of implementation of those laws where they do exist, makes it impossible to determine where boundaries lie. As a result, owners of enclosures often run into conflict with trespassers. For instance, milk delivery trucks often create paths that overtimes become subjects of contest between owners of two or more enclosures.

Owners of enclosures also have to be wary of wild animals that often roam into their facilities. At the same time, clan conflicts are sometimes triggered when owners of enclosures kill livestock that wander into their grazing land. Although these conflicts start between the owners of enclosures and owners of

livestock, they sometimes develop to include the individual's clan members. Such conflicts could become widespread leading to internal displacement, damage to property, and animosity between the parties and clans.

3.4 Increase in the number of districts and regions

During the colonial regime, there was no privatization of communal resources (APD, *Dialogue to Peace: From Plunder to Prosperity*, 2007). Instead, agricultural or public grazing grounds were zoned. During the rainy seasons, the public was restricted from accessing certain parts of public land. These portions of land were meant to generate pasture for livestock. The same portions could however be accessible for the animals during dry seasons. Since the fall of the Central Government of Somalia, there has been an increase in the proliferation of new districts and villages that also claim ownership of public lands and water resources. This is especially the case in the rural areas, and the Government of Somaliland has done little to enforce or legislate these claims. Asked about this challenge, a representative of the ministry of Environment interviewed during this study noted that;

"Since I represent the Ministry of Environment, I can unequivocally state that the challenges we are confronted with involve compromising the boundaries of land; the issues that come from the use and burning of charcoal; and the fencing of public land. The Ministry is focusing a lot of its attention on the matter of appropriating public land, which is a huge problem" (Geele h. , 2022).

Prior to the outbreak of the civil war, the government would regularly survey land to determine whether or not it was habitable (APD, *Dialogue to Peace: From Plunder to Prosperity*, 2007). This was also done as a way to locate various communities that had the potential to found settlements. The distance between settler communities was restricted to be at least 20 kilometers.

However, following the civil war, these regulations were abandoned resulting into the proliferation of new districts, villages, and settlements. Lack of land control policies and zoning has intensified competition between different groups in the formation of new districts, villages, and towns. Some examples of these regions include Buhoodle, Saraar, Xaysimo, and Daadmadhedh. In addition to this, these regions were established on the basis of a clan, a reality that has undermined relationships between groups. The lack of official border demarcation for the new districts often worsens the tensions between various groups and clans. Explaining this dynamic in the Sool region, one interviewee explains; "In terms of violent fights, there have been a number of them. There was no response from anyone, and the administration of the local government did not fulfill its responsibility to uphold security. Another problem is that the land that was once used for grazing is currently being developed into a city or a new community. In addition, one of the factors that contributed to the escalation of the dispute was the fact that the relatives of the victims had not been compensated for their losses" (Sugule, 2022).

3.5 Charcoal burning and export

Charcoal burning has widely increased during the last two decades resulting into massive environmental destruction in Somaliland. The Ministry of Environment and Rural Development of Somaliland has on multiple occasions voiced its concern regarding the steady increase in charcoal burning and usage, and highlighted the positive link between deforestation for charcoal and increased cases of droughts and desertification, (Development, 2022). Charcoal burning has aggravated child labour in Somaliland, because the practice is predominately carried out by male teenagers (who typically lack formal education). However, charcoal trading is mostly done by adult men. Due to the gendered division of labour which assigns women cooking roles, charcoal users are mostly women. The acacia trees, namely Gallool (Acacia Busie) and Qudhaca, are the most valuable trees for the burning of charcoal. These trees flourish in plateaus that receive between 150 and 300 millimeters of rain annually (Ministry of Pastoral Development and Environment and Candlelight for Health, Education, and Environment, 2004).

Due to the country's worsening economic situation, charcoal export of charcoal has become a significant new source of revenue, particularly for younger men who are unable to find work, as well as for the charcoal traders. It is estimated that the yearly turnover of the charcoal trade is \$250 million (UNEP, 2018).

Charcoal burning and trading are largely prevalent in Erigavo, Sanaag and Badhan while its export is done through the port of Bosaaso in Puntland. According to APD the impact of drought is severest in the regions where charcoal burning is prevalent, (APD, 2007). The primary driver of increased charcoal burning is the high demand from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. Although charcoal export had been banned by the Somalia government in 1969, the collapse of the central government in 1991 saw the resumption of charcoal export, (UNEP, 2018).

The government of Somaliland has attempted to regulate the trade in charcoal by limiting exports while allowing domestic use. To some extent, they have been successful in doing so in Central and western Somaliland. However, weak government presence in Eastern Sanaag has led the trade to flourish in the region.

The high returns on charcoal production and trading have resulted in recurring disputes between nomadic populations and charcoal traders. Explaining this problem, an elder in Sool interviewed during this study narrates; "Clashes between clans started when a man was executed over charcoal that was supposed to be shipped to the Arabian Gulf." (Ibrahim, 2022). The clan conflicts have led to the establishment of new clan villages, which has further exacerbated the tensions that already existed within the region (Elmi, 2022).

The restrictions on charcoal export have been met with resistance, and as a result, a complete ban on charcoal export is yet to be fully implemented. One FGD participant from Sool laments;

"On a weekly basis, they destroy more than a thousand trees in this district and are a major issue in the entire region. Charcoal traders have amassed significant wealth which they invest in acquiring weapons to arm local youth groups (Abdi, 2022)."

As a result of charcoal burning, most villages no longer have any trees under which people and animals can seek shelter from the sun. The burning and trade in charcoal continue to accelerate climate change and environmental difficulties, a reality that has diminished the quantity and quality of grass and water, which are pastoralists' primary means of subsistence in the Eastern portion of Somaliland.

3.6 Disputes over petroleum exploration

Oil exploration companies such as Genel, Ophir Energy, Prime Resources, Asante Oil, and DNO have signed production-sharing agreements with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals of Somaliland, indicating their interest in the country's oil and mineral resources. But as of right now, it is thought that the only companies with Production Sharing Agreements are Genel and DNO (Jakob Grandjean and Kristian Skovsten, 2016). In 2012, several exploration companies started doing their business in the Caynabo District of the Sool region (Council, 2013). However, in late 2013, the contracted exploration firms, without an official explanation, unexpectedly ceased activities, (APD, Somaliland Progress Towards Peace, 2015). One of the reasons cited for this withdrawal is the lack of transparent engagement between the oil exploration companies the government and the public, (APD, Somaliland Progress Towards Peace, 2015). The failure to publicize the contracts fostered a climate of mistrust between the government and the citizens. In addition to this, the government did not use the financial incentives to invest in the infrastructure needs of the surrounding communities, such as the installation of water points. Highlighting this problem, one FGD participant explains; "The government and the petroleum exploration firms did not make the nature of their agreement public." All that was mentioned to us was that there would be petroleum exploration carried out (Ahmed, 2022)." Similar complaints were reported with regards to the recruitment policy of the oil exploration companies. One FGD participant in the Togdheer region complains; "The youth population within Somaliland are confused and want to know why employment opportunities were not publicized in the media, and we deserve an explanation" (Ali H., 2022).

In addition to the above concerns which reflect the community's disapproval of how the oil explorations were done, clan militias and government troops have come into conflict due to profound misconceptions and mistrust of one another. Because there is no natural resource policy or regulatory framework on the management of natural resources at the district level, resolution of such disputes has become difficult. In conflict-affected settings, natural resources such as mineral wealth have the potential to provide significant and sustainable employment opportunities. However, in fragile contexts, such as the case of Somaliland, it incites inter-clan land conflicts and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

3.7 The failure to uphold peace treaties

Intercommunal conflicts have generally been recurrent in the Eastern regions, particularly in Buhoodle, Hudun, Kalabaydh, El-afweyn, and Shidan districts. These conflicts, which often lead to death and loss of property, are caused by competition over the distribution of water and other natural resources. One strategy of dealing with these conflicts has been inter-clan mediations. These efforts have been led by neighboring clan leaders, the Ministry of Interior, regional and district administrators and senior police officers. In addition, the central government of Somaliland has engaged in a number of activities with the goal of establishing a forum for conversation and peacemaking.

Most peace agreements are implemented in phases. There are three phases in this implementation; The first step is getting the disputing parties to formally sign the agreements. The second part requires the delivery of the first installment of the diya payment "Aas," which is often the cost of the burial or injury. The third phase involves payment of money and completion of the whole payment. Problems start when the parties fail to comply with this part of the agreement. Drought, death of cattle and lack of resources often account for this non-compliance.

Before the breakaway of Somaliland from Somalia in 1991, the Central Government of Somalia conferred power on regional and district courts to oversee agreements between clans and sub-clans. The Somaliland government has in the same vein tried to mediate inter-clan conflicts. However, despite formal government attempts at mediation, such efforts never run to their conclusion. Instead, they are often abandoned when temporary peace is restored. As a result, several issues remain unresolved. These include payments of compensation or blood money to the relatives of victims, repairing damaged homes and helping the injured, (Conversation with elders in Qorilugud on the 1st of March 2022....). One elder explains;

“During conversations aimed at bringing about peace, it was decided that the majority of these payments would be paid. However, we continue to struggle with the collection of their payment despite our best efforts. This is a consequence of there being both good people and evil people giving a specific number of camels as compensation payments for the relatives of the killed and injured.” (FGD with elders over the Elmi, Peace accords, 2022).

It is also noteworthy that whereas the pursuit of compensation should follow the full restoration of peace, more efforts have been put on the determination of compensation. Failure by law enforcement agencies and the courts to enforce compliance with terms and conditions of peace agreements, has resulted into resumption of hostilities and tensions between different communities in the Eastern regions of Somaliland over the past twenty years. The enforcement of peace accords is the responsibility of the judicial system

and the security sector. However, financial and logistical limitations often undermine the execution of this role.

Failure to adhere to peace terms is however a recent phenomenon. Historically, traditional elders from both sides of the fight would demand money in the form of "Diya" or compensation, and anyone who refused to pay would be taken into custody by the government. Accordingly, recurrence of conflict over failure to adhere to peace terms was minimal. One Chief in Burco offered the following explanation:

"Lack of resources, a shortage of livestock as a result of recurrent droughts, the disintegration of communities as a result of the increasing numbers of traditional elders and chiefs within communities, weak governmental institutions and lack involvement of district courts in administering the terms and conditions of the initial agreements that were made, has affected the implementation of agreements in actual time." (Dhuux, 2022).

As highlighted above, the proliferation of chiefs has grossly undermined societal stability in Eastern Somaliland. Historically, there were few traditional chiefs who presided over large territories and populations in Somaliland. The Chiefs coordinated fundraising for health and other purposes and acted as a link between the government and their communities. They also acted as a link between government and community elders. However, in the past two decades, rapid population increase has stretched their mandate resulting into weak controls and the emergence of 'ad hoc' chiefs with no recognized mandate or power.

Failure by one clan to pay Diya or Mag (blood compensation) for a previous killing committed by another clan often results in revenge killings. Revenge killing are considered to be a source of conflict in Togdheer, Sanaag, and Sool Districts, (Ali I., 2022)". Since the beginning of this year, the territories of Sanaag and Togdheer have experienced multiple incidences of fighting between the various clans and sub-clans. The fact that older people typically approve of revenge killings explains their prevalence in areas where older persons still control society, such as in Eastern Somaliland. In many cases, the traditional elders facilitate the escape of the criminals by instructing their clan to protect the assailants from being apprehended. This way they manipulate the victim's clan into accepting compensation while also escaping death sentence for the crime (Qisaas).

4 EXCLUSION AND MARGINALIZATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN EASTERN SOMALILAND.

This section explores the dynamics of traditional dispute resolution in Eastern Somaliland. It underpins the important role that elders play in dispute resolution and the various strengths of the traditional dispute resolution mechanisms in Eastern Somaliland. The section further examines the exclusion of women and youth in conflict resolution and highlights the implication of this exclusion on sustainable conflict resolution.

4.1 Traditional elders and conflict resolution in Eastern Somaliland

Due to their inherent legitimacy within the clans, elders are very important in interpersonal and inter-clan conflict resolution. They are also essential in the enforcement of peace agreements. In this regard, they utilize their influence to set the foundation for long-lasting peace in Somaliland generally. The elders have developed time-tested means of resolving conflicts. For instance, as a practice, elders often ensure that the mediation processes are conducted at the site of the conflict or within its proximity. This enhances the acceptability of the solution/s and ensures that the witness and the affected communities are able to participate in the conflict resolution processes. Since communities that are able to govern their own methods of conflict resolution are better able to incorporate their distinct cultural requirements, identities, traditions, and institutions into such methods, traditional conflict resolution systems are presumed to enhance intra-communal solidarity. The fact that the community is able to identify a neutral mediator /elder(s) adds to the credibility of this process. The function of the mediator includes conciliation, which entails engaging privately with the parties in conflict in order to facilitate the process of reaching a compromise during the meetings that take place beneath the tree.

Customary dispute resolution systems presided by elders involve the payment of diya which is considered a deterrence to anyone considering engaging in any kind of criminal activity. Although less prevalent, the exchange of daughters for marriage between the two clans is utilized as a way to bring two warring communities together. This serves as a means of fostering tolerance between the two families, which is an essential step in the process of integrating the two groups into a single-family unit.

Generally, traditional methods of conflict resolution are popular because they are expedient, less disruptive, and more acceptable to the warring clans. They also prevent aggravated conflict. Despite these strengths, dispute resolution processes in Eastern Somaliland are largely considered to marginalize and exclude vulnerable groups in society- namely the women and youth as explained below.

4.2 The absence of women in peace-building processes

Women bear a disproportionate share of the burden caused by violent conflicts. They not only lose husbands, sons, brothers, or other blood relations but are also more likely to be victims of sexual violence. Despite their vulnerability, the study noted that women play a very limited role in inter-clan conflict resolution processes. They are often limited to setting up the venue of the peace meetings and offering food to the attendees. This exclusion of women is largely caused by the Somali culture which confers the roles of resolving disputes and other public engagements to men. This reality flies in the face of recent research which indicates the positive value of involving women in peacebuilding, (Klot, 2007).

Organizing women in an effort to achieve security and justice has been shown to be effective, particularly in Somaliland. During urban warfare in Somaliland, women often organize rallies and large-scale demonstrations to discourage violence and promote peace. Women also share testimonies during clan reconciliation meetings. These testimonies include; a highlight of the psychological effects of war, the

pain of seeing husbands and brothers at war with one another, and how marriage has given them a cross-clan identity.

Despite these roles, the deep-seated patriarchy in Somaliland has continued to exclude women from societal leadership and therefore from dispute resolution forums. Thus, traditional leaders are generally hesitant to accept women's intervention in the domain of customary dispute resolution. In fact, some of them consider the mobilization of women's groups to condemn conflict to be a violation of customary law. This is because traditional leaders believe that women are not as knowledgeable as men about the ways in which customary law operates (Kulmis, 2022).

One of the cultural obstacles that act as an impediment to an inclusive and participative approach to conflict resolution is the traditional elders' belief that women are increasingly taking on the responsibilities that were traditionally reserved for men in a variety of contexts. However, women's organizations are optimistic that by continuing to raise awareness, teaching men and unifying women's organizations, the integration of women in peace processes can be strengthened. One research participant in Sanaag explains;

"Peace-building efforts organized by women are new to the society at large. As a result, we are occasionally put to the test by this. However, we take heart from the significant progress that has been done in a relatively short amount of time.... In the past, we provided our contributions without first obtaining the opinions of any other interested parties. As a result, women have the potential to play an essential part in both the establishment and maintenance of sustainable peace."

Nevertheless, this necessitates the full participation of women in all stages of peace processes (Intellectual, 2022)."

More women's inclusion in conflict resolution would guarantee sustainable peace. Because they live and work in close proximity to the causes of conflict, they are often in a better position to offer insight into the build-up of the conflict. Their dual clan identities- where a woman who belongs to one clan would be married in another clan, make it easy for them to act as a bridge between warring clans or sub-clans and mobilize communities towards peaceful conflict resolution.

4.3 Participation of young people in peace and reconciliation

Due to the high level of youth unemployment in Somaliland, youth, particularly in the East, have been used as instruments for violence. In addition to this, they hold a high allegiance to their clans and religion, factors that make them likely to engage in conflict to defend these ideals. Their involvement in conflict resolution in Eastern Somaliland is thus not only a moral necessity but a practical means of promoting sustainable peace. The continued downplaying of their role in peaceful conflict resolution is therefore counterproductive to peace efforts.

The growing number of young people in Eastern Somaliland presents an opportunity for the meaningful involvement of youth in peacebuilding. In addition, it is crucial that young people be provided with the skills necessary to transform conflicts. Stereotypes on the intellectual capacity of young people and their roles in society must be transformed to recognize their important role in peacebuilding. This is because young people have the ability to rally their peers, participate in efforts to end hostilities and foster an atmosphere conducive to peaceful coexistence within warring clan communities.

Several youth groups have been established with the goal of breaking the link to clan loyalty. In this regard, such groups have in their membership drawn from multiple clans. Additionally, youth-specific groups in various districts located in the eastern regions are attempting to construct young capabilities in order to encourage youth conversation for the purpose of achieving peace throughout their Districts. Despite this, there are still inadequate youth organizations that are not affiliated with any particular clan or youth group with the agenda of promoting peace.

5 CASE STUDIES OF CONFLICTS IN EASTERN SOMALILAND

5.1 Conflict in Buhoodle

5.1.1 The course and dynamics of the conflict

There have been various conflicts in recent years between the two sub-clans of Habr Jeclo and Dhulbahante that took place between the districts of Qorilugud and Buuhoodle. Similar conflicts were reported in Maaygaale, Kalshaale, and Buuhoodle. In November 2010, fighting broke out in the region of Kalshaale, which is located in the southern regions of Burco. The Dhulbahante from the area of Buuhoodle and the Habar Jeclo were the primary combatants in this conflict.

In addition to being a grazing pasture, Kalshaale is considered to be a "buffer zone" along the clan territorial borders that separate the two clans. Megaagle is located a few Kilometers to the South-East and was mostly Dhulbahante territory, whilst Qorulugud is located a few kilometers to the North-West and was primarily Habar Jeclo territory. Both of these locations are in the same region.

The region has experienced protracted conflict between these two clans. Vengeance has particularly fueled these conflicts. For example, the Dhulbahante would often build a house or a mosque on land that was previously considered neutral space or land that the Habar Jeclo historically considered to be theirs. The Habar Jeclo would react by doing the same thus triggering a conflict. Explaining this phenomenon, one elder in Qorilugud explains;

"As traditional elders that reside in Qorilugud, we strongly support the government of the Republic of Somaliland, but the other community from Buuhoodle is against Somaliland. As a result, they have enlisted

the backing of several armed militia organizations who either side with Puntland or the Federal Government of Somalia. As a direct consequence of this, new settlements have been formed in the region, leading to tensions between the two groups (Elmi A. , 2022)".

The situation in Kashaale and Megaagle is a reflection of this problem. The nomads in Habar Jeclo and Dhulbahante graze in Kalshaale for grazing and watering their animals. Kalshaale is thus utilized by both groups. The Dhulbahante considered Kalshaale to be Dhulbahante territory, although the Habar Jeclo were allowed to graze their animals there as well- as long as they didn't erect cisterns or buildings in the area. Similarly, the Habar Jeclo allowed the Dhulbahante to graze and water their animals in areas that the Habar Jeclo considered to be their territory. These reciprocal arrangements benefitted both clans. However, this arrangement was violated, triggering conflict and competition over pasture and water (Elmi A. , 2022). In addition to this, the emergence of towns near water wells often triggers such conflicts.

The conflict in Kalshaale demonstrated how easily a local disagreement over water- which involved dry season pasture and a clan buffer zone, could escalate into a major war that involved the national army, delegates from competing state administrations, and increasingly well-equipped and well-organized clan militias.

5.1.2 Incidental actors and dynamics of the conflict

Other than having long-standing tensions, both clans in the Buhoodle and Qoriligud conflict are heavily armed. At the same time, several distinct armed militias from Khatumo, that do not have formal agreement with any party, operate in Buhoodle. In addition, the Federal government of Somalia and Puntland militaries have overlapping political claims in these areas.

Due to the fact that Buhoodle and Ethiopia have a shared open border, illegal items and contraband, including alcoholic beverages and drugs, as well as firearms and ammunition, have been smuggled into both countries. Competition for control of smuggling ring thus acts as another conflict Faultline.

At the same time, there is no common administrative government in the contested area because shades of each administration are present in Buhoodle- Puntland, Somalia, and Somaliland, as well as Khatumo. The situation is worsened by the presence of terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State, (Isis or Daesh). Over the past six years, regular conflicts have thus been reported between communities that support one of the powers present in the area. The situation is worsened by Somalis in the diaspora who have aligned themselves- and provide support to either the Buhoodle community, the Federal Government of Somalia, the State of Khatumo or the governments of Puntland and Somaliland.

In general, the numerous conflicts in the Togdheer region can also be traced to the competition over natural resources like gold, minerals, jewels, and natural gases. Additionally, pastoral communities have come into conflict with one another as a direct result of the appropriation of public grazing property.

5.1.3 Peace efforts in Coodanle

Several efforts were made to restore peace between the two warring clans. These efforts were spearheaded by sultans, Aqalis, Sheikhs, and intellectuals from both communities. The most fruitful one was the peace meeting held in Coodanle, a village that is located in the middle of the two clans.

The government equally made efforts by sending a delegation to mediate in the conflict. However, the Dhulbahante clan rejected the mediators and consequently, refused to directly participate in the mediation process. Their divergent political allegiances to the Khatumo state and the Puntland administration were the driving forces behind the decision to reject the mediators.

Despite this, they have demonstrated their dedication to working toward the achievement of peace and security in the region. The intervention of the sultans and public intellectuals has been quite helpful in keeping the peace for a relatively brief period of time, which is a significant accomplishment on their part. Specifically, the sultans were successful in hosting the peace conference, as well as in meeting separately with the traditional leaders of both sides of the conflict.

As a direct consequence of this development, the two-armed militias, that were blamed for participating in hostilities were removed from their posts, and the region where the conflict was taking place was cleared out. In addition, the Sultans asked both sides to send 120 men as representatives to the mediation session. The adjudication process was proposed by the mediators, and both parties reached an agreement that the verdict must be based on Sharia law.

To prevent interference by political delegations, the traditional elders dug a ditch at the venue to prevent any political activity on the location of the peace meeting. The members of the mediation committee were selected openly and objectively to guarantee neutrality. All objections against any individuals were received and investigated within three weeks prior to the peace meeting. These efforts eventually led to the resolution of conflict and restoration of peace. However, the political conflict between the Somaliland administration and Khatumo state, Puntland, and the Federal Government of Somalia still dominate the agreements that were made between the local communities in Buhoodle and Qorilugud. This is due to the fact that the strong military presence of Somaliland's army and Khatumo state has restricted the movements of residents. Furthermore, the continued presence of militias in Buhoodle and its surrounding has undermined the effective implementation of the peace agreements.

5.1.4 Future Outlook

The existence of varied political actors makes it difficult to determine the political future of the conflict in Buhoodle. These actors offer political support for the Puntland administration, Khatumo state, the Federal Government of Somalia, the Republic of Somaliland, or the religious militant groups in the area. Sustainable peace can thus only be obtained when the conflicting parties opt to work together. In addition, the relationships that exist between Buhoodle and the other settlements in Somaliland are tenuous at best.

Reconciliation between the government of Somaliland and the state of Khatumo, and in particular between the Habar Jeclo and Dhulbahante clans, is required to facilitate Integration and the cultivation of trust between the two communities that currently call Buhoodle and Qorilugud their homes.

It is also extremely important to put into action the peace agreements that were reached at the previous conference in Coodanle and to hold a second conference in the same location in order to reach a peace agreement that is more permanent while adhering to the terms and conditions of the previous agreement.

Residents of Buhoodle and Qorilugud participated in the first peace conference, which was held in Coodanle. Local traditional elders oversaw the process, and the participants in the meeting came from Coodanle. One of the principal challenges that overwhelmed the preliminary conference was the political tension that existed between these two groups. As a result, it is essential to launch the process at the most fundamental level prior to the beginning of the second peace conference in Coodanle. Additionally, it is necessary to maintain the independence of the peace process from any external political influences, since these have the potential to significantly impede the ongoing peace process.

Youth, women, and diaspora communities must also be integrated into the discussions regarding their active participation in the dispute resolution process. This will require massive community mobilization. APD, with its expertise in conflict-related research should identify the gaps, difficulties, and opportunities in the previous peace process in Coodanle. APD can also help in providing assistance with the execution of peace accords and the dissemination of the results of those accords to the communities that participate in the process.

5.2 Conflict in Adhi-Caadeeye, Sool area

5.2.1 The course and dynamics of the conflict

This conflict pitted the Fiqishiine sub-clan of the Hawiye clan and the Reer Elmi sub clan of the Dhulbahante clan. Both clans live in Adhi Caadeeye. The disagreement between the two communities in Adhi Caadeeye largely centred on the use of water wells and pastureland. The Fiqishiine people believe that grazing land and water wells in Adhi Caadeeye that they use for their cattle belong to them. The

Reer Elmi sub clan of the Dhulbahante clan have similar claims. This conflict raises contentious questions; Who controls the political leadership of Adhi Cadeeye? And "Who owns Adhi cadeeye?"

The Fiqishiine clan is credited for founding the town in the 1960s. In fact, historically, the Fiqishiine clan served as the town's leaders. However, the Dhulbahante clan controlled the remainder of the regions (districts) in Somalia even before the Somalia government fell apart in 1991. The recurrent conflict between these two clans facilitated an arms race between them. Following the end of the civil war in 1991, the Reer Elmi of the Dhulbahante clan argued that the Fiqisine clan belonged to a minority and was therefore unqualified to govern or lead Adhi Cadeeye. This pronouncement resulted in a conflict between these groups, resulting into massive loss of lives and property. This conflict has recurred overtime, with the latest episode occurring in December, 2021. The conflict started when a member of the Fiqshiine community killed a member of the Reer Elmi subclan. This marked the tenth time that a member of the Reer Elmi community was slain by a member of the Fiqishiine community. Consequently, the Reer Elmi killed 14 members of the Fiqshiine subclan. Both parties also suffered multiple injuries. As a consequence of this unresolved ongoing conflict, inter-community marriages, trade, and migration have all come to a halt.

Neighbouring communities, the Ministry of the Interior, and the governor of the region have all made a number of attempts to bring both groups together, but none of these efforts has been successful.

5.2.2 Obstacles to reconciliation Adhi-Cadeeye

Lack of commitment between the two conflicting clans has undermined efforts to find a sustainable solution to the conflict. In addition, the underlying causes of the problems that led to the conflict between the two groups have not been addressed. Thus, both clans continue to assert sovereignty over the lands and territories that they occupy.

Second, the government's efforts to bring both sides together through the various peace channels that were established during earlier peace efforts were not followed through on. Government's inefficiency and inadequacy is therefore responsible for continued hostilities in the region.

Since 2008 there have been numerous conflicts between Somaliland and Puntland armies. This conflict has cast a shadow over the conflict in Adhi cadeeye. The two clans, therefore, have conflicting affiliations. Due to their clan ties with the Ugadhyahan and political affiliations in Puntland, the Reer Elmi have traditionally backed the administration of Puntland, whilst the Fiqishiine communities have traditionally supported the government of Somaliland. These political divisions have played a role in further fueling the conflict and have hampered efforts to move toward peace and reconciliation. Both the severe drought and economic hardships caused by COVID-19 have also hampered the ability of both communities to fulfill the conditions of the peace agreements which involved compensations.

5.2.3 Future outlook

Traditional elders from both clans were eventually able to come together for peace negotiations between the two groups. The peace discussions are still going on, and one of the key challenges that both communities have experienced during the process of establishing peace is finding a solution to the situation involving the injured members of each group. The issue has not been resolved to anyone's satisfaction. The absence of a mutually accepted mediation committee as well as the failure of each party to sign the final agreement account for this situation.

In spite of this, the temporary peace process between the two belligerent parties resulted in an agreement regarding the payment of compensation (diya) where all sides came to an agreement on the payment of blood money or other forms of compensation to the families of those who lost their lives in the fight. In accordance with Shariah law, a total payment of 100 camels was agreed upon as compensation. This payment was to be made in three phases. However, only the first, consisting of 33 camels has been honored. It is hoped that the remaining compensation which is meant for 24 casualties of the fighting, will be paid after the end of the drought.

Since the number of casualties is still contested, both warring clans were mandated to determine the number of their dead members so that the correct amount of compensation can be affirmed.

5.3 The Ceerayan, Sanaag situation

5.3.1 The course and dynamics of the conflict

A few years before the outbreak of the civil war, the territory that is now known as Ceerayan was formally designated as a district located within the Erigavo area. It is situated 60 kilometers to the Southwest of Erigavo and its primary economic activity is livestock keeping. Prior to the collapse of the Central Government of Somalia, the land was traditionally divided among four sub-clans: the Habar jeclo, Dhulbahante, Warsengeli, and Habar Yonis groups. At the same time, the villages in the region collaborated to share water sources and grazing land. However, after the collapse of the Central Government, Somali National Movement assumed control of the region of Erigavo, including the territory in which those communities resided. This included the area that was formerly under the control of the Central Government. As a result, members of the Muse Ismaail of Habar Yonis and Basonbur of Habar Jeclo sub clans settled there and established the town of Ceerayan.

These settlements attracted even more settlers. In addition, the residents of these villages did not have literacy skills and largely worked as herders. However, 8 years after the establishment of the settlements in Ceerayan conflicts over the administration of Ceerayan emerged. New factions with interests in controlling the area emerged, resulted into protracted conflict.

Similar clan tensions have previously been reported in Tulaal. This conflict emerged when the Muse Ismail sub-clan of the Habar Yonis community blamed the Basonbur sub-clan of the Habar Jeclo community for the death of one of its members, a soldier. Although this conflict didn't result into active hostilities, it created a lot of tensions between the two communities.

The area teetered on the brink of hostilities again when an assault on the settler communities resulted in the deaths of 9 people. The President of Somaliland and several Ministers condemned this provocation and called for action to prevent a full breakout of conflict. In light of this, a Peace Committee comprising traditional and religious leaders was established. The regional government also detained a number of suspects. Eventually, the two clans agreed to a peaceful settlement of the dispute. However, this was to be done without any involvement of external actors, including the government. Detainees from both communities were therefore released after committing to bring an end to their protracted feud.

Three different peace committees were established by the government to resolve the conflicts. The primary responsibilities of these committees were to facilitate dialogues between the warring parties and promote adherence to any peace agreement. However, this peace has been threatened by new cases of disagreement over the management of the villages. APD has in the recent past intervened to resolve one case, but the general situation remains precarious, (Elmi A., 2022).

5.3.2 The Obstacles to sustainable conflict resolution.

The ongoing conflict in El Afwayn over the past five years has made it difficult to maintain the reconciliation process in Ceeryaan. The prolonged drought not only posed a threat to the lives of citizens, but also made it more difficult to work toward reconciliation. This in turn prolonged and protracted the conflict.

The results of the general election and the fact that citizens in Ceeryaan supported different political formations based on clan affiliations further aggravated the conflicts and created an environment of suspicion which is not suitable for conflict resolution. In addition, the activities of Colonel Caare (a former Somaliland army colonial who formed a clan militia) and his militia groups, as well as their encounters with the Somaliland army, were a barrier to the process of bringing the communities together for the sake of reconciliation.

Interference by the diaspora is a key obstacle to peaceful conflict resolution in Ceeryaan. Diaspora communities not only offer political support to rival clans and families but also remit funds which are used to pay militia and purchase weapons. Being that they are actors in local conflicts, mediation efforts often fail if the diaspora funders and supporters reject them.

At the same time, mistrust over the use of grazing land and community wells continues to cultivate an environment of tensions and act as a natural Faultline for conflict at the slightest provocation.

5.3.3 Future outlook

The fighting in Ceeryaan, which resulted into loss of lives and property, raged for five years. In view of this, the traditional elders from both communities have been making significant efforts towards peacebuilding. As a direct consequence of these efforts, they have been successful in putting an end to the usage of firearms. The elders also sent calls for peace to several members of the House of Elders (Gurti), the Governor, and the Division Commander. The involvement of these elders has boosted the legitimacy and pace of the conflict resolution processes. Despite these efforts, the government has largely been absent from the negotiation sessions. It is however hoped that the elders' intervention will bring sustainable peace.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This study revealed a variety of social, political, and economic dynamics and challenges that continue to affect peace prospects in Eastern Somaliland. The conflict mapping exercise particularly revealed an intersectional connection between the various courses and actors in conflicts in Somaliland.

In view of the intersectional nature of the conflicts, it is necessary for policymakers and communities to engage with all the parties involved in the conflict. This will promote sustainable community-driven peace and conflict management. This may also require a legislative framework, especially at the district and regional level where legal gaps, especially with regard to natural resource management continue to trigger conflicts.

The absence of the state from conflict resolution spaces and the perception by communities that the state is either biased, unwilling, or unable to resolve conflicts has further aggravated hostilities in Eastern Somaliland. This situation is further worsened by the fact that various clans and sub-clans pay allegiance to different authorities including the Somaliland government, the Somalia government, and the Puntland government. The inability or unwillingness of the government to engage in significant dialogue with civil society and the general public has further eroded its legitimacy and acceptability in the eyes of conflicting parties.

The failure by the government to exercise full control and presence in parts of Eastern Somaliland, coupled with overlapping territorial claims with Puntland has created a rich ground for the recruitment and training of terrorist groups such as Isis and Al-Shabab. This reality has been complicated that jobless youth within Somaliland have become easy recruits for these terrorist groups. The use of Somaliland as a transit point for smuggled weapons as well as the fact that terrorists travelling to Somalia often use Somaliland as a transit point has worsened the security risks in Eastern Somaliland.

Natural resources like land, water, minerals, pasture and nonrenewable sources of energy have been highlighted as the greatest sources of conflict issues in Somaliland. The emergence of climate change has resulted into long droughts and famines which have worsened inter-clan competition resulting into frequent conflicts. This rivalry over finite natural resources has equally affected oil exploration efforts thus slowing down investment.

Clanism and tribalism are quite rampant in Somaliland. They permeate every aspect of a society's social and political structure and breed severe mistrust among its members. The overlap between clan and politics has further aggravated this mistrust. Demarcating the boundary between clan and politics through participatory democratization is one way of managing this situation. This process must include both men, women and the youth. The same inclusivity should apply to dispute resolution processes where women and youth are currently excluded. At the same time, the reconciliation process for communities that have long-standing grievances, education, and awareness would go a long way in promoting inter-clan harmony. Since failure to adhere to peace terms has become a cause of protracted conflicts, parties in conflicts should comply with their duties during and after peace talks by paying the necessary compensations to avoid revenge killings.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 Inclusion of women in conflict resolution processes.

The exclusion of women from mediation processes robs Eastern Somaliland communities of crucial voices that can add impetus to the conflict resolution processes, especially because women often have dual clan identities. Moving forward, policymakers, elders, and communities should embrace and appreciate the important role of women in sustainable conflict management. Capacity building of women on mediation strategies should also be undertaken.

6.2.2 Youth empowerment and deradicalization

To reduce youth involvement in conflict, including reduction of their recruitment into terrorist organizations, authorities in the Eastern regions should focus on job creation. This will reduce disillusionment that drive the youth into the hands of the terrorists. Government should also increase opportunities for vocational and technical training to improve the skills of the youth. The government should also establish deradicalization programmes to targeting youths who are at risk of being recruited into terrorist groups.

6.2.3 Youth involvement in conflict management

Despite being the main actors in conflicts, the youth are largely excluded from mediation processes. Instead, these processes are exclusively overseen by elders. To respond to this gap, there is a need to involve the youth in mediation processes. At the same, the youth should be trained on conflict prevention, mediation, Somali customary law and social reconciliation methods.

6.2.4 Strengthening government involvement in conflict management

Generally, the government, elders and communities are the main custodians of peace and security. Although the government has made attempts to engage in conflict resolution, its often seen as partisan and therefore rejected. To build public trust, the government should engage in regular stakeholder forums with local communities in Eastern Somaliland. The Ministry of the Interior should also establish a Regional Department that is concerned with the early detection and prevention of conflicts and mediation of disputes. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior should establish a conflict management unit responsible for training local district and village administrators on peace and conflict management.

6.2.5 Promotion of transparency and accountability in natural resource management.

Corruption in natural resource management, especially in the management of public wells, creation of enclosures, and management of urban and public grazing land are very sources of conflict. Accordingly, the relevant ministries should enhance their transparency in dealing with the public on these matters. This will encourage the members of the public to seek government intervention in cases of disputes instead of resorting to violence. The government should also develop long-term policies and regulations to mitigate resource-based conflicts. Proper survey and mapping of the public and private lands should also be undertaken to reduce boundary disputes.

6.2.6 Enforcement of peace agreement

Failure to implement peace agreements is one of the main causes of revenge killings and conflicts in Eastern Somalia generally. Accordingly, the government, elders, religious leaders and all conflict resolution actors should encourage communities to adhere to their obligations by complying with the terms of peace agreements, including payment of compensation as and when ordered to do the same during mediations and respecting clan boundaries and settlements on the use of water and grazing land. This may require the commencement of concrete engagement with the judiciary and traditional elders with the goal of making it easier to put the peace accords into effect. For instance, the inter-clan peace accord that was overseen by the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) and the peace mediation committees over the conflict in Adhi cadeeye should be put into effect.

6.2.7 Formation of community-led peace committees

In order to form peace committees in their communities, varied groups that represent different parts of communities should be selected, and efforts made to include their participation in ongoing reconciliation activities. Diverse peace committees are particularly necessary in Ceerayan, Shidan, and Adhi cadeeye where several sb clans co-exist. This diversity should capture village of residence, age, gender, ethnic and clan identities and political affiliation among other categories of inclusion. In addition, the process of selection would include the validation of hand-picked persons from the communities of Ceerayan, Buhoodle, and Adhi Cadeeye.

6.2.8 The implementation of the National Land Policy

Proper management of land and water resources, especially during droughts when pastoralists communities often clash with settler communities requires the comprehensive implementation of the national land policy. This will not only regulate the demarcation of public pasture land but will also make it easy to mark and resolve boundary disputes. The implementation of the policy will also guide the establishment of enclosures and the use of public wells as well as the mapping of boundaries between clans and sub-clans. It will also guide the establishment of settlements.

6.2.9 Community led mediation efforts

Generally, there has been attempts by external actors such as neighbouring clans, NGOs, government officials and the diaspora to attempt to control mediation efforts. Such externally driven processes are not sustainable. It is therefore necessary to ensure that local communities, take charge of driving the processes of reconciliation. This is especially important with regard to the execution of peace agreements. All other actors should only support and not lead the peace efforts.

6.2.10 Continuous demilitarization.

Although militarization of the contested areas in the Eastern region is a product of several actors both within and outside Somaliland, there is need to fast track peaceful boundary conflict resolution between the three main actors; Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland. This would guarantee peace for the communities living in the contested areas and ensure that foreign and local investment and aid reach the deserving people in these areas. However, this may require political goodwill by the three actors. Such efforts would also accelerate the fight against terrorism and weapon smuggling.

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- Abdi M. (2022, April 17). Rural land. (APD, Interviewer)
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- Ali, I. (2022, April 21). Government and land managment. (APD, Interviewer)
- Ali, H. (2022, April 26). Public Land ownership. (APD, Interviewer)
- Ahmed, S. (2022, April 18). Grazing land . (APD, Interviewer)
- Abdilahe, B. (2022, April 23). Impact of land problems. (APD, Interviewer)
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