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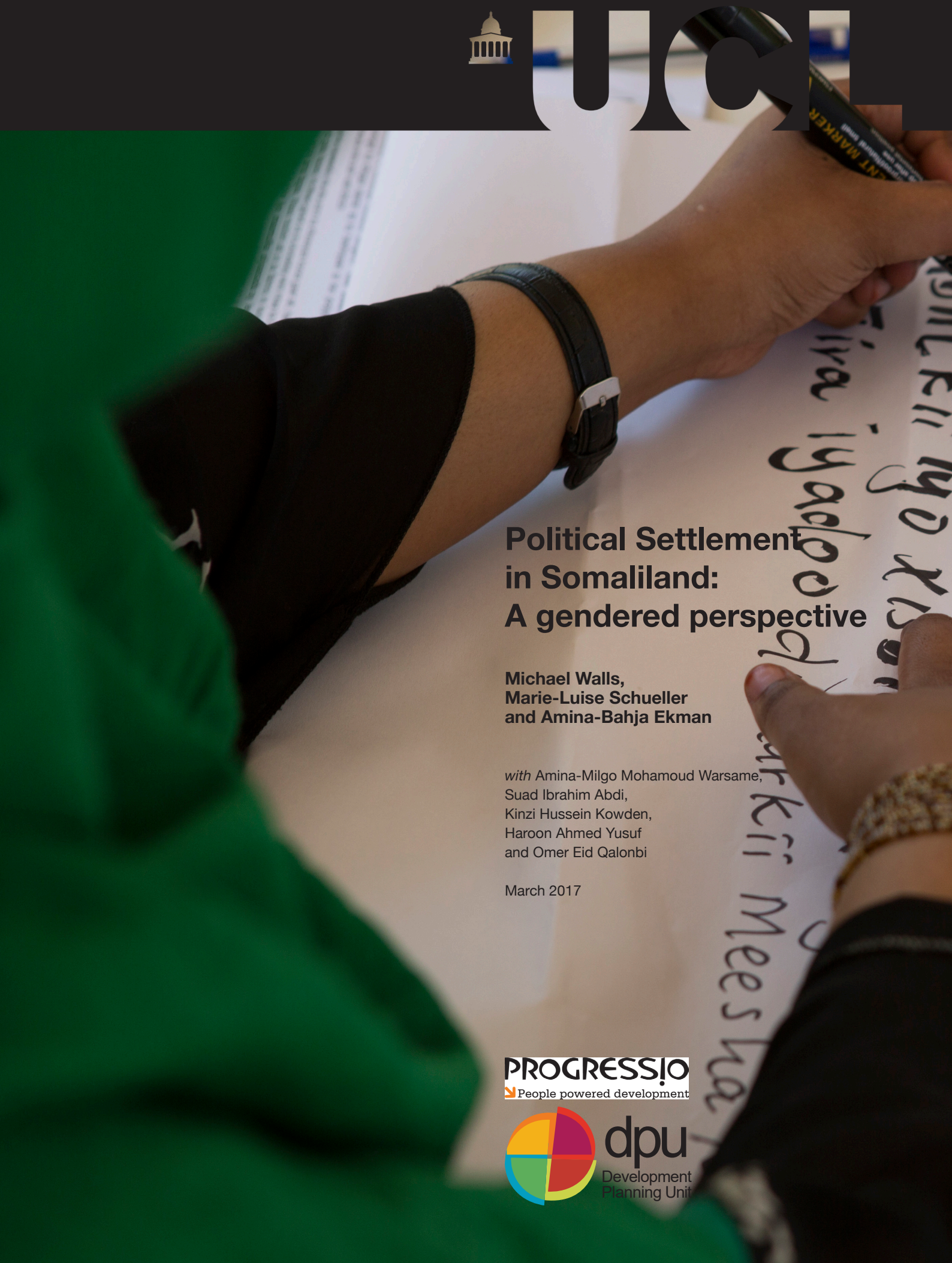

Political Settlement in Somaliland: A gendered perspective

Michael Walls,
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About the authors

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Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil society organisation
DFID	UK Department for International Development
FGM	Female genital mutilation
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoNPD	Ministry of National Planning and Development
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SONSAF	Somaliland Non State Actors' Forum
SONYO	Somaliland National Youth Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
Unicef	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WPP	Women's political participation
WRO	Women's rights organisation

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Glossary of Somali Terms

aftahannimo	eloquence
aqal	family dwelling
bilis	noble
boqor	clan leader
caaqil	chief of *mag* group
deeqsinimo	generosity
diya	blood compensation (Arabic)
garaad	clan leader
geesinimo	courage
godob-reebta gabadhaha	'the leaving behind of a grudge through women'
guurti	ad hoc group of mediators; Somaliland's Upper House of Parliament
jinsiga	gender
lamanaha	couple; used here to refer to 'non-biological' gender
Ijtihad	independent reasoning, judgement
mafresh	place to chew *qaad*
mag	blood compensation
nag	woman, female
nagaanimo	femininity, femaleness
nageeyti	womanish (colloquial)
nin	man, male
qaad	leafy narcotic drug
Quraysh	the family of the Prophet
raganimo	masculinity, maleness
ribo	financial interest
Sharia	Islamic canonical law
suldaan	clan leader
tariiqa	brotherhood, Sufi school
ugaas	clan leader
wadaad	learned in Islam
waranle	'one who owns a spear'
xeer	customary contract, 'law'
xeerka birimageydada	principles that govern the conduct of war
xidid	related by marriage

Executive Summary

Research suggests that inclusive political settlements tend to be more stable. For Somaliland in the northern Horn of Africa, stability is underpinned by a patriarchal clan-based system that is non-gender-inclusive. The question therefore arises as to how the transition to greater inclusivity might be achieved without destabilising Somaliland's political settlement in the process.

The most recent 2012 Gender Inequality Index for Somalia rates the whole of the old Somali Republic at 0.776 (1 indicating maximum gender inequality), the fourth-lowest position in the index (UNDP Gender Unit, 2012). In practice, this means that the Somali territories are characterised by high levels of maternal mortality, gender-based violence, illiteracy, child marriage, rape, female genital mutilation and inadequate health services for women and girls. While this data does not relate to Somaliland alone, it provides a likely indication of the severity of the imbalance between women and men in the country.

The data that is available for Somaliland shows similar gender disparities. Girls are less likely to be enrolled in primary school, for example, with 95,578 recorded in Somaliland in 2012/13 against an enrolment of 119,453 for boys. That disparity increases significantly at secondary level, with 12,306 female enrolments in the same year against 26,932 for males (MoLSA, 2014).

Despite the pains of transition, there is good reason to consider a more inclusive political settlement as a means of reinvigorating the Somaliland polity. Our research and other evidence in the secondary literature show that people in Somaliland are becoming increasingly disillusioned with the 'politicisation' of clan and the rise of 'clannism'. These developments in the political settlement are themselves potentially destabilising, but this time of change offers room for gender-focused activism that uses greater inclusivity for women and men (as well as minority groups) to help promote peaceful transition in Somaliland.

In this report, we argue not only that the Somaliland political settlement is currently relatively stable but non-inclusive in gender terms, but that there are compelling reasons on both normative and instrumental grounds to urgently improve this situation. We present the results of a 21-month research project, including new primary data about attitudes towards improving women's political participation and reducing gender-based violence.

We conclude the report with a number of suggested initiatives, the contours of which are worth emphasising from the start. Firstly, it is important that international involvement is not seen to dominate gender initiatives to the degree that these interventions add to the growing perception that 'women's issues' are a concern of liberal foreigners and are therefore 'un-Somali'. Secondly, it is important that donor programmes seeking to address the gender-inclusivity of Somaliland's political settlement take a long-term view, and are grounded in principles supported within Islamic ethical structures.

The Somaliland government and political parties also have a significant role to play in opening spaces for both men and women to participate actively in political activities at all levels. Thirdly, therefore, we recommend a return to closed lists in elections, and a focus on finding ways to deliver on the constitutional guarantee of equal rights for all citizens. While it has supported Somaliland's peace effectively in many ways, clan-based justice is manifestly unjust in many cases of sexual violence. Fourthly, we therefore suggest that it is important that mechanisms be found to draw customary elders into a legal system that provides more effectively for the victims in such cases.

Somaliland's success in establishing a viable political settlement in the face of considerable odds is impressive, but the transition from customary structures to those of representative nation-state politics exposes gender imbalances that could threaten to undermine that success. The research outlined in this report supports efforts to engender an inclusive and robust political settlement for the future.

Introduction

This report presents the findings of a 21-month research project examining the political settlement in Somaliland from a gendered perspective. The research involved three primary components: firstly, a review of documentary sources identifying the relationships between political settlement and gender and, more specifically, the aspects of that relationship that pertain to peace-building, gender-based violence and the stability of the political settlement. Secondly, a review of policy measures employed in Somaliland to promote greater gender inclusivity; and, thirdly, the collection of qualitative data throughout Somaliland over the course of about a year.

The research was built around two objectives and 10 research questions:

OBJECTIVE 1: To analyse how gender identities (masculinities and femininities) are practised and how that practice influences sociopolitical participation and violence against women and girls in contemporary Somali society; and how this has impacted on the evolution of a stable, inclusive, post-conflict political settlement in Somaliland.

Within this objective we will explore whether deconstructing current masculinities and femininities could help to address negative social attitudes towards women and girls in Somaliland with a view to eliminating violence against women and girls; and hence supporting gender equality.

1. What are women's and men's definitions of masculinity and femininity in Somaliland and how do these shape sociopolitical participation?
2. In what ways do those perceptions translate into practice?
3. How have those identities changed since the end of widespread conflict in 1997?
4. What invited, created or claimed spaces are available to women and men, respectively, that permit or restrict participation in political processes?
5. In what ways have gender identities contributed to violence against women and girls, and gender inequality?
6. What linkages are there between gender inequality and the stability of the political settlement?

OBJECTIVE 2: To identify the structural and institutional barriers to women's increased sociopolitical participation and to reduced levels of violence against women and girls, and thereby to identify ways in which development interventions can be more effective in enhancing the inclusiveness and stability of the political settlement in Somaliland.

This will include a gender-aware analysis of relevant institutions and policies, the extent to which they are aligned with the political settlement, and how the international community and the Government of Somaliland could contribute to removing some of these barriers through improved policies and practice to ensure more equitable development.

1. In what ways have recent government and donor-funded or -supported development interventions (policies and programmes) in Somaliland deliberately or unintentionally supported, undermined or sought to change gender identities and roles in the post-1997 political settlement?

2. In what ways has interaction with the gendered political settlement assisted or hampered the achievement of agreed development goals? Were there significant positive or negative unintended consequences?

3. What are the main institutional arrangements arising from Somaliland's political settlement that affect women's political participation and violence against women?

4. How can interventions designed to promote gender equality simultaneously be strengthened to achieve other specific development goals?

The analysis in this report is structured around these two objectives and the respective research questions. As background to our findings, the next section offers a substantial literature review of the relevant policy and scholarly literature, followed by a discussion of the project's methodological approach. Following the presentation of our analytical findings and recommendations, the report closes with a summary of the main points and our concluding remarks.

Orthography and vocabulary

This report uses Somali spellings where appropriate, with 'h' appearing as 'x' (for instance, Xassan), and the use of the Somali 'c' (as in caaqil or Cabdiraxman). The names of geographical locations and Somali clans follow common usage, and where possible are rendered in the Somali spelling rather than an Anglicised form, for instance, Ceerigaabo rather than Erigavo. Quotations in Somali appear in italics followed by an English translation in square brackets where required. A glossary of the Somali terms used in this report can be found at the start of the report, with definitions provided by the research team.

Literature Review

Gender, political settlements and development

Recent political economy research affords a central role to the 'political settlement' within a polity in determining the outcomes of wider development processes. A 'political settlement' consists of 'ongoing and adaptable political processes that include specific one-off events and agreements' (Laws, 2012:21) and refers to the balance or distribution of power between contending social groups and social classes, on which any state is based (Di John and Putzel, 2009). This means we need to analyse bargaining processes amongst elites, and between elites and diverse non-elite groups in a given society. Ultimately, political settlements manifest themselves in the structure of property rights and entitlements – which give some social actors more distributional advantages than others – and in the regulatory structure of the state. In order to determine how inclusive a political settlement is, we therefore need to go beyond just looking at the extent of participation in the bargaining process or who occupies state office, to an analysis of the distribution of rights and entitlements across groups and classes in a given society (ibid). As most societies are characterised by patriarchal gender power relations (which tend to disproportionately distribute power and wealth to men) it comes as no surprise that political settlements – particularly if considered as bargaining processes between elites – frequently and systemically exclude women.

Photo 1: Discussing the gendered political settlement. *Source: © Kate Stanworth, Hargeysa, 2016.*

There may also be a trade-off between stability and inclusivity, as political settlements may be stable but not inclusive of certain social or political groups (Laws, 2012). Phillips (2013) has worked specifically on political settlements in Somaliland, though she did not incorporate a gendered approach. Her research supports Laws's argument that 'vertically exclusive distributions of power and resources – that exclude most non-elites – may be more likely to augur political stability, at least in the short to medium term, than those that are vertically inclusive' (Phillips, 2016:636). She finds that this appears to be the case in Somaliland, as much of its 'relative stability can be attributed to the collusive commercial and clan-based arrangements that were established to end the fighting around Berbera between 1991 and 1993' (ibid).

Mixed results from institutional reforms in development contexts have also led to an increasing acceptance that development is not merely a case of 'getting the institutions right', but is very much a political and politically-dependent process. This points us back to the importance of political economy analysis, of which political settlements form a part. An evolving literature around political settlements is starting to map a useful structure for understanding politics at play in different contexts, and in particular the ways in which the formal and informal dynamics pertaining to elite negotiation help to shape outcomes in economic growth, institutional performance and political stability (Dressel and Dinnen, 2014).

In placing politics at the core of institutional analysis, the political settlement lens offers the potential for a more nuanced view of institutional arrangements, thus permitting better-informed choices between different types of development interventions. Political settlements play a critical role in shaping the form, nature and performance of institutions, even as the institutions themselves help consolidate and embed particular settlements, with the consequence that political power and institutions need to be aligned if interventions are to achieve the results intended (Khan, 2010).

But institutions are not neutral: they are gendered. According to Waylen (2014), this happens both nominally through 'gender capture' (more men occupying positions of power than women) and substantively, which means that even increasing the numbers of women may not necessarily make a substantial difference as institutions are gendered through numerous mechanisms that result in gender bias. This bias emerges from social norms based on accepted ideas about masculinity and femininity, which reinforce supplementary and caring roles for women and decision-making roles for men within institutions that have served to uphold the male domination of those institutions. According to Chappell and Waylen (2013:602), the institutional dominance of particular forms of masculinity may lead us to view gender as a 'regime' where masculine power is naturalised. 'Acknowledging the existence of a gender regime is critical as it provides insights into the power dimensions of political institutions […] and makes us look at how and what resources are distributed and who gets to do the distributing' (Waylen, 2014:215). Patriarchal norms and interests are deeply embedded in institutions and political settlements. Goetz and Hassim (2003:5) find that 'the design of political institutions […] profoundly hampers the perceived legitimacy of women politicians and of gender equity concerns, and hence the effectiveness of feminists in advancing gender equity policy'.

Given the importance of gender in determining who benefits from existing political settlements, and how resources are distributed and to whom, it is surprising that much of the political settlement literature to date has been largely gender-blind. While there are relevant and overlapping literatures on gender in peace agreements and state-building, and feminist analyses of the state, policymaking processes, women's political participation and institutional analysis, these have paid little attention to political settlement frameworks.

Recent efforts to 'engender' political settlement frameworks include work by Ní Aoláin (2016) and others at the Political Settlements Research Programme, University of Edinburgh, and research by Nazneen and Mahmud (2012) at the Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre, University of Manchester. Ní Aoláin (2016) looks at the relationship of political settlement analysis to peace-building from a feminist perspective. She analyses how political settlement analysis could be expanded 'to incorporate (gender) ideology, (gender) discourses, and bottom-up strategies used in negotiations by non-elite actors and informal interactions' (ibid: 22) with the ultimate aim of transforming existing settlements and making them more gender-inclusive and answerable to women's needs and priorities. She considers 'reproductive rights, the regulation of violence, access to economic goods on equal terms and the advancement of both substantive end procedural equality for women' (ibid: 7-8) as useful areas with which to 'gender benchmark' political settlements. In this report, the regulation of violence and the advancement of equality for women will be specifically investigated with respect to the political settlement in Somaliland.

Nazneen and Mahmud (2012) have analysed the literature pertaining to a number of country case studies looking at women's representation, participation and influence, institutions and gendered

policy impact to determine the gendered nature and impact of the political settlements in question. They also conclude that political settlement frameworks would benefit from using a gender lens, as this would clearly 'demonstrate the role played by ideologies and ideas' (ibid:7) and how these influence the way in which women's needs and interests in a given political settlement are interpreted. Our research certainly highlights the influence of the gender ideologies held by the Somaliland political elite and wider society on the interpretation of women's needs and interests, which leads to women's exclusion from existing political agendas and policies, and relative impunity for perpetrators who commit acts of gender-based violence. Nazneen and Mahmud (2012) conclude that using a political settlement analysis, with its focus on structure, agency and their interaction, helps us interrogate gendered politics and policymaking. They argue that:

a focus on political and social elites (including traditional elites) and their interests and incentives for addressing/hindering gender equitable policies and development outcomes and how different political / institutional arrangements facilitate their power to do so, may help in unpacking the opportunities and limits of women's participation in politics and policy making and the possibilities for securing gender inclusive development (ibid:61).

The extent to which women are able to influence the existing political settlement, and the kinds of strategies that may be effective, depends very much on the type of political settlement in place and the political system in which it is embedded. Nazneen and Mahmud (2012) find, for example, that a strong relationship between women's rights organisations and the president is important to achieve policy outcomes in 'dominant political party' systems, whilst in systems characterised by competitive clientelism, the support of the state bureaucracy (especially 'femocrats'), as well as a close relationship between the feminist movement and the sectoral state agency (in Somaliland's case the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), are critical for the promotion of gender equity goals. They also argue that strong mobilisation by pro-women policy coalitions is needed for gender transformative agendas (such as on the issue of domestic violence). Somaliland is an interesting case study of these processes. The polity is characterised by competitive clientelism between clan groups, therefore in order to achieve success, a strong women's movement does indeed appear necessary if positive change is to be promoted, with that movement working closely with allies in the state bureaucracy.

One of the criticisms of the political settlement approach has centred on suspicions about the motivations of external agencies in promoting a more political understanding of institutional issues (Dressel and Dinnen, 2014). Despite, or perhaps because of, Somaliland's ambiguous international status, it emphatically cannot be categorised as an example of a 'phantom' state, engineered by Western powers and lacking capacity in self-government (Chandler, 2006). In selecting a case that is so clearly typified by the indigeneity of state-building efforts, we believe that this research offers a particularly useful view of the expansion of both theoretical and empirical understandings of the role that gender plays in shaping political settlements, and the effect of those settlements on gender, in a context that is removed from the particular concerns of external manipulation.

What works to promote gender-inclusive development and women's political participation?

If most political settlements exclude women, the question then becomes which types of policy interventions should be supported to ensure their inclusion. Nazneen and Mahmud (2012) consider the following factors as important to the promotion of gender-inclusive development:

elite support for a gender equity agenda; [the] ability of the women's movement to contain oppositional elite or non-elite groups; transnational discourse and actors creating space for the gender equity agenda; presence of male allies and 'femocrats' within the state apparatus; and policy coalitions exerting pressure on the state (ibid:3).

As political settlements are complex, women's formal political participation may be a good first step towards promoting more gender-inclusive settlements. Whether women are effective in formal political processes, however, depends on whether their representation is merely the 'presence' of women (possibly due to a legitimation exercise of the state) or whether women have influence, are able to advance their priorities, and can demand policy responses (accountability) (Goetz and Hassim, 2003). While quotas may enable more women to be present in electoral political bodies, this does not mean that they are necessarily interested in or able to pursue policy goals that are aligned with the interests of their constituents. Women are not a homogenous group and may have different interests based on class or political orientation. O'Neil and Domingo (2006) undertook a two-year evidence and learning project on women's leadership, and found a mixed picture. While not all women necessarily pursue gender-equity agendas, influential women 'can and do advance other women's interests – in most countries, women politicians, bureaucrats and feminist activists have

been able to secure legal and policy reforms that advance the rights and well-being of women and girls' (ibid:11). Whether they are successful depends on both agency (the women themselves/women's organisations) and the political settlement (structure) in which they operate, which may severely restrict their agency.

In the Somaliland context, women have not yet achieved 'descriptive', let alone substantive representation (Rosenthal, 1995), due to the current political settlement. All the factors mentioned by Nazneen and Mahmud above are critical. The literature particularly emphasises the importance of strong local women's movements acting as pressure groups and an accountability mechanism, thus contributing to the favourable external conditions needed to ensure elected women deliver and feel supported by a larger movement (Goetz and Hassim, 2003). Tripp (2015) also finds that one of the most important factors influencing women's political representation in African parliaments is the role of effective women's movements and broad-based coalitions, acting in concert with other actors, such as women party leaders, parliamentarians, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies and donors in advocating for the adoption of parliamentary quotas. Tripp found that even in predominantly Muslim countries like Senegal, where religion might be expected to present a barrier to women's political participation, women's strong coalitional mobilisation was able to overcome these restrictive cultural factors: 43 per cent of Senegalese legislative seats are now held by women. Thus women's organisation can trump culture in some contexts.

The adoption of quotas is the key factor influencing women's legislative representation in Africa (ibid. In African countries with relatively weak and conservative civil societies, political parties are the main mechanism through which women have made political advances (Goetz and Hassim, 2003). Proportional representation electoral systems with closed lists (in which parties adopt quotas for women candidates, thus averting bias against parties reluctant to put forward women as candidates) have been found to be most effective in producing a critical mass (at least 30 per cent) of women in parliament, particularly if combined with well-institutionalised party systems with formal centralised rules for candidate selection. These are, however, poorly developed in developing countries and frequently based on patronage systems and favours, which tend to exclude women (ibid).

Tadros (2014) argues that the above focus on macro-level institutional arrangements, such as quotas to achieve increased women's representation, must be complemented by a bottom-up life-history approach that examines women's entire political pathways. Her analysis is based on eight case studies that highlight the close link and transition from women's leadership in informal spaces to formal arenas when they are able to mobilise large constituencies, and have a strong rapport with influential informal leaders in the community that endorses them. Tadros's findings suggest that approaches to women's political empowerment should therefore be adapted 'to help them draw creatively on their existing experiences and resources gained in the informal arena to support their performance in formal politics' (2014:10).

Gender inclusion: instrumental and normative importance

Returning to the relationship or potential trade-off between stability and inclusion, the debate partly relates to the instrumentality of inclusion: is it important for political settlements to be more inclusive because that is the morally right thing, or should they be more inclusive for instrumental reasons? The former view considers that 'values such as inclusion or gender equality are an inherent and indissoluble part of lasting peace' (El-Bushra, 2012:11), while the latter reasoning holds that greater gender inclusivity leads to greater stability. A conceptual division between those two lines of reasoning does not mean that both cannot be true simultaneously. The distinction is important, however, as the implications of each are considerable.

If inclusivity is a matter of justice (the position taken in this report), then there is no need to seek causal relationships between it and security or stability. If the need for inclusivity is a normative one, then no further justification is required for actions that promote it, and any such action that leads to greater inclusivity is, *prima facie*, justified at least in terms of the outcome.

If there is also a positive link between inclusivity and a second desirable condition such as stability or security, though, it is important that the nature of that link is sufficiently clearly defined to permit the development of policies and other interventions that promote that relationship, rather than inclusivity alone.

Of course, proving causal links in the social sciences is typically an exercise in frustration, and doubly so when the scenario in question involves the aspirational state of a 'more gender-inclusive political settlement'. We must therefore rely in large part on a logical argument, and there is support for the instrumentality of gender inclusion in that pursuit.

El-Bushra's research establishes that women 'often bring a non-partisan, process-oriented approach

to bear' (2012:10) on reconciliation efforts, which in itself promotes greater inclusion of stakeholders and contributes to more broadly legitimate agreements. This is not an 'essentialisation' of gender: the tendency towards inclusivity arises largely from socially constructed gender roles in the first place, but that is no reason to ignore the potential for those roles to contribute to greater political legitimacy in political settlement.

Caprioli (2005) is particularly concerned with structural as well as cultural violence, as she holds that a local environment typified by high levels of gender inequality and gender-based violence increases the likelihood of local and regional instability. Caprioli suggests that greater inclusion of women in the political settlement 'might have a dual impact in hindering the ability of groups to mobilise the masses in support of insurrection through the use of gendered language and stereotypes and in reducing societal tolerance for violence' (2005:161–162). Specifically, she notes a 'gender gap' in international relations and political science theory, arguing that intrastate conflict is more likely in societies where cultural norms embrace violence as legitimate in addressing grievances. She refers to Galtung's work, stating that 'structural violence is a process by which cultural violence is institutionalised' (ibid:4). Support for that position comes from another study in which Caprioli was involved, which demonstrated a link between state stability and the physical security of women (Hudson et al, 2009). This link that was recently underlined by a major World Bank report noting the significant increased risk of 'intimate partner violence' in societies that are already affected by fragility and armed conflict (World Bank, 2014:70–71).

El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:19–20) show that women in conflict and post-conflict situations tend to expand their opportunities for economic participation, which is a trend borne out by respondents in our research. Relatedly, Petesch (2011) finds that male unemployment tends to increase after conflict. While there is evidence that these changes revert to more traditional gender roles over time, there are also indications that some of the change remains, and that the resultant increase in economic participation for women provides opportunity to renegotiate gender roles (El-Bushra and Sahl, 2005). There is an element of instrumentality here in that there is an implication that women will tend to help to overcome some of the economic difficulties created by conflict as they address the needs of households under stress as a result of the loss of male income sources.

There is a link to violence here. El-Bushra (2012:8) makes a sociological argument that 'violence (most notably but not exclusively by men) is the result of gender identities being 'thwarted', i.e. conditions (e.g. of poverty, conflict, disaster, political oppression) prevent gendered aspirations from being fulfilled'. This accords with Petesch's (2011) finding that male economic dependence contributes to domestic violence. With particular relevance to the Somaliland case, El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:86) argue that male distress associated with the inability to provide financial support for their households culminates in many instances in a preference for 'idleness' rather than emasculation in the face of financial dependence on their wives. There is evidence from our research that gang and domestic violence represents growing sources of societal instability in Somaliland. If this is driven in some part by male 'emasculation' in the economic arena, then, following Caprioli's argument, this might be countered by women's political inclusion since the inclusion of women in the political settlement diminishes the power to mobilise for violence (Caprioli, 2005).

Other research projects highlight the value of promoting increased participation by women in post-conflict state-building, both on normative grounds and in supporting more durable institutional arrangements, and the challenges faced. A Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior project (Castillejo, 2011), investigating the impact of state-building on women's citizenship in five post-conflict countries found that while post-conflict contexts provide new opportunities for women to mobilise, their ability to influence state-building processes is limited both by structural barriers and by opposition from elites. Castillejo (2011:2) writes that:

while women have made some significant gains in terms of formal equality and inclusion, informal patterns of power and resource allocation have been much harder to shift. It appears that gender inequalities in these contexts are innately linked to the underlying political settlement, including the balance of power between formal and customary authorities. It is therefore critical that donors address gender as a fundamentally political issue.

She argues that donor approaches to state-building lack substantial gender analysis, leading to inadequate solutions to gender issues and missed opportunities to fundamentally transform power relations and develop states in ways that are accountable and responsive to women.

Enloe (2004a:97) goes a step further than Castillejo, considering 'gender' by itself insufficient in terms of analysis. Instead, she argues that there should be a 'feminist consciousness' informing work on gender that ensures that the 'experiences, actions and ideas of women and girls' are 'taken seriously'. Without

this, there can be no reliable analysis of masculinity[1] either, as masculinities and femininities are defined in relationship to each other. We can apply some of Enloe's ideas to the Somaliland nation-building project. For example, patriarchal systems, which privilege masculinity, are notable for marginalising the feminine (Enloe, 2004b:5), meaning that women's contributions to peace and state-building processes, as well as their experiences and needs, tend to be made 'invisible'. It also means that women do not automatically benefit from nationalist movements that are supposed to represent all citizens. In fact, post-war societies often re-establish masculinised privilege in their political cultures, delegating women back to 'traditional' roles, despite the important contributions they have made during conflict and peace-building processes, and the genuine chance of transformation afforded by political transition processes (Enloe, 2000:13). Mohamed (2014) concurs with Enloe, arguing that Somali history is generally presented from a male perspective and based on men's experiences. Our findings, as presented in this report, also indicate the marginalisation of women in Somaliland – as one respondent noted, when 'politicians need something done, they will come to you, but when it comes to getting benefits, you get nothing' (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

The importance of a clear understanding of gender within the political settlement is underlined by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on women and peace and security (UN Security Council, 2000). Ahmed (2012:30) notes that the objectives established by UNSCR 1325 require 'a fundamental shift' in political structures if women are to be represented at all levels in which resolution to conflict is sought. The reality is that UNSCR 1325 is being implemented in contexts where, whether in peacetime or during conflict, structural factors mean that women are excluded from high-level decision-making and key institutional mechanisms and processes for human advancement. Ahmed also argues that the ways in which women are treated in situations of both peace and conflict are in large part determined by 'the prescribed norms about what it means to be a man or a woman' (ibid:31), bringing us back to the concept of masculinities/femininities and prescribed gender roles. A society's belief systems, cultural norms, and socialisation processes ultimately inform the nature of power hierarchies that guide social interaction, particularly where gender relations are concerned.

The above considerations lead us to the conclusion that it is therefore critically important that policy-makers understand the gendered nature of political settlements that pertain in specific locations, both in order to ensure that interventions are designed in a manner that functions within those settlements, and also in order to identify specific measures that enhance equitable and consequently more sustainable development by effecting change in the settlement itself.

Gender identities and gender roles

An analysis of the understanding of men and women's definitions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' in Somaliland society necessitates an outline of the theoretical concepts of 'sex' and 'gender'. The literature on gender and gender identity is usually found in, but not limited to, the feminist discourse. However, while feminist literature on women's adverse position within the patriarchal systems is plentiful, there is still no wider consensus on the meaning of 'gender' (Butler, 1990; Hooper, 2001). Hooper (2001) writes that the dominant body of literature on gender today is focused around three dimensions: the first analyses physical embodiment and the role of reproductive biology; the second dimension explores the role of institutions and their social construction of gender, the family, the state and the economy; and the third is the discursive dimension of the gendered construction of language and its function in creating gender roles.

In classic feminist theory, the distinction between 'sex' and 'gender' is made principally to dispute Freud's 'Biology is destiny' argument, typically understanding 'sex' as biologically intractable and 'gender' as culturally or socially constructed. Consequently, 'sex' is the biological aspect of the body and 'gender' is the cultural or social aspect of the body (Butler, 1990). This definition traditionally contains the assumption that there are two 'sexes' and therefore two genders, and has been criticised for 'an uncritical acceptance of the nature/culture dichotomy of Western philosophy' (Hooper, 2001:29).

Postmodern feminist theorist Judith Butler criticises both traditional and modern feminist theories on gender for limiting the principal understanding of gender. Butler's own separation of 'sex' and 'gender' presents a rather radical definition asserting that 'man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one' (Butler, 1990:6). Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994) argue that Butler's analytical separation is challenging in real life as

[1] Masculinities are defined by gender relations and concern the position of men in a gender order. They can be defined as the patterns of practice by which people (both men and women, though predominantly men) engage that position (see Connell, 2000; Connell, undated).

the early gender labelling of children as ‘male’ or ‘female’ assumes a permanent, monolithic identity. This is compounded by the analysis of male-female relations through a lens focused on these polarised identities (Hooper, 2001). Despite this critique, Butler’s distinction of ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ overcomes the nature vs. nurture dilemma by acknowledging nature as an equally constructed category to culture while also explicating the role power plays in the construction of gender identities.

The definition of gender and gender identity guiding the analysis in this report has elements from all the dimensions described by Hooper. In brief, ‘sex’ is understood as a biological aspect of the body and ‘gender’ is understood as culturally constructed. However, ‘sex’, or the biological aspect of the body, is not the only space in which our gender identities are formed. Instead, we support the view that gender identity is fluid and constantly renegotiated due to our social relations and our involvement in different social practices (Stets and Burke, 1996: Carter, 2014). Gender identities are relational as they are constructed in relation to each other. Furthermore, gender institutions are understood as key institutions that control resources and as a result they influence and shape gender identities and roles (El-Bushra and Sahl, 2005).

Our analysis acknowledges both the intractability of gender and gender identities in some respects, and their flexibility in others, and the part institutions play in constructing gender identities. We see gender roles – the set of learned social behaviours and norms that the individual attaches to their gender – as embedded in the construction of gender identities. We also support the notion that one's gender identity is the degree to which an individual identifies as masculine or feminine. This explanation asserts that masculinity and femininity are rooted in a person's social ‘gender’ rather than their biological ‘sex’ (Burke et al, 1988; Spence, 1985). The traits commonly associated with femininity are usually expressive such as emotional, nurturing, caring, passive and warm. Conversely, masculine traits are commonly framed as instrumental, such as tough, dominant, strong and rational (Connell, 2000; Schippers, 2007; Stets and Burke, 1996). We note that these definitions differ between cultures, classes and religions.

The way we understand the hegemonic relationship between masculinity and femininity adheres to Connell's feminist model (2000). This approach regards masculinity as the central feature of gender identities: the place where the practices of gender relations between men and women are defined. Therefore, masculinity is a dominant social position with a set of practices that influence gender relations and gender institutions on multiple levels (Connell, 2000; Schippers, 2007). Femininity amongst women in society, on the other hand, does not hold the same hegemonic position as masculinity. Instead femininities are constructed in compliance with the subordinate position women have in a society (Connell, 2000; Schippers, 2007), with femininity being viewed as an expression of low masculinity.

Connell’s work on masculinities is particularly helpful in underlining the degree to which gender practices are not fixed, but change over time and with circumstance. Most relevant to our report, she notes the need to encourage a shift from patterns of masculine practice (such as a willingness to use violence) to ones that are more ‘peaceable’ if a given political settlement is to encourage inclusivity and reduced levels of violence (Connell, 2000). Importantly, Connell’s work also highlights that not all men conform to hegemonic or violent versions of themselves, but that society constructs and values certain ways of masculine behaviour. These behaviours are usually associated with power and dominance: those that do not behave in these constructed ways might be treated unfavourably or viewed as having no power (ibid; Cornwall, 1997).

The literature on socialisation is also helpful here. This suggests that specific personal variations in traits between men and women emerge from the various ways the male and female sexes are socialised (Ampofo, 2001; Carter, 2014). Such socialisation can only manifest itself in an environment in which gender inequalities, commonly favouring men, already exist (Ampofo, 2001). The norms that guide gender inequalities are inscribed during the early stages of childhood, with the understanding of gender differences becoming more substantial during adolescence since it is during this period that young boys and girls access spaces differently. Ampofo (ibid) writes that during the adolescent years boys gain more spatial power as their horizons expand, whilst for girls, their focus narrows to the household level, thus defining specific sets of privileges and duties for each. The socialisation approach also suggests that the social characteristics established and linked to biological ‘sex’ are used in daily speech, reinforcing the different gender norms that come to guide young boys and girls in their adult life.

In gender identity theory, the pre-Oedipal phase explains how girls can continue to love and identify with their mothers even after they are made aware of their own sexuality (Hooper, 2001). Boys, on the other hand, need to disengage with their mothers in order to establish a male identity (Ampofo, 2001; Carter, 2014). The masculinity that takes form in this process is a reaction to identifying with the mother

and thus the female gender. Instead a stronger relationship develops with the father or other male individuals, even when the father is not present in the household. The disengagement and separation from the mother become the boy's struggle in forming his own gender identity (Ampofo, 2001; Carter, 2014; Hooper, 2001). The more exaggerated and aggressive the identification with masculinity becomes, the more the boy fears the feminine, both within himself and in relation to women (Hooper, 2001).

This approach to gender identity assumes that masculinity is fragile and neurotic. Boys are taught how to be male from their mother – a person whose identity does not reflect his own biological or social gender – meaning it might be easier to learn how to be female than male during the adolescent years (ibid; Ampofo, 2001). In response, masculinity is exaggeratedly and aggressively adopted, which Hooper suggests might be the 'right formula for the aggressive psychology needed for male domination and success in a competitive and capitalist world' (Hooper, 2001:26). This formula creates a transformation of power as 'female power over male children is transformed into male power over adult women' (ibid). Although this argument is interesting when considering the role the institutional arrangement of the family plays in the construction of masculine and female identity in Somaliland, it is also problematic as it only focuses on the family as the unit for analysis, thus ignoring the wider symbolic power attached to men and masculinity (ibid).

Background: Gender, clan and politics in Somaliland

Lineage and clan

The focus of this research is on Somaliland, situated in the northern part of the Horn of Africa, within the borders of what was once the British protectorate of Somaliland. As important as the colonial era was in defining borders and promoting a notion of statehood that drew on European rather than Somali traditions, local customary systems remain critically important in Somaliland society. Needless to say, and in common with any complex society, Somali custom is an area of considerable and evolving sophistication.

DNA tests establish that the closest genetic links for the Somali are with the Oromo people of Ethiopia and Kenya, although Somali lineage tradition traces ancestry to Arab forebears, with the weight given to lineage traditions connecting Somali clans with the *Quraysh* (the family of the Prophet), thus emphasising the importance of Islam in Somali identity (Lewis, 2002:4-5; Sanchez et al, 2005; Walls, 2014:33).

The contemporary political settlement in Somaliland fundamentally reflects the clan system, so any description of that settlement must start with clan, with the traditionally camel-herding 'noble' or *bilis* lineages of the Isaaq, Daarood (Harti), Gadabuursi and Ciise dominating the northern Somali areas. A 'trade caste' known as the Gabooye occupies a subordinate social position and its members are distributed throughout Somaliland.

Inter-clan and intra-clan relations are governed by a system of social contract known as *xeer*, with highly structured roles for men and women. Each gender plays a significant role in Somali society, but formal social and political structures are heavily weighted towards a patriarchal hierarchy. Those roles are, of course, in a constant state of evolution, as is the case with all human social institutions, but the durability of this patriarchal nature is notable, as our research shows.

Clan affiliation is derived from agnatic lineage. Traditionally every male Somali was able to trace descendants back by many generations. In that sense, social structures, determined by kinship, can be relatively fixed. However, at every level, groups form and abandon alliances with those of other lineages, depending on the needs of the time. In addition, mutually exclusive lineage traditions also coexist, meaning that clan groups do not always share a single, common genealogical tradition. While affiliation is therefore critical, relationships between groups tend to display a significant degree of fluidity. While there is generally a strong loyalty to clan and to a lesser degree to clan family, these relationships may be compromised through alliance to groups of more distant kinship where circumstances dictate. The smaller the unit under consideration, the less likely such compromise becomes (though it is not unknown).

It is worth focusing briefly on clan structure, as our respondents make repeated reference to this social framework in the findings that follow. The smallest 'contracting' unit is the *mag*[1] group, which can be drawn from several sub-lineages. Only men formally pay into *mag* arrangements, although a woman can be called on to contribute to her husband's or father's group in some circumstances (Lewis, 1961: 173–175). *Mag* groups coalesce into sub-clan units,

[1] The Arabic term *diya* is often used interchangeably with the Somali counterpart, *mag*, to refer to the system of blood compensation guarantees that underpin the Somali social contract. *Mag* offers mutual assurance on the part of small groups as to the behaviour of fellow group members.

which fall under clan groupings, of which a number constitute a clan family. Unfortunately, any typology of clan effectively ossifies what is in fact a notably pragmatic and dynamic system. There is no single, agreed version of lineage traditions. However, the notion of clan is so pervasive that it is essential to offer some interpretation of its structure so that the Somaliland clan system can be understood: Figure 1 is hence one possible version for representative purposes.

Minority groups

The northern Somali areas, including Somaliland, are dominated by the *bilis* clans to a far greater extent than southern Somali areas, which include more heterogeneous ethnic and linguistic groups. In spite of this numerical and political domination, other groups continue to live in Somaliland, principal amongst these are a number of so-called 'minorities', to which the collective term 'Gabooye' is applied.[2]

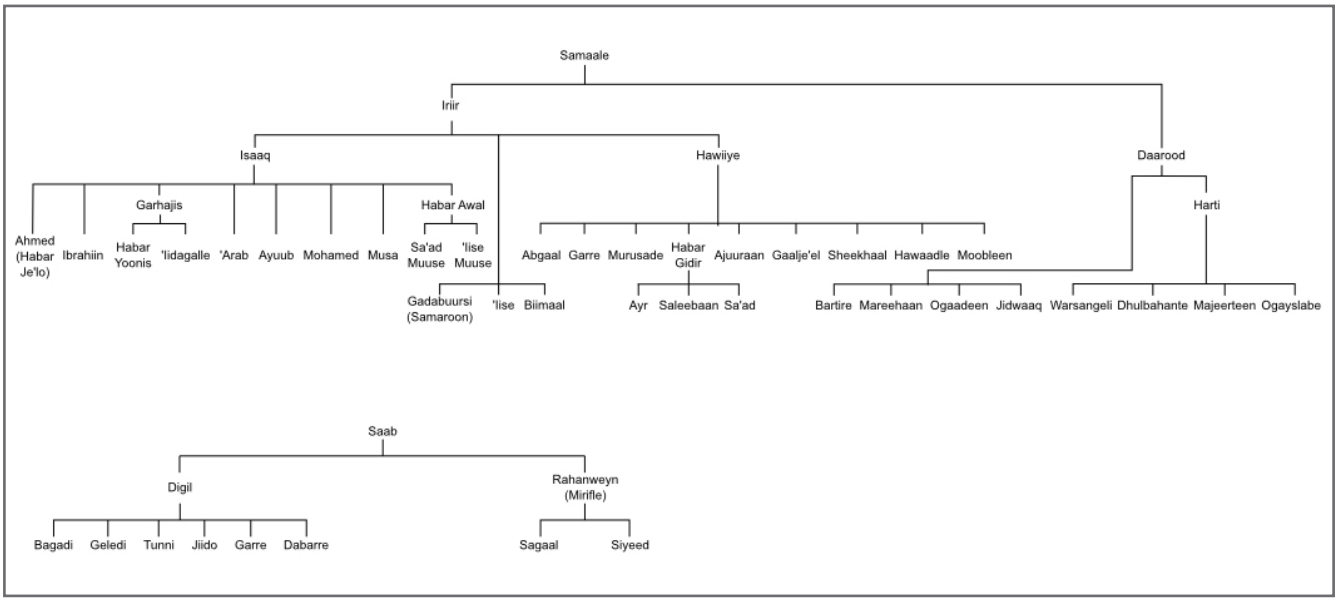

Figure 1: Example of genealogical chart of Somaliland clans. *Source: Walls, 2014:317.*

Dominant clans

Of the *bilis* ('noble') lineages, Somaliland is dominated by two clan-families, and two clans that fall outside these families. Within Somaliland, the Isaaq are numerically dominant, and are distributed throughout central Somaliland and also Ethiopia. The Daarood clan family is one of the largest groups in the Somali Horn, but those in Somaliland mainly reside in the eastern areas. The Somaliland Daarood are largely made up of the Warsangeli and Dhulbahante clans, both part of the Harti group. The two other *bilis* clans, Gadabuursi and Ciise, both live in western Somaliland.

Like the Daarood, the Isaaq clan family is comprised of a number of clans, dominated by three in particular: the Habar Awal (in turn divided into several sub-clans, the biggest of which are Sacad Muuse and Ciise Muuse), the Habar Jeclo and the Habar Yoonis. The Habar Yoonis are often associated with the numerically smaller Ciidagalle under the umbrella term Garhajis. The Isaaq family also includes a number of smaller constituent groups, as shown in Figure 1.

The Gabooye are often considered to consist of two subgroups, the Yibir and Tumaal, designations drawn from their association with stigmatised artisanal occupations, including leather-working, hairdressing and metal-working, which are still pursued today. However, the usage varies: for instance, in some cases the Tumaal and Yibir exclude themselves from the category of Gabooye, arguing that it applies instead to two other subgroups, the Madhibaan and Muuse Dhariye; other accounts suggest that Gabooye covers a large number of trade-related groups (including both Yibir and Tumaal). Despite this terminological variation, it is the case that there are a number of groups who are ethnically closely related to the Samaale-descended Somalis, and which occupy systemically marginalised positions within Somali society.

By custom, the Gabooye are 'bonded' to Somali families or lineages of 'noble' descent, and are consequently geographically widely scattered. By custom, the Madhibaan have been associated with the Habar Yoonis, the Muuse Dhariye with the Harti (Daarood), while the Yibir and Tumaal are found with all

[2] *Midgaan* is also sometimes used, but it is considered insulting and so it is not used in this report.

the *bilis* clans (Walls, 2014:38-40). While association with 'host' lineages is seen to accord them some protection, they are prohibited from intermarriage with individuals from those groups, as well as being accorded generally lower status. The Gabooye do not tend to form their own *mag* groups, and the degree to which affiliated clans have been willing to negotiate compensation on their behalf has been significantly undermined by years of conflict.

There has been a tendency for Gabooye to shift into urban areas in recent decades, often practising their respective trades in physical proximity to other Gabooye groups, and thus breaking the link with the lineage groups with whom they had been 'bonded'. As a result of this urban drift, Gabooye groups have become more vocal in recent years and are increasingly seeing themselves as representative of distinct lineages.

It follows inevitably that Gabooye women endure the double marginality of gender and the generally lower status accorded Gabooye.

Caaqils, xeer, mediation and the roles of men

Social relations in pastoral Somali society are based on a system of customary contracts known as *xeer*, adjudicated by ad hoc committees of elders.

As already noted, the fundamental contracting unit in northern Somali society is the *mag* group, the members of which act as guarantors of the good behaviour of fellow members. Each *mag* group is represented by an informal leader or *caaqil*, a term which is sometimes translated as 'chief' but which is primarily an influencing, negotiating and chairing role.

The *caaqil* is but one position in a distinct hierarchy of customary roles that emphasises negotiation, mediation and facilitation rather than authoritative power. In hierarchical terms, a number of titled elders sit at levels above *caaqil*, for which the terms used differ slightly from clan to clan. In Somaliland, *garaad*, *ugaas*, *boqor* and *suldaan* all refer to positions of greater seniority than the *caaqil*. It is misleading to describe Somali society as either acephalous or employing a formal hierarchy of power, though. There are differentiated levels of influence and respect, but authority is negotiated and dependent on ongoing popular support (Laitin, 1977:27).

If disputes arise at the household level, the onus falls first on the (male) heads of the families involved to attempt to negotiate a settlement. If the dispute involves different *mag* groups, then the relevant *caaqils*[3] will attempt to negotiate. If the problem proves intractable, a mediating group might step in. The membership of that group would need to be sufficiently senior and independent of the immediate problem so as to command the respect of the protagonists. The individuals may be from the clans or sub-clans involved, or they may be external and therefore considered independent. Throughout these processes, women play a key role as intermediaries, with that role particularly important for women born into a group affiliated or related to one side of the dispute, and married into the other. Any individual or group who assumes a mediatory role may be referred to as a *guurti*, a term that has become established in the Somaliland context through its application to the upper House of Parliament.[4]

The enforcement of *xeer* revolves around compensation payments for specific acts. Ostensibly, the Abrahamic tradition of 'an eye for an eye' (and consequently 'a life for a life') serves as the basis for compensation calculations, but it has not historically been taken literally. The death penalty has only been applied occasionally for cases of murder, with fixed rates of compensation generally preferred. No differentiation is made between premeditated and spontaneous killings, or weight given to the intention of the offender. Instead, a standard compensation is calculated, using as a starting point an accepted formula in which 100 camels is payable for the killing of an adult male victim, 50 for a female, and 33 for a child. The schedule extends to a wide range of situations and occurrences, including rape and other acts of sexual or gender-based violence, assault and so on. Variations to the procedures are acceptable by mutual agreement.

The point that is critical to this research is that the pursuit of justice is very much a matter between families, *mag* groups or lineage units rather than individuals. The dominant role played by males within this clan-based system of justice means that compensation is typically paid between groups of males. Compensation for rape, for example, is paid between groups rather than directly to a victim, giving rise to the complaint aired in this research that the victim is marginalised. The grievance is often exacerbated by the practice of forcing the rapist to marry the victim, intended to ensure the perpetrator cares for the victim (and any resulting child) over time – though of course that is frequently not how events unfold in such circumstances.

[3] The Somali plural is *caaqilo* but caaqils is often used in English-language texts.

[4] It is worth noting that the current permanent status of the Somaliland House of Elders (*Guurti*) represents a deviation from the ad hoc nature of the customary *guurti* (Walls, 2014:46–48).

All able-bodied men are expected to play a full part in social and political life, and tend to be designated either *wadaad* (those learned in Islam), or *waranle* (literally 'one who owns a spear'). A *wadaad* is expected to avoid calling for or participating in war, while someone who identifies as *waranle*, as the name suggests, is expected to fight when necessary, with honour in large part relating to their demonstrated fighting prowess.

When conflict does occur, there are clearly understood principles that govern the conduct of war (*xeerka birimageydada*). These rules centre on a principle captured in the Somali name for the rules themselves: *biri-ma-geydo*, which is translated by some as 'immune' (or 'spared') from the metal or spear. The principle here is that mediating and senior elders, religious scholars (*wadaads*), women and those who are elderly or frail must be protected from any fighting. Further than that, while the looting of camels and some other major assets might constitute acceptable practice, the theft of goats and sheep, and household items is proscribed, thus limiting the impact of war and ensuring that conflict does not extend to the wholesale destruction of the adversarial party or parties (Bradbury, 2008:18; Hoyland, 1999:19; Mohamed, 2003:88).

The specificity of these rules of conflict allows for contestation over resources, including the use of violence, but controls that violence in a manner that is intended to maintain general social stability. It does that in large part by confining the pool of potential combatants to specific classes of men, with customary roles for other men and for women that allow active participation in one way or another, including in roles designed to permit resolution of conflict as well as its perpetuation.

The role of religion: Islam in Somaliland

The two lynchpins of Somali social organisation and identity are clan and Islam. Somali culture is said to 'boast one of the highest percentages of adherence to Islam anywhere in the world' (Jhazbhay, 2009:111). Somalis overwhelmingly identify themselves with a Sunni Islamic tradition, in which the majority favour the oldest Sufic order, the Qadiriyya, and the Shafi'ite rite of Sharia law. Some, though, identify with other Sufic traditions, usually one of the two branches of the Ahmadiyya order of which the largest is the Salahiya *tariiqa* (brotherhood) of Sheekh Mohammed Salah. The most famous opponent of the British colonial administration, Sayyid Maxamed Cabdille Xasan, affiliated himself strongly with that Salahist group, while the smaller Dandaraawiya *tariiqa* also has some Somali adherents.

For the majority in Somaliland, the observance of Islam is characterised by a number of specific characteristics. The mysticism of much Islamic interpretation allows space for the continuation of elements of a pre-Islamic belief system, extending to the veneration of Somali antecedents. This approach to Islam finds accommodation in the Qadiriyya tradition, but tends to be rejected by more literalist schools, including the Salahiya *tariiqa*. Both of these are Sufic traditions, and intolerance of what is seen as superstition is even greater among more recent Islamic imports, including Salafist adherents, who command a rapidly growing following amongst Somalis (Lewis, 1984).

Clearly, the Somali attitude to Islam is complex, affecting all aspects of social and personal life, yet it is open to adaptation and adjustment in a manner that sets the Somali practice apart from some other Islamic societies. The Somali sense of identity is marked by a relationship with Islam as a bulwark against the animist and Christian beliefs of most of their neighbours, thus constituting the basis for a powerful sense of Somali identity. As Cassanelli argues, 'It is unlikely […] that rural Somalis in the past saw themselves as part of a larger Somali nation […] One can reasonably argue that it was the Muslim shaykhs, both Arab and Somali, who first planted the notion of a wider Somali identity (Cassanelli, 1982:128–129).

In Somaliland, Islam coexists with clan, at times in harmony but often in tension, as expressed in a popular tale. A clan leader, Catoosh, organised a working group to construct an irrigation system. He had them working so hard that they were unable to perform their usual prayers. Torn between loyalty to Catoosh and duty to Allah, one individual eventually declared: '*War nimanyohow, Ilaah iyo Catoosh baa igu diriraya, xagga Catoosh baanse u liicaa!*' [Do you know, Allah and Catoosh are fighting inside me, and Catoosh is defeating Allah!] (Kapchits, 2002:65; Samatar, 2002). Some interpret the tale as describing how Somalis, faced with such a profound dilemma between loyalty to clan and commitment to religion, will 'promptly go against the law of Allah, if doing so turns out to be in his material interest' (Samatar, 2002). However, others take a more pious line, suggesting that, on hearing of the dilemma, Catoosh himself declared that he would not wish to present such a choice to anyone, and called a halt to work while prayers were completed. Even in the more pious version, though, commitment to clan was apparently strong enough to require the leader's 'permission' to pray. As Cassanelli notes, 'Somalis [are] primarily Muslims, but Muslims constrained by allegiances to kin and clan' (cited in Hoehne and Luling, 2010:58).

This tension is also found in Somaliland society, between the role Islam plays in promoting a sense of unity and the discourse around clan, which tends to promote segmentation and therefore division.

Throughout history and into the current time, Islam has supported calls for Somali unity and social change, against the segmentary nature of clan.

Gender roles: marriage, influence and patriarchy

Given Somaliland's social system described above, and in common with many societies, it is inevitable that marriage provides an important means of consolidating alliances between Somali communities. It provides a useful means of confirming or establishing friendly relations between lineage groups, adding significance to the term *xidid*, which means 'related by marriage'. When the explicit intention is the settlement of past grievances, the practice is known as *godob-reebta gabadhaha*, or literally, 'the leaving behind of a grudge through women'. In either case, this creates a pivotal role for women, who act as go-betweens between their clan of birth and that of marriage (Gadhweyne, 2009:129). However, women's relative exclusion from the political realm can be seen as a negative expression of this 'intermediary' role: a woman can act as an intermediary precisely because she is not completely trusted by either of the clan groups between which she is mediating.

Women also play an active 'influencing' role before, during and after conflict. It is important, of course, to note that their influence can promote conflict as well as peace – just as is the case for some men. A number of respondents in our research commented on this dual role. Proverbs are commonly employed by women both to emphasise the undesirability of violence, and to urge warriors to avenge grievances. For example, *Dagaal wiil baa ku dhinta ee wiil kuma dhasho* [In war, sons are killed, but none are born] (Kapchits, 2012:68); *Malihin walaalo nooga aar guda cadawgii dilay wiilashayada* [We don't have brothers to revenge the enemies who killed our sons] (Tadesse et al, 2010:94).

In reproductive roles, women's roles are, unsurprisingly, pivotal, with the nature of the pastoral economy conferring a number of key responsibilities. Women often own goats and sheep and decide how much ghee and milk they need for household use, selling the rest and retaining the funds earned. They will also coordinate the relocation of the family dwelling or *aqal*, when the time comes to shift the household in search of better pastureland.

Remittances of funds from overseas, a very significant source of foreign exchange throughout the Somali Horn of Africa, are also disproportionately directed to and therefore controlled by women, who tend to be seen as the most responsible recipients.

This long-established role in household-based trade and financial management has provided a base for women to take on greater responsibility for household income in general, as men have been killed in conflict, moved overseas to seek employment, or replaced paid work with the consumption of *qaad, a* leafy narcotic drug. Since as far back as the extension of the sealed road connecting the different Somali areas in the early 1970s, women have tended to control the retail trade in agricultural products and clothing. This extended to the rental of trucks and full responsibility for commercial arrangements; a practice that has continued with increasing female involvement in the *qaad* trade, with women reportedly constituting the majority of stallholders in Somaliland.

While Somaliland women unquestionably occupy pivotal roles in household management and small business – and in Somaliland's vibrant civil society – many have long expressed disillusion at their continued lack of recognition for the role they play in peacemaking, tending to wounded (male) combatants, and supporting state-building (for example, the provision of food and services for conferences and sewing police uniforms).

It was women who collected the food from the refugee camps and the other logistics that the Somali National Movement needed when they were trying to come in and take over Somaliland. Women's mobilisation of food and medical logistics was critical to the war. Men who survived from that day all got great jobs, but we, the women who were collecting and mobilising resources, nobody gave us anything (female, 31–40, political party agent, Maroodi Jeex).

It is interesting to note that three of the most popular mythical tales told to children involve strong, female protagonists. The queen, Caraweelo, who castrated almost all of her male subjects and ruled successfully, if brutally, for years; the cannibal witch, Dhegdheer; and the wise but devious Huryo, are all presented as figures of strength and fear. It is significant that Somali men and women have very different customs with respect to these mythical figures. For many women, Caraweelo remains a source of pride in womanhood. For men, she remains a figure of (often comical) hatred, illustrated by the custom, when passing her purported grave in Sanaag, for men to throw a stone at it while women place a fresh flower on the monument.

The tale holds a more specific significance when it is used to illustrate the argument that women should not be leaders for fear that they might become 'abnormal and unwomanly'. Perhaps it is too much of a leap to suggest, on the basis of these tales alone, that there is some element of fear of what women might be capable of that lingers in the popular imagination and solidifies the sense that women should not be permitted full entry into the political arena (Affi, 1995). Men complain

that the attributes *geesinimo* (courage), *deeqsinimo* (generosity) and *aftahannimo* (eloquence) are valuable qualities when found in a man, yet regrettable in a woman, as a wife will use courage to confront her husband, her generosity will make her a poor steward of his possessions, and her eloquence will see her conversing too freely with other men (Adan, 1996:81–82).

Political parties, gender and clan

Somaliland's most recent state-building phase commenced in early 1991 with the fall of the Siyad Barre government in Mogadishu. Initial peace-building efforts reached a conclusion with the adoption of an interim constitution in 1997, moving to a multi-party system after public endorsement of a formal constitution in 2001.

1997 saw the end of a seven-year sequence of conferences that ushered in a period of sustained peace and has supported a series of popular elections. However, the patriarchal nature of this system remains entrenched, with women largely excluded from formal political decision-making (Abdi, 2002; Walls, 2013). Somaliland's political settlement continues to be underpinned by clan, which in diverse ways has been incorporated into state-building and political decision-making processes. This dual governance system places customary kinship structures alongside local councils, and legislative, judicial and executive branches of 'formal' government (Fadal et al, 1999; Walls et al, 2008; Walls and Kibble, 2013).

The process by which aspirant parties seek eligibility sees 'political associations' first contest local elections, with the three that top the party poll across all regions adjudged to have secured party status. At the current time, the three political parties registered to contest parliamentary and presidential elections are the governing party, Kulmiye, the largest opposition party, Waddani, and the second opposition party, UCID. The constitutional limitation on three political parties was intended to force sub-clans to build alliances with other clan groups, in the hope that this would moderate or mitigate the political dominance of clan (Art 9.2, Republic of Somaliland, 2000). That has worked to some degree, although clan politics still permeates all aspects of the party system. The 2012 local council elections proved something of a high point in the politicisation of clan, as the open-list system adopted for that election encouraged candidates to confirm sub-clan financial support and backing as a first step, before securing political party support (for more analysis, see Kibble and Walls, 2013).

The continued importance of clan in determining candidate selection in elections means that the patriarchal structures of that system continue to make it difficult for women to secure candidacy. In the 2002 local council elections, only two women were successful out of a total of 379 council seats, while in the 2005 Lower House elections, a mere seven women stood as candidates out of a field of 246 people; of those, just two women won seats in the 82-seat chamber (Abokor et al, 2006:8, 10, 22).

The situation of female candidates did show some improvement in the 2012 local elections, in which 140 female candidates stood in a field of 2,368, with ten of them winning seats out of a total of 379 positions (Kibble and Walls, 2013). However, while proportionally the total number of women standing marked a high point of 5.9 per cent, the percentage actually elected has remained between 0.5 per cent and 2.8 per cent in each of Somaliland's elections. While statistics tell only a partial story, they do effectively underline the point made by many research respondents: it remains very hard indeed for women to secure votes in representative elections. We argue that there is compelling evidence that, in spite of the optimism of some respondents, that situation has not shifted much over the decade to 2012 in which elections have taken place.

The dominance of patriarchal kinship structures makes it difficult for women in a number of respects. Firstly, they struggle to secure the support of their clan, who question their loyalty. It is then more difficult for female candidates to raise the funds necessary to mount an effective campaign. They often struggle to persuade both male and female voters to vote for them for much the same reason as the difficulty they experienced in securing their candidacy in the first place. The financial burden is particularly strong, with all women competing in the 2012 local elections saying that the experience had been a bad one for them personally, primarily because of the financial burden it imposed (Verjee et al, 2015:30–32).

While it is difficult to 'prove' in empirical terms, we feel there is a strong case for the argument that the clan system both underpins the political settlement, securing the level of stability that Somaliland has achieved, and precludes the involvement of women and minority groups. Our gendered analysis of the current Somaliland political settlement concludes that the clan system supports a stable but non-inclusive political settlement. This situation is sometimes supported by Islamic teachings on the appropriate role of women, although at other times, Islam offers an argument for greater gender inclusivity than is permitted by the customary system. Ultimately, it seems clear that the primary cause of the lack of gender inclusivity lies with the continued predominance of the clan system rather than with religious interpretation or some other causal variable.

Methodology

Research approach

This research project sought to explore the power relations that maintain the political settlement in Somaliland, using a specifically gendered analytical approach. It was designed specifically to build an understanding of how a wide range of Somaliland residents understand gender identities and roles, and consequently how these relate to the political settlement in the country.

The task of 'understanding perceptions' is necessarily a constructivist endeavour: our focus had to be on the way respondents constructed reality for themselves. We have therefore opted to rely heavily on verbatim quotations from our respondents in order to build a narrative that we feel reasonably reflects a balance of opinion. We took this decision after some consideration, and with an awareness of the debates on the presentation of qualitative data in this manner (see Corden and Sainsbury, 2006). While we have endeavoured to build a coherent and representative narrative around the qualitative data, we acknowledge the subjectivity involved in that exercise.

Stakeholder mapping (described in more detail below) was an important part of our approach in order to provide some framework understanding of who held influence over whom. To make sense of this mapping exercise, it was necessary to limit its scope since a map covering the totality of Somaliland's political settlement would have been too elaborate and extensive to support meaningful analysis. The focus selected for the mapping workshop described below was on sexual violence, specifically rape, exploring the power relationships that come into play when such an offence occurs.

Throughout the research, we retained a focus on the 'spaces' of participation, considering invited, created and claimed spaces from a gendered perspective, drawing on the work of Gaventa (2006) and Cornwall (2002) in particular.

Research methods

We utilised a range of research methods during the 21-month research project. This primarily centred on group and individual interviews, and focus groups, discussed in more detail below. It also included two key stakeholder workshops in Hargeysa: one at the start of the research, to help us to refine questions and approaches, and the second towards the end of data collection, to consider preliminary findings. We brought research participants from each region to attend the second workshop, which ran over two days, in order to ensure that the participants reflected the breadth of respondents already engaged in the project.

We also augmented our primary data with the review of secondary material from desk research, which contributed substantially to the literature review in this report and to the formulation of questions and hypotheses as the research progressed.

The dissemination of research findings will continue after the project has concluded, but has already involved events in both London and Hargeysa to present findings and launch the research report.

Interviews and group discussions

We gathered qualitative data through a mixture of focus group discussions, semi-structured key informant interviews and group interviews. The full research team consisted of five Somali and three UK-based researchers.

In total, we conducted 73 key informant interviews, 18 focus group meetings (three in each of the six regions, with the members of each group attending

all three discussions as far as possible[1]), and 23 group interviews. This amounted to 389 individual respondent contributions across all six regions; of these, 211 respondents were women and 177 were men (see the List of interviews in the Appendix).[2]

We chose to use focus groups so that, by drawing together the same group of individuals over three separate meetings, the discussion would both cover more ground, and dig more deeply into some of the issues that were more difficult to define. This worked well in some instances, with researchers using the repeated discussions to narrow the focus of questions around issues that had not received clear answers in previous meetings. However, in a few instances, there was a sense that by the third meeting, all that participants had to say had been said. On balance, we felt that the focus group approach was beneficial in spite of this.

The use of group interviews and individual key informant interviews was determined on the basis of what worked best for the people involved: some felt more comfortable talking in a group, some individually. While individuals might be expected to speak in a different manner by themselves than in a group, we found that there was not a discernible pattern in which one setting seemed to produce fuller or more reflective responses. We therefore left it to our five-person local research team to determine which format was better suited to which context and which respondent. We did agree, however, that they would utilise both approaches in each region. There were some instances (notably in Sanaag) when a group interview worked well when it involved just a single gender, but in most cases the groups were mixed.

All interview questions were reviewed at length in a series of Hargeysa-based workshops with the full research team, and then discussed and reviewed in conference calls as the research progressed. This highly interactive approach had the advantage of allowing us to adjust the questions and approaches used as interviews were completed. While an approach as flexible as this would not have generated reliable quantitative data, it served our qualitative orientation very well indeed. We believe that the combination of individual and group interviews in all regions, and in a mix of cities, towns and rural centres, enabled us to collect a wealth of data that gives a highly informative picture of attitudes to gender identity and roles, and the participation of women and men in the political settlement in Somaliland.

Photo 2: Research team and stakeholders. *Source: © Kate Stanworth, Hargeysa, 2016.*

[1] In some instances individuals were not able to attend each discussion, but in most cases we were satisfied that the focus groups served the intended purpose of engaging the same people in discussion on several occasions.

[2] The gender of one of the participants in one of the earliest focus group discussions was unfortunately omitted from the records for that group, so these numbers add to one short of the total.

Almost all interviews and focus group and group discussions were conducted in Somali by local researchers, although UK-based team members conducted or participated in a few interviews in Hargeysa, and also attended interviews in Laascaanood. The process of developing questions and refining techniques with the full research team was beneficial in ensuring the depth of understanding of non-Somali researchers and the cultural appropriateness of questions, as well as building the research capacities of all involved. All interviews were transcribed and translated into English by Somaliland-based translators/transcribers. Transcripts were then loaded into NVivo, which was used for analysis by the UK-based research team through both individual work and a series of workshop sessions.

Within the analysis sections that follow, quotations from interviews and discussions appear in italics. Respondents are cited with reference to their gender, age band, occupation, educational level and the region in which the interview or focus group took place, where those data points exist. (In some cases, one or more pieces of information were unavailable or missing, and are therefore not represented.) This information appears in brackets after each quotation.[3] We discuss the ethical issues around this approach to anonymisation below (p. 30), but in methodological terms, we decided that it is important that we indicate as much contextual data as possible. It is readily apparent why the gender of respondents is important in understanding gendered perceptions on the political settlement, but equally, regional location, age group, occupation and educational level all provide important reference points that help us contextualise responses.

Data analysis

The nature of our research precludes quantitative data analysis to a large degree: the subjectivity of the views presented makes it both difficult and misleading to organise analysis around claims that, for example, 'X per cent of women think Y'. There is far too much ambiguity and complexity in the respondents' comments for such an approach to data analysis to make sense. We therefore opted to include quotations in English, translated as far as possible from the verbatim Somali, coupled with respondents' demographic data, in order to support our analysis, without compromising the principles of anonymity.

Our approach made it unnecessary to randomise research subject selection, although the decision to conduct interviews and discussions in each region was deliberately designed to ensure the diversity of backgrounds, and in some respects can be considered to approximate randomisation to a limited degree. Both key informants and group participants were selected using purposive sampling, involving what amounted to a snowball technique, in which our local researchers engaged facilitators in each region to identify a range of participants, with additional participants identified on the basis of recommendations from initial informants. As a research team, we made a conscious effort to ensure the diversity of ages, genders, employment and educational attainment as well as location or residence in the selection of participants.

Stakeholder power mapping

In order to define those who were active in the area of gender politics, we also undertook a power-mapping exercise, drawing on work done during the period of the research, and involving some of our team under the auspices of Progressio. The exercise was framed by the issue of sexual violence, specifically rape, in order to focus the enquiry. By limiting the scope of the analysis in this way, we were able to achieve a more focused analysis that highlighted specific issues more clearly.

The workshop took a full day and required participants to identify each relevant stakeholder or group, and then undertake an analysis of the power relationships between those stakeholders in terms of their 'power over' and/or 'power with' other stakeholders groups.

Each stakeholder group was assigned a colour code, with predominantly or exclusively male groups identified in red and predominantly or exclusively female groups in blue. Stakeholder groups that could not clearly be identified as predominantly one or other gender were assigned to a 'mixed' category. Differing circle sizes denoted differing levels of power, with larger circles denoting greater power over the focal issue of the rape of young girls.

Having been identified, each stakeholder group was then connected with others, with the direction of the arrow denoting the direction of influence. The proximity of circles to each other was used to indicate the closeness of the relationship between each group.

The analysis that resulted from the power-mapping workshop is contained in the 'Power structures:

[3] Within the text, citations appear as: (gender, age band, occupation, education, region). Where data is missing, it is simply omitted, so a citation reading (female, civil society, Awdal) refers to a woman interviewed in Awdal, who is working in a civil society organisation. The omission of data on age band and education simply means that data is not available for that respondent.

stakeholders and relationships' section below (p. 64).

Ethical considerations

The most significant ethical concerns related to ensuring informed consent from our respondents, and in assuring participants that their anonymity would be maintained, along with the confidentiality of the data collected.

Some discussion, both in interviews and in group settings, touched on issues of potential sensitivity, most particularly sexual violence. However, these topics were dealt with at a conceptual rather than personalised level, and no participant was pressed to address such topics unless they volunteered to do so. In a few cases, respondents expressed some caution discussing religious perspectives on women's societal or political participation, but again, no respondent was pressed to speak, and their contribution was fully anonymised.

We did not conduct interviews with minors (under 18 years of age) or include them in group events.

Almost all interviews were conducted by local researchers, most of whom had experience dealing with these issues in other work. We also addressed ethical considerations in the workshops we conducted with the team prior to data collection, covering the nature and need for informed consent and considerations around anonymity and confidentiality.

The design of the methodological approaches employed, and our understanding of the data collected, involved frequent communications between the UK- and Somaliland-based researchers. We feel that this approach allowed us to maintain sensitivity to cultural and individual needs that has both added to the richness of the data gathered and its analysis, and helped avoid the potential for offence or dissatisfaction.

We prepared an information sheet for respondents in English, before translating it into Somali; the subsequent development of the English and Somali versions then largely took place in tandem, as discussion around terminology in Somali fed back into adjustments to the English-language version. There was an option for participants to sign the form, but few chose to do so, making it clear that, while they understood the nature of the research and were willing to participate, they were not comfortable adding a physical signature. Researchers read the information sheet to illiterate participants, and in all cases explained the research verbally as well as offering the written description, and made it clear that consent could be withdrawn at any stage if desired.

We have adopted a system of anonymisation which we are confident ensures that none of those quoted can be identified. This is helped by the relatively large number of interviews and group discussions, which makes it less likely that individuals will be able to identify their comments amongst those presented in the final report. It is also important that the interviews were conducted almost entirely in Somali, before being transcribed and translated into English.

However, the issue of translation does raise ethical issues. We do not purport to be presenting the very words of the respondents; rather we claim only to be building a representative picture of their comments. That is consistent with the endeavour described in the methodology section in which we are trying to develop an understanding of perceptions, and on that basis examining possible implications and policy routes. The transcription and translation process effectively adds a further layer of anonymisation. Because we are confident that individuals will not be able to identify themselves or others from their representations in this report, we have not opted for blanket anonymisation of all personal details (Clark, 2006). We feel that it is important that gender, age bands and location be identified so that readers can gain some understanding of the context in which the comments were made. We have therefore provided that information in conjunction with the quotations, as discussed above. Although every effort was made to gather this data for each participant, there were some instances in which one detail or other was not collected or was not offered by the respondent, in which case it is, of course, omitted from the reference.

UCL's research ethics procedures are consistent with those of other research institutions in the UK, and we ensured compliance with the expected standards.

Analysis

Objective 1: gender identities

OBJECTIVE 1: To analyse how gender identities (masculinities and femininities) are practised and how that practice influences sociopolitical participation and violence against women and girls in contemporary Somali society; and how this has impacted on the evolution of a stable, inclusive, post-conflict political settlement in Somaliland.

Within this objective we will explore whether deconstructing current masculinities and femininities could help to address negative social attitudes towards women and girls in Somaliland with a view to eliminating violence against women and girls; and hence supporting gender equality.

As explained in the Introduction, the first objective had six research questions. The analysis that follows addresses each research question in turn, linking respondent quotes with the narrative that emerged from analysis of the data. The general findings under Objective 1 are explained by four main trends:

- Gender identities are understood as guided by the biological categorisation of 'sex'
- Culture and religion strongly influence gender identities (i.e. masculinity and femininity)
- The socialisation of young boys and girls at an early age consolidates the functions of gender identities and thus gender roles
- Despite changes in roles and responsibilities between men and women, there still exists a lack of space to transgress beyond fixed gender identities and gender roles.

The findings within these four trends all have an impact on the political participation of both men and women in Somaliland.

Research question 1.1: gendered definitions of masculinity and femininity

What are women's and men's definitions of masculinity and femininity in Somaliland and how do these shape sociopolitical participation?

One of the earliest and most striking observations we drew from our research was the degree to which the majority of men and women we interviewed perceived Somali men's and women's identities as guided by 'sex' yet constructed by 'gender'. At the same time, given that there is no single understanding or definition of the word 'gender' in the Somali language, there seems to be an ambiguity that opens up room for misunderstanding of the actual meaning of the term and in which contexts it might be applied. As this respondent explained:

> *We meet with people who wrongly understand gender and they believe that if you talk about gender you mean women. Therefore they should be given explanation and clarification that gender is not only women but also includes men* (female, civil society, Awdal).

The first of the Hargeysa-based workshops made it clear that the word 'gender' in the Somaliland context is understood as an alien word utilised by foreign and local development workers, and is not found in general parlance. It was instead agreed among the participants in the workshop that it would be better to use words that were more meaningful in the Somali context, namely *jinsiga* and *lamaanaha*. The term *jinsiga* is used as a unit of categorisation in

the Somali language in reference to an individual's biological gender, as in *nin* (male) or *nag* (female). The word *lamaanaha* was the closest we were able to come to the non-biologically defined notion of 'gender', but was not ideal as it is usually used to describe a romantic relationship between a man and a woman. However, when asked what 'gender' means in the Somali context there was broad consensus amongst respondents that there are meaningful distinctions between men and women that relate to roles and identities beyond those that are biologically determined. Thus, while there may not be a specific Somali word that conceptually embraces the concept of gender, people's understandings do extend into that area.

For instance, the understanding of femininity and what it means to be a woman is strongly linked to the perception of women's reproductive role:

> *Women are excellent at the tasks and duties that Allah has made them fit for, for instance this includes the housework, the cooking and the like. If I try to wash two clothes I might not be able to finish all day long but a woman could wash 100 clothes in an hour with her bare hands. It is because Allah created them so she could easily do that job, and as for the man his natural task is things like decision-making and conflict resolution. When a man goes and hears two conflicting parties he might easily solve it, whereas a woman can't manage that for days* (male, 31–40, tertiary, Maroodi Jeex).

Whereas the perception of masculinity and what it means to be a man is linked to men's productive role:

> *the good Muslim man, in proper manner, should be a man who lives in peace with all Muslim people and works and manages his children and wife, and teaches people the Islamic studies and Quran. That's the good Muslim [man]* (male, 50–60, religious leader, Awdal).

The understanding of 'gender' and gender identities in this context is consequently communicated by perceptions of gender stereotypes. Men are seen as more practically focused in their gender identities, while women are considered to have more expressive traits – such as kind, honest and vulnerable – and to be more responsible – as mothers and carers (Stets and Burke, 1996). For most respondents, a 'good woman' is devout, respectful, obedient to her husband and takes care of her family. Men are considered to be naturally 'stronger' and more rational:

> *Men are important because Allah gave them the responsibilities of providing the means to eat, while for women, they are responsible for children and child-bearing, cooking and feeding* (male, 31–40, civil society, tertiary, Maroodi Jeex).

While men were seen as more decisive, women were considered to be 'emotional' and less rational.

> *Women are more emotional than men and are always psychologically more vulnerable. That is why they are religiously denied to be judges in the court. They can be easily swayed by their emotions into making rushed judgements* (female, 18–30, educational, university, Sanaag).

Women were also sometimes referred to as having greater integrity, a trait that is often connected to responsibility for reproductive duties. For instance, one young woman stated that '*Women are more honest and more committed to their responsibilities for the family and the community'* (female, 18–30, student, university, Togdheer).

This accords with stereotypical notions of women as intuitive but not strong in leadership. This man argued that:

> *Women are blessed with immense mental power in reading situations and people, but they are not good in leadership ... because ... they are always on the lookout for potential threats as they are more vulnerable and are physically weaker than men. When she understands a danger she is facing it is hard for her to collect herself and manage her emotions, though* (male, 41–50, private sector, secondary, Togdheer).

For some, these are differences in purpose and ability, but not in value, but many of our respondents did not share the view of gender equivalence. Instead, the notion that gender roles are not only firmly defined and distinct was commonly equated with a belief that women are, in specific terms, inferior or of less value to society than men. Most of those interviewed were, inevitably, aware of the nature of the research, and few were inclined to admit to such beliefs themselves. Many, however, agreed that social norms held firmly to such values.

The second trend that emerged from our research was about the extent to which religion and culture both influence and limit gender identity. In general, our respondents claimed that religion and culture together define ideal gender identities and most considered this a good thing as it provides a general 'moral compass'. However, a few respondents suggested that religion and culture adversely affect women's role within society.

A few respondents were also specific in suggesting that the foundations of gender difference are social rather than religious, although those individuals were in a minority.

> *Q: [Are the different roles for men and women] due to customary traditions or are they because of religious belief?*
>
> *A: No, they are only traditions. Men can do most home chores, and likewise, women can also do most of the work both outside and inside the home* (female, 31–40, secondary, Sool).

Both religion and culture grant more 'freedoms' and rights to men than women. Many of these narratives came from women: '*I don't think that women have left behind their natural and fundamental duties. Allah didn't say that we [should] stay away from work, it's just a perception of men, and [they] use that in order to exert pressure on women*' (female, 41–50, private sector, Maroodi Jeex). Some male respondents also argued that religion and culture are actually in place for the protection of women: one man argued that religion and culture (clan) safeguard women's freedoms and rights. Another noted that*: 'Allah has chosen men to shoulder the responsibility of leading this world. It is their burden'* (male, 18–30, tertiary, Saaxil).

The same male respondent also held that:

> *[…] religion is the one that has given them [women] the best care and valued them [women] the most, it is the father or the brother who is responsible for the daughter or sister when she is a child, or grown up but unmarried and it is her husband who must take care of her when she is married and even our culture gives them the same status* (male, tertiary, private sector, Saaxil).

Research question 1.2: translation of perceptions into practice

In what ways do those perceptions translate into practice?

This socialisation process, as outlined in the Literature Review above, was strongly in evidence in our respondents' discussions. In almost all questions relating to gender roles and responsibilities, respondents agreed that they are introduced at an early age by parents using cultural and religious teachings. For instance, one man stated that *'Some of the things that a boy must learn throughout their upbringing include, firstly, that men are the potential leaders of the future'* (male, Awdal), whilst a female respondent asserted that *'I gave birth to the boys first and the girl last and the boys served me well with housework but when she reached the age of 7 they were sending her all the work'* (female, 51–60, housewife, Awdal). Similarly, a female respondent from Berbera said that:

> *[…] young girls are made to stay at home, cook for the boys, clean and iron their clothes, make their beds and their room, clean the house and attend to all housework* (female, 41–50, civil society tertiary, Saaxil).

Boys, on the other hand, are only expected to focus on school. Because of this, it was reasoned among respondents that young boys in Somaliland have better chances of success later in life than young girls who, much like their mothers, have multiple roles and are thus time-burdened:

> *[…] mothers are always in the market working and girls have to then work at home and at the same time study school, studying and attending classes become too tough as school education gets more challenging, the grades suffer and they finally have to drop out* (female, 41–50, government official, Maroodi Jeex).

In discussions about the characteristics of a 'good man' and a 'good woman', it was clear that gender inequalities are produced in the socialisation phase, during which parents and other significant adults reinforce gender differences. One male responded said that:

> *The girl should learn everything that's right and that is wrong before she got married, because if her father and mother do not tell her the good and bad things she will later do anything and will believe she is right. There are also girls who do not listen to their parents, therefore I would suggest that girls should be guided and advised at home level. Mothers should instruct and train girls at home to clarify them the good and bad deeds* (male, 18–30, tertiary, private sector, Awdal).

Social characteristics linked to biological 'sex' are further used in daily speech and thus continue to reinforce the different gender norms that later come to guide young Somali boys and girls in their adult life. We also found evidence of the ideas of gender identity theory outlined in the literature review on pages [13-20], in which masculinity is defined in opposition to the mother. For example, whilst a number of female respondents critiqued patriarchal structures, others seemed to reinforce these structures. One woman

argued that *'The good Islamic woman should be able to manage her family, be in peace with neighbours and obey her husband'* (female, 31–40, secondary, private sector, Awdal). Another commented that '*the good Muslim woman is the one who covers her body, obeys her husband, applies Islamic conduct, is kind to the neighbours and lives in peace with other people, that is a good Muslim woman'* (female, 31–40, tertiary, private sector, Awdal). Boys and girls are expected to do different tasks and socialisation in gender inequality, guided by the perceptions of gender differences, at an early age is one of the causes of contemporary gender inequality. As a female respondent from Berbera put it, '*there are deep-rooted tendencies within the families that are embedded within the minds of Somali men and boys and that starts at home'* (female, 41–50, tertiary, private sector, Saaxil).

Research question 1.3: how identities have changed since the end of conflict

How have those identities changed since the end of widespread conflict in 1997?

In responding to the question of how identities have changed since 1997, the gendered division of labour in the domestic realm functions as an appropriate unit for analysis. The theory behind the gender division of labour supports the notion that men are specialised in paid work within the market and women specialise in unpaid work within the household (Washbrook, 2007).

In Somaliland, there is a strong divide between both the amount and type of work that men and women do individually and as groups. Women are expected to do more work in the household, perhaps because such tasks are linked to their reproductive roles and identities, and men as a group are expected to engage in productive work outside the household. However, following changes in the socio-economic situation after the periods of civil war in Somaliland, women have assumed greater economic responsibilities for themselves, their children, other relatives such as parents and grandparents and, in many cases, their husbands.

Such changes may have enhanced the responsibilities of women within the family, yet it has not translated into overall improvement in the realisation of their rights within society as a whole, as commonly expressed by women respondents. The majority of male and female respondents stated that women do not have a place within the political sphere, as expressed in this quotation, for instance: *'the community was always for men and the clan, to concede that to women is quite hard to imagine'* (male, 18–30, tertiary, private sector, Saaxil).

Women and men who transgress the boundaries of accepted gender roles face challenges – for instance, it is regarded as shameful for a man to do 'women's work'. Although some of the men and women interviewed said that they would like a change in rigid gender roles, the majority of responses still focused on the shamefulness of swapping gender role, particularly when men undertake acts considered as '*naaganimo*' (femaleness or femininity).

> *I heard that in South Somalia men do assist women at home but here is a taboo and when people see a man working for his wife they call him 'naageeyti' which means womanish. The Somali culture is not allowing men to help their wives at home* (female, 41–50, housewife, Awdal).

Hence it appears that the basic values attached to gender identities remain unchanged despite the socio-economic shifts of the post-war period. These roles are determined and defined by both religion and culture. The impact of conflict is also a relevant factor, and may have affected Somali gender identities differently. Research from the Rift Valley Institute (Gardner and El-Bushra, 2015) suggests that the ideals and norms of Somali manhood – such as male responsibility for the family and the ability to navigate kinship relations – have been difficult to live up to in the context of post-war instability. Nonetheless, the exacting ideals of *raganimo* (masculinity), despite being difficult to live up to, are reproduced by both men and women to younger generations (ibid).

Our research similarly suggests that men's experience of post-conflict life affects the entire family. We also found that the constant reproduction of the ideals of *raganimo* creates a rigid manual for how men and young boys are to act, and that those that transgress these expected gender identities are faced with challenges. In addition, even when the roles and behaviours attached to expected gender identities have shifted – as is the case for women with more productive roles whilst men take more passive roles – the values attached to these roles remain different. *Raganimo* is associated with positive traits such as courage, humility and wisdom. whilst *naaganimo* is not used in a positive manner.

Research question 1.4: invited, claimed and created spaces

What invited, created or claimed spaces are available to women and men, respectively, that permit or restrict participation in political processes?

Gender equity and Islam: spaces for negotiation?

Traditional culture in Somaliland blends nomadic pastoral traditions and norms with Islamic teaching, and it is this interaction that shapes Somaliland society. Our research findings indicate that there is a distinct overlap between religion and culture regarding the different roles of men and women.

Religion takes up an important space in the cultural life of a society and the status of women in a society is usually an outcome of how religious texts have been interpreted (Klingorová and Havlíček, 2015). Each religion promotes norms and standards that are commonly internalised within the political and cultural institutions governing society. All monotheist religions uphold a social structure that favours male dominance (ibid); and, because there is a reciprocal relationship between religion and culture, the status of women in religion is therefore reproduced in society (ibid). Our research supports this view.

Our findings also suggest that religion in Somaliland is gendered, and thus we considered whether the status of women in Somaliland's political settlement is related to women's status in Islam. It is commonly asserted that Islam is strongly patriarchal, and that gender justice is an incompatible Western concept. Sharia, the laws that govern the life of a devoted Muslim, were codified during a period in history in which the general status of women was poor. Contemporary cultural and social interpretations of the status of women that draw on Sharia therefore reflect these historical conditions. Interpretation of the Holy Quran has been monopolised by men, specifically those with priesthood status, who define 'the ontological, theological, sociological and eschatological status of Muslim women' (Hassan, 1996:148).

Bearing in mind that it is considered sinful to question the theological formulations of Sharia, it is nonetheless important to consider whether there are spaces within Islam that could accommodate the claims of justice and equality made by Somali women. For instance, Islamic scholar Riffat Hassan (2007) writes that the Holy Quran supports human liberation, but that the dominant patriarchal interpretations of women's status within Islam neglect the ethical orders that demarcate social justice within a Muslim society. The concept of justice guiding contemporary Muslims lies in the exercise of the *Ijtihad*, the rational logic needed to apprehend the messages of the Holy Quran, of which the essential principle is the acknowledgement of one's responsibility towards nature and life, and the obligation to eliminate all forms of injustice (ibid).

Personal freedom and/or rights are guaranteed to *all* Muslims that devote their life to Allah and follow the Sharia; hence no one other from Allah can limit the freedoms and/or rights guaranteed and given (ibid).

The Holy Quran, argues Hassan, is designed to protect all oppressed classes, including men and women equally (ibid). There is no Quranic differentiation between men and women nor any indications of the gendered division of labour. Instead, the Quran guarantees the freedoms and rights of men and women equally. The space to negotiate the status of women in Somali society must therefore lie in careful interpretation of the Holy Quran (ibid).

Closed spaces

> *Culture and tradition offer some of the biggest differences. When there is an issue or matter that is to be discussed by the elders, women will not be called to give their advice or opinion. It is just men who are consulted with. Though men and women have the same mental and thinking faculties, men will always be asked for their words and opinion* (female, 41–50, political party agent, secondary, Maroodi Jeex).

Most spaces where power is exercised and important decisions are made are closed to women in Somaliland but open to men. Some of these spaces are also hidden, in the sense that agendas are set or deals made in 'informal' men-only spaces such as the *mafresh* where men gather to relax, talk and chew *qaad*, which may then feed into public decision-making. Some women mentioned that men often convened late into the night, a time when women could not attend due to family commitments or because it is improper for women to be out late at night.

> *Women are at a disadvantage. Female members of top party committees can only know important party issues when it is too late, as they are not always called to the party's side meetings and informal meetings. It is the culture that is the barrier to them* (female, political party agent, secondary, Maroodi Jeex).

> *If a woman wants to be minister she doesn't get it, but men get higher jobs, whereas women get to be secretaries and lower positions. The reason is that men are together in decision meetings but women aren't there and culturally the male is privileged* (female, private sector, university, Maroodi Jeex).

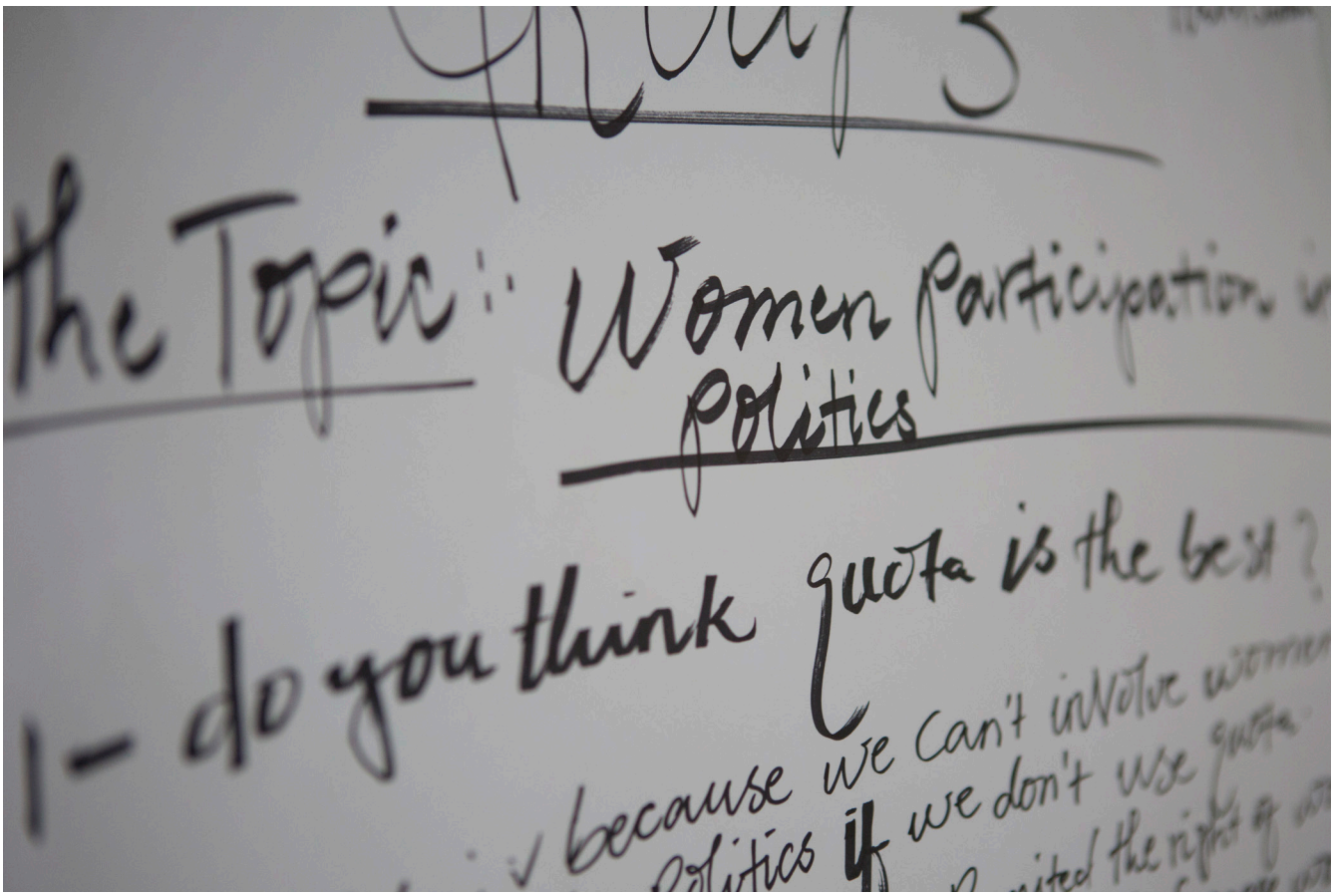

Photo 3: *Workshopping ideas*. *Source: © Kate Stanworth, Hargeysa, 2016.*

Respondents felt that as a result of the war, spaces for women's political participation have closed even further as people retreated further into clan which provides a form of security in an unstable post-conflict environment. As a result, women were not only excluded from the peace-building and reconciliation conferences that shaped Somaliland's current settlement, they were not consulted in the constitution-making process, and remain absent in the Guurti and the Lower House (apart from one MP). Respondents argued that this continued exclusion results from the clan structure of Somali society:

> *[I]n Somaliland politics and many other neighbouring countries which resemble our context […] their politics is based on tribal lines. In tribes, women never represent the heritage. So as long as our culture exists, men are present and there is no reason they invite women's participation* (male, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

This is strongly reflected in women's lack of opportunities to be chosen as political party candidates:

> *the clans meet all over the country without any women being present and decide on candidates, then they tell everyone 'this is our candidate' and ensure people will vote for him; the majority of clan will vote for that person. So, what's the function of a political party? Political parties are afraid to challenge this* (personal correspondence with A. Warsame, 20 January 2016).

It also translates into personal and family spaces:

> *… even at the family level, your own brother thinks that women have no ideas – though it's changing in some families. To most men, you are just 'another' woman and they can't visualise you in THEIR space: they see you as an intruder. They can only visualise women in the spaces which are assigned to women. A woman's space is clearly defined, and certain qualities are given to women in that space (in the home, xishood, or shyness, is also used to refer to 'shame'), the rest are discounted. If you were counted as an individual, as a woman, then men would come and ask your opinion* (personal correspondence with S. Abdi, 20 January 2016).

Claimed spaces

Despite the huge barriers women face entering the masculine spaces outlined above, they have been able to claim some of these spaces and continue to do so into the present. Women did not only demand to be listened to by the elders who negotiated the peace settlement, but women's rights organisations (WROs) like Nagaad have been demanding an electoral quota that guarantees a certain number of seats for women in parliament since 2005. WROs have successfully claimed spaces in local councils and 10 women were elected as local councillors in 2012. It is interesting to note, however, that female councillors are frequently assigned to thematic committees that relate to women's gender roles such as the environment, waste management, education or water, but not security which continues to be seen as a masculine area. *'There were times, when women were excluded from this but not anymore. They have a representation in the committees for development and education. The only committee that they are not represented at is the committee for security'* (male, 18-30, Sanaag). The fact that women are excluded from security committees is a major issue, as security is gendered and not having women's concerns and interests represented in these committees may mean that important areas of security that are crucial to women, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), are not given the attention they require.

Even when women are able to enter 'closed' male spaces, such as the masculine space of local or national politics, they face challenges in doing so.

> *I used to be the Vice-Chair of the opposition party and whenever there were meetings, they'd ignore me and talk to the men instead. They just assumed I was the leader of the Women's wing* (personal correspondence with A. Warsame, 20 January 2016).

This is of course not unique to Somaliland. Ahikire (2003:227, cited in Tadros, 2014) notes that women in local councils in Uganda have very little scope for influencing agendas in meetings because they had not had the opportunity to 'sell' them to other members – in contrast with male councillors, who would combine business with pleasure and take advantage of get-togethers in bars and other social arenas in order to build support for their ideas. Similarly in Somaliland, politics in informal arenas (so-called hidden spaces) can also be highly exclusionary for women, minimising the influence of their participation in formal politics. This is demonstrated by the issue of the electoral quota. Whilst women have campaigned for change to the electoral laws for some years, young men, supported by the Somaliland National Youth Organisation (SONYO), were able to achieve an amendment to the electoral law to permit candidates to stand from the age of 25 (see Research question 2.1 p. 45). Male spaces had a role to play in quickening the process as 'men were more perceptive because they all met in the *mafresh* whether they are in parliament or government' (personal correspondence with S. Abdi, 20 January 2016, quoting SONYO). As respectable women are not part of these spaces (only singers and 'loose' women tend to be considered acceptable female guests), they are also not part of important discussions.

The extent to which women have been able to claim the spaces outlined above, and push for inclusion in 'formal' political spaces, depends on the extent to which they are able to organise their collective power, their 'power with'. This continues to be a challenge in Somaliland, and respondents referred to the fact that women are not united with many different interests at play. Factors such as age, education, class, location or the level of support they have at home from husbands and family also affect their ability to organise collectively. While some women are progressive and have been engaged in the fight for gender equality for many years, others are conservative and do not challenge the status quo. A number of respondents also mentioned that civil society organisations in Somaliland are competing with each other for funding, which can hamper collaboration for common objectives. There is also a gap in coordination between women's organisations and other civil society groups, which keeps women's issues isolated from the broader national context and deprives NGOs of mutual help, knowledge exchange and expertise. Nonetheless, WROs have been successful in creating and claiming spaces where this collaboration has occurred, as outlined in more detail in Research question 2.1 (p. 45).

Created spaces

In order to achieve access to previously closed spaces and claim them, women first needed to create alternative spaces. In 1997, they founded the national women's rights network Nagaad, in direct response to women's exclusion from the third nationwide peace conference in Hargeysa. Nagaad was designed to serve as an organised, collective voice of women who were determined to fight for their socio-economic and political rights as equal citizens of Somaliland and to organise a collective women's voice. Women-only spaces were also created at the local level to build women's skills and confidence, enable women to organise, and support each other to run for local office. Donors and INGOs have supported many of these spaces.

> *The advancement of mothers' and women's rights were not seen. This made us speak aloud about ensuring women's rights, their advancement, and development. As a result this made many housewives come forward and elect us. I was elected on a seat reserved for women councillors. I was seeking women's votes. I always talked about the tangible results I would achieve for women when I would represent them as their elected councillor by also ensuring their rights. Therefore, for me it was women who elected me and not men. I told the women their needs and stated that men represent us and manage our women's affairs for us, how about we have women representing us and become our leaders* (female, 18–30, politician, university, Sool).

Much of the work undertaken by women's rights organisations has focused on encouraging women to vote for each other by convincing ordinary women that women are more likely to serve their specific interests than men. This has also required organising around women's collective voice:

> *Women have created women's networks and organisations, but when it comes to elections they have to support each other as women, and forget about tribal allegiances and the like* (male, Sanaag).

New spaces

In order to build the confidence and capacity that women need to compete with men in Somaliland's highly unequal political playing field, it is necessary to create more new spaces. When asked how donors could really make a difference, women's rights activists suggested that they should support a leadership academy for women and a boarding school for girls focused on education that deliberately seeks to build strong and confident women. Part of the curriculum could include progressive Islamic studies as a way of sustainably building women's leadership capacity. This was felt to be very important, as most contemporary women's rights activists had been educated at the girls' school in Burco, which provided them with a high level of education that facilitated their activism and civil society leadership.

Invited spaces

In response to women's decade-long lobbying for the electoral quota, President Silaanyo set up a nine-member National Consultative Committee in 2011 to look into possible processes for women's (and minority groups') political participation. Only one woman was invited to this space. Of the 390 people consulted on their thoughts on women's political participation to inform the way forward, only 125 were women, whilst 150 were religious and traditional leaders. This meant that the outcome of the process was likely to be skewed from the outset as the largest groups of respondents – the religious and traditional leaders – constituted the most prejudiced and gender-biased sector of Somaliland society. After the consultation, the Women's Activist Group, which included 28 of the most prominent, national-level women leaders, sent a letter of complaint to the president. This included a critique of the approach, data-collection tools, respondent selection and initial questions posed by the committee as biased, misleading and reflecting the culture of negativity against women's rights and gender equity. This shows how those in power can easily manipulate 'invited' spaces to serve their own interests.

Research question 1.5: identities and connections with violence

> *In what ways have gender identities contributed to violence against women and girls, and gender inequality?*

Customary practice in Somali society has strongly supported clearly distinct roles for men and women, who, as reported here, are widely seen to have fundamentally different identities. There is considerable divergence, though, over whether gender identities are determined by Allah, by nature or through social or familial conditioning.

For many, the process of differentiation is taught from birth: *'boys and girls are raised in a way where each knows who he or she is and they are taught their differences'* (male, Maroodi Jeex).

These differences are enshrined in religious law or defined by Allah. Religious justifications for the differential value of girls and boys are commonly cited, such as these comments: *'It is Sunna that two sheep are slaughtered for boys and one for baby girls and it is the birth of the baby boys who are loved more than the birth of baby girls'* (male, 31–40, civil society, university, Togdheer). *'[I]n the Islamic Sharia it is men who have the higher status or worth'* (female, 51-60, pastoralist, no formal, Sool).

Clan was also frequently cited as a reason for the perception of women having intrinsically less value than men. *'Women are always discriminated by the clan, they aren't regarded at all and the clan don't deem them important, it is men who benefit from the clan'* (female, 18–30, student, university, Togdheer).

The prevailing social attitudes articulated by our

respondents were differentiated in terms of latitude for change or flexibility. There was widespread support for the view that, while women could take on roles that were traditionally the preserve of men (albeit sometimes only with grudging social acceptance), there is much less room for the reverse.

> *If a man does work considered to be the preserve of women, people used to ask if he is a woman, because they are teasing him.*
>
> *Q: But the woman who does the work which men do, they will not tease her?*
>
> *A: No, never!* (female, 41–50, civil society, secondary, Awdal).

While few questioned the ubiquity of these established gender traits or roles, not all were satisfied that these attitudes are justified either religiously or socially. Some bemoaned the lack of change. Respondents who were explicit in adopting more critical perspectives were not amongst the majority, but did include both men and women of differing ages.

> *I believe that everyone agrees with me that a woman can offer more than a man can offer and every man agrees with that but men's big ego won't let them give women this simple recognition. Women are more honest and more committed to their responsibilities for the family and the community* (female 18–30, student, university, Togdheer).
>
> *It seems we are still living in the Dark Ages and that we hold many similarities with the Arabs in the Dark Ages where women were deemed valueless and unworthy* (male, 51–60, civil society, university, Togdheer).

How do identities contribute to violence against women and girls?

This perception that men are considered to be more decisive than women was matched with the perception that men are more prone to violence. '*Men are naturally less kind than women ... some are naturally born to be more violent*' (male, Awdal).

As explained in the Background section (p. 21), customary traditions contain major roles for women in times of conflict and peace-building, including as go-betweens, in negotiated agreements, through marriage and similar. However, all of these roles are based on the distinctiveness of female identity rather than on equality or equivalence. Men could not, by definition, play those roles.

> *In Sheekh district they agreed that women had to be exchanged for marriage and that ended the conflict [...] in the conflict I [as a woman] could go places that my brother couldn't* (female 41–50, politician, university, Saaxil).
>
> *[When] paying compensation to the tribe of a murdered man, men alone can settle that type of decision. [...] Women might have had a big part to play behind the scenes by giving a lot of advice and actually contributing to the fundraising of the compensation money, but they won't be allowed to be part of the actual negotiations between the two clans* (male 51–60, private sector, university, Maroodi Jeex).

While gender identities, and consequently also roles, are considered to be predetermined and fundamentally different, when asked who tends to be most prone to violence, most did not refer to the 'natural' proclivities of men in that respect. The more common responses focused more narrowly on four causes:

1. Unemployment, leading to idleness, and especially amongst young men
2. Lack of 'awareness', which was frequently equated with a low level of respect for women
3. Being single, with a strong and sometimes explicit reference to consequent sexual frustration
4. Drugs (including *qaad* and alcohol) or mental illness.

> *What causes him [to commit rape] is being single. While he doesn't have a job, suppose if he got married and created a job for himself, he might not rape a girl. [...] if you grow up with a violent family, like his mother and father used to fight, that can make him behave badly [...] lack of awareness in schools, if that topic [that violence against women and girls is bad] had been added to their subjects at school, even though he didn't learn it at home, he could get it from his teacher [...] that is the three causes* (female, 41–50, secondary, civil society, Awdal).
>
> *Q: Do you think all violent men are unemployed?*
>
> *A: When you see the jails most of the violent criminals are youths, especially those jailed for rape. 80 per cent are youths and there could be insane or drugged individuals* (female, 41–50, private sector, no formal, Awdal).

> *Violence against women isn't as widespread as it used to be but that is one way that it could be stopped. Those men are influenced by Satan and it is Allah who can help them. Men have no money and when they get indebted or owe money to someone they will even start to steal the livestock that women have reared for so long, and we refuse to let them do so, which causes violence itself* (female, 51–60, pastoralist, no formal, Sool).

> *Drinking liquor or wine, consuming* qaad *and abusing other drugs can put men in an unstable state of mind, which could actually make them more aggressive in behaviour* (female, Sanaag).

> *Q: Who is responsible for violence?*

> *A: Men, if they were responsible enough nothing would go wrong, but I believe now most of them are high on* qaad*, when they chew* qaad *they can kill, they can steal, and can insult people* (female, 41–50, civil society, university, Togdheer).

Understandings of violence against women and girls

While physical assaults, including rape and beatings, were generally acknowledged as gender-based violence, most respondents were quick to offer much broader definitions. One, when asked to define violence against women and girls, included:

> *rape, FGM, beating of women [...], denial of their rights such as denial of their participation in politics and parliament. There are also other violations which we must not forget, such as denial of their inheritance, forcing them to do what they don't like such as marrying them to men they don't like in order to get wealth from other families, which is against Islam (male, 31–40, educational, university, Togdheer).*

Reflecting a significant rise in youth gang activity in recent years, and particularly in Hargeysa, a number of respondents commented on gang rape. '*Violence against women has increased and has taken on a whole different face. Before it was rape between two, a victim and a perpetrator, but now it is a group thing, which is so scary. A group like five men against one woman and it is more a gang rape*' (female, Maroodi Jeex). '*There were 300 gang rapes in one of those years and nobody is talking about it*' (female, 31–40, private sector, university, Maroodi Jeex).

Some felt that the issue was being overemphasised, though: *'A few rape cases by youth or gangs and thieves is normal and happens all over the world: in Europe, USA and Africa. This shouldn't be explained as if it means there is insecurity [in Somaliland]'* (male, Sanaag).

There was fairly wide agreement amongst men and women of all ages and in all areas that FGM does amount to gender-based violence. A senior police officer, for example, felt that '*female genital mutilation is also a violation which isn't in line with Islamic religion and is harmful for young girls who are forced and tortured. They don't leave her alone: even if she cries she will not be released till they cut her organs*' (male, 41–50, government official, secondary, Sool). However, others felt that FGM is a less serious or unacceptable form of violence. '*FGM is not as bad as this [rape]. I mean, with FGM, I don't know, but I can't compare it [with rape]*' (female, 31–40, private sector, university, Maroodi Jeex). In one case, a respondent was explicit in equating the practice of FGM with a reduction in gender-based violence: '*I believe [violence] has increased. In the past, women were able to move anywhere, but now girls aren't circumcised. Therefore the youth of today and yesterday aren't the same. The youth were better in the past. Only camel herders used to rape girls rarely*' (male, Sanaag). While few were as frank about such views, there was a tendency to agree that FGM as a practice is in decline, with one person noting that '*FGM isn't practised in urban places, whereas a majority of girls in rural areas undergo FGM, which is sexual abuse*' (female, 41–50, private sector, university, Awdal).

Some respondents included a variety of forms of inequality as violence, including a lack of access to education and justice.

> *Girls are excluded from education and other developments. Such things are common violations against women and girls. Also, the voice of women isn't considered and their rights aren't given* (male, government official, Sanaag).

> *There are families whose mother works in the markets and the elder daughter is assigned to do house chores and will not have any education. Such an issue is also personal abuse towards that girl* (female, 41–50, government official, secondary, Awdal).

Many respondents referred to psychological pressure as a form of violence, with a number of respondents referring specifically to inequities in domestic life and in divorce rights.

> *For example, the woman working for her family isn't getting support from her husband and is covering all the costs. And again, the man can*

> *divorce her without giving her the dowry as he will insist that he will not give her a letter of divorce until she agrees to forgive him payment of the dowry [...] that is a big violation of her rights* (female, educational, Sanaag).

There was considerably less agreement on whether domestic violence within the household should be considered unacceptable. Responses on that subject tended to focus on the feeling that the Quran permits a man to beat his wife 'gently' or 'a little' if other remedies are unsuccessful in bringing her into line. References were consistently to a specific translation of the Quranic verse 4:34: 'As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly)' (Dukes, 2011).

There is debate over the instruction to 'beat lightly', including from scholars who do not accept that the original intention was to sanction violence (for example, *Al-Qur'an* 2001:78-79). When respondents mentioned the issue, they did so with acceptance of such Quranic sanctions: '*The Islamic religion states that if the woman doesn't obey her husband and behaves badly, the husband is allowed to beat her slightly for correction and improvement of her conduct*' (female, government official, Sanaag).

Two omissions are worth pointing out. Firstly, few respondents referred specifically to minority groups. One respondent stated that the practice of refusing to allow intermarriage between Gabooye individuals and those of 'noble' clans was a form of gender-based abuse. '*Girls from the Gabooye community aren't allowed to be married except by other Gabooye man as that is considered culturally impermissible, so that is an abuse*' (female, 18–30, private sector, university, Maroodi Jeex). However, generally this was not discussed. Secondly, only a handful of respondents referred to forms of gender-based abuse in which the victims were men, for instance this person described it as a form of extortion:

> *Q: What do women do against men?*
>
> *A: They request a lift and later ask for money. Otherwise, she will tell him, she will accuse him of rape* (female, 18–30, private sector, university, Maroodi Jeex).

Research question 1.6: linkages between inequality and stability

What linkages are there between gender inequality and the stability of the political settlement?

Using a framework drawn from evolutionary biology, Hudson et al (2009) argue that 'lower levels of gender inequality hinder the ability of societies to mobilise for aggression', thus supporting an argument that greater inclusivity of women in the political settlement has a tendency to support greater stability in that settlement (Caprioli, 2005).

Somaliland's case alone is not sufficient to confirm or refute that argument, but the views of respondents do shed light on attitudes towards this issue. In our interview and discussions, understandings of peace and stability tended to be fairly consistent, with respondents referring to the ability to 'sleep freely'. Male respondents tended to emphasise the absence of immediate personal threat: '"*Balaayo hor la qabta ma laha dabo la qabto ma leh", as we say here. Peace means that you can sleep freely at night knowing that no one holds a grudge against you or would take an opportunity to seek revenge from you for something you did to them in the past*' (male, Maroodi Jeex). Female respondents were more inclined to focus on the absence of threat to family members '*Peace means sleeping quietly in the night and living in the day, without constantly worrying if your kids will come home safe or alive*' (female, 41–50, government official, secondary, Awdal).

Some offered more complex responses, in some cases distinguishing between personal security and social stability:

> *I would divide peace into two: personal peace and security and societal peace and security. Personal security is having peace at your home, being on good terms with your spouse, and if you don't have that you can't sleep peacefully at your home. The other one is the security of the community that affects each member of that community* (female, 41–50, civil society, university, Awdal).

If peace was seen as the ability to sleep well, stability was often equated with the existence of essential services, and particularly some system of justice. 'Stability' means that '*people are peaceful and settled, with access to basic services like health, education and other needs. It is a society that has a working justice system, and in which the use of drugs is banned and there is trust amongst the people*' (female, 41–50, civil society, university, Awdal). '*If there is no justice then there will be no peace and security. If we have a good and fair justice system, then I think that every citizen will be a law-abiding citizen*' (male, 41–50 clan leader, no formal, Awdal).

The focus on 'justice' was also picked up with reference to 'rights', with women more likely to make such comments than men, although both genders did refer to rights or justice as essential elements of a peaceful and stable society. For '*a community to live in peace, there must be a government or another system for order, and that system should ensure that everyone gets their rights. So peace is a part of the rights that belong to everyone*' (female, 18–30, civil society, university, Awdal).

A number of people made reference to the ability to move freely as a defining characteristic of a stable and peaceful society, defining instability as the absence of that ability. Insecurity is '*where there is conflict and war with no stability. It can be between two clans where there is fear, and no one can travel or move outside their territory, and their water points aren't shared. That's what I define as insecurity*' (female, government official, Sanaag).

Many respondents drew direct connections between unequal or different male and female roles, and the 'ability of the society to mobilise for violence' (Hudson et al, 2009). Inevitably, though, these attitudes show some diversity, with a significant number expressing the view that one of the major causes of violence and social breakdown in Somaliland today involves youth violence and gangs. While that represents a relatively new form of gender-based violence when considered against the conflict of past years, it is no less based on gender identities than was that past conflict, and also poses some threat to the stability of the political settlement.

> *Currently, violence comes from society. I think the cause is young boys who join gangs and violate women and girls. [...] the cause is that boys lack motivation and are addicted to drugs like* qaad *and cigarettes which stimulate them to commit gang rape and individual rape and abduction* (male, 31–40, educational, university, Maroodi Jeex).

Some invert the gender relationship, suggesting that it is the absence of male role models that promotes violence rather than the presence of women that mitigates violence. Respondents commented that some fathers were 'lost' to *qaad* or to conflict, and were therefore not present to meet their responsibilities to their families. This had resulted in a lack of parental guidance, '*particularly parenting and raising male children has proven to be a challenge, because it is the father who disciplines boys and if there is no father, a mother can't discipline them or teach them manners, they won't listen to her*' (female, 41–50, secondary, Maroodi Jeex). One respondent recounted: '*a mother told me a while back that if her son is expelled from school, it matters very little to his father who usually just says, "Get him back to school yourself or leave him to do whatever he wants". So you see, it is the mother who is increasingly compelled to make all decisions of the children's upbringing*' (male, Maroodi Jeex).

In other cases, respondents laid the blame more generally on day-to-day necessities that prevented the appropriate care of children. '*As economic circumstances worsened, women started to work and go out to the market to provide for their families, but this came at a price. Children are left with no one to mentor them and guide them, so the children have become stubborn; they have developed gang behaviour*' (female, Maroodi Jeex).

While many respondents highlighted the absence of effective parenting as a cause of rising gang violence, some also drew attention to the dual roles played by women in resolving conflict and promoting it. '*A woman can be both a peace-builder and, at the same time, can ignite conflict. Women are a good source for conflict resolution, telling and convincing men to end conflict, but at the same time they rally behind men for conflict, telling them to fight and fight hard in order to defend the clan honour*' (female, 31–40, housewife, primary, Saaxil).

Some noted that peace, while important generally, was of particular significance for women. '*Both women and men love peace [...] but it is most significant for women, because she has more responsibility [...] If conflict happens, she can't run away, she can't produce anything, and she can't sit in the market. She can't get the basic needs for her children, and there will be no one to care for her children*' (female, 41–50, civil society, secondary, Awdal). Consequently, women are seen as having greater incentives to promote peaceful resolution and greater stability.

Many respondents noted the role of the state, and in some cases, clan or communities, in maintaining peace, though some also highlighted the fundamental deficiency of a system that guarantees peace to men but not women. '*Peace allows us to move anywhere. The government or the community might be the ones who ensure it. During the rise of Islam, women were able to travel long distances with their livestock assets, but in our case [now], if a woman can't even walk one kilometre in the city, the peace we have is pointless to the women*' (male, Maroodi Jeex). This highlights the point that 'peace' does not necessarily mean security for women; in reality, insecurity and SGBV often increases for women once a violent conflict is over. Peace is thus gendered as gender inequalities persist and translate into renewed if also altered patterns

of gender-based violence in post-conflict societies, as was also noted with respect to the rise of a male-oriented gang culture in Somaliland.

A few respondents in the eastern regions of Sanaag and Sool drew attention to the deficiencies in the Somaliland state's ability to maintain a peaceful, stable society, though the fundamental cause of the problem was typically considered to lie with clan division. For instance, this female respondent argued that: '*Now Ceerigaabo, where the Somaliland government is present, and Badhan, where the government haven't reached, aren't the same in terms of security. Badhan is better. In Ceerigaabo there is law and order, but no one is respecting it or afraid of the law*' (female, civil servant, Sanaag). Speaking of the same area, another respondent said that: '*In Badhan, there is only one clan and the system of security is based on the clan system, but in Ceerigaabo there are several clans with many resources that can cause conflicts of interest. In the past, only Badhan was peaceful and people didn't flee, while in Ceerigaabo everyone fled to save their lives. That [clan] is the difference*' (male, civil servant, Sanaag). Other respondents in the eastern regions also singled out the interplay between clan and state as undermining security:

> *We are in Sool right now, where there are competing administrations who are vying for control of the region. Somaliland, Puntland and Khaatumo are all controlling parts of this region. They were supposed to be negotiating to resolve their disputes, not fighting each other. You see, there are severe droughts that have hit the country and you know what the officials are doing? They are driving around hundreds and hundreds of cars for campaign interests in drought-stricken villages and regions* (male, 51–60, clan leader, Sool).

These responses show that the clan system underpins the stability of the political settlement – as is the case in so much of Somaliland life.

As will be clear from the preceding discussion, most of the comments we received about peace and stability did not directly address gender roles or inequality. The link was often more indirect: stability affects everyone, though for many respondents, it is more important for women than for men. While some argued that greater inclusion of women in public life would enhance stability, others disagreed. Interestingly, both male and female respondents, often young in age, expressed remarkably conservative views on gender inclusivity:

> *I don't think something terrible will happen if woman are not there, women are a part of men's lives in every aspect, as wife, sister, mother and so on. There is no right that is missing from them, so let them stay in their homes. Why would they want to be out, in fact, when women in the developed countries are returning to their homes?* (male, 18–30, government official, university, Saaxil)

> *I agree with him and it is not good to send women out of their homes for the sake of missing rights. God has put men in control and women should accept that* (female, 31–40, civil society, no formal, Saaxil).

> *I agree: women are good to be wives. We can give them one or two positions as an incentive, but the rest should be at home, because if you look at women who are now part of the system, they become like men and behave like men, and that is not allowed because it is a sin to hear that woman's voice* (female, 31–40, housewife, primary, Saaxil).

The opposing view tended to be that women's active involvement in pushing for peace is a critical component in achieving greater stability. '*The conflict would have continued and anarchy would have been everywhere if women hadn't been involved*' (female, 18–30, civil society, Maroodi Jeex). This accords with the earlier comments on the roles women play in peace-building, which are echoed in research by Siham Rayale (2012) who notes that, despite lobbying for inclusion, women were not formally allowed to participate as full delegates in Somaliland's peace conferences during the 1990s, being granted only observer status. However, they made themselves heard, continuing to lobby the warring parties to sue for peace and suggesting concrete ideas as to how the post-conflict political settlement might look. Rayale (ibid) quotes Anab Omar Ileye, the chair of the women's wing of the Kulmiye party: 'It was women who brought the idea of institutionalising the elders into the government akin to what Americans consider as the Senate or the British House of Lords; an upper house. I was the first to speak about this to a gathering of men'. The same theme was recounted by one of our own researchers:

> *There were times when women pressured men in the peace conferences to broker a peace deal. In the Sheekh conference, women protested against the warring factions and pressured them to reach an agreement. The same in Hargeysa in 1997, [but] women were [only] given an observer status*.

Nonetheless, it is hard to draw a clear conclusion as to whether respondents felt that a more gender-

inclusive settlement would be a more stable one. The contemporary reality that Somaliland women remain largely excluded from formal politics means that there was no real discussion on whether an effectively hypothetical situation in which the political settlement was broadly inclusive from a gendered perspective would be more stable. The closest responses to this were those outlined in this section, in which many, but not all, argued that women can and have played a vital role in securing the level of security and stability that Somaliland has enjoyed since 1997.

However, there is division over whether greater inclusivity would, in itself, be welcome: whilst some of our respondents argued vociferously that the exclusion of women is unacceptable, many others argued that it would contravene elements of Somali identity or Islamic teaching. The difficulty lies in causally linking those positions with perceptions of stability in a hypothetical context.

In the final analysis, though, there is ample evidence to support our argument about the current political settlement. Contemporary Somaliland stability is underpinned by clan structures, which depend on a mutually reinforcing set of power relationships that are, in themselves, fundamentally unequal in gender terms. The suggestion by scholars such as Hudson et al (2005) and Caprioli (2005) that greater inclusivity could lead to greater long-term stability may still be true, as there is no guarantee that the stability of the Somaliland situation is sustainable in the long term. At the same time, the data gathered in this research highlights the difficulty in moving from a situation in which women are marginalised to one that is more inclusive, given that the transition must surely involve societal change that has the potential itself to promote conflict.

Objective 2: structural and institutional barriers

> **OBJECTIVE 2:** To identify the structural and institutional barriers to women's increased sociopolitical participation and to reduced levels of violence against women and girls, and thereby to identify ways in which development interventions can be more effective in enhancing the inclusiveness and stability of the political settlement in Somaliland.
>
> This will include a gender-aware analysis of relevant institutions and policies, the extent to which they are aligned with the political settlement, and how the international community and the Government of Somaliland could contribute to removing some of these barriers through improved policies and practice to ensure more equitable development.

As with the first objective, the analysis that follows is addressed under the heading of each of the four research questions attached to the objective.

Research question 2.1: policies and programmes

> *In what ways have recent government and donor-funded or -supported development interventions (policies and programmes) in Somaliland deliberately or unintentionally supported, undermined or sought to change gender identities and roles in the post-1997 political settlement?*

Over the past 20 years, the Somaliland government and foreign donors have introduced a number of gender equality strategies that are also widely used internationally to change institutions. One of these strategies is institutional 'layering' (Waylen, 2014) which, in the Somaliland context, has consisted of the creation of a 10-people Gender Unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) and gender focal points in line ministries, as well as the development of a National Gender Policy to facilitate gender mainstreaming. National women's rights umbrellas like Nagaad, supported by INGOs, have also been advocating for a women's quota in parliament, albeit unsuccessfully to date. The extent to which these strategies can be successful is highly context-specific and they could be criticised for being 'integrationist' as they cannot 'fundamentally re-gender masculinist institutions' (Waylen, 2014:219).

Some local and international NGOs have sought to change gender identities and roles through deliberate gender-equality programming focusing on women's leadership and political participation, while others have integrated gender-awareness and equality concerns into sector-specific programmes which aim to achieve the broader development goals related to health, livelihoods or education that are outlined in the National Gender Policy and National Gender Action Plan discussed below.

This section aims to describe the overall trends and to assess how these interventions may have supported, undermined or sought to change gender identities and roles. We find that their outcomes have been contradictory. While some interventions have supported existing gender identities and roles, others have sought to change them, while others unintentionally undermined gender role changes. As there are a large number of policies and sectors we could look at, we here particularly focus on interventions that aim to promote women's strategic gender needs in terms of political participation and decision-making, while also paying some attention to SGBV and access to justice.

It is important to mention at the start that both donors and the Somaliland government have given no attention to changing men's gender roles and identities in any of the work that follows. This is a major oversight, as men are the main perpetrators of gender-based violence, which is intricately linked with how masculinities are understood and existing gender power relations are exercised in Somaliland.

The legal framework for women's participation and recent legal initiatives

The 2001 Constitution of Somaliland was overwhelmingly endorsed in a public referendum held on 31 May 2001. Although Somaliland has not yet ratified international human rights instruments, these are recognised by the Constitution. Article 22 grants women equal rights to political participation, to form political parties and to be nominated by their political parties to vie for any political leadership seat.[1] Article 21.2 guarantees equal participation of women and men in the electoral process, to vote and to be elected (to a public office). However, Article 36.1 clarifies that 'the rights, freedoms and duties laid down in the Constitution are to be enjoyed by men and women, save for matters which are specifically ordained in Islamic Sharia' (Republic of Somaliland, 2000). This tends to be commonly interpreted in such a way that women should not hold the highest positions such

[1] Article 22 states that 'every citizen shall have the right to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural affairs in accordance with the laws and the Constitution.'

as president or judge, but can hold other political positions. Women did not participate in the drafting process, as women's organisations were relatively nascent at the time and unsure how to engage. They also lacked external support to do so (personal correspondence with A. Warsame, 20 January 2016). No grassroots consultations were undertaken on the content of the various versions of the Constitution prior to its adoption. Their came from previously held peacemaking conferences that were attended by all clans of Somaliland, though women were only allowed as observers. It is unclear to what extent women were able to influence the content of the Constitution.

How are national-level policy and legal interventions seeking to change gender identities?

The Reserved Seats for Women & Excluded Minority Groups Bill was the result of many years of lobbying by women's rights networks such as Nagaad, supported by UNDP and other INGOs, to change women's traditional gender roles and to increase their formal political participation through a 25 per cent quota for women at all levels of government. In 2007, the Guurti rejected a previous bill requiring that the first five people on proportional lists be of different genders on the basis that the Constitution does not endorse a quota for 'special groups'. After further lobbying by Nagaad, the Guurti agreed to a quota in principle, but recommended a wider national consultation on the issue. A consultative committee was finally appointed in 2011 to conduct that consultation, and later that year, they made recommendations to the Social Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives (Yusuf, 2012). Partially on the basis of those recommendations, and referring to Article 22.a of the Constitution, the committee passed by simple majority a motion to reserve seats for women and minority clans in local council elections. They set a 15 per cent quota for women in local councils, a 10 per cent quota in the House of Representatives, and a 7 per cent quota in the Guurti, if it were to become an elected body,[2] encapsulated in the Reserved Seats for Women & Excluded Minority Groups Bill. This was brought before the House of Representatives in July 2012, who simply opted to omit it from their legislative agenda. As a result, and despite continuous lobbying by WROs to enact the bill into law, no progress has been made since.

Nevertheless, despite these obstacles, some progress has been made. In the November 2012 local council elections 10 women (of 142 who contested seats) were voted in as local councillors (of a total of 379). While the number of women compared to that of men remains very low, this represented a 400 per cent increase in the number of elected female councillors (Elder and Nicoll, 2013:3). However, Nagaad's 2010 call on the president to establish a Women's Commission has fallen on deaf ears to date (Nagaad, 2010).

The Sexual Offences Bill has suffered a similar fate to the Reserved Seats for Women & Excluded Minority Groups Bill. It was introduced following pressure from WROs but has met with resistance from religious leaders and other sectors. It continues to be passed back and forth between parliament and the Guurti (and religious leaders) without becoming law. In the process, it has been watered down so much it has become almost meaningless. For example, it excludes domestic violence and forced marriage (see page 46 for more details). The fact that little progress has been made with these bills highlights political resistance by the Somaliland male-dominated politico-religious elite to implement policies that promote women's rights and protection. We shall return to some of the factors for this later.

The Somaliland National Gender Policy was first introduced in 2009 by the Somaliland Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development (now MoLSA) as part of a wider 'reconstruction development framework', with funding and technical support from UNDP Somaliland. The first draft was prepared by a Ugandan gender and legal consultant on behalf of UNDP, with input from national consultants and MoLSA staff (Hussein-Ismail, 2013:11; Tungaraza, 2010:45). As it was donor-funded and many sections appear to have simply been 'cut and pasted' from similar documents, it was considered 'externally' developed. In order to improve local ownership of the process, Somali civil society organisations asked for a local consultation process on the draft. This happened and consultation meetings and policy-dialogue workshops were held with women's groups, national stakeholders and partners.

The policy includes five thematic priority areas: poverty reduction and economic empowerment (livelihoods), education and training, health and reproductive health, political participation and decision-making, and gender-based violence (MoLSA, 2011). The section on women's political participation and decision-making is perhaps the most deliberate attempt to change gender roles in the document. In 2012, the policy was further elaborated in a National Gender Action Plan that provides strategies and

[2] Activists who had been so important in pushing for the agreement were unhappy with the final proposed quotas. See 'Invited spaces' on page 38.

activities for implementation, including indicators and timeframes but without a budget (MoLSA, 2012). MoLSA is the leading ministry on gender affairs in Somaliland and has responsibility for coordinating with other ministries and NGOs to implement the gender policy.

Awareness of the policy, and opinions on implementation progress, vary greatly. Many NGOs, which seem to have a relatively high level of awareness of its existence and content, refer to the fact that the gender policy, though in existence, is not being driven by line ministries and not being implemented. These ministries are therefore designing their own programmes to contribute to achieving the policy's thematic objectives in the different sectors, though with little ministerial input. It is unclear to what extent the specific activities outlined in the National Gender Action Plan are being taken forward or monitored by MoLSA. While severe delays in implementation seem to have occurred between 2009 and now, MoLSA is reportedly planning to '*implement the policy by drafting provincial level action plans that would be disseminated and implemented at local village level*' (female, government official, Sanaag).

Other implementation challenges include the lack of resources (both financial and human), a lack of capacity to coordinate all stakeholders and monitor implementation, and institutional discontinuity due to frequent ministerial reshuffles within MoLSA. MoLSA staff stated that convincing other line ministries, such as health and education, to play their part in effective implementation of the policy and plan was their principal challenge, as other line ministries lacked ownership and understanding of their roles and responsibilities in this regard. There also appears to be a lack of collaboration between MoLSA and civil society organisations (CSOs), and amongst CSOs themselves, regarding implementation, despite the fact that there is a Gender Cluster Group in MoLSA that meets regularly and is in charge of monitoring and implementation of the policy.

This is echoed by the director of a national NGO:

> *As far as I know the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is the only party that is involved with any effort of implementing this policy. I see no other party who is even trying to implement this policy, so the minister is there trying to implement this policy but all other stakeholders or concerned institutions aren't following suit. One of those stakeholders is the Ministry of Health, who have a role to play in the implementation of this policy as family health is part of the Gender policy, but maybe all that the Ministry of Health has managed to accomplish is shelve the policy since the day it received the copy of the policy. I believe that referring to this policy in writing proposals to be submitted to the donors is the only time most of the stakeholder institutions remember this policy.*

Implementation of the National Gender Policy is supposed to be facilitated by ministerial gender focal points and it is not clear how effective they are or can be, as they seem to have little institutional support from their ministries. But there is also a lack of political leadership as, according to respondents, the minister of MoLSA shows little commitment to implementing the plan.

> *Those policies haven't been implemented as they were expected to and I believe the reason for that has a lot to do with the fact that the ministers who have ruled the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs are and have always been men and I believe had there been women ministers at MoLSA there would have been better enforcement of those gender policies and laws because those policies affect women more and I think what is needed is the reform and transformation of those gender-related policies* (female, government official, Maroodi Jeex).

This lack of political will can be explained by the way that institutions in Somaliland are gendered: they are masculinist and serve to promote the interests of the men who are in charge of them. Many government officials either are not interested in changing the status quo or do not consider the objectives of the National Gender Policy high on their list of priorities. Another challenge to implementation is the fact that the policy and action plan are perceived to be donor-driven, at least by those who hold positions with the power to allocate funds and implement policies:

> *I think the biggest problem is drafting and developing a policy with donor funds, then it is left there at the desks of government officials, nobody implements it. We develop a policy to be executed, not left on shelves and desks in government offices. Donors should have more monitoring and supervision mechanisms: it is only then I think the policy will be executed* (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

This is compounded by the fact that the National Gender Policy has 'had very little space to define its own priorities' (Hussein-Ismail, 2013:15) in terms of discourse and local realities, as it was developed in a top-down fashion by UNDP within a framework of international and regional human rights norms. It is open for discussion whether taking into account the social-cultural and religious constraints upon women's

rights in Somaliland would have led to a higher level of local ownership and more effective implementation.

A major gap in the policy is that it is devised with the understanding that 'gender equals women'. Despite the fact that men are mentioned here and there, men's gender roles or identities, which can hamper their life experiences due to violent masculinities, are not taken into account. Neither are men considered to be victims of violence, which remains taboo as it does not fit within commonly perceived masculine identities. The impact of *qaad* chewing, which in itself appears to be a symptom of insecure masculinity on the part of men who are unable to fulfil traditional gender roles as breadwinners, is also ignored. The invisibility of men's gender needs in the National Gender Policy shows that there has been no thinking outside the box on gender policy at the national level.

How have programmatic interventions by NGOs supported, sought to change or undermined gender roles and identities?

A large number of NGOs in Somaliland, both national and international, are working towards the objectives outlined in the National Gender Policy. These include supporting women's livelihoods through loans to support commodity trading or village savings groups, literacy training, water provision, health, political participation, education, and addressing SGBV, in both urban and rural areas. While some of these initiatives focus more on improving women's lives within their traditional gender roles by supporting health centres and water projects, others specifically aim to encourage women to participate in decision-making, both at local and national levels. But there is no clear-cut division between the two. Projects that, on the surface, appear to support women in their existing gender roles can also contribute to changes in thinking and practice if they integrate elements of women's political empowerment:

> *Some women who benefitted from illiteracy and loan programmes urge men and become members of the village development committee despite the reluctance of men in including woman in the VDC [village development committee] as we encourage them* (female, civil society, Awdal).

Positive outcomes appear to have been achieved in projects dealing with women's existing gender roles, of which respondents seemed aware: '*A poor woman whose husband is a* qaad *eater and doesn't support the family gets this opportunity and as a result of the income and trade sends her children to school'* (female, civil society, Awdal). Livelihoods projects are particularly well received. Even though some people are not happy with projects focusing solely on women, many recognise that whatever helps the community is good: '*The majority of community members believe that women should be given the chance to be supported and women will only use what she gains in her house and family. One strategy used to win over the men to include women on village committees has been to refer to women's strengths such as being better at forming and managing credit associations and saving than men'* (female, civil society, Awdal). This seems to receive a positive response. The Ministry of Water Resources has also included women on water committees so they now participate in water planning that determines the location of wells. '*This has had a very positive impact on the time women spend every day fetching water as they need to walk a shorter distance and experience fewer cases of sexual harassment on the way'* (female, government official, Maroodi Jeex).

There are also positive examples of change at the local council level, though this seems to be due as much to human agency as to the structures that have been set up, such as the gender section of the Social Affairs Committee at Borama city council. The female local councillor there was able to influence policies and plans from a gender lens*: 'We always look at […] where benefits for women may come from in projects. I always present this in council meetings and point out the benefits women may gain from it since I represent women in the council'* (female, civil society, Awdal). Her intervention changed the perception of women's gendered work roles, as she *'convinced everyone that women should participate alongside men on an equal basis'* in a project to supplement the income of low-income families. This project, which involved laying stones in roads for which *'initially only men were needed and trained, now incorporates as many women as men'* (ibid). We tentatively suggest that it is easier to change gender roles and there is less resistance by men when it comes to issues of work and bringing in an income.

There has also been some progress in projects that explicitly aim to address strategic gender needs, such as promoting women's political participation (WPP) at the local level. Here, promoting WPP is part of more comprehensive strategies that also include economic empowerment and education. This makes a lot of sense, as the needs of women are great due to high levels of poverty, and programmes need to be relevant to their needs. However, as such programmes aim to change gender power relations and entrenched social norms, they are met with more resistance, particularly when it comes to national-level policy change.

There have been numerous initiatives to get women to vote for each other, which first required a change in

women's understanding that politics has something to do with them, too. A key programme has been from ActionAid, which supports 53 women's coalitions of between 30 to 70 grassroots women in three regions (Maroodi Jeex, Sanaag and Togdheer) who work collectively towards improving women's livelihoods, stopping gender-based violence and advancing their leadership skills and political aspirations. This has had some tangible outcomes, as four of the 10 women who were elected as female councillors in the 2012 elections had been supported by the women's coalitions within their constituency (personal correspondence with Somaliland country director, January 2017).

> *The [ActionAid] programme's biggest impact was that women understood that politics is not forbidden from them, that they have as much at stake as men in politics. One of the biggest successes the programme had was one when women were elected to the local council of Gabiley. Observers told us that women voted for them, local women organisations who were part of the programme voted for them. One of the campaign slogans included don't vote for a man where you have the chance to vote for a woman. Women understanding their right of electing who they want to and that they could be elected was maybe the biggest visible impact of the programme* (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

Some NGO programmes aim to raise gender awareness by making men more aware of the importance of including women, though this seems to be couched in a developmental perspective. For example, one NGO stated that they conduct health and gender awareness programmes and workshops for men and women in villages, informing them that the community will not develop if they ignore gender roles. '*We give examples like when you go to the village and meet only with men who are answering for the needs of women, and we encourage women to participate in meetings and public gatherings to answer about their needs and raise their voices*' (female, civil society, Awdal). District-level, neighbourhood and village development committees appear to have been a vehicle to bring in women's voices and issues. Overall, it appears that NGOs have realised that it is important to involve men more in community programmes to ensure they achieve their objectives. National-level interventions, such as conferences, seem to have focused more on strengthening women's rights with little involvement of men. Women-only spaces are necessary to strategise and build solidarity and confidence. It may also be challenging to get men interested in a subject perceived to be 'about women', but to achieve policy change, men need to be involved at the highest levels as they have the power (see our analysis of Somaliland's power structures on page 64).

While many NGOs and government agencies such as MoLSA encourage women to participate, it remains unclear to what extent programmes addressing women's practical gender needs also explicitly aim to change women's perceptions of their strategic gender needs. This ambiguity is underlined by the following quotes by civil servants and local NGO staff in Ceerigaabo:

> *I think the Gender Policy by the ministry has reaped some fruit: education and water services have been improved and that in turn led to bettering and improving women's lives* (male, Sanaag).

> *The National Gender Policy is written and is at the ministry, but women's fair political share and representation are missing. Men are not yet ready to give women the empowerment they deserve* (female, Sanaag).

It is evident from the discussion above that donor programmes have helped to increase the number of women employed in public institutions. In addition to the female local councillors, three women now work for the Attorney General after advocacy from donor UNDP. Nonetheless, the question of sustainability remains open – what happens when these programmes end?

How is progress being undermined?

Government and men

> *Most policies to do with women are rejected because it's men making the decisions* (female, politician, Awdal).

As already mentioned in the section on the National Gender Policy (pages 46-47), progress on women's inclusion and WPP can be undermined in a number of ways and by numerous actors for different reasons. Governmental commitment to the implementation of the policies mentioned above is questionable as there has been little progress to date. The women's quota bill was rejected despite earlier campaign promises made in 2010 by the current ruling party to establish a 25 per cent quota for female candidates in subsequent elections. In Somaliland, there are powerful forces against the electoral quota for women that even the president is not able to overcome. Public appeals by President Silaanyo in 2013 to elected officials to reconsider their position and pass the quota law have not borne fruit to date. Women's

rights activists whom we interviewed felt that while the president had started with a commitment to the gender equality agenda, the fact that 'he wanted to please the clan' did not allow him to translate this into reality.

There are numerous reasons as to why male parliamentarians continue to reject the Reserved Seats for Women & Excluded Minority Groups Bill. These are mainly down to fear of losing power or the income that comes with being a parliamentarian, though officially it is couched in the language of 'culture' and 'tradition' using euphemisms such as 'politics is no place for women (and may corrupt them)' or 'women are not natural leaders like men'.

> *When the President submitted his proposal for a women's quota, the parliament rejected it because of their personal interest. Male parliamentarians fear that they might lose their seats to women if a quota is passed* (female, Awdal).

> *The House of Representatives passed the law, but when it came to the elders, they blocked it. The last reason they gave was, the House of Representatives has 82 members, and because there are several clans who feel that they have a small number and they said if women come in, as if women can't have the right […] to be in decision-making. They said that there is a need to increase but then they said this is impossible now. There are so many different reasons and this is just one of them passed* (female, 31-40, private sector, Maroodi Jeex).

It is not only at the national level that the lack of commitment to women's empowerment is undermining change. According to one respondent, individuals working for MoLSA diverted funds allocated to women's empowerment for their own gain, which they were able to do as there was little commitment towards these programmes:

> *Some cases have been discovered while others were not, but in all those cases funds unfortunately ended up in the hands of officials who were never committed to seeing changes happen for women, so they either embezzled the funds or spent them poorly. Those who are running the ministry at its different levels don't believe in those programmes at all, for them it is a mere project to be completed, nothing more* (male, Togdheer).

Many of the above examples show that men with the power to make a change do not have the 'political will' or incentive to do so because of self-interest.

At the same time it is unlikely that the few women in ministerial positions (less than 8 per cent) will be able to promote women's rights as they are hugely outnumbered. Men's resistance to give women more power may also come from a desire to defend and protect their masculine political spaces, which have been shrinking in the economic area as women have been taking on more and more of men's breadwinning roles since the end of the war, as explored earlier in this report.

Donors: foreign agendas?

It seems clear from the above discussion that gender is not seen as a national priority. Somaliland's national priorities are peace and security, to which a large amount of the national budget is allocated. Gender, meanwhile, is very much seen as a donor-driven agenda.

As with government officials, donors have also played their part in undermining change in gender identities and roles, though perhaps in a more indirect way. For example, their programme priorities may not be realistic or sensitive to the Somaliland context, leading to lacklustre (and perhaps irrelevant) implementation, as this respondent suggests:

> *the funding is more oriented to the donor needs rather than the needs on the ground and it is usually hard to implement those programmes on the ground so you know there is a gap between the proposals that got the grant and what is actually implemented […] The challenge of these programmes is always: are they the ones that actually cover the needs of these community? You see the proposals and the funding are always managed by people who have no knowledge of Somalis or the Somali context and the donors are unwilling to invest the time that is needed in getting the right people to manage this funding* (female, Maroodi Jeex).

A similar view was expressed by a local NGO worker in Hargeysa: *'It is so much better to do policy affecting community and work up through structures, unfortunately it is the other way round'* (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

The approaches used by donors advertising their programmes for women's empowerment have been self-defeating at times. Huge billboards erected on Hargeysa's main roads display donor logos and inform the public in English about the programme's priorities. This can easily provide conservative voices with ammunition to renounce these programmes as 'foreign agendas' imposed on Somali culture, and

to brand WROs as their agents. This accusation of Western cultural interference is frequently used by those aiming to maintain the status quo to block change. This means that change needs to be brought about in a more subtle manner, by reclaiming interventions as local. This may be achieved by, for example, grounding messaging in pro-women's rights Islamic values and ethics.

Development (Gender Equality) Act, for example, aims to provide development assistance 'that is likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender' (UK Government, 2014). While the UK Department for International Development (DFID)'s commitment to promoting gender equality is laudable and has been welcomed by women's rights NGOs in

Photo 4: 'To educate a girl is to educate a nation' billboard. *Source: © Michael Walls, Hargeysa, 2016.*

Donor requirements can also make it difficult for women who are not highly educated to access funds for small and medium-sized enterprises, as this respondent argues: '*while most donor funding seems to concentrate at the micro-level and small loans, women who have moved beyond that stage have their applications rejected due to a complicated application process*' (female, 31–40, university, private sector, Maroodi Jeex). This shows that donors are not pushing the boundaries of women's perceived gender roles by appearing to consider women as recipients of small rather than big loans.

Many local NGO respondents felt that donors had the biggest influence on policy implementation, as they have the financial resources to do so. While this may be the case in setting agendas (as outlined above) this is not necessarily corroborated at policy level as the two bills that have been supported by donors and pushed by national NGOs mentioned above have not been passed into law.

There is an inherent trade-off between donors promoting international human rights such as women's rights and gender equality, and this being perceived as a 'foreign imposition' in a conservative context such as Somaliland. The UK International

Somaliland, implementation of this commitment on the ground may face challenges and resistance by those who disagree with the principle.

The short-term project-based nature of funding, along with a dependency on external donors, also undermines the success of projects working to change gender roles and identities, as such approaches require lengthy time-frames if they are to support sustained change.

> *I think the UN support and work with the Ministry of Justice, including the police, and again nothing sustainable or organic is going on. I remember there was the establishment of women and child desks within the police stations. They don't work, I never see them [when] I visit police stations, and there are so many incidences of violence, but there is no follow-up. I think ideally they should [be there] but there is no social change, this is not sustainable* (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

It is not clear whether the Somaliland government would prioritise promoting this kind of work if it was left to them. One respondent, referring to woman and child units in police stations, intended to address

VAWG, said: '*But they only stayed while we were funding. Once the funding stopped everything fell apart. We brought in forensic doctors to train the police and the doctors and they were brought in from the UK. So it was more or less an international community thing […] I am not really sure exactly how it is still funded and how it is still working'* (female, university, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

According to MoLSA staff, the ministry is not receiving any financial support from the government to implement the National Gender Action Plan, including the pillar on SGBV. This shows that gender mainstreaming is not on the government's agenda; rather, they leave it to donors to fund, which in turn may perpetuate the perception that gender inclusion is an externally driven issue.

Research question 2.2: positive and negative consequences

In what ways has interaction with the gendered political settlement assisted or hampered the achievement of agreed development goals? Were there significant positive or negative unintended consequences?

> Paying close attention to seemingly liberal but de facto retrograde gendered pacts producing political settlements that ill-serve women in the spheres of reproductive rights, the regulation of violence, access to economic goods on equal terms and the advancement of both substantive end procedural equality for women are markers of our route to gender benchmarking political settlements (Ní Aoláin, 2016).

The above quotation highlights the specific aspects that we would expect to be considered in a political settlement that does not ignore women's interests. These include not only substantive and procedural equality for women such as representation and influence over political decision-making processes, but also reproductive rights, the regulation of violence and equal access to economic goods.

The previous sections of this report have illustrated how the Somaliland-gendered political settlement is based on male superiority, female subordination and, most importantly, a patriarchal clan-based system underpinned by patronage networks. This system excludes women from participation in political decision-making, resource allocation and higher-level jobs in the economy, hampering the achievement of agreed development goals. In Somaliland, most positions of power are occupied by men, who justify their continued dominance in these positions with reference to cultural, religious and social norms. Men have little incentive for change, as they perceive women's empowerment as a zero-sum game in which they would lose power commensurate to the level in which women would gain it. Due to the nature of the political settlement in Somaliland, we can therefore expect an inherent tension between achieving the agreed development goals of national policies, and maintaining the political settlement. Achieving these goals would require the government and other actors to take gender discrimination seriously and address some of the structural challenges that continue to undermine women's rights and equality, and which lead to women's continued poverty and exclusion.

This section analyses how the interaction of different actors with the gendered political settlement in Somaliland has assisted or hampered the achievement of Somaliland's stated development goals. Interaction with the gendered political settlement can potentially assist or hamper the achievement of agreed development goals, as those with power are responsible for the allocation and distribution of resources via social networks, formal and informal institutions such as the clan, or patronage networks. For example, '*when livestock is provided by NGOs for poor families, chiefs of clans and big men take the biggest share while poor families of widows and children are not given anything'* (female, government official, Sanaag).

We focus here on the goals that are of particular relevance to the topic of this research – women's political participation and SGBV – by focusing on a select number of policies that contain these goals, such as the Somaliland National Gender Policy and the Somaliland National Development Plan. Both of these goals are also directly linked to specific targets under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on 'Gender Equality' agreed on by the United Nations in 2015 (UN General Assembly, 2015). Target 5.2 of SDG 5 commits governments to 'eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres'. Target 5.5 asks governments to 'ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life'. Target 5.9 asks governments to 'adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.'[3] As Somalia is

[3] As the Somaliland NDP includes a commitment toward the Millennium Development Goals (which expired in 2015), this commitment is naturally carried forward into implementation of the SDGs, the follow-up mechanism.

one of only seven countries that has not ratified the UN women's bill of rights (CEDAW),[4] it is unclear to what extent Somaliland is bound by it. In terms of the actors, we focus on the Somaliland political and religious elite, donors and INGOs, and Somali women's rights organisations.

Gender-specific content and goals of Somaliland's development policies

Somaliland's five-year National Development Plan (NDP) was developed by the Ministry of National Planning and Development (MoNPD) with technical support from UNDP (MoNPD, 2012). Its overarching aim is to achieve rapid economic development and growth, sustainable development, and poverty reduction in line with Vision 2030 and the Millennium Development Goals.[5] The NDP states that the government of Somaliland is committed to implementing the national gender policy, including the objectives: 'to eliminate gender inequalities; mainstream women's empowerment in all sectors of development; and [to] promote women's equal access to participation and decision-making in [the] social, economic and political life of the nation' (MoNPD, 2012:276).

The NDP recognises that it is important to consolidate and strengthen advances already made in terms of forging democratic institutions by, amongst other approaches, mainstreaming women's political, economic and social participation (ibid: 273). The NDP identifies a challenge to this commitment in the form of the underrepresentation of women in parliament. This is supposed to be addressed by developing policies 'to increase the proportion of seats held by women and marginalised groups' in the national parliament (ibid: 211). The 'good governance' section also considers the 'gender imbalance in public institutions' as a key challenge that needs to be addressed in order to achieve 'good, corrupt free government' (ibid: 209). According to the NDP, women make up between 20 and 30 per cent of the government's civilian workforce, but they are hardly represented in the top hierarchy of the civil service: all general directors are men, and only 13 out of 285 department directors are women (ibid: 271). Another area that specifically mentions women's roles in public institutions is the justice sector section, which recognises the importance of women's participation in the justice system and women's equal access to justice.

A strategic objective of the NDP is 'improved public service delivery and the access of marginalised groups to public service, and to introduce affirmative action for women and disadvantaged groups in the public sector' (ibid:193). However, this commitment remains at the level of ambition since the detailed plan that followed the NDP does not specify or cost any specific actions to achieve this objective.

Government progress and hindering factors

Despite the fact that the NDP states that the government will introduce affirmative action in parliament and the public sector, little, if any, progress has been made since 2011 when the plan was written. This is all the more surprising as two bills were drafted and put before parliament since then – the Reserved Seats for Women & Excluded Minority Groups Bill and the Sexual Offences Bill (see page 46) – that aim to address two of the areas outlined in the NDP: access to justice and women's representation in parliament. This shows the lack of political will for taking policies forward that further the interests of women. Rather, Somaliland power-holders appear to seek to preserve the current political settlement based on male-dominated clan politics.

> *Although I work with the National Development Program, I don't think addressing women's issues takes a priority […] I have been part of several committees such as the planning committee and the economic committee and no woman was included in those committees. I think if women were not part of those committees then how could they be a priority for the National Development Plan? And the answer is: I don't think they are* (male, government official, Togdheer).

As already mentioned, whilst 140 women ran in the local council elections of November 2012, only 10 were successful, taking up a mere 2.6 per cent of the available positions. Despite the participation of highly educated women with involvement in the political sphere, civil society and business, and the fact that Hargeysa is home to many successful, educated women, not one woman was elected in Hargeysa – another indicator of the scale of the struggle of women's political participation.

The above examples show that policymakers' interaction with the gendered political settlement has

[4] 187 countries out of 194 countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), though some with reservations. The United States and Palau have signed, but not ratified the treaty; the Holy See, Iran, Somalia, Sudan and Tonga are not signatories. For more information, see http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/ (accessed 17 March 2017).

[5] These have now been superseded by the 2015 SDGs and we will therefore reference these here.

hampered the achievement of important development goals such as WPP and access to justice. Bills that aimed to make a difference in these areas have been blocked in order to retain the current settlement. Had there been affirmative action then perhaps more than 2.6 per cent of local councillors would be female. Also, little conscious effort seems to be made to ensure women participate in committees that are tasked with implementation of the NDP.

We have already outlined earlier in the report how the government's lack of implementation of important areas of the National Gender Policy has hampered the achievement of its more strategic gender goals, such as 'enhancing gender parity in political participation and decision-making' and 'preventing and eliminating all forms of SGBV against women and girls in Somaliland' (MoLSA, 2011:17–18).

The reasons for a lack of progress are highlighted in the following excerpt, conducted with a key actor in the justice sector:

> *I think [whether a bill is passed] is determined by one of two factors. They are either submitted by an assigned subcommittee or those laws are backed by a well-organised social organisation […] the reasons holding back the approval of the draft laws I have mentioned might be either there isn't a special subcommittee for those bills or it is the work of an external entity that is blocking the approval of these draft laws* (male, 31–40, government official, university, Maroodi Jeex).

Particularly in the case of the Sexual Offences Bill, it seems to have been 'external entities,' such as religious leaders, who have blocked approval over the past two years. These actors are very influential within the political settlement and collectively pursue a conservative agenda when it comes to women's rights. According to someone who attended the hearing to which the director general of MoLSA had been invited to present the bill, the crux of the MPs' debate revolved around whether there were any rape cases in the country and questioning Nagaad, who were also there lobbying for the bill, how they knew there were any rape cases in Somaliland (Progressio Workshop, 2016).

> *With the sexual law, there were traditional and religious leaders who lobbied for it to be stopped. So they have indirect influence in the politics also. They don't have Members of Parliament and they don't have executive powers. But the community listens and they recite strongly what they are against. So the government listens and the parliament understands* (male, university, Maroodi Jeex).

However, even if this bill passes, achieving access to justice for women who have experienced SGBV will be hard to achieve, particularly if these women or their families do not have political connections. *'There was a rape case that one of the ministers' relatives was the victim* [sic]*. The case was immediately ruled for the victim and the perpetrator was tried. The case was closed quickly because of that minister's influence, but they offer little to cases related to the ordinary public'* (male, Maroodi Jeex). This shows that the rule of law works for those who have financial resources and power, but not necessarily for ordinary people. The current political settlement usually promotes peace between clans using compensation mechanisms under *xeer* over justice for women who are violated. This means that in practice, even in cases where perpetrators have been taken to court, they are frequently released. Elders intervene to mediate between the clan of the man who has violated the woman and her family, resulting in compensation paid to her family for the crime committed. Sometimes girls or women are even married off to their rapists. In this case the gendered settlement prevents the achievement of eliminating VAWG because one of the drivers of it is impunity based on 'customary law' and compensation benefitting males.

Another obstacle to the implementation of the National Gender Policy is the lack of institutional continuity in ministries, including MoLSA:

> *The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs had to play the role of following up with stakeholder institutions who are expected to implement the policy, it is they who are to monitor who is implementing and who is not, they have to […] use government pressure and the legitimacy of the ministry to hold those institutions accountable and the ministry don't do that because of the insecurity and the discontinuity of the ministerial post due to sudden government reshuffles. You see a minister who is willing to change things comes to the ministry, he studies and analyses the major priorities that will deserve his time and resources and the gender policy of course will be on top of his priorities, so he drafts a plan of implementing the policy, seeks funds for implementation and starts to follow up with stakeholder institutions. At that very moment when things start to fall in place and the minister starts to take tangible steps forward all of a sudden there will be a government reshuffle and a new minister who knows nothing about the ministry, the gender policy or the ministry's other major priorities will be brought on-board and that will be a huge step taken in the wrong direction. So that is the main obstacle that hindered the implementation*

> *of the policy, there is no institutional continuity […] Even if the new minister is well informed about the ministry and its current priorities but the problem is that he wants to bring his own priorities and he intentionally throws the good work of the ministry out of the window.*

In order to assess the effectiveness of policies and practices designed to achieve agreed development goals, we need to understand how these dynamics play out at an institutional level. Goetz and Hassim (2003) argue that in most societies, gender equity concerns are counter-cultural as they challenge the interests of individual men, and of groups constituted on the basis of patriarchal privilege. In order for change to occur, a powerful and committed state is needed to ensure that constitutional or policy commitments on gender equity are actually implemented. This includes a disciplined bureaucracy able to implement gender-sensitive policy in spite of social and internal resistance (ibid). There is also evidence that hard incentives, backed by formal rules, are more effective in ensuring effective gender mainstreaming, than just relying on 'soft incentives' such as trainings (as has been the case in the European Union).

To assess this in Somaliland, we need to ask why new formal rules were introduced, who initiated them (was it key actors in institutions together with outside allies, or were new rules introduced as a top-down measure because of external pressure?), how much power institutional change agents and their opponents have, whether institutions such as the MoLSA Gender Unit have significant resources to enact meaningful change, whether these agencies are located in the centre of the core executive with oversight functions or in a weak outlying department, and how much capacity these have to create or implement policy (or get others to do it). It is also important to evaluate whether those enforcing the rules are the same people as those who make them (as there can be considerable bureaucratic resistance by those charged with implementing gender mainstreaming, particularly lower down in organisations), and whether there are any formal institutional rules for monitoring and evaluating implementation, and sanctions for non-compliance (Waylen, 2014).

The answers to these questions are contested. For example, there are many voices in civil society who would argue that gender-mainstreaming policies have been introduced by 'outsiders': donors and their 'agents', the women's rights movement. While some MoLSA staff have been actively promoting implementation, the MoLSA Gender Unit and even MoLSA as a ministry has few resources and therefore probably little power to influence other ministries and stakeholders that are more resourced and closer to the centre of power. This also applies to public institutions and the civil service overall, which is male-dominated (less than 5 per cent of leadership positions are held by women, as stated above). We can therefore potentially expect considerable bureaucratic resistance to the implementation of these policies by those with an interest in preventing change.

Somaliland civil society and WROs: interaction with the gendered settlement

Women's rights organisations have been advocating for women's rights in Somaliland for the past twenty years, including for the policies discussed above. While there have been some successes, there have also been many challenges as they interact with the 'gendered political settlement'. In a broader sense, this settlement is based on the idea that men are leaders and the public space is theirs, while women are 'followers' who are assigned to the domestic sphere. This means that women do not enter the political arena on a level playing field and with the same confidence as men do. Agency and 'power within' also matter and these depend to some extent on women's educational levels.

As a result of the war and other global developments, Somaliland has become more conservative. This is due to the increasing influence of Wahhabist Islam from Saudi Arabia, the retrenchment of the state and the re-emergence of power of customary institutions after the war, and other global developments that continue to make religion a contested ground for the assertion of different identities. This has not translated into a high level of activism for women's rights in the younger generation of women who have grown up since the end of the war. Most women's rights activists in Somaliland are from the generation of women who were already adults under Siyad Barre's regime (1969–1991), and who remember a time when women had more formal rights in the public sphere than they seem to have now.

WROs are frequently accused of being 'elite' and urban, and not having a broad rural constituency. These two factors probably present the biggest challenge for WROs to achieve their goals. While there are some male allies, these are few. Particularly in public fora, few men are willing to vote for laws promoting women's rights or to support them publicly, even if they privately support their case. Working to promote women's rights in this context is an uphill struggle. *'The few women in politics have no strong advocates to back them up and the young female generation aren't taking their footsteps'*, argued one of our respondents (female, Maroodi Jeex). As stated

in the literature review, the extent to which women's policy agendas and gender equality concerns can be achieved depends on the nature of political systems, the nature of civil society, and the nature and power of the state. In terms of civil society, what counts is the place and power of the gender equity lobby, its power to mobilise public concern to support its demands, and its power to challenge gender-biased conceptions of women's needs, roles and rights.

In the Somaliland context, the gender lobby has not received much power or support, so strategies moving forward need to particularly focus on how this can be achieved. Our experience during this research was that women's rights activists demonstrate passion and a great deal of courage in the face of conservative and hostile attitudes. They face resistance from conservative women who may be afraid of change, as well as male conservative voices who seek to discredit women's rights activists altogether by accusing them of only doing this work to promote their own economic benefit:

> *I believe there are those who align themselves with international organisations just to get funds for projects. When you examine it closely, you will see that the main and ultimate motive of these women is just to earn a living, to survive economically. They do the projects they do mostly for economic gains, that is their primary motive, other than that we haven't seen so far are women who have real political ambitions and willing to stand for themselves to realise their political hopes. Most women we have seen so far are those backed by NGOs and other institutions, but we have yet to see ambitious women come out and present to the public their political desires* (male, university, Maroodi Jeex).

This male respondent demonstrates a startling lack of awareness about the challenges facing women who want to enter the masculine space of politics without institutional support or financial resources. His response is not unique, but one in a long list of arguments that aim to discredit and delegitimise the efforts of women's rights activists and preserve the status quo. For the women engaged in this struggle, this is not a 'foreign agenda' even as they struggle to get broad-based support.

This resistance is not only couched in terms of conservatism and self-interest. WROs also face a landscape of political activism occupied by male-dominated CSOs, who have been more able to lobby for political change than female activists. As discussed on page 37 (Claimed Spaces), SONYO has been able to gain support for policies about the participation of (predominantly male) youth in local politics during the time that the women's electoral quota has languished on the legislative table. Its National Youth Policy was passed within a relatively short timeframe, and the amendment to Presidential and Local Elections Law No. 21/2001 to reduce the age requirement to run for local government office from 35 to 25 years was also successful. As a result, many young men became local councillors in the 2012 elections (SONSAF, 2015). These activists were able to take advantage of the gendered political settlement in two important ways that are not available to women. Firstly, even though young men are not included in traditional decision-making, they are '*within the clan system so they go to meetings*' (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex) such as the men-only spaces where decisions are made. Secondly, male activists are able to subtly take advantage of the fear that young men could take up arms to achieve their goals. The threat of violence meant that it was therefore in the political parties' interest to amend the law.

Donors' interaction with Somaliland's gendered settlement

It is likely that donor interaction with the gendered settlement has both assisted and hampered the achievement of agreed development goals. As Somaliland is not a recognised state, is does not have access to World Bank or IMF funding, which means it is not limited by the aid conditionality that comes with such agreements. However, Somaliland does receive bilateral and multilateral funding from UN agencies, as well as a host of INGOs. Views on donors' interaction and influence on the settlement vary. One respondent felt that donors should use their power more to pressurise the Somaliland government for increased women's participation in politics. She argued that '*the government was weak due to its lack of international recognition and still under the mercy of the international community*,' so this was an opportune moment to do so (female, 31-40, university, private sector, Maroodi Jeex). Other respondents felt that donor-funding priorities may not necessarily be aligned with the needs of local communities or be culturally sensitive, and that the promotion of a women's empowerment or gender equality agenda from the outside was counterproductive as it could easily be used by those opposed to transformational change to delegitimise the efforts of women's rights activists. It may therefore be more productive and strategic for donors to take a 'back seat' in terms of the gender equality discourse and ensure WROs couch this in culturally appropriate terms, as this may breed less resistance.

It is quite certain that donor priorities have influenced the government's priorities on paper, and this

accounts for the contradiction we find between policy and practice. As outlined above, the exclusion of women from politics is in direct contradiction to many of the government's stated policies and to the Constitution. The divergence between the government's commitments on paper and the lack of progress in reality may therefore be down to other motivations. As Tungaraza writes, 'In its endeavour to acquire international recognition, it is important that the Government of Somaliland maintains a good international record for promoting and safeguarding women's human rights' (Tungaraza, 2010). It is therefore possible that gender equality provisions found in Somaliland's development policies are merely part of the Somaliland state's legitimation project, rather than demonstrating an intention for implementation and change. The ongoing resistance and foot-dragging to implementing the two women-focused bills outlined above appear to be strong evidence for the lack of political commitment towards change in Somaliland.

The above analysis shows that Somali women face huge challenges when it comes to a number of the factors considered to be critical to the advancement of gender-equitable development outlined by Nazneen and Mahmud (2012) in the literature review. There appears to be no elite support for a gender equity agenda, and few, male allies and 'femocrats' within the state apparatus. At the same time, women's policy coalitions exerting pressure on the state are relatively weak and not well connected with a wider network of women's organisations such as businesswomen, for example. There is one major supporting factor: there is a transnational discourse and actors creating space for the gender equity agenda, such as NGOs, but their legitimacy is questioned by those who have little interest in changing the status quo as 'operating with a foreign agenda.'

Research question 2.3: main institutional arrangements affecting women and girls

> *What are the main institutional arrangements arising from Somaliland's political settlement that affect women's political participation and violence against women?*

In responding to the research question, we have adopted an understanding of 'institutions' that is consistent with North's now long-established definition:

> Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction. They are made up of formal constraints, informal constraints and their enforcement characteristics. Together they define the incentive structure of societies and specifically economies (North, 1990:97).

More simply, we take this to support a view of institutions as 'systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions' (Hodgson, 2006:2). 'Institutional arrangements' are therefore the combination of institutions, relative to each other, that 'structure' the full array of complex social interactions that constitute a given human society – in this case those of Somaliland.

Institutions include both the 'formal rules of the game' as well as informal rules such as the norms, rules and practices that structure people's behaviour (social norms). Waylen (2014) notes that, despite huge changes in women's social and economic status in many countries in recent decades, multiple and intersecting power relations and male domination remain commonplace in institutional arenas such as political and judicial systems.

Institutional arrangements and women's political exclusion

The gender dynamics of institutions and how institutions change continue to be under-researched and poorly understood. Institutions are not neutral – they embody power. As already highlighted in the literature review, they are gendered in two ways – nominally and substantively – resulting in gender bias and discrimination (Waylen, 2014:215). This bias emerges from social norms based on accepted ideas about masculinity and femininity (which we have already referred to in Objective 1), which associates masculinity with rationality, power and control, and femininity with passivity, care, emotion and irrationality. This is the case not only in Somaliland, but also in most cultural settings.

Gender norms and informal institutions often remain unperceived and unremarked as they are naturalised as part of the status quo (ibid:216). Thus, 'reforming formal rules may end officially sanctioned gender bias but will not necessarily overcome all institutionalised forms of male bias as informal rules may undermine formal rule change' (ibid).

Rules can be gendered in two ways. Formal rules about gender may treat men and women differently in official and legal terms, although many of these rules (for instance, pertaining to employment, political participation and education) are now gender-neutral. Informal rules about gender, such as the sexual division of labour, do, however, remain. These interact and coexist with formal rules, and often reinforce the gender status quo of a society or subvert attempts towards change (ibid). This frame of analysis is

used in this section to examine changes in formal rules with respect to women's political participation and leadership, or violence against women, and to consider whether these have translated into substantive change or whether informal rules continue to undermine formal rule change.

Women's economic participation

While our understanding of the term 'political settlement' follows Laws's definition as encompassing 'ongoing and adaptable political processes that include specific one-off events and agreements' (Laws, 2012:21), the political realm can only be considered in the context of its deep linkages with economic sectors. This is, of course, a point that is consistent with our understanding of institutions, as just outlined. Moreover, there is considerable evidence that Somali women are marginalised in both the political and economic arenas in ways that reinforce each other.

In Somaliland, most businesses with staff are owned by men, who tend to give preference to other men when making employment decisions. The patriarchal nature of Somaliland's social structure both explains, and is perpetuated by, these tendencies, as it ensures that males have far greater access to patronage networks than women, which in turn results in greater access to jobs and promotion. Rather than a merit-based system, men's opportunities arise from their status as males and 'breadwinners'.

> *Many highly experienced women are working in offices with much less experienced male employees and it will always be the less experienced, less skilled male employees who will get all the promotions and she will always respond to them. You see the woman who started as an assistant in 1997, when the conflict ended, is most likely working as an assistant this very day and maybe she had scores of male bosses who all were less experienced and got employed through family links and through clan basis* (female, Saaxil).

Men's employment and economic opportunities arise from their support from elders (themselves male), their access to spaces such as the *mafresh* (from which women are usually excluded), and to sources of finance. With these advantages, male-owned businesses tend to flourish, whereas female-owned operations are restricted in their ability to expand. This means that, in spite of the fact that Somali women tend to be very active in business sectors, they are often restricted to micro and small enterprises.

Just as men offer other men employment, female-owned businesses tend to offer a proportionately greater number of jobs (43 per cent) to women than do those owned by men (7 per cent) (World Bank, 2016:35). Female-owned businesses in Somaliland are therefore the primary driver of female employment in the economy. This holds true for micro, small and medium firms, though in large firms the percentage of female workers is much more equal, meaning that it does not appear to depend on company ownership.

Women's disadvantage in terms of participation in the labour market and in business means they struggle to gather the economic resources needed to support active political participation at election time, reinforcing cultural impediments to political representation. However, women are very active in the so-called informal economy where they have stepped up to be breadwinners. Since the end of the Somali civil war, many men have not found formal jobs and are not as disposed as women are to do anything to ensure the survival of their families, no matter how menial it may be.

> *We couldn't succeed to create employment opportunities as such men failed to live by their duty as the family breadwinners, forcing women to go out and struggle with feeding their families. You see there are employment opportunities of course but these are opportunities that men are not satisfied with* (female, Saaxil).

Women's political participation

Many respondents considered women to be 'the backbone of society'. This suggests that women's contributions are critical to the stability of the political settlement, and not merely in terms of their reproductive but also their productive roles. However, the link between this contribution and political leadership does not necessarily follow, as this respondent suggests: *'If today's reality is that women are earning a living for their families, can we say that would give them the right to be leaders, the right to govern the society? I believe that would be wrong'* (male, Maroodi Jeex).

As made clear earlier in the report (page 45, The legal framework for women's participation and recent legal initiatives), the Somaliland Constitution guarantees equal rights for men and women:

> *All citizens of Somaliland shall enjoy equal rights and obligations before the law, and shall not be accorded precedence on grounds of colour, clan, birth, language, gender, property, status, opinion etc* (Republic of Somaliland, 2000: Article 8.1).

However, many of our respondents were sceptical about this provision, and few felt confident that constitutional guarantees had much effect on social exclusion. '*I do not think any of us in the group have read the Constitution, and we don't know if there is a provision for women. But I can see the lack of implementation, so we don't know if anything could have been done for women [by the Constitution]'* (female, 18–30, government official, Togdheer). Coming from a state employee, this effectively underlines the prevalence of the sense that the Constitution lacks relevance in day-to-day life, as suggested in this quotation:

> *Even though it is likely that the Constitution may allow for women to be elected it is possible that the sub-clans for that matter and even men will not allow women to be elected and they will face many obstacles despite being stated clearly in the Constitution* (male, Togdheer).

In reality, even though women constitute more than 60 per cent of the eligible voting population, they face major challenges when it comes to their participation in political leadership. The 82-member House of Representatives has only one female MP, there are only ten women of 379 local councillors and the Guurti has no female representatives. Of course, there is some ambiguity when it comes to women's representation in the House of Elders as the eligibility criteria state that elders should be versed in Somali traditions. This provision may limit women's access to the Guurti as they are unable to participate in clan leadership and decision-making. However, it is also the case that objections are formulated in terms of conservatism and practicality: in a chamber with a limited number of seats, men do not want to give up their privilege to women.

Somaliland traditional values also hold that women are like minors, who are not capable of undertaking judicial acts. Somaliland's constitutional rules are also subject to the provisions of Islamic Sharia, which in its turn specifies significant rights for each gender. Many understand Islam to withhold the right of women to become a president or chief judge. Moreover, Somali customary law offers an even narrower set of rights to women than either constitutional or Sharia law. In summary, while constitutional provisions, which are of a general nature, give equal opportunities to both women and men, this occurs in a context where customary law, Islam and tradition favour male candidates.

Through our research, we identified four barriers to women's political participation in Somaliland: the clan system, increased economic responsibilities in the home, culture and religion, and gendered institutions. These have been introduced in preceding sections, and are now explored in more detail.

Barrier 1: clan and 'clannism'

> *The obstacle to female political participation is usually the two clans she is linked to: her clan of birth and her clan of marriage both question her loyalty* (male, 31–40, private sector, Togdheer).

There is wide agreement from respondents that one of the most fundamental barriers to greater participation from women in the political realm lies with clan structures. '*There is no way that a clan would, on their own, choose a woman to represent them in elections. Somalis believe that women are incapable of leading and they will always refuse women to lead them*' (female, 18–30, private sector, university, Saaxil). Many respondents complained that clan has become politicised in a manner they refer to as growing 'tribalism' or clannism', terms that were almost always used pejoratively. For instance, '*Clan is spreading and touching many people. [...] Public bureaucrats, top government officials and political parties are the ones who exacerbate and spread tribalism*' (female, 18–30, private sector, Sanaag).

There was considerable hope during the 1990s, as the Somaliland constitutional system was being debated and agreed, that the imposition of a constitutional three-party limit would force clan groups to form new alliances, gradually helping to reduce the influence of clan on political decision-making. However, whilst the three-party limit has been adhered to, the benefits have not largely been realised in terms of mitigating clan politicisation.

> *Democracy was intended to eliminate tribalism and be an alternative to the clan politics but you see it only ignited it further. It has turned into an effective tool for spreading tribalism [...] Political parties, elections and democracy have all been misunderstood and misused to the point that they have heightened tribalism to new heights we have never seen before* (male 61–70, private sector, no formal, Sanaag).

With increasing tribalism, spaces for women are closing in terms of accessing employment or political positions, since women tend to be excluded from patronage networks.

> *In the past there was a formal procedure like vetting and winning jobs through examination and other formal systems like all governments do but when the government was ousted that was no longer true. As tribal politics became the norm, getting a job became a matter of who*

> *you know rather what you know or your skills or education and this led most women to lose out* (female, civil society, Saaxil).

> *It is not the clans that are getting more dominant but it is tribalism that is on the rise, and I think the rise of tribalism has a lot to do with democracy and the multi-party system we have chosen, you see it has become a sort of weapon for the elders, now it is harder for women to come in. If a woman wants to compete in elections, everyone will disown her, her blood clan will say, you don't represent us, you belong to the clan you are married to and the clan she is married to will say you belong to the clan you are from. So every clan will make sure they have men representing them, and you know all levels of government councils are to be chosen through elections or through the clan-based system, the parliament and the local councils, so you see we have embraced democracy but one that is pretty much overshadowed and dominated by our cultural and religious biases* (male, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

At a more formal level, changes have been made. For example, in 2012 the decision was made to opt for an 'open list' electoral system, which encouraged aspiring candidates to seek clan support first, and to worry about party support only once clan resources had been mobilised. This strengthened the grip of clan groups on the political domain, undermining the constitutional intent embodied in the three-party limit. This move made it much more difficult for women to contest seats and to get elected, making the record number who did stand the more notable, but also in part explaining the low rate of success they experienced (Kibble and Walls, 2013).

The oft-cited basis on which women are excluded from political representation lies in the issue of clan affiliation. The patrilineal system ensures that men may affiliate with only a single clan – that of their forebears. However, women are considered to identify with the lineage of their father from birth, but to assume that of their husband on marriage. Even if a woman does not marry, the potential for shifting clan loyalty is enough, in most cases, to dissuade clan or sub-clan groups from supporting the candidacy of a woman. Consequently, '*women [...] don't vote for each other: she will vote for a man from her [father's] clan or one that is representing her husband's clan*' (male, Sanaag).

Female and some male respondents expressed frustration in a number of instances that women were not united in supporting female candidates when they did stand. '*There are many men supportive of gender equality, but I believe the problem lies with women. It is us who are undermining other women. Women vote for men not for other women*' (female, 31–40, civil society, no formal, Saaxil). Women and men may not vote for female candidates due to associations with masculinity and femininity (as analysed in Objective 1), which identify men as strong and used to responsibility, and women as weak. Hence a clan that has women standing as candidates is seen to be 'weak'. This is despite the fact that many of those interviewed agreed that women are the 'backbone of society', having stepped into breadwinning roles to maintain families whilst many man have reneged on these responsibilities and succumbed to *qaad* chewing.

It is not, of course, the case that these attitudes are universally shared. It is notable that some regions (and therefore clan groups) appear to support women as politicians more readily than others. Sanaag and Sool, in particular, more often elect female councillors and MPs. While the numbers are not large, local respondents were aware of this difference: '*Sanaag is different from other regions in how it has empowered its women*' (male, Sanaag). This perhaps explains the greater optimism amongst some respondents for women's political chances. '*If she seeks the votes of the clan she is from, [a woman] will get them, and if she seeks votes from the clan she is married to she will get them*' (female, 61–70, private sector, no formal, Sanaag).

Nonetheless, resistant attitudes remain deeply held. One of the reasons that the clan system has retained such a strong grip on Somaliland's political settlement lies in the determination of much of the population to avoid a return to conflict at any cost. '*Today all we are trying to do is to maintain the peace*' (female, government official, Togdheer). Clan is seen as the foundation of that peace:

> *clan and tribalism are getting stronger. People are being disintegrated and fragmented into clans and sub-clans [...] every clan is expected to keep the peace in its environment [...] Somaliland is built upon tribes and the administration can't even move a finger without the approval of those tribes* (male, 51–60, clan leader, no formal, Sool).

> *I believe we have not yet reached a stage to end tribalism and we are not mature enough to do so, you see our statehood has no strong foundation and it is pretty much kept in place by appeasing and pleasing different clans and giving each a position so they could see themselves in the government structure, every party is now literally owned by its founder, what*

> *we are doing now is convincing the world that we are a functioning democratic state but in reality all we have managed so far is to appease the clans so they couldn't resort to violence again* (male, Sanaag).

Of course, while women struggle to secure support for formal political positions, it remains the case that they have long played a number of important roles in securing peace, as described earlier in this report. However, as pivotal as these roles have often been, they tend to militate against increased formal representation. It is the fungibility of female clan identity that makes women effective as go-betweens and in sealing peace agreements. As in the customary traditions of many societies, marriage is frequently used a means of formalising an agreement. '*When reconciling inter-clan wars, girls were exchanged to strengthen peace. That was called "godob reeb", and thereafter they enjoyed peace*' (male, 18–30, government official, Maroodi Jeex). Women also play important roles in mobilising resources and urging men to fight or settle grievances.

> *I think women have played two controversial opposing positions. I am speaking from experience [...] what I can tell is that women's first role was putting fuel on the fire, then fuelling it even more. When men were defeated in a conflict they would tell men to 'put on skirts' (meaning, how can you be defeated if you are men? You must fight back! It was women who were supplying many men with the money and resources that they had mobilised to buy weapons and arms. [...] The other contradicting role was peacemaking. They have a clan of birth and a clan of marriage, and they are the link between two opposing clans. As such, they are well placed to be the starting point for communication between the two tribes. Women have a major role in the reconciliation and peace-building process as well as playing a key role in the conflict and its instigation* (male, Sanaag).

Barrier 2: the impact of changes in gender roles on WPP

Women have been significantly affected by conflict and the reconstruction phases that have followed with regard to their increasing responsibilities for both productive and reproductive roles in households in which male breadwinners have been killed, moved away (often overseas), or become unemployed.

> *I was an employee and I used to wake at 4:00 in the morning. In those early hours of the morning all those who are going out are women heading to the slaughterhouse, for cleaning jobs or to the market, 99 per cent are women and it's men's responsibility as per the requirement of our religion that they provide for the family, […] as women struggle with feeding their families all alone they can neither join the political field nor amass an economic fortune* (male, 41–50, government official, Saaxil).

Barrier 3: the Impact of culture and religion on WPP

There are differing views as to whether Islam allows or prevents women from leading or participating in the public sphere. As demonstrated by the following quotations, male respondents tended to believe that WPP is constrained by Islamic proscriptions.

> *We are 100 per cent Muslim and our prophet PBUH said in one of his narrations: "A community guided or governed by a woman is doomed". Our religion draws a clear path for each of us, it gives each of us a very specific rights and freedoms. Islam believes that women stay in their homes and that government and big administration issues are better when handled by men. I personally believe women should keep their honour and dignity intact and stay in their homes while men take care of governance responsibilities* (male, Saaxil).

> *What are they going to do if they get elected? She will lead and get mixed with men at the workplace. We are a Muslim community both our culture and our religion don't allow women to govern or lead a Muslim community and on the other hand the biggest obstacle to women's political empowerment is the religion, our religion opposes leadership of women* (male, Saaxil).

> *Yes, unemployment is such a burden on our people of course and women are saving their families by rising up to the void left by men but that would not mean they can be prime ministers or presidents, that is something that neither religion nor the culture we have allowed them* (male, Saaxil).

This is echoed in the daily ways that men use cultural norms to reject the premise of WPP, and speak on behalf of women. '*[E]verything is coming back to culture, and the way men perceive women; these perceptions are not the reality. I have seen it in practice, when I did research, if you ask to bring women on-board, they say, "What would she tell? The men already have their [the women's] views, why do you need to talk to women? Why are you bothering her?" They don't believe women have intelligence,*

capacity, strength' (Personal correspondence with S. Abdi, 20 January 2016). The same cultural norms come into play when men who listen to their wives are criticised for being "un-Somali".

Barrier 4: gendered institutions

Ultimately the formal political arena is a male-dominated space in which masculine norms prevail and men seem to have little inclination to include women or further their priorities (such as issues of SGBV). There are only three female ministers (of 52) currently in posts, making it difficult to accomplish substantial women-focused policy change and overcome the predominant gender bias in Somaliland's political institutions. Little seems to have changed since Edna Adan was appointed Foreign Minister in 2003. Speaking at the Hargeysa Book Fair in 2015, she described how she was received when entering a meeting room as the first female minister in Somaliland. Entering the male-only space, she was asked to get up a number of times from chairs where the ministers 'sat' (despite the other ministers being late). When she was finally allocated a seat near the door, she found that cigarette smoke was blown in her face. Though sheer determination, she managed to change the seating order in such a way that smokers sat in the same corner. The deeper challenges of female representation, however, were less easy to change.

Institutional impact on violence against women and girls

We discussed in Objective 1 how the perpetrators of gender-based violence are typically men, and how such violence may be fuelled by prevailing norms of masculinity and frustrations with the inability to meet conventional gender roles (such as breadwinning). Many respondents looked to religion and clan for both the causes of violence and the possible remedies, with considerable support for a stronger grounding in the teachings of Islam so that the interpretation that women are less valuable than men in Islam would be addressed: '*in the Islamic Sharia it is men who have the higher status or worth*' (female, 51–60, pastoralist, no formal, Sool).

> *I think if a man is to be peaceful and free of committing violence against women, that person must know the basics of Islamic religion and he must have a good religious foundation in his past upbringing* (male, Sanaag).

> *If Islamic religion is used as law and order, the violations would be reduced. All men don't do the violations and types of violations are also different, but each type can be reduced with [...] awareness raising and application of Islamic sharia as law* (female, educational, Sanaag).

Others referred more generally to the importance of education and awareness of the consequences of violence, such as this respondent who said that: *'I think when a man is literate and or has a basic education he is in a better position to know the consequences of his violent actions, both for him and for his victims. But when he has no education at all, he can't know that and he will just keep committing violence'* (female, Sanaag). Others suggested a range of interventions that would help reduce levels of violent behaviour towards women and girls, such as this list of suggestions:

> *If a boy is brought up knowing his rights and duties and the types of violence, it won't eliminate violence against women but it will greatly reduce the percentage of that violence [...] Raising awareness of violence against women on TV could also reduce the rate of violence against women. A number of other programmes, like cartoons, portraying these acts could reduce the rate of violence against women. [...] Job creation and employment, building sport centres, entertainment centres and other projects that attract men's interests would divert men from* qaad *consumption and the idleness that leads them to commit violent acts against women. If the boys stay in their village areas or squares all day doing nothing, this causes them to harass women for just the simple reason of fun, their energy must directed at something. They must be made busy so they have no time to commit violence* (male, Awdal).

Other respondents argued that the solution is to generate greater respect for women and the social and reproductive roles they play.

> *Men must learn to understand the value of the mother and how much she sacrifices for men. That would be the key. Women give birth, they breastfeed and nurse baby boys, they raise boys to be the strong men they finally turn into. If men are given more awareness and made to understand the mother, the sister and the wife more, maybe they would have respected women more* (female, civil society, Saaxil).

However, there were some who disagreed on the appropriate or practical roles that might be played by different institutional arrangements or actors. While, for many, Islam offers more inclusive remedies than clan, some respondents felt that custom has such a consistent tendency to dominate religious practice that the latter is effectively rendered ineffective in

addressing these issues. This reflects the comment of a respondent cited by Smith (2014:40): 'Oh religion? In our culture in our community, there's a blurred line. Religion and culture go hand in hand, But they don't always agree. And some people tend to choose culture over religion. Or they say the culture is the religion'.

There was extensive discussion amongst our respondents about the institutions that govern prevention in cases of gender-based violence. Clan justice emphasises collective responsibility using a system of blood compensation money, often referred to by the Arabic term *diya* or its Somali equivalent *mag*. Under that system, individual culpability is removed, and compensation payments are agreed between clan groups.

> *Q: What do you think is causing these violations?*
>
> *A: What causes it is that a girl is raped by group of boys and the families of the criminals and the victim come to an agreement after a small amount of money is paid to the victim's family and the case is closed then by the court and the police. The girl being the victim loses her dignity and reputation and as result a few girls commit suicide by burning themselves, some abandon their homes by going as illegal immigrants and the culture and tradition underrate national legislation system* (female, 41–50, civil society, Togdheer).

Most cases of sexual assault are dealt with under these customary systems, but that does not mean that they have widespread approval. This man suggested that those who seek compensation rather than supporting the victim should be punished:

> *the ongoing and increasing rape activities are encouraged by the elders and clan leaders because when a girl is raped by a group of perpetrators who are arrested, the elders will come and take the case out of the court and legislative offices, and they go under trees. The violated girl's dignity and personality are addressed with [just] a small amount of compensation. The money will be shared by elders who spend it on qaad, without thinking of the girl's rights and dignity and future. The victim who lost her dignity may end up as a bad person or suffer from bad health. So I would suggest that even fathers who are taking part and all elders should be taken to jail because they are the major reason contributing to this assault* (male, 18–30, government official, university, Saaxil).

Research question 2.4: strengthening interventions

How can interventions designed to promote gender equality simultaneously be strengthened to achieve other specific development goals?

> *So if the donors support us in a positive way, not only in the political participation, because people are fed up with the talk about the women's political participation. But we need integrating programmes including decision-making otherwise political participation is not going to work so that is my recommendation* (female, civil society, Maroodi Jeex).

There are a number of ways in which the above question could be addressed, depending upon whether we consider local- or national-level change, general development programming or gender-specific policy and advocacy. If we look at work at the local level, we can answer the question as it is stated or turn it on its head and ask: how can gender equality concerns be integrated into each and every intervention in order to achieve broader development goals? This would imply taking the above quotation very seriously and adopting a sectorial and multidimensional approach. This would not only aim to achieve WPP, for example, but embed this into wider programmes that aim to address inequality in terms of access to resources, education or health. At the same time, this would ensure that women are part of decision-making at all stages of interventions and strengthen their confidence to contribute meaningfully.

Women in Somaliland face multiple discriminations due to their gender identity and roles. Interventions therefore could include literacy and wider education as part of empowerment programmes and to strengthen their 'power within', as this description of a series of programmes demonstrates:

> *Then women also understood that if they were to get the right political participation and representation that they aspired for, then getting basic literacy or basic education of reading and writing was crucial. Women started to claim that after they got conscious of their right of electing who they wanted to, they could see their vote go to the wrong candidate because they couldn't write and the men working at the polling station would make women vote for who the men at the polling station wanted, not who the female voters wanted. Because it is women who these programmes were designed for and it is they who had the lead of the programme, we had to incorporate a component for improving*

> *female literacy […]. Then those women who got basic education felt that they couldn't compete with men because they didn't have the same financial resources as men, so we started to try to create income sources and help them join the employment programme. We then created a programme called 'Republica' that economically supports women in villages. You could see the impact that this had on women was massive; in every village you visit, you would see members of the 54 organisations who can proudly express their rights* (female, civil society, university, Maroodi Jeex).

A multi-sectoral approach is therefore essential for women's empowerment, particularly at the local level and for women who are not part of the educated elite. Education in this context should also include learning the Quran, along with rights awareness, which can be an essential part of women's empowerment due to the importance of religion in Somali life. In Somaliland, men frequently use conservative interpretations of religion to justify women's subordination, and it is therefore important that women know the scriptures to challenge such discourses.

The story in Box 1 is a good example of how empowerment works in practice. It shows how interventions to promote gender equality can automatically lead to achieving other development goals, such as better education for children, as an educated woman will be able to support her children at school. It also highlights how gender awareness can be integrated into programmes that aim to achieve other development goals, such as literacy. In particular, this story emphasises the importance of a role model and longer-term mentorship, Islamic education and literacy, freeing up women's time from household chores to pursue these tasks, and dialogue with men to understand and support the process.

Box 1: The slow process of change. *Source: Female, civil society, university, Maroodi Jeex.*

I was talking to one woman who is my neighbour. I say how are you doing? 'Fine'. How is your husband, how is your children? Are you learning anything? 'No, I am not learning anything.' Are you going to school? 'No, I never go to school.' Are you born in Hargeysa? 'Yes, I was born in Hargeysa.' Why don't you go? 'My mother and father never sent me to school, then when I grew up I married, then I had children.' Then I say: can I ask you a question? She say, 'yes'. I say, are you thinking that you are missing any rights for you? She says 'no, I never miss'. I say why? Do you know your rights? She say, 'yes, I know'. Can you explain? She say, 'yes, I can explain: I have grown up, I have health, I have a husband, I have children, I have a house. So I have already my rights.' So I say: ok, that's your right then? She say, 'yes'. Are you learning the Quran? She say no. Sure, how can you then meet your rights if you never know your Quran and you are compulsory to learn the Quran. You don't want to go to school but the Quran [...]

Are you working in the day? 'No, I am staying home.' So, and you are not doing anything? 'Yes, I do. 6 in the morning up to 11 in the night I am working.' I say, then, then you need your right! She say, 'then what I can do?' [I said,] Ok, you don't do anything, but you are thinking, you go to your home, then you think, you come back after one week. She came back, she say, 'I realise your speech, I realise your talking, I lose many rights. […] I realise now', she say. Ok, then what are you doing? 'I have to start to learn the Quran.' Ok, go to the school [for] Quran, then you learn Hadiths and Quran and all those things. Then she go.

When she is learning the Quran for six months she came back, she said thank you for your help. I say can you please also go for the literacy programme. I have the class; I don't charge anything; I give you also the book and the pen. Can you make your time? So she said, 'ok'. She talked to her husband; she said 'you have to hire two housekeepers – I want to learn'. What happened? [He said,] 'Ay, no, no, no, no; you have to look after your home, your children, otherwise this house will be destroyed'. [She said] 'I want to build myself, I learn the Quran, I don't know how to pray'. So they say 'ok, go, go, go'.

She enjoyed our group, the literacy programme. She learned [for] one year. Now every day, every day, she is asking me in the seminar about the woman issue. She say, 'I was watching you last night in the TV […] you are my role model. I want to become your position'. […] the woman knows the Quran very nicely, even she is checking whether her children are learning. Before she was not checking, now she is checking. She said, 'What is this?' She goes to the school, she says: 'hey, my children are not learning anything! Look at this!' So it takes time, it needs time, it needs commitment, very strong commitment, and patience. It's two way: to bring on-board the men and also to continue to build the capacity of the women.

Power structures: stakeholders and relationships

In order to address Objective 2, particularly the elements relating to gender-based violence, we undertook a power analysis of the Somaliland political settlement. Our approach drew on a power-mapping workshop described in the Methodology section [p. 27] to map the key actors with regard to sexual violence. The mapping exercise focused on violence specifically, rather than on the range of stakeholders and relationships relating to a broader definition of gender in the political settlement. While that limits the scope of the analysis, it enables a more focused examination of specific power relations that is reflected in a number of respondent comments.

Photos 5 and 6 show the outcomes of the power-mapping exercise. The biggest circles in the power map are those of religious and clan leaders and the president, all of whom are male. The mutually reinforcing power relationships between these groups, as well as the power they exercise over the fathers of girls who have been raped, were readily evident. The strong influence that religious leaders have over the Ministry of Religion, and the power of both religious and traditional leaders over parliament and over the president, were also evident.

This was reflected in our interviewees' responses, for

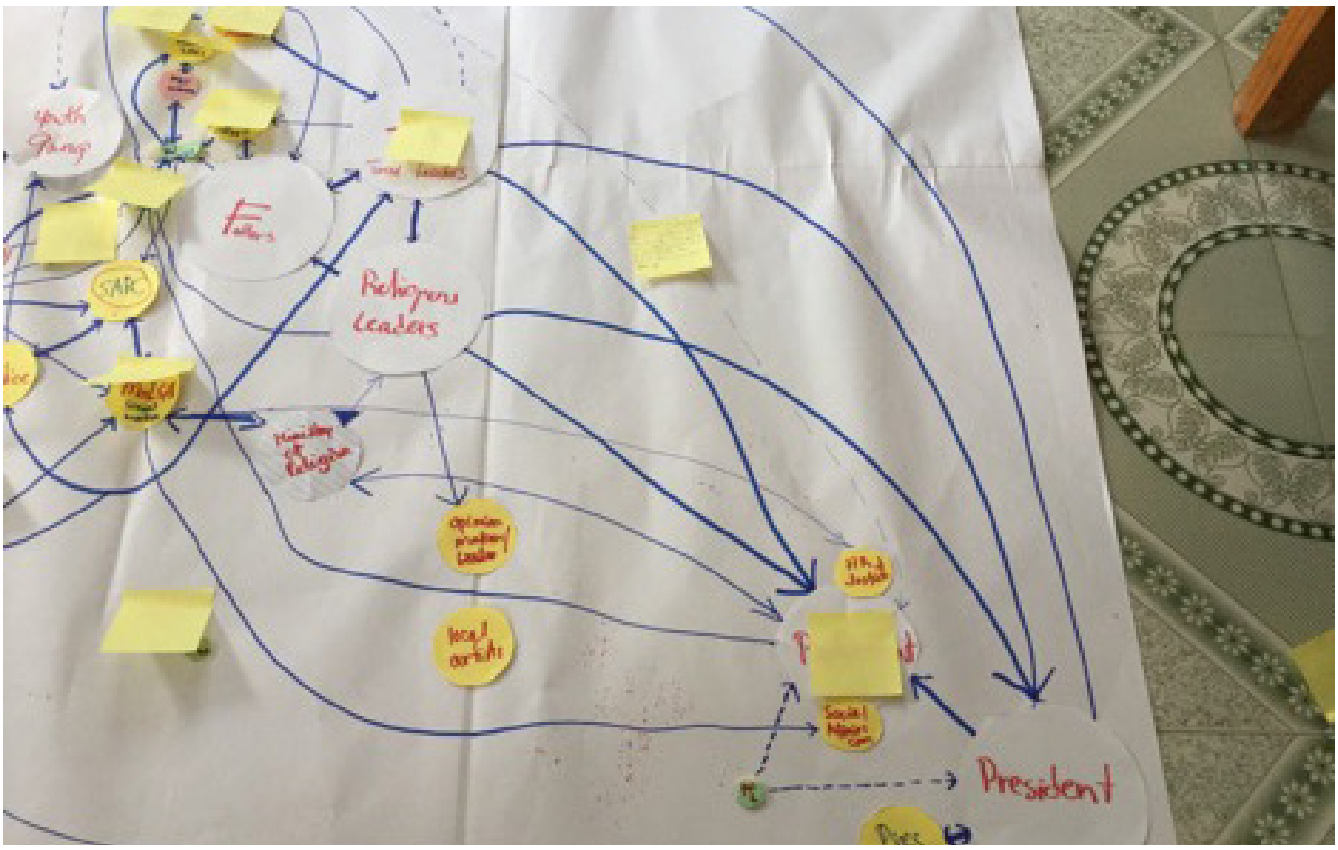

Photo 5: The centrality of religious leaders; distance of presidential power. *Source: Progressio Workshop, 2016.*

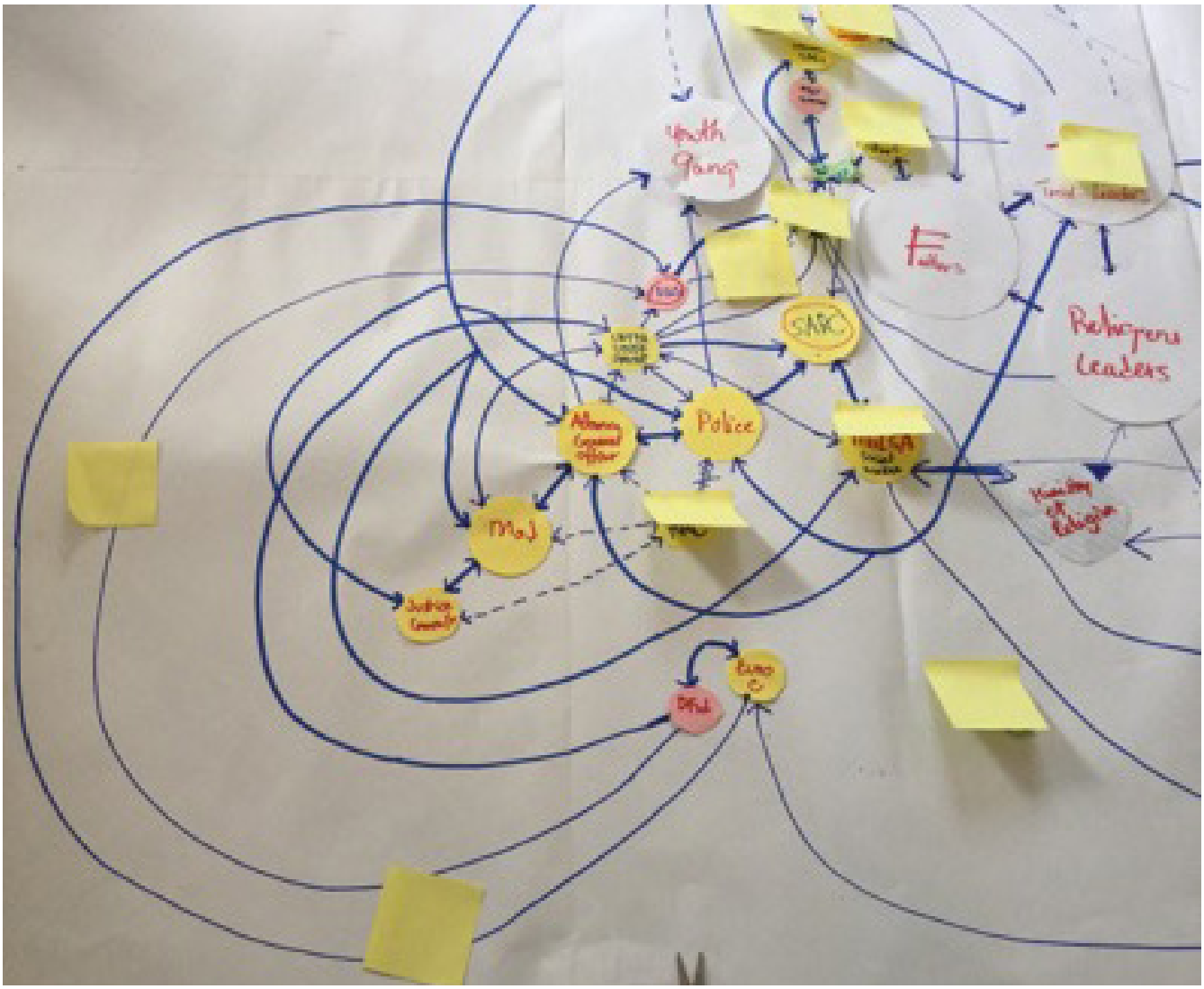

Photo 6: Fathers, gangs and tangled connections with official agencies. *Source: Progressio Workshop, 2016.*

instance from this male political party agent, who is worth quoting at length:

> *The government tried to pass the banks law and there were some commercial banks coming here. So religious leaders organised themselves and there were some articles that were allowing ribo [interest]. So ribo is against the religion, they said, so the parliament should not pass this law. There was strong rejection from the religious leaders and it was stopped. In the sexual law there were traditional and religious leaders who lobbied for it to be stopped. So they have indirect influence in the politics also. They don't have Members of Parliament and they don't have executive powers, but the community listens and they recite strongly what they are against. So the government listens and the parliament understands* (male, political party agent, university, Maroodi Jeex).

In some respects, these patterns are found in the existing literature summarised above and in day-to-day talk on the streets of Somaliland. It is obviously significant for the business of government that customary (clan) and religious leaders topped the power-mapping exercise rather than political leaders, with religious leaders in particular noted for their ability to block or amend legislation, including that related to sexual or gender-based violence, where they object to its content. Although one of the larger circles, the President of Somaliland holds relatively less power, relying on a maintenance of the consensus that won him his position in the first place. Religious leaders were successful in significantly watering down the Sexual Offences Bill (discussed at pp. 46, 53), whereas the president has been unable to get legislation introducing a quota for women in parliament and local councils passed at all, in spite of his public and apparently very genuine support.

The intention behind this power analysis was to feed directly into a discussion about how the Sexual Violence Bill might be passed in Somaliland. In line with that objective, the mapping exercise was useful in identifying potential allies in that process, as well as blockage points. Specific MPs were identified as one group who might support the bill in spite of the indifference or opposition of many. Key ministries, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) under whose remit lie women's affairs, were also identified as allies, as were civil society groups, including the women's umbrella organisation NAGAAD, and the wife of the president, who has long been an outspoken critic of the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM).

Table 1: Stakeholders related to the issue of violence against women and girls in Somaliland.
Source: Progressio Workshop, 2016.

Female	Male	Mixed Gender
Women and girls experiencing sexual violence	Traditional leaders – *suldaans* and *caaqils*	Sexual Assault and Referral Centre
Mothers	Fathers	INGOs
Community leaders	Community leaders	UN agencies (UNFPA, UNDP and Unicef)
Somaliland Women Lawyers Association (SWLA)	Religious leaders	Donor governments
Human Rights Commission	Police	DFID
President's wife	Legal Aid Clinic and legal support providers	Social media
Market women	MoLSA	Poets
Female business owners	Parliament	
Women's self-help groups	Human Rights and Justice Committee	
Female lawyers	Social Affairs Committee	
	Ministry of Justice	
	Youth gangs committing rape	
	President	
	European Commission	
	Media (government controlled)	
	Private sector	
	Opinion-makers	
	Local artists	

This analysis focuses on the power of religious leaders in particular, which also extends to the issue of violence against women and girls (VAWG), including sexual violence. The justice system, including the police, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Attorney General, has relatively little power over these issues compared to religious and traditional leaders, and fathers. The ministry responsible for this policy area, MoLSA, is also relatively powerless, whilst NGOs and multilateral donor agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), have even less power over the issue. In addition, traditional leaders have power over the police and Attorney General, and vice versa.

It is worth noting that wealthy businesspeople, a key stakeholder group, did not figure in the mapping exercise. Most are male, although there is one well-known and very successful female *qaad* dealer, Ina Gafaane. These individuals tend to adopt a stance that is politically engaged only insofar as that engagement assists in the pursuit of their business interests. Indeed, that appears to be even truer for Ina Gafaane who is notable for her reluctance to lobby on any issue that does not pertain directly to her business. In all these cases, workshop participants felt that this group, whether male or female, were not likely to play a significant role with respect to sexual violence issues.

The focus on VAWG highlighted a significant role for religious leaders over those of the clan. This arises specifically because imams were central in expressing concern over the necessarily explicit use of definitional terms in the legislation concerned. Where specific religious concerns are not as relevant, religious leaders tend to keep a lower profile with clan affiliation playing a more dominant role. This is consistent with the observation that it was essentially an alliance of clan interests and the self-interest of MPs that derailed the introduction of a quota for women's representation.

In summary, we found that religious leaders retain the greatest relative power on issues relating to VAWG, but that the more fundamentally constraining power relationships with respect to women's political participation lies with the clan system.

Recommendations

It is clear from the preceding research that we should look towards programmes that, for example, promote women's participation and leadership and bring these into spaces where decisions on public service provision are made that aim to achieve broader development goals that benefit everyone in society. This involves women working 'on the inside' to influence these decisions, while at the same time mobilising women to demand better services 'from the outside'. This of course can be challenging in the Somaliland context as state capacity and accountability mechanisms are weak, particularly for women who do not have as much power and who find that their opinions are not taken as seriously as men's in the political sphere.

Increasing public understanding of how gender power relations perpetuate social inequality and undermine development for all, and how policy decisions affect people's everyday lives, should become part of gender equality programming in its narrow and widest sense. This female member of Somaliland's civil society articulates such a position:

> *And I used to say to women, because most women and most people don't see the connection between the decisions taken by our leaders and their basic day-to-day needs, so I said if there are bad decisions being made there, there will be no milk, there will be no water, people will struggle to get water, to get what they eat. So it all depends on the kind of decision-makers. In fact all the time I was running for office, I tried to not say to the people vote for me but instead to make them understand why they should vote for women […]. Look at the local government: the issues they are dealing with are issues of health, waste collection, education, safety in the streets, recreation, all these things. Women know more about them because they are involved with this daily while most men are not* (female, civil society, university, Maroodi Jeex).

Doing so requires making civil servants, power-holders and ordinary men and women aware of the importance of including women's (and men's) gender-specific priorities into public policy development and how this is linked to a higher level of achievement of development goals for all of Somaliland society. Collaboration between ministries needs to be improved to ensure that gender policy priorities are integrated into implementation plans of all line ministries responsible for addressing the goals outlined in the National Gender Policy and Action Plan (improving livelihoods, education and training, health and reproductive health; and reducing gender-based violence). This would also contribute to a more inclusive, peaceful and developed society. Research by Caprioli (2005) and Hudson et al (2009) shows that more gender-equal societies tend to have lower levels of intra-state violence. To enhance this, justice sector plans could target security and policing to areas where women are particularly vulnerable to rape such as refugee camps; and women-owned enterprises could be specifically funded and supported at all levels to increase women's employment, to name but a few.

As stated above, promoting women's political participation and leadership (currently only under MoLSA's remit), should be understood as one of the main avenues to achieve better development outcomes as it seems unlikely that those in power are aware enough to promote gender-sensitive policies otherwise or willing to do so.

The specific recommendations that follow are based on our own analysis and on respondents' recommendations of how things could be improved.

Recommendations to donors and civil society

1. Support multi-sectoral programmes, integrate and prioritise gender equality concerns in all interventions

Given the cultural sensitivities and strong resistance to promoting gender equality in Somaliland, this may be the best way forward, particularly at the local level. Multi-sectoral programmes should include effective micro-finance institutions to increase women's economic power, as poverty is a major factor causing violence and abuse.

Some good practice examples have already been cited above. The following quotation highlights how this can be achieved within broader community development programmes, and the importance of bringing men on-board in the process:

> *I called some men in my neighbours' houses and talked to them. I say, 'hey you guys, you are the men of the village, I need to talk to you'. They say, 'why don't you talk to us then?' [I said:] 'We have to know our village, what our villagers need. Do we need an MCH? Your woman is pregnant, and your children need to go to school and a clean environment. So we need to make the committee.' They say 'oh that's good'. The security, the environment, the water, you know we have no water. 10 men came to my home, they say, 'we want to talk to you. You know the government and the organisation, so we have to establish a committee.' I am saying, 'how many members do we need on the village committee?' They say: 'we need 7 or 9'. I say 'then make the list! … Halifar, Abdi, Hassan [...]' They listed 9. I say: 'Hey, why don't you include the women?' 'Ha, yes, yes, it's true, we forgot the women.' So they delete two men, they add two women. And that committee is working very nicely. […] they take it at village level, then they say 'hey, yes, can we talk to the Mayor of Hargeysa? Can we talk to him? Yes, Yes, Yes!' The two women, they are so very active. The men are weak. They say, 'hey, the women are better than us!' They say, 'can we make it 5 women on the committee and the two men?' At the end, after six months, you see, so ... so you can use ... a long, slow process, then you bring on-board the men* (female, civil society, university, Maroodi Jeex).

Bearing this in mind, we present seven specific recommendations for Somaliland's donors and civil society organisations about how to engage with Somaliland's gendered political settlement.

2. Ensure holistic gender programming that addresses positive masculinities

Programming that mainly targets women can lead to resentment from men as they feel left out. It also reinforces the view that 'Western people are only looking for women' as stated by the respondent below. In order to achieve progress, men need to be involved. CSOs' programmes and messaging should therefore also be inclusive of male concerns. This should include providing spaces for the social integration of youth, as well as working with men to develop positive masculinities and gender-equitable attitudes in relation to changing gender roles. At the same time, women-only spaces need to be created and strengthened to allow women to organise, share common experiences as women, and build confidence.

> *Therefore development activities should be equally shared by gender and the community in general will develop otherwise part of the community will be left apart. When you give example of women at work in the farms and men doing nothing they will still say you advocate for women only. When you organise meetings with women, some men say the Western people are only looking for women but the development approach requires involvement of both men and women. Therefore as development worker you should know when women are available or free to attend meetings because men are always free* (female, civil society, Awdal).

Changing gender power relations is a long-term endeavour that requires multiple strategies and long-term timeframes. Donors and CSOs both need to think in terms of programmes rather than projects.

3. Be culturally sensitive: use locally appropriate language and reduce public donor branding

Words like 'gender' – with its English origin – are perceived to be Western and alien to Somali culture. This means there can be significant resistance to gender as a concept, from both men and women. Gender is a complex concept and, as mentioned early on in this report, is commonly misunderstood to refer only to *women*. We recommend using culturally more appropriate terminology. For example, instead of gender, practitioners could use terms such as *jinsiga or*

lamaanaha, as described in Research question 1.1 [p. 31]. At the same time, women's empowerment should begin from a definition of what women themselves perceive it to be, which can then be built upon.

Donor logos on billboards high above the streets of Hargeysa and elsewhere in the country, displaying messages in English, contribute to development interventions being perceived as donor-driven and not local. In order to avoid accusations of Western cultural interference, change needs to be brought about in a subtler manner. It is advisable for donors to keep a low profile and not advertise their programmes in public spaces in a foreign language and with prominent logos. Less visibility may better achieve project objectives. At the very least, messages should be displayed in Somali and donor logos should be kept to a minimum.

4. Ground programmes and messaging in pro-women's rights Islamic values and ethics

In a country like Somaliland, where religion is ever-present and where sociocultural and religious influences constrain women's daily experience, it may be more helpful to support local solutions that frame the discourse on gender equality in Islamic terms rather than using international human rights language and conventions, which are often perceived to be foreign. Many of our respondents felt that Islam grants women more rights than traditional Somali culture. This would mean examining the role of Islam with respect to the rights and empowerment of Somali women and seeking interpretations that are more conducive to the case for women's rights.

This could be a funded study, supported by donors or INGOs, but it should be a local initiative. The women's rights activists that we interviewed felt that in order for such a study to be taken seriously by religious leaders, it would need to be conducted by a Somali Islamic scholar and supported by a critical mass of women. This would prevent a repeat of the experience of some Somali-Canadian women whose similar project was met with strong resistance from Somaliland's conservative religious leaders, who were quick to denounce them as well as the author, a non-Somali scholar, as 'foreign'.

5. Promote changes in social norms

Social norms that state that women cannot lead and are inferior need to be substituted by positive norms. This can be achieved by supporting female role models who demonstrate that other ways of being are possible. 'Women's leadership and authority has symbolic power. It challenges widespread beliefs that men are leaders, and women's place is in the home' (O'Neil and Domingo, 2016:11). The same is true for men who take on female gender roles. Women and

Photo 7: *Debating possibilities*. *Source: © Kate Stanworth, Hargeysa, 2016.*

men are unlikely to start voting for women unless this shift in attitudes towards women's leadership takes place.

The importance of role models is also expressed in the following quote by a male respondent: '*Women who are given top government jobs should provide the premise through which we will change the community perception towards women in power, when we compare the achievements to those of their male counterparts*' (male, Maroodi Jeex). The risk, of course, is that such women will constantly have to prove themselves and 'earn a right to be there', something men are not required to do even if their performance is found to be wanting.

6. Choose the right people: work with WROs and provide long-term funding to promote and integrate gender equality at all levels

Many respondents stressed the importance of supporting WROs in order to achieve change for women. This view is supported by the literature as WROs are considered to be more likely to understand and push for women's rights than other organisations or government agencies. There is a simple reason for this: institutions in most contexts are gendered in masculine terms (as they are embedded in patriarchal societies with men frequently holding leadership positions) and are consequently unlikely to prioritise women's rights. The example above of how (mostly male) 'youth' successfully pushed for inclusion in local politics shows what happens when women are not explicitly taken into account as a group. However, the political settlements literature also stresses that in order to effectively promote gender equity goals, particularly in political systems characterised by 'competitive clientelism' such as Somaliland, WROs need to work in close collaboration with allies in the state bureaucracy (such as 'femocrats') and the sectoral state agency (such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs). In order to promote gender transformative agendas (such as on domestic violence), strong mobilisation by pro-women policy coalitions is needed (Nazneen and Mahmud, 2012).

Donors should therefore continue to support and strengthen the domestic women's coalitions and their links to allies, while at the same time strengthening them to hold government to account for the implementation of gender-specific laws and policies. These include supporting work that aims to strengthen linkages between urban-based, elite WROs and regional and community-based women's groups. A strong women's movement is necessary to support women in higher levels of decision-making to promote women-centred agendas and hold government to account. Goetz and Hassim (2003), for example, argue that women in decision-making positions will only be effective and accountable to the extent that there is a strong women's movement in civil society acting as a pressure group and an accountability mechanism. This would complement an electoral quota with the right external conditions to ensure elected women deliver and feel supported by a larger movement. Interventions also need to be long-term to promote transformational change and build women's confidence and capacity to compete with men.

7. Provide support for women's economic activity

Donors should also actively support and ensure financing for women-owned businesses, which are the primary driver of female employment in the economy, as referenced in the section on women in the economy. [p. 58]

8. Engage men and identify male allies who support the women's rights agenda

Engaging men and identifying male allies is important: many activities undertaken by NGOs concerning women's rights include women but few, if any, men. It is important to bring men on-board, especially those with high status who can make an immediate difference, but also from other levels in society. This includes taking proactive steps to ensure men understand the importance of women's participation – indeed, emphasising that they can personally benefit from more gender equality: '*this is also good for men*' (female, government official, Awdal).

Recommendations for the Somaliland government

1. Securing women's political participation

The Somaliland government and political parties should:

- Reinstate closed party lists to promote women's political participation and political party development over clan-based politics. Many respondents recommended that political parties rather than clan groups should select candidates for the House of Representatives in order to boost women's chances of selection.
- Political parties should introduce a merit-based system, where people (women and men) are chosen because of merit, not clan. As long as the focus is on clan, women don't stand a chance to be appointed as candidates.
- Enact the Reserved Seats Bill into law and ensure it is implemented.

- Implement gender commitments in existing policies and plans such as the Somaliland NDP and National Gender Policy and Action Plan, by establishing, sufficiently resourcing, and ensuring internal and external gender-sensitive public accountability mechanisms, including sanctions (hard incentives), to hold ministries to account for effective delivery at both the national and regional levels.

- Conduct a constitutional review to include women's priorities such as a parliamentary women's quota and a separation (of powers) of the clan and the government. This would not only address one of the key barriers to WPP (the clan system), but also counter the rise of 'clannism' and the increase in corruption which goes along with it, which is perceived by many of our respondents to have a negative impact on the achievement of development goals.

- Align Somaliland's constitutional commitment to gender equality (Article 22) with the reality on the ground. This can be achieved by creating a favourable environment for women's active and meaningful political participation and leadership, which should include changing the negative attitudes many people harbour against women in leadership roles, and implementing the above recommendations.

2. Enhancing justice and reducing violence against women and girls

- The Government of Somaliland should organise a national consultation with women from all backgrounds to ensure their priorities are included in an amended Sexual Offences Bill.

- The current justice system is fragmented. Competing legal systems mean that cultural practices that perpetuate impunity for VAWG, such as paying compensation to the families of women and girls who are raped while the victims are ignored, continue unabated. Instead of focusing their support primarily on the formal justice sector, the Government of Somaliland (and Somaliland's donors) should engage all justice actors, including traditional leaders, and ensure their practices align with relevant national laws.

- These steps need to be complemented by increasing women's participation in, and influence over, all aspects of the justice system, and ensuring their priorities are integrated into customary and traditional processes dealing with SGBV and rape.

- Somali customary law (*xeer*) is uncodified and subject to interpretation, and tends to discriminate against women. We suggest that the Ministry of Justice establish a commission to analyse the gender-discriminatory aspects of *xeer* and ensure compatibility with existing laws, the constitution and international law. Changes should then be disseminated to the public through public information campaigns and sanctions applied for non-adherence.

- Justice sector plans could target security and policing to areas where women are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence, including refugee camps.

Conclusion

Somaliland has achieved a great deal in moving from the conflict of the late 1980s to a situation in which there has not been widespread conflict since 1997. A significant part of that achievement has been the adoption of a constitutional system of representative democracy that guarantees 'equal rights and obligations before the law' for all citizens (Republic of Somaliland, 2000: Article 8.1). However, as our gendered analysis of the political settlement reveals, this is a system in which women remain excluded in large part from the formal institutions of power.

When asked if the spaces for female involvement in Somaliland's political sphere are expanding, most of our respondents answered positively, albeit acknowledging the slow pace of change. Of course, there were also those who did not see improvement, and a vocal minority also argued that gender inclusivity is undesirable or unacceptable in the Somaliland context.

Differing perspectives on how fast and far things have changed in terms of gender roles and equality were also reflected in our research team. One woman, a seasoned women's activist, commented that '*sometimes it is getting better in some ways ... [but,] personally, I don't believe the gains will increase*'. Another, a man and also a long-term advocate for women's rights, argued instead that '*in 2002, there were no female MPs, only two women in local councils, and one or two female ministers; now there are 10 councillors, an MP and four ministers*'. In spite of these developments, the research team as a whole agreed that, however one looked at the picture, progress towards gender equity has been painfully slow, and there remains little sign that the situation is about to change substantially. The repeated failure of the women's electoral quota, particularly in the face of other electoral reform successes (such as reducing the minimum age of political representatives spearheaded by the youth lobby), reinforces this sentiment.

It is, of course, true that participation in the political settlement extends to more than standing for election or appointment to public office. However, access to such positions or their customary equivalents is necessarily part of an inclusive settlement. The fact that women turn out to vote in at least equal numbers to men, and that women are active in all sectors other than formal and customary politics highlights their absence in those areas, but does little to mitigate the fact of their exclusion.

There are both normative and instrumental grounds for arguing in favour of the desirability of greater inclusion. Somaliland's Constitution reflects the normative case: as enshrined there, all citizens should be able to exercise the right of active participation in any lawful manner of their choosing. There is also an instrumental case for the ability to exercise such rights since doing so can lead to a more durable and legitimate settlement in the long term. If the involvement of men and women in approximately equal measure leads to wider acceptance of the resultant peace, and to a settlement that is oriented more to negotiation than to conflict (both arguments that draw from the work of influential scholars such as Caprioli, 2005, and El-Bushra, 2012), then the case for greater inclusivity is founded on the double logic of instrumentality and justice.

The instrumental argument, though, is complicated by the fact that the Somaliland political settlement is demonstrably stable but also demonstrably non-inclusive for women. A significant part of the intractability of the problem of female exclusion lies precisely in fears that anything that undermines the foundation of the clan system, upon which that settlement is built, might consequently threaten the peace that is today so jealously guarded.

We argue on the basis of our research that this creates a potentially dangerous situation. Many Somalilanders

are growing increasingly weary of the politicisation of clan, railing against the corruption that they see as clannism. That disillusion takes many forms, including frustration from women and minority groups about a system that systemically excludes them from decision-making. Others see the electoral system as robbing them of the participatory power they enjoyed as adult males in a consensus-based polity at the same time as unemployment robs them of economic autonomy. There is a sense that these frustrations themselves might one day threaten the durability of the settlement in Somaliland.

This situation raises the question as to what should be done, and by whom. One of the broader questions we aimed to answer when embarking on this research was whether donors should deliberately be influencing political settlements to make them more inclusive. Even if this is the 'right' thing to do, it also raises questions of sovereignty. In reality, donors do not have the power to methodically change the political settlements of other countries in order to meet particular social objectives. Of course, there are interfaces through which donors do change settlements, such as by increasing the power of civil society actors vis-à-vis the state (affecting the balance of power) and supporting gender programmes (affecting gender roles). These interventions may be subject to backlash, and therefore we directed some of our recommendations towards Somaliland's donors and civil society organisations. They are included under Objective 2, Research question 4.

Our respondents repeatedly invoked 'culture' (clan and custom) and Islam to justify women's continued exclusion from positions of power. At times, Islam was regarded as a justification for forms of exclusion or, conversely, as creating space for greater inclusion. While it is true that many Somalis believe that religion prohibits women from occupying the positions of president, imam and judge, only a minority argued that women should be excluded from political engagement generally for religious reasons. The importance of Islam in shaping Somaliland's political settlement means it is important to take account of perceptions and practices in this regard, particularly in terms of greater discussion of how Sharia addresses gender issues.

The more profound cause of women's exclusion lies in the difficulty women have in securing clan nomination for political activity, in obtaining the votes of sub-clan affiliates, and in raising money through clan channels to support political engagement. Our principal finding is therefore that the segmentary nature of clan affiliation perpetuates women's exclusion more than any other single factor.

These structural and attitudinal factors make the prospect of a 'more inclusive' settlement a complicated aspiration. Nonetheless, there are steps that can be taken. Our research shows that the pathway to greater inclusivity rests on strengthening both the formal and religious institutions that emphasise notions of gender justice. It is not enough by itself to strengthen the formal judicial system, as the customary equivalent is prevalent through most of Somaliland. It is, however, possible to imagine a gradual coming together of customary and formal justice systems in a manner that draws in both women and clan leaders to work alongside or as trained members of the judiciary.

There is also an urgent need to continue to support women's rights organisation and to help to develop female leaders, perhaps through innovative strategies such as a women's leadership academy or a school for girls. Increasing public understanding of the negative developmental and societal impact of excluding the gender-specific priorities of specific groups from policy-making processes should be a priority as this may increase support for women's inclusion and leadership.

Female leadership should also be supported by developing a progressive Somali Islamic scholarship that tackles textual interpretation of the Quran in a rigorous manner that also authoritatively addresses issues around gender roles and justice

It is thus critical that activities promoting gender inclusivity are grounded as far as possible in local custom in an effort to counter the feeling that 'women's issues' represent a foreign (and inherently un-Somali or un-Islamic) agenda. In this regard, the roles of the Government of Somaliland and civil society actors are vital. So is the involvement of men, and increasing their understanding that gender is a men's as much as a women's issue.

Appendix. List of interviews

AWDAL REGION

No.	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Type of Interview
1	08/09/2015	Female	18-30	Secondary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
2	08/09/2015	Female	41-50	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
3	08/09/2015	Female	41-50	Primary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
4	08/09/2015	Male	61-70	Secondary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
5	08/09/2015	Male	61-70	No formal	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
6	08/09/2015	Male	61-70	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
7	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
8	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
9	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
10	22/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
11	22/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
12	22/11/2015	Female	51-60	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
13	22/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
14	22/11/2015	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
15	22/11/2015	Male	61-70	Secondary	Religious leader	Focus group discussion
16	22/11/2015	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
17	22/11/2015	Male	61-70	Primary	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
18	22/11/2015	Male	41-50	No formal	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
19	30/03/2016	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
20	30/03/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
21	30/03/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
22	30/03/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
23	30/03/2016	Male	51-60	Secondary	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
24	30/03/2016	Male	51-60	No formal	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
25	30/03/2016	Male	51-60	Religious	Religious leader	Focus group discussion
26	30/03/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
27	07/09/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview
28	07/09/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview
29	07/09/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
30	07/09/2015	Female	18-31	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
31	07/09/2015	Female	18-32	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
32	21/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
33	21/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
34	21/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
35	21/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
36	21/11/2015	Male	18-30	Secondary	Student	Group interview
37	21/11/2015	Male	31-40	Secondary	Other	Group interview
38	24/11/2015	Female	31-40	Intermediate	Housewife	Group interview
39	24/11/2015	Female	41-50	No formal	Private sector	Group interview
40	24/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
41	24/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
42	04/01/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
43	04/01/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
44	04/01/2016	Male	71-80	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
45	04/01/2016	Male	61-70	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
46	04/01/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
47	30/03/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
48	30/03/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Other	Group interview
49	30/03/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
50	30/03/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Other	Group interview

51	30/03/2016	Female	51-60	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
52	30/03/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
53	30/03/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
54	30/03/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
55	08/09/2015	Female	31-40	Secondary	Civil society	Individual interview
56	08/09/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Civil society	Individual interview
57	08/09/2015	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Government official	Individual interview
58	08/09/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Individual interview
59	22/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Private sector	Individual interview
60	22/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Individual interview
61	23/11/2015	Female	*Not known*	Tertiary	Government official	Individual interview
62	22/12/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
63	29/03/2016	Female	41-50	No formal	Housewife	Individual interview
64	09/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
65	23/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
66	23/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview

MAROODI JEEX REGION

No.	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Type of Interview
1	07/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	Secondary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
2	07/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Focus group discussion
3	07/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Focus group discussion
4	07/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
5	07/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Focus group discussion
6	07/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
7	07/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
8	07/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
9	17/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
10	17/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
11	17/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
12	17/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
13	17/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
14	17/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
15	17/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
16	17/11/2015	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
17	17/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
18	30/03/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
19	30/03/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
20	30/03/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
21	30/03/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
22	30/03/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Government official	Focus group discussion
23	30/03/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
24	30/03/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
25	17/10/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
26	17/10/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Group interview
27	17/10/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Group interview
28	17/10/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Group interview
29	17/10/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
30	21/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	Intermediate	Political party agent	Group interview
31	21/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	Secondary	Political party agent	Group interview
32	21/10/2015	Female	31-40	Secondary	Political party agent	Group interview
33	21/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	Secondary	Political party agent	Group interview
34	21/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	Secondary	Political party agent	Group interview
35	21/10/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Political party agent	Group interview
36	31/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
37	31/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview

38	31/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
39	31/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
40	31/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
41	01/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Group interview
42	01/11/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	Civil society	Group interview
43	01/11/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	Civil society	Group interview
44	01/11/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
45	01/11/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
46	01/11/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
47	13/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Political party agent	Group interview
48	13/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Political party agent	Group interview
49	13/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Political party agent	Group interview
50	15/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
51	15/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*		Individual interview
52	15/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil Society	Individual interview
53	18/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
54	19/10/2015	Female	51-60	*Not known*	Private sector	Individual interview
55	24/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
56	24/10/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
57	24/10/2015	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
58	31/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
59	04/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
60	06/11/2015	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
61	08/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
62	05/12/2015	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
63	19/12/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
64	04/04/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Housewife	Individual interview
65	04/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Housewife	Individual interview
66	11/04/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
67	11/04/2016	Female	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
68	11/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
69	12/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Private sector	Individual interview
70	20/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
71	07/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
72	23/08/2016	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview

SAAXIL REGION

No.	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Type of Interview
1	02/06/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
2	02/06/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
3	02/06/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
4	02/06/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
5	02/06/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
6	02/06/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
7	02/06/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
8	02/06/2016	Male	41-50	Primary	Other	Focus group discussion
9	23/07/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
10	23/07/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
11	23/07/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
12	23/07/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
13	23/07/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
14	23/07/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
15	23/07/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
16	23/07/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
17	23/07/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
18	05/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion

19	05/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
20	05/08/2016	Female	31-40	Informal	Other	Focus group discussion
21	05/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
22	05/08/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
23	05/08/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
24	05/08/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
25	05/08/2016	Male	*Not known*	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
26	02/06/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
27	02/06/2016	Female	51-60	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
28	02/06/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
29	02/06/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Other	Group interview
30	02/06/2016	Male	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
31	02/06/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
32	02/06/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
33	02/06/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
34	24/07/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
35	24/07/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
36	24/07/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
37	24/07/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
38	24/07/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
39	24/07/2016	Male	18-30	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview
40	24/07/2016	Male	18-30	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
41	24/07/2016	Male	41-50	Primary	Government official	Group interview
42	24/07/2016	Male	61-70	Primary	Other	Group interview
43	24/07/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
44	05/08/2016	Female	31-40	Primary	Housewife	Group interview
45	05/08/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Other	Group interview
46	05/08/2016	Female	18-30	Primary	*Not known*	Group interview
47	05/08/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Other	Group interview
48	05/08/2016	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
49	05/08/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Group interview
50	05/08/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
51	05/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
52	02/06/2016	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Political party agent	Individual interview
53	02/06/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Other	Individual interview
54	02/06/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Individual interview
55	02/06/2016	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
56	23/07/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
57	23/07/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
58	05/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Other	Individual interview
59	05/08/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Individual interview

SANAAG REGION

No.	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Type of Interview
1	08/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Focus group discussion
2	08/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Focus group discussion
3	08/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Political party agent	Focus group discussion
4	08/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
5	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
6	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
7	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
8	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
9	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
10	08/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Other	Focus group discussion
11	08/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Focus group discussion
12	08/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Focus group discussion

13	08/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
14	08/09/2015	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
20	26/11/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
21	26/11/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
22	26/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
23	26/11/2015	Female	31-40	Intermediate	Private sector	Focus group discussion
24	26/11/2015	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
25	26/11/2015	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
26	26/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
27	26/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
28	26/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
29	26/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Focus group discussion
30	26/11/2015	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
31	26/11/2015	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
32	26/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
33	26/11/2015	Male	41-50	Intermediate	Civil society	Focus group discussion
34	26/11/2015	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
35	26/11/2015	Male	41-50	Intermediate	Private sector	Focus group discussion
36	26/11/2015	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
37	26/11/2015	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
38	14/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
39	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Intermediate	Political party agent	Focus group discussion
40	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
41	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Political party agent	Focus group discussion
42	14/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
43	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
44	14/04/2016	Male	51-60	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
45	14/04/2016	Male	61-70	*Not known*	Private sector	Focus group discussion
46	14/04/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
47	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
48	14/04/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
49	14/04/2016	Male	41-50	Intermediate	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
50	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
15	09/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
16	09/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
17	09/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
18	09/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
19	09/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
51	14/04/2016	Female	51-60	*Not known*	Private sector	Group interview
52	14/04/2016	Female	51-60	*Not known*	Private sector	Group interview
53	14/04/2016	Female	61-70	*Not known*	Private sector	Group interview
54	14/04/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Private sector	Group interview
55	07/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
56	08/09/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Political party agent	Individual interview
57	08/09/2015	Female	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
58	08/09/2015	Female	18-30	Secondary	Civil society	Individual interview
59	08/09/2015	Male	18-30	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
60	08/09/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	*Not known*	Individual interview
61	09/10/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Clan leader	Individual interview
62	27/11/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
63	27/11/2015	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
64	27/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
65	27/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
66	27/11/2015	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
67	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Private sector	Individual interview
68	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Government official	Individual interview
69	14/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Private sector	Individual interview
70	14/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview

SOOL REGION

No.	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Type of Interview
1	08/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
2	08/01/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
3	08/01/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
4	08/01/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
5	08/01/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
6	08/01/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
7	08/01/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
8	08/01/2016	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
9	08/01/2016	Male	41-50	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
10	14/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
11	14/01/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
12	14/01/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
13	14/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
14	14/01/2016	Male	51-60	Primary	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
15	14/01/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Government official	Focus group discussion
16	14/01/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
17	14/01/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
18	14/01/2016	Male	51-60	Secondary	Government official	Focus group discussion
19	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
20	14/04/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
21	14/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
22	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
23	14/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
24	14/04/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
25	14/04/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Focus group discussion
26	14/04/2016	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
27	14/04/2016	Male	41-50	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
28	14/04/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
29	08/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
30	08/01/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview
31	08/01/2016	Female	18-30	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview
32	08/01/2016	Female	18-30	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview
33	08/01/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
34	14/01/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	*Not known*	Group interview
35	14/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
36	14/01/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Other	Group interview
37	14/01/2016	Female	18-30	*Not known*	Private sector	Group interview
38	14/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
39	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Private sector	Group interview
40	14/04/2016	Female	18-30	Secondary	Private sector	Group interview
41	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Private sector	Group interview
42	14/04/2016	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Private sector	Group interview
43	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Private sector	Group interview
44	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
45	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
46	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
47	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
48	14/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
49	31/07/2016	Male	71-80	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
50	31/07/2016	Male	51-60	Primary	Clan leader	Group interview
51	31/07/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
52	31/07/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
53	31/07/2016	Male	71-80	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
54	14/01/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Government official	Individual interview

55	14/01/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
56	14/01/2016	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
57	15/01/2016	Female	51-60	*Not known*	Other	Individual interview
58	15/04/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Other	Individual interview
59	15/04/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Individual interview
60	31/07/2016	Male	41-50	Secondary	Other	Individual interview
61	01/08/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Individual interview

TOGDHEER REGION

No.	Date	Gender	Age	Education	Job	Type of Interview
1	16/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
2	16/04/2016	Female	*Not known*	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
3	16/04/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
4	16/04/2016	Female	18-30	*Not known*	Housewife	Focus group discussion
5	16/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
6	16/04/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
7	16/04/2016	Male	41-50	Secondary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
8	16/04/2016	Male	31-40	Secondary	Other	Focus group discussion
9	16/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
10	21/05/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
11	21/05/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
12	21/05/2016	Female	18-30	*Not known*	Civil society	Focus group discussion
13	21/05/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
14	21/05/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
15	21/05/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
16	21/05/2016	Male	41-50	Secondary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
17	21/05/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
18	01/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
19	01/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Focus group discussion
20	01/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
21	01/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
22	01/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
23	01/08/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Housewife	Focus group discussion
24	01/08/2016	Male	51-60	Tertiary	Other	Focus group discussion
25	01/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Focus group discussion
26	01/08/2016	Male	51-60	Secondary	Private sector	Focus group discussion
27	16/04/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
28	16/04/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Private sector	Group interview
29	16/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
30	16/04/2016	Female	31-40	*Not known*	Housewife	Group interview
31	16/04/2016	Female	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
32	16/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Student	Group interview
33	16/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
34	16/04/2016	Male	41-50	Secondary	Other	Group interview
35	16/04/2016	Male	31-40	*Not known*	Other	Group interview
36	16/04/2016	Male	18-30	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
37	21/05/2016	Male	51-60	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
38	21/05/2016	Male	41-50	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
39	21/05/2016	Male	31-40	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
40	21/05/2016	Male	31-40	*Not known*	Clan leader	Group interview
41	22/05/2016	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Other	Group interview
42	22/05/2016	Female	18-30	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
43	22/05/2016	Female	51-60	Secondary	*Not known*	Group interview
44	22/05/2016	Female	41-50	Secondary	Government official	Group interview
45	22/05/2016	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
46	22/05/2016	Female	31-40	Secondary	Civil society	Group interview

47	02/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Group interview
48	02/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
49	02/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
50	02/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Government official	Group interview
51	02/08/2016	Female	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Group interview
52	02/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
53	02/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
54	02/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
55	02/08/2016	Male	31-40	Tertiary	Civil society	Group interview
56	14/04/2016	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Other	Individual interview
57	16/04/2016	Female	41-50	*Not known*	Government official	Individual interview
58	20/05/2016	Female	41-50	Tertiary	Civil society	Individual interview
59	03/08/2016	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Other	Individual interview
60	03/08/2016	Male	*Not known*	*Not known*	Civil society	Individual interview
61	*Not known*	Female	31-40	Tertiary	Government official	Individual interview

		Tot	Awdal		Maroodi Jeex		Saaxil		Sanaag		Sool		Togdheer	
			Groups	Participant sessions	Groups	Participant sessions	Groups	Participant sessions	Groups	Participant sessions	Groups	Participant sessions	Groups	Participant sessions
Key informant interviews	female	47		9		16		4		9		5		4
	male	26		3		7		4		7		3		2
	Total	73		12		23		8		16		8		6
Focus group discussions	female	76		12		13		9		14		14		14
	male	97		14		11		16		30		14		12
	Total	174	3	26	3	24	3	25	3	45	3	28	3	26
Group interviews	female	88		18		17		13		9		15		16
	male	54		10		8		13		0		10		13
	Total	142	5	28	5	25	3	26	2	9	4	25	4	29
Totals by region	female	211		39		46		26		32		34		34
	male	177		27		26		33		37		27		27
	Total	389		66		72		59		70		61		61

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