

**THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING:  
THE CASE OF THE WOMEN NETWORKS IN  
SOMALILAND.**

**BY**

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**NOVEMBER 2007**

## DECLARATION

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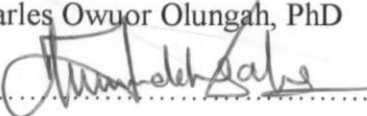
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Name: Charles Owuor Olungah, PhD

Signature.....

Date .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my late mother Esther and to my son Kevin for whom they are in  
my life

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## **ACRONYMS**

ACPHR- The African Charter on Human and People's rights

BFPA-Beijing platform for action

COGWO-Coalition of grassroots women's organization

CEDAW-convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women

DPA- UN Department of Political Affairs

FGD-focused group discussions

IDP-internally displaced persons

IGAD-Inter governmental authority on development

ILO-international Labour organization

JNA-Joint Needs Assessment

KI-Key informants

MDG-Millennium Development Goals

OSAGI- Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues to the Secretary General

TFG-Transitional Federal Government

UN- United Nations

UNDP-United Nations development Program

UNICEF-United Nations children's fund

UNIFEM-United Nations fund for women

UN SR 1325- UN Security Resolution 1325

UNOSOM-UN Operation in Somalia

SG- UN Secretary General

SGBV- Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SPM- Somali Patriotic Movement

SNM\_ Somali National Movement

SSDF- Somali Salvation Democratic Front

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## **ABSTRACT**

Conflicts and wars are justly argued as a patriarchal phenomenon and the role of women is more often than not obscured under the guise of passiveness and victim hood. This study sought to explore the role of the Somaliland (a region within the international borders of the republic of Somalia but not recognized internationally) women in bringing and sustaining peace in the region. Somaliland has been enjoying peace and stability in the Horn of Africa region as opposed to the rest of Somalia which still experiences civil strife.

Women's roles in peace building processes are multidimensional and sometimes invisible, as they are considered to be supportive rather than central to the processes. Thus there is need to document the centrality of women's roles in peace building especially from a traditional mechanisms point of view to provide an insight to the challenges, best practices and recommendations for integration in global peace processes.

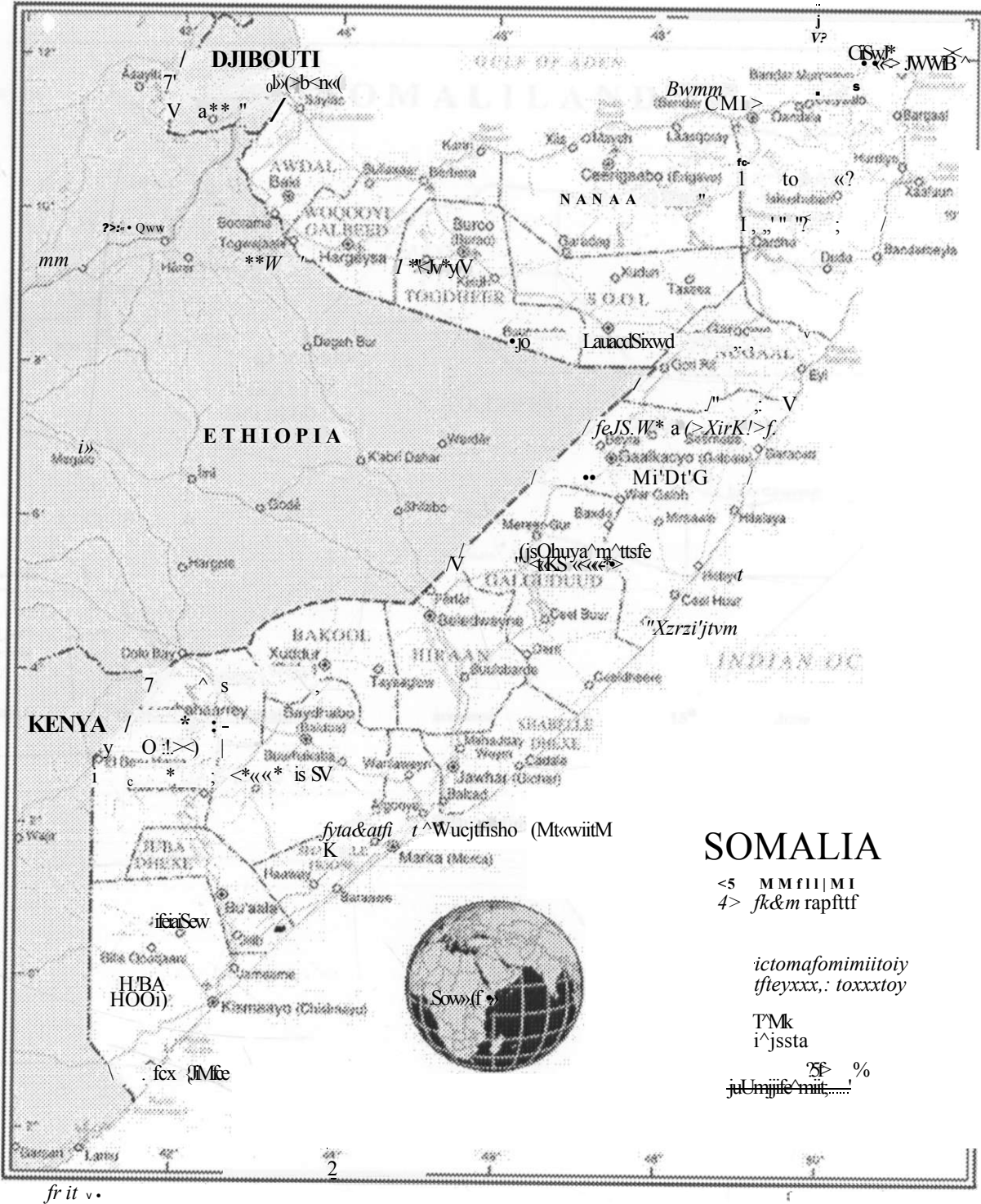
To reach the goals of the study, a women's network in Somaliland, Nagaad umbrella network was identified as the unit of study in order to explore the role that women networks played and still continue to play in the peace building arena. In-depth interviews, Key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussions and semi structured questionnaires provided the research data which was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative tools.

The data collected and analyzed indicates that Somaliland women were very active in advocating and lobbying for peace in the form of peace marches and campaigns, through

which they passed their information through songs, dance and poetry. The Somaliland women also mobilized into groups easily to amplify their voices and further consolidated to form active networks, which still exist to-date, to coalesce their skills in advocating and lobbying. To ensure that ceasefires and peace negotiations were upheld, the Somaliland women sold their valuables e.g. jewellery, to support logistics and any financial needs. However this activism never translated to positions of power as the power sharing was and still is on the basis of the clans. Traditions and culture were also established as other barriers to women's participation and this is further exacerbated by high illiteracy and lack of information among the women.

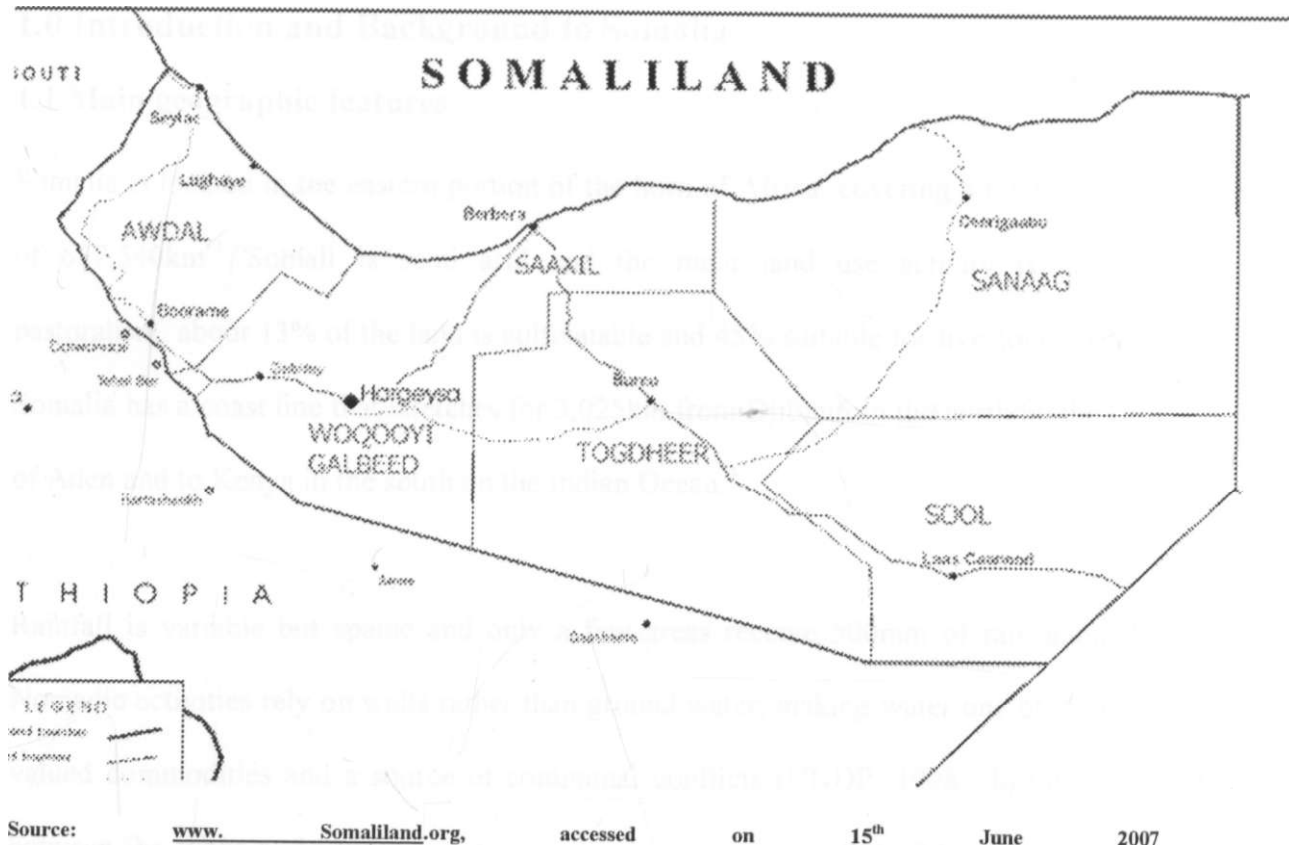
Women's skills to mobilize and advocate for peace informally should be upheld, integrated and institutionalized as a unique strategy to achieve sustainable peace by stakeholders, authorities and Governments. A concerted effort should be made towards the promotion of women's rights as a key strategy to ensure that a critical mass of both men and women participate in peace building. A conducive environment should ideally exist to ensure that women as well as men participate; this can be achieved through gender sensitive policies which enshrine affirmative action for women's leadership and quotas for women in decision making processes and positions. Documentation of the role of women is also key as an advocacy tool for sensitizing all stakeholders on the important role played by women in the peace building processes.

MAP OF SOMALIA



Source: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, cartographic section, January 2007

MAP OF SOMALILAND



## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction and Background to Somalia

#### 1.1 Main geographic features

Somalia is located in the eastern portion of the horn of Africa, covering a total land area of 637,540km.<sup>1</sup> Somali is semi arid and the main land use activity is nomadic pastoralism, about 13% of the land is cultivatable and 45% suitable for livestock raising.<sup>2</sup> Somalia has a coast line that stretches for 3,025km from Djibouti in the north on the Gulf of Aden and to Kenya in the south on the Indian Ocean.<sup>3</sup>

Rainfall is variable but sparse and only a few areas receive 500mm of rain annually. Nomadic activities rely on wells rather than ground water, making water one of the most valued commodities and a source of communal conflicts (UNDP, 1998). In the South, between the Jubba and Shabelle rivers, receives an average rainfall of 600-700mm, with the main activities being extensive rain fed cultivation for the two main crops in Somalia. However, rains fail on an average of once every five years leading to recurrent droughts and periods of hardship (UNDP, 1998). There are four main seasons; *jiilal*, from January to March which is the harshest season of the year; *Gu*, the main rainy season from April to June when rain fed agriculture is practised; *xagaa*, the period from July to September, a dry period and then *dyer*, the period between October and December which is the short

<sup>1</sup> UNDP, Human development report, 1998

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> ibid

rains and sometimes experiences flooding due to the high water levels in the main rivers as a result of the heavy rains experienced in Ethiopia.<sup>4</sup>

Somalia is the scene of periodic droughts and floods, has limited carrying capacity and thus making it prone to severe environmental degradation. This is further exacerbated by overgrazing and economic activities such as harvesting trees for charcoal exports (UN, 2006)

## **1.2 Key historical themes**

Much of the contemporary development crisis in Somalia can only be understood in the context of the country's history<sup>5</sup>. The role that the clans play in the political scene of Somalia is powerful and thus needs to be explored and examined deeply through the ages. This section aims at exploring the key historical themes and events that shaped Somalia and also shapes the interrelationships between the Somali societies.

### **1.2.1 Pre-colonial Somalia**

Somalia has a long history of migration, conquest, and assimilation. Somalia was inhabited by the Oromo and other pastoral tribes and hunter and gatherer groups before the spread of the pastoralists in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> centuries (UNDP, 1998). Along the coast, several ancient trading cities were inhabited by a mix of Arab, Persian and other communities who developed their own ethnic identities such as the Benadir and Bravan people. The Bajuni, a Swahili speaking fishing community, and the Bantu people settled along the Southern coast and the river valleys respectively (UNDP, 1998)

<sup>4</sup> UNDP, Human development report, 2001

<sup>5</sup> UNDP, human development report, 1998

In the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, Somali clans came into Somalia, first northward from Southern Ethiopia, and then southward in the riverine regions.<sup>6</sup> In these regions, the settled clans adopted a sedentary agro-pastoral lifestyle. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Somali clans continued moving southward, crossing the Jubba river and moving all the way to Tana river now in what is today a part of Kenya.

According to the Human Development Report (UNDP, 1998), the migration resulted to legacies that have been important in shaping Somalia. Firstly, a dominant Somali culture and an adherence to Islam were born. However it should be noted that behind this seemingly homogenous cultural and religious background, there are a lot of differences as most of the clans retained their ethnic identities beyond the Somalia lineage<sup>7</sup> though heavily muted by the Somalia nationalism. Secondly, the pre colonial migration explains the scattered nature of clan settlement throughout the country, the clans are found in pockets throughout the country<sup>8</sup>. This patchwork of settlements complicates clan based leadership and interclan disputes over the rights to political power and resources even in the contemporary Somali society. (UNDP, 1998) Thirdly, broadly speaking, before the pre colonial migrations, the -Somalia society was stateless<sup>9</sup>. Consequently this led to the development of social conventions that manage the social relationships to the present day society and have spilled over to managing the political arena. The society was organised

<sup>6</sup> ibid

<sup>7</sup> ibid

\* The clans are scattered all over, for example the Harti are both found in the south near Kismayo and also in the North East,; the Ogadeni will be found in the ogaden region of Ethiopia as well as in the Jubba region and also in Kenya; the Hawiye, one of the most dominant clans will be found in the central one of Somalia and also in pockets in southern Somalia and Northern Kenya;

<sup>9</sup> Lee,cassanelli,The shaping of Somali society, Philadelphia, university of Pennsylvania press, 1982

around lineage and a lot of leadership invested in traditional clan leaders whose principal role was to solve and negotiate disputes with other clans.

### **1.2.2 The colonial period**

The colonial legacy in Somalia includes the division of the Somalia people into five separate colonies in the Horn of Africa. Djibouti was colonised by the French; Somaliland Protectorate by the British; Somalia by Italy; Kenya by the British and the Ethiopians remained independent. This division of the community led to efforts to unite the Somali inhabited portions of the Italian Trust Territory Somali, Kenya and Ethiopia without success. At independence, in 1960, the British Somaliland, after only five days of self independence from 26<sup>th</sup> June 1960 to 1<sup>st</sup> July 1960, was united with the former Italian Territory of Somalia through a referendum, to form the Somali Republic.<sup>10</sup>

Colonialism thus introduced foreign political structures as opposed to the traditional clan systems and a notion of European nationalism fuelling a rise of Somali nationalism in a context of a poorly developed national identity since the Somalis were more localized to clan bases. This then resulted in a stronger alignment to clan structures rather than nationalism". Even with opportunities for formal education and exposure to international development, economies and ideologies, Clanism still remains a strong undercurrent in both the social and political arenas.

The colonial period led to an insurgence of urban centres although as earlier noted the community still remains sedentary and rural based agro pastoralists.

<sup>10</sup> [www.somaliland.org](http://www.somaliland.org), accessed on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017

<sup>11</sup> UNDP, 1998



### 1.2.3 Independent Somalia (1960-1990)

During the three decades of independence under documentation; 1960-1969, which is the period just after independence, experienced a rise of multi party democracy which then witnessed gradual deterioration to strengthened fragmentation and danism. The period from 1970 to the mid 1970's was brief and characterized by socialist development initiatives and finally the period between the mid 1970's to the 1990's, the development and political arenas in Somalia were characterized by high levels of corruption , repression and decay of the nation(UNDP 1998).

Notably however, Somalia though experiencing several periods of unrest, since independence, had the first crisis in 1988 and this led to the ultimate disintegration of the country.<sup>12</sup> The uprising was fuelled by clan based rivalries as well as political and economic considerations. The North (now Somaliland), largely inhabited by the *Isaaq* clan, were opposed to being ruled by the Marehan (Siad Barre), and their region was more productive producing surplus livestock. They felt a sense of injustice since the resources were not benefiting them primarily and the subsequent distribution did not lead to an equitable regional economic development.<sup>13</sup>

An uprising , led by the Somalia National Movement (SNM); a group rooted mainly in the North led to a terrible clash between the forces loyal to Siad Barre and this led to destruction of the major towns in the North, particularly in Hargeisa (now the capital of

<sup>12</sup> Mohammed Sahnoun, the missed opportunities, united states institute of peace press, Washington DC, 1994

<sup>13</sup> ibid

Somaliland) and Burao<sup>14</sup>. An estimated number of 5,000 civilian members of the *Isaaq* clan were killed and many more injured in the following months as insurgency and repression spread throughout the region<sup>15</sup>.

By and by, the conflict spread to the whole country under Siad Barre, who unleashed the worst reprisals ever witnessed against his own people. As the situation deteriorated, the Government pushed for peace talks with the increasing rebel movements unsuccessfully. On January 27<sup>th</sup> 1991, Siad Barre and his supporters fled from Mogadishu (the capital of the Somali republic and the seat for the presidency) leaving the country without a Government and the major insurgent movements controlling the Mogadishu.<sup>16</sup>

#### **1.2.4 Background to Somaliland**

##### **a) Political background**

The SNM leadership, concentrated on the problems in the North during the long period of turmoil, hatred, mistrust, clan manouvering and turmoil in the South and a surprising degree of peace between the clans *{Isaaq* and non *Isaaq}* in the North (now Somaliland) was secured largely through the efforts of the traditional clan elders.<sup>17</sup> On May 18<sup>th</sup>,  
*m*  
1991, the SNM leadership proclaimed that their region would resume independence from the South, taking the title Somaliland Republic. This pragmatic decision reflected the growing tide of public favouring separatism and also the Somaliland people concentrating on rebuilding their country after the devastation witnessed during the SNM

<sup>14</sup> Richard Greenfield, Barre's unholy alliances, Africa report, 1989,pg66

<sup>15</sup> UN, the situation in Somalia, report of the secretary general,s/23 829, 1992

<sup>16</sup> Mohammed Sahnoun, the missed opportunities, united states institute of peace press, Washington DC, 1994

<sup>17</sup> Ioan M,Lewis, Blood and bone, the call of kinship in Somali society, the red sea press, UJ,USA,1994

uprising.<sup>18</sup> This was a decision of a clan conference in Burao at which the *Isaaq* and non-*Isaaq* clans reconciled after a long period of animosity and civil strife<sup>19</sup>.

The secession was a pragmatic move to distance the North from the factional fighting in the South, it signaled that the Northerners had no territorial claims on the South<sup>20</sup> The Somali Republic had now reverted to its two former constituent colonial units; the ex Italian and the ex British- which now had two interim Governments- neither which recognized the other and each seeking diplomatic recognition.<sup>21</sup> The decision to secede was however not in consultation with the numerous political factions in the rest of the regions. The Independence from Somalia of the northern region resulted into Somaliland (Somali: *Soomaaliland*) as a *de facto* independent republic located within the internationally recognized borders of Somalia. However, till to date, it has not been recognized by any other country or international organization<sup>22</sup>.

#### **b) Location and climate**

Somaliland is situated on the Eastern Horn of Africa and lies between the 08°00' - 11°30' parallel North of the Equator and between 42°30' - 49°00' Meridian East of the Greenwich. It has an area of 137,600km<sup>2</sup> (68,000 sq. miles) and shares borders with Republic of Djibouti to the West, Federal Republic of Ethiopia to the South and Somalia

<sup>18</sup> ibid

<sup>19</sup> Judy bushra and Judith gardener; 2004, Somalia, the untold story, the war through the eyes of Somali women, Pluto press and CIIR , London,uk

<sup>20</sup> ibid

<sup>21</sup> ibid

<sup>22</sup> www.wikipedia.org

to the East. Somaliland has a coastal line to the north of the country which extends 460 miles along the Red Sea<sup>23</sup> as defined by the Gulf of Aden.

According to the Official Government website, ([www.somaliland.org](http://www.somaliland.org)), the population of Somaliland is estimated at around 3.5 million, with an average population growth rate of 3.1% and an average life expectancy of 50 years for males and 55 years for females. Population density is estimated at approximately 25 persons per sq. kilometre as at 1997<sup>24</sup>. Fifty-five percent of the population is either nomadic or semi-nomadic, while 45% live in urban centres or rural towns.

Somaliland is situated north of the Equator; it is semiarid and has daily average temperatures of 25 degrees to 35 degrees centigrade. It has three topographic zones; the coastal plains (*Guban*), the coastal range (*Ogo*) and the plateau (*Hawd*)<sup>25</sup>. There are four recognized seasons of the year, *Gu* (late March, April and May) as the first part of summer; *Hcigcia*; another summer period and *jilal* and *deyr* as the winter seasons. Humidity varies from 63% in the dry season to 82% in the wet season.

The backbone of the economy (60-65%) is livestock production. The total livestock in the country is estimated at 24 million. In 1996, 3 million heads of livestock were exported to the Middle Eastern countries. The country also exports Hides, Skins, Myrrh and

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of planning and coordination, republic of Somaliland(2004), Somaliland In figures, Hargeisa, Somaliland

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

Frankincense in smaller scale<sup>26</sup>. Land under cultivation is currently estimated at 3% of the total geographical area and another 7% has potential for agricultural development.<sup>27</sup>

### **1.2.5 Historical Background to the Somali conflict**

The conflict history of Somalia goes way back to the colonial period where the partition of Africa divided the pastoralists more than any other African ethnic group. There were five Somalis; one each under, France, Italy, Ethiopia and two under Britain and one ruled indirectly under Kenya (the Northern Frontier District). After independence, in 1960, a more unique challenge other than nation building emerged, the extending of national statehood outside the frontiers of the Somali republic (formed under the union of British and Italian Somaliland) , to embrace the remaining portions of the nation in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya<sup>28</sup>. However, the first nine years of independence seemed to have a strong sense of cultural nationhood/nationalism though they never constituted a single united political unit.

Unity was based on kinship traced along the male lines<sup>29</sup> and thus internally divided into a myriad of competing lineages. The language spoken throughout Somali is the same, the religion, the nomadic herding culture thus forming an ethnic group, this was fodder for the after independence nationalist politicians who naturally sought to politicize this cultural legacy and transform it to an effective national and political cohesion<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> [www.somaliland.org](http://www.somaliland.org)

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of planning and coordination, republic of Soinaliland(2004), Somaliland In figures, Hargeisa, Somaliland

<sup>28</sup> Ioan.MLewis, Blood and bones, the call of kinship in Somali society, the red sea press, NJ,USA, 1994

<sup>29</sup> ibid

<sup>30</sup> ibid

The scenario changed drastically with a coup in October of 1969 by General Mohammad Siad Barre.<sup>31</sup> His regime adopted "scientific socialism"<sup>32</sup> with the aim of eradicating the clan divisions and uniting the nation. Tribalism (clan based) now associated with nepotism and corruption, was banned officially and tribalistic behaviour became a serious criminal offence (Lewis 1994). Line genealogies, the traditional basis of socio-political identity and their use to identify people, were banned. The head of state now was the father of the nation, whose mother was the revolution whose ideology was legitimated with reference to the holy trinity of Marx, Lenin and Siad.<sup>33</sup>

Siad introduced Soviet Union backed initiatives which included creating a written Somali language and declaring it an official national language and forthwith launching intensive nationwide urban and rural literacy campaigns in the 1970s, massive environmental programs, health infrastructure, schools, modern legislation and controversial marriage and family laws<sup>34</sup> all directed at eliminating clan and lineage divisions

Siad's rule which with time became more dictatorial and unpopular had a powerful inner power circle consisting of members of three closely related clans, the *Marehan* (his patrilineal clan), the *Duba/hante* (the clan of his son in law) and the *Ogadeni* (his mother's brother's clan) all segmentary groupings of the *Dcirood* clan.<sup>35</sup>

\* *ibid*

" Ahmed I Sainatar, 1988, *socialist Somalia: rhetoric and reality*, London zed books

Ioan.M.Lewis, *Blood and bones, the call of kinship in Somali society*, the red sea press, NJ, USA, 1994

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*

During the 1974-5, in the initial years of the Ethiopian revolution, following Haile Sellasie's deposition in October 1974 encouraged the Ogaden Somalis to seize an opportunity for separation. Siad invaded Ethiopian Ogaden in a bid to liberate the Somali speaking people of Ethiopia by pushing out the Ethiopians from the Ogaden. This is referred to historically as the Ogadeni war in which the forces of the Western Somalia liberation front and the Somali troops united in the war. The Ethiopians under Mengistu however pushed the Somali armies out with support from the Soviet Union, who took advantage of power alignments in the Horn of Africa. It is notable that the army from Somalia was quite large and Siad's rule was synonymous to this army.

This defeat led to a high influx of refugees from the Ogadeni region into Somalia in 1978-9, creating immense resource constraints in a country that was dependent of humanitarian aid (Lewis, 1986). Majority of the refugees were placed in camps in the North, where the hosts came from the *Isaac* clan, whom they had traditionally confronted in their herding movements<sup>36</sup>.

According to Lewis (1994), The Ogadeni war, and the defeat which was further exacerbated by the refugee influx, led to public demoralization and an upsurge of clanism as a result of the upset clan demography by the refugee influx among other factors. All the measures of Siad's scientific socialism had clearly not succeeded in transforming into a Somali nation, armed opposition spread throughout the country with the key aim of overthrowing Siad's regime which was also marked with clan oriented demands thus weakening the impact of the rebellion. In 1989-90, in the North, the Somali

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

National Movement (SNM) drawing support from the *Isaaq* clan waged a civil war in the north that left a trail of destruction. The *Mctrjarteen* had also formed the Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) which had its operational bases in Ethiopia further showed the disintegration of the Somali national solidarity.

In anticipation to these rebellious factions within Somalia, which was further impacted on by his weak political base; Siad began a protracted war against his own people. His strategies were firstly to secure an Ethiopian cooperation to cauterize both the SSDF and the SNM. A truce was signed in 1988 and each of the country undertook to cease supporting each other's dissidents, consequently Ethiopia withdrew its support to both SNM and SSDF. As a result, the SNM waged the 1988 -91 civil war between the regime and the Isaac clan<sup>37</sup>.

Secondly, Siad Barre now employed danism to replace socialism and consolidated his own clan and family. He started using his army, into which the male Ogadeni refugees in the north had been conscripted, to weaken rebellious clans and movements, mainly the SSDF, the SNM and the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), established in 1989 by the *Ogadeni* and the United Somali congress (mainly *Hawiye*). The Siad family used all sorts of coercion and rewards to maintain lineage rivalry within the nation leading to a period of utmost corruption. The alliance that had earlier formed of the three clans crumbled. This is what set a stage for the most savage and ruthless wars in the world.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*



A period of intense interclan battles and wars followed and Siad sought to use these divisions to his advantage, however his position got threatened further and in desperation, he turned his artillery to Mogadishu leading to the worst uprising that eventually led to his flight on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1991. Even after the ouster of Siad Barre, interclan battles of control raged and this was further exacerbated by severe famine in 1991-2 which captured the interest of the international communities. In November 1992, the USA sent in their military as a means to stem the famine which was code named the Operation Restore Hope, with the plan that the UN would take over when law and order was restored. The command passed on to the UN, code named UNOSOM, uneventfully in May of 1993 with lightly armed personnel. Aideed's men had confrontations with the UN forces leading to deaths but the worst incidence that contributed to a final withdrawal was the downing on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1993, of two US special forces helicopters and the deaths of 18 US military personnel and between seven hundred and one thousand Somalis in the cross fire. UNOSOM finally withdrew in March of 1995 after two years of half hearted attempts to keep the peace keeping mission on. This changed the course of events in Somalia forever.

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Since when Siad fled in 1991, Somalia has been without a central Government. General Aideed who was a faction leader was killed in action in 1996 and his son, Hussein took over. The number of factions kept growing and throwing into more disarray centralization and by 1997 a total number of twenty seven factions existed. This led to subsequent protracted fighting among rival clan leaders leading to the rise of war lords, death, dislocation and starvation among thousands of Somalis and as a result many have

fled their country and remained as refugees to date in neighbouring countries while others have sought asylum the world over.

As a result, the Somali republic and the Somali people have remained an enigma to the rest of the world in this century without laws, no central Government, no courts, no taxing system, and no single official currency among other important aspects that govern a country. However there have been various attempts to the restoration of peace as supported by the international community and currently a weak Transitional Federal Government that is fighting for space and control nationally with UN support.

After about the 15 years of Somali civil war and instability and thirteen reconciliation and peace conferences; IGAD facilitated a two year long Somali National Peace and Reconciliation Conference, the conference successfully concluded with the inauguration of the 275 members with 12% as women Transitional Federal Parliament in August 2004; the election of the President in October 2004; and finally the endorsement of the Prime Minister and the Transitional Federal Government in early 2005. The Transitional Federal Government has been based in Nairobi since inauguration and now has relocated to Somali to set up its Government. The Government however, has been severely constrained in asserting its power nationally.

The current situation in Somali presents unique challenges and constraints and thus the new government faces a major task especially of creating an efficient and inclusive national administration. In addition to establishing the central political, legislative,

judicial and financial frameworks that are crucial to reconstruction, the Government will have to create effective regional and district administrations to oversee key social services, provide the conditions for security and the rule of law, and lay the groundwork for the reconstruction and development initiatives that are vital to the country's future. More to this, the Government must do so with a visibility and credibility that will inspire the confidence of the Somali people and give it a mandate to lead Somalia into a new era of peace and reconciliation.

### **1.3 Over view of Women and the Somali conflict**

#### **1.3.1 Gender relations**

The Somali society is patriarchal and the male child is given greater symbolic value than female. Generally, the birth of a boy is celebrated with the slaughtering of two animals whereas only one is slaughtered for a female, if any<sup>38</sup>. Further, male homicide, requires twice the compensation a female homicide demands and revenge killings are obligatory for men but rare for women. Boys are viewed as the continuation of the clan and their father's lineage<sup>39</sup>. Thus in retrospect, women and girls in the Somalia society are viewed as inferior to men and thus "men take dominant roles in the society in both religion and politics. There exists strict division of labour with the women responsible for domestic tasks and chores which range from finding and preparing the food, collection of water

<sup>38</sup> Bushra and Gardner, 2004

<sup>39</sup> ibid

and firewood to child rearing. This leaves women with little or no time to participate in community decisions and activities.<sup>40</sup>

Although within most groups Somali women have always played a significant role in the economy, traditionally their sphere of influence and decision making was, publicly at least, confined to the home. The exception was during the conflict when a woman may be expected to play the role of peace envoy or messenger between her husband's clan and her father's clan<sup>41</sup>.

Even before the war, Somalia had among the lowest literacy rates in the world for both men and women. The war exacerbated this and severely affected access to education. The war made families more dependent on girls to substitute for their mother's gender roles and this further diminished their chances for education<sup>42</sup>. Bushra and Gardener (2004), further note that the lack of education, especially Arabic comprehension, result in the Somali women not being conversant with Islam and the shariah law. In communities where there has been a rise of fundamentalism, common religious references are used to exert control over women. Ttle Somalia men also lack education too, however, since they are assumed to have a higher social standing superior to women, and free from every day responsibilities, they are assigned dominant responsibilities and society holds them responsible for decision making from household upwards, at clan level and national level (Bushra and Gardener, 2004)

<sup>40</sup> \* .

Anuna warsame, 2001, queens without crowns; Somaliland women's changing roles and peace building, horn of Africa series 4, Kenya life and peace institute/Somaliland women's research group and action group.

Bushra and Gardener, 2004

<sup>42</sup> ibid

### **1.3.2 Women and the conflict**

For those years Somalia has suffered under the hands of a civil war, Somali women have suffered similar consequences as their male counterparts and in addition, suffered unique consequences that their male counterparts have not suffered by virtue of being female<sup>43</sup>. Their suffering has been masked under the hidden complexities of the gender blind understandings of the war and its aftermath. Most commonly the war has been viewed in terms of how it affects the Somali people and the gender specific disadvantages and how it impacts on the gender relations are commonly not featured.

Sirleaf and Rehn (2002) reviewed the global evidence on women and war and have documented the horrors experienced by women in war. The UNIFEM publication documents accounts of gang rapes, rape camps, mutilation, murder, sexual slavery and the scars of brutality on women as evidence of the horrors experienced by women. Further, in the context of Somalia, in Bushra and Gardener (2004), professional Somali women present accounts of personal experiences and professional observations which leave no doubt to the terror experienced by women during conflicts and war. The Somali women present accounts of the mass exodus of families from major towns fleeing extreme violence yet trying to keep together while still trying to keep safe, the plight of pregnant women, accounts of stress induced labour, lack of health facilities, security nor privacy, lack of access to water and other direct impacts of war.

<sup>43</sup> UNIFEM,2005

These documentations, with personal accounts and professional observations, further support the many conclusions that women have been the primary victims of the conflict and war. They suffer prolonged displacement, subjected to sexual violence; assume roles as the household heads in the absence of the men; assume caretaking for the children and the elderly in insecure and difficult circumstances, are vulnerable to exploitation and other human rights abuses and contracting HIVAIDS from sexual violence.

During the various dynamic periods of the protracted conflict and civil war, Somali women became particularly vulnerable as the traditional support networks collapsed leaving women with no social support from the clan system that was the safety net there before. At large, Somali women in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) settlements have particularly faced human rights violations and Sexual and Gender Based Violences (SGBV) in their acquired roles as the breadwinners for their families in the absence of a clan structure to protect them. They are exposed and have to traverse unfamiliar ground under insecure conditions to search for basic needs such as water, firewood, shelter and food exposing them to abuse.

The instability, insecurity and infrastructural damage that came with the protracted conflict devastated the Somalia economy, famine and loss of homes that has severely impacted on the women. Women and children have been caught in the crossfire and have fled their homes in a desperate attempt to escape the fighting. This has led to a proliferation of female led households within the refugee families and the IDP families. Violence has become a way of life for a vast majority of the male population;

proliferation of small arms worsened the situation further leading to the women being more ostracized and sidelined.

More often than not, the Somali women have been perceived as victims of war only in the home front and in their roles as wives and mothers. Their experiences outside the households are not recognized as well as the fact that a change in gender relations rendered the women breadwinners for their families and have for those years sustained the country through trade. As survivors of the conflict, they bear the burden of reconstruction in a context that hardly recognizes their roles.

### **1.3.3 Somali Women and traditional conflict resolution**

Somali traditional culture is a predominately patriarchal society that blends nomadic pastoral traditions and norms with Islamic teaching. The shape of the culture is affected by the interaction between these two factors<sup>44</sup>. All Somali identity and ethnicity will belong through patrilineal descent to one of the six kin based clan families that make up a confederation of genealogy related clans<sup>45</sup> thus tracing their blood relationships through the male line. Clans could be divided into sub clans which will be composed of primary lineage groups and within each of these groups are the *diya* paying groups, each of which can act as a corporate unit and as such the most binding levels of the clan<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> UNICEF/Academy for peace, 2002, Women's rights in Islam and Somalia culture, Somaliland.

<sup>45</sup> Lewis, 1994

<sup>46</sup> WSP, 2005

Kinship thus assigns every Somali an identity, which in turn defines relationships with other members of the society, rights, obligations and even personal security<sup>47</sup>. A woman belongs to her father's clan and even marriage does not change this. For a man, clan identity is with his brothers and male relatives from the father's side and passes on to his sons, this also represents his political affiliation (Lewis, 1994). His links with his mother, whether from the same clan with the father or not is weak in terms of clan solidarity and loyalty.

A woman on the other hand, has a strong relationship with her mother's clan and she can be identified with both her maternal or paternal clan which gives her dual support and protection that is not available to men<sup>48</sup>. However this dual identity has been perceived as risky ambivalence and questions women's clan royalties and thus women get excluded from many decision making processes on one hand and on the other hand this has made women to be traditionally valued as the go betweens or bridges especially when there are interclan fights since they are more mobile<sup>49</sup>.

All men at birth, their security and their property belong to a specific *diya* group. A son will automatically belong to the father's *diya* group and their membership of the group unites them through a contractual alliance to receive or pay compensation (*diya*) for homicide, injury committed by or to the *diya* paying group. Women on the other hand are not members in the same way, they are not obligated to pay or collect compensation. Further family consisting of girls only receives and pays less *diya* amounts (Bushra and

<sup>47</sup> UNICEF/APD, 2002

<sup>48</sup> Bushra and Gardener, 2004

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*



Gardener, 2004). Consequently, compensation for the loss of a woman's life is usually 50 camels, half of that for a man, a hundred camels.

According to Lewis (1994), the lineage system is an ongoing structure which continuously develops through segmentation thus increases over generations. This means that what is important is the increase in male numbers thus the importance of marriage and the social celebration on the birth of boys. In the context of conflicts and war, men in the community enjoy greater safety and protection in the space controlled by their clansmen, however for women there is a slight difference in that a married woman who is not from her husband's clan, should be physically safe within his clan area as his clansmen will protect her, on the other hand if she was childless, she would feel safer in her father's clan and go back to her maternal home, further if she had children, she will keep them within their own clan (her husband's) to keep them safe<sup>50</sup>. If the children were girls she will most likely take them with her to her own clan since they are not at risk of revenge killings.

Power in the clan structures is differentiated along clan, gender and age lines with the women subjugated by men, young to old<sup>51</sup>. Hereditary positions dominated by the men are such as the *sultan* (clan head) at the level of the clan division who is a symbol of authority; the *Akil* or *nabad-doon* (elder or peacemaker) who are all men heading a household unit, who attend a *shiiir* (council) to discuss important matters such as peace,

<sup>50</sup> Bushra and Gardener,(ed), 2004

<sup>51</sup> Bushra and Gardner(ed), 2004

conflict, compensation, marriage, divorce, inheritance and all issues that need their attention . The *shiir* is guided by traditional law, *xeer*.

The *shiir* excludes women<sup>53</sup> and the woman in this patriarchal society is supposed to obey, respect, honor and respect her husband as well as all other male relatives. Women perform all domestic chores, rearing children, constructing the house (*aqai'*), milking, collecting firewood, food and water<sup>54</sup> but do not participate in the decision making processes. However, Amina Warsame (2001), in Bushra and Gardener (2004), states that women were never called to give their opinions publicly, but played a more invisible role through private consultations so as not to undermine the authority of men.

Islam has a huge influence on the Somalia traditions and values, the family is founded on the Islamic law (*shariah*) and thus the *xeer* borrows heavily from the *shariah*. However, contradictions between these two systems exist and in practice *xeer* takes precedence especially on marriage, divorce and inheritance<sup>55</sup>.

Several interclan convention? on protection and security in times of war were expected to observe strict rules. They stated who could or could not be attacked and those who were immune from attack (*biri-mageydo*-spared from the spear) include women, children, the sick, the elderly, poets, men of God, guests and community leaders. Sadly, these

<sup>52</sup> WSP,2005

<sup>53</sup> Bushra and Gardener, 2004

<sup>54</sup> WSP,2004

"ibid

conventions were not observed during the civil war making it unsafe for anyone to live outside the confines of their own clans<sup>56</sup>.

Women have been traditionally valued in conflict reconciliation especially through establishment of a communication bridge between warring parties to transit from a war to peace; however they get excluded from other formal stages that ensure sustenance of peace and peace building (Lewis, 1994). These latter stages are such as dialogue, negotiation and mediation which are roles traditionally reserved for the elders.

#### **1.4 Legal frameworks**

##### **1.4.1 The United Nations Resolution 1325**

In 2000, the United Nations passed UN Resolution 1325, mandating the participation of women in peace process as a landmark decision for protecting and supporting women in decision making and the peace processes. The resolution specifically mandates that all actors, states and Governments adopt measures that support local women's peace initiatives and the involvement of women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements. Further,"UN Resolution calls upon all parties to take action in integrating gender perspectives and training in peacekeeping, protecting women in armed conflict and mainstreaming of gender in all reporting systems and programs related to conflict and peace building.

<sup>56</sup> Bushra and gardener,2004

Resolution 1325 categorically calls for the consultation of women and civil society groups in peace processes and calls for gender mainstreaming in conflict resolution and conflict reconstruction. These are all measures that would place women centrally in the peace building processes.

Since the adoption of the resolution, awareness on the importance of including women in peace building and reconstruction processes has grown tremendously. Specifically, United Nation Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has been playing a leading role in promoting its use by advocating on women's behalf at international and regional forum. UNIFEM has facilitated and supported women's efforts to break through peace processes across the world with specific cases such as Burundi, Afghanistan, Sudan and Somalia. The UN-OSAGI, DPA and other civil society organizations working on women peace and security have also been instrumental in advancing the mandate of the resolution.

It is notable however; the implementation of 1325 remains sporadic, unsystematic and ad hoc.

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#### **1.4.2 The Beijing Platform for Action (BFPA)**

This international convention calls for a 30% minimum representation of women in decision making bodies which embodies all decision making platforms. This convention states that; "*the full participation of women in decision making, conflict prevention and resolution and all peace initiatives is essential to the realization of lasting peace*".

Recommendation E. 1 demands that states increase the participation of women in conflict

resolution at decision making levels and instil measures that protect women living in situations of armed or other conflicts.

In article I, the platform for action calls for promotion and protection of the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, specifically the CEDAW further giving weight to the inclusion of women in all decision making spaces.

#### **1.4.3 The Convention for the Elimination of all forms of discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women does not specifically reference to peace processes, however, Article 7 demands that states allow women to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government.

In article 8, states are called upon to take all appropriate measures to ensure women, on equal terms with men and Without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their government at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

Article 3 further solidifies by giving states an obligation to take in all fields all appropriate measures to guarantee the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms of women on a basis of equality with men.

#### **1.4.4 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

In September 2000, the UN member states embraced and endorsed eight millennium development goals by 2015. These goals commit the member states and the international community to an expanded vision of development that encompasses human development as key to sustaining development. The goals have been widely accepted as the framework for measuring development progress.

Goal number 3 specifically responds to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and thus mandates all member states to commit to the inclusion and participation of women in development issues, peace building and reconstruction development.

#### **1.4.5 The African Charter on Human and People's rights (ACPHR)**

This is an instrument that reaffirms the AU member states' commitment to peace and security among other fundamental issues such as good governance and economic empowerment. Further, the protocol to the ACPHR women's rights further testifies to the reaffirmation by Africa that women's rights are central to development. The protocol specifically calls for protection of women's rights and calls for measures that addresses all areas in life in which the African women are discriminated. Though the protocol does not mention peace building activities, it provides a focused platform for advocacy for inclusion of women in all spheres in life and for policies that address gender inequality.

## 1.5 Problem statement

Peace cannot succeed if more than half (52%) of the population; the women are excluded from the peace building processes. Women then as members of the society stand to lose as much as men and even more from a conflict although they are not at the centre of decisions to go to war. As survivors of the conflict, they also bear the burden of rebuilding and restoring their country. However, they have historically been marginalized and under represented in conflict resolution and peace building. They are stereotyped as victims and their peace building and conflict resolution role goes unrecognized and unrewarded.

However, their role in conflict resolution and peace building is multidimensional. First, women's participation is conceived as an issue of equitable representation, for legitimate conflict resolution requires an inclusive and participatory process, and thus is part of a reform process in which decision-making power is transferred to every citizen on the basis of equality. Second, it is frequently argued that women bring gender perspectives to the substance of negotiations and peace building processes. "Women's representation at

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the negotiating table is the *sine qua non* of gender equality and inclusion," says Graca Machel in the Secretary-General's report on children in armed conflict<sup>57</sup>. More explicitly, in peace negotiations Women make a difference because they adopt a more inclusive approach towards security and address key social and economic issues that would otherwise be ignored by their male counterparts. However their interests, rights and specific priorities are rarely given any prominence or attention during the formal peace

<sup>57</sup> UN,2006

negotiations or even in the subsequent peace building decision making platform. Thirdly, women's leadership role is most visible in their communities; it is here that they organize to end conflict and build the necessary skills for peace building and negotiations.<sup>58</sup>. In the post conflict reconstruction period, women's contributions to the economy and livelihood support during the period of war are not given weight and women are not viewed as economic and social change agents.

In Somaliland, the women played a big role in ensuring there was peace, however, not much has been documented and the information that is available is anecdotal. In this context, the study seeks to explore and document the role of the Somaliland women in contributing to a culture of peace in their region. Further, the study also explored the challenges the Somaliland women faced and recommended strategies that can ensure that women's concerns and perspectives are integrated to future peace processes.

## **1.6 Research questions**

1. What traditional conflict resolution mechanisms did Somaliland women networks engage in peace building?  
*m*
2. How did the women engage in the formal peace negotiations in Somaliland?
3. What are the main challenges and barriers to women's participation in peace building processes?

<sup>8</sup> Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Sirleaf Johnson;2000 the independent experts assessment, women war and peace, UNIFEM



## **1.7 Objectives**

- **General-** The overall objective of the study will be to examine the role of women in peace building in Somaliland.
- **Specific-** The specific objectives will be:
  1. To document the various traditional conflict resolution mechanisms undertaken by the women's networks during the peace processes.
  2. To investigate the ways in which women engaged in the formal peace processes in Somaliland.
  3. To identify the main barriers to women's participation in peace building in Somaliland.
  4. To provide practical recommendations on how to effectively involve the Somali women in the post conflict peace building.

## **1.8 Study assumption**

Somaliland Women's role in peace building has not been adequately recognized, integrated nor institutionalized in the formal post conflict transformation and peace building in Somaliland. „

## **1.9 Justification**

Conflicts and war can be justly argued as a patriarchal phenomenon as men are largely responsible for initiating wars, fuelling them and fighting them. The rhetoric of war and combat is embedded with particular views of masculinity. In this view women are often seen as passive victims of war and conflict struggling to cope with the effects of war in

their lives<sup>59</sup>. Thus women's attempts to achieve peace through mediation in the face of male war fare are often seen as evidence of women's greater preference for peace. The dominance of conflict by men and the active role of women in seeking peace lend weight to ideas which view aggressiveness as inherently male, in contrast to the women's nurturing role. This is as a result of the patriarchal structures within which societies operate and which men seek to defend, more so embodied in nations or states conflicts. Men's dominance over technology and information further entrenches male dominance and on the other hand female suppression.

Transitions from deep-rooted conflicts offer a unique opportunity to lay the foundation of a democratic, just and equal society. Central to any transition processes is the need to examine closely the gendered aspects of nation building and to institute concrete mechanisms to ensure that all people-women, men girls and boys- can enjoy freedom and participate equally in the society. Women have played a major role both on the battle front and in supporting households of Somalia during the conflict and thus in the rebuilding and reconstruction of Somalia; policies and programs should involve and reflect the role of womerr as well as take their social and economic needs into consideration.<sup>60</sup>

Gender equality needs to be integrated in the development of democratic cultures, institutions and processes of post war Somaliland through women's effective participation in the peace, reconstruction and development initiatives. The UN Resolution

<sup>59</sup> Bushra and Gardner, 2004

<sup>60</sup> UNDP,2005, annual report, UN, New York

1325 reaffirms the importance on the role of women in peace building and their equal participation in promoting peace and security through effective participation in all institutional arrangements for post conflict reconstruction.<sup>61</sup>

Through out the conflict, Somali women contributed greatly to the economy and shouldered huge responsibilities for the livelihoods of their families and still are playing an active role in peace building initiatives in several parts of the country. Therefore, the centrality of women to the reconstruction effort for Somalia calls for critical support and investments in actions to promote and protect the rights as well as strengthen women leadership at all levels. The massive reconstruction efforts in areas of education, health, infrastructure and development demand a conscious attention to the roles, responsibilities and situation of women.

In Somaliland as well as the rest of Somalia where a distinct clan system prevails, women can play an important role in post conflict reconstruction as they maintain close ties with their clans' structures and also as the women's constituency as evidenced by the cohesive women's networks that exist<sup>62</sup>. These women networks composed of women from different clans and regions have been united in opposing the war, mobilising fellow women and participating in advocating for women's human rights. They have also

<sup>61</sup> UNIFEM,2005, annual report, UN, New York

<sup>62</sup> Nagaad in Somaliland consisting of 32 women's groups is a living evidence , COGWO and WAWA also exist in south central Somalia and Puntland respectively

successfully lobbied with the international community for resources to address pertinent issues<sup>63</sup> .

Over time however, women have been seen, and will continue to be seen as change agents within the social, economic and political structures as they are above the conflict forces but can nurture peace. They therefore have a key role and need to be recognized as a formidable force in the restoration of peace through inclusion in the decision making spaces.

In this context then, this study is important as it will document and highlight the role Somaliland women have played in the search for peace, in the sustenance of peace and in reconstruction and development of Somaliland, an aspect with inadequate documentation.

<sup>63</sup> There is a vibrant civil society movement led by women in Somaliland and the rest of Somalia. These organizations have been spearheading development through addressing social, political and economic issues and reaching the communities during the periods of civil strife and in the absence of the government.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 Literature review

#### 2.1 Introduction

Despite the existence of international human rights frameworks that most countries are party to such as UN resolution 1325 on women, peace and security; the African protocol to the ACPHR on women's human rights and CEDAW which explicitly call for women's involvement in decision making at national and international levels, women remain largely excluded despite their many attempts to participate. This can be evidenced by the unsystematic involvement of women in the peace processes through out the world. In most cases it has taken the high level lobbying by international actors such as UNIFEM and the international civil society movements for the inclusion of a limited number of women in peace negotiations and other decision making spaces that involve peace building. In the 7<sup>th</sup> round of the Darfur peace negotiations, held in Abuja in 2005, UNIFEM supported a gender expert's support team (GEST) from the Darfur's to offer support to the handful who were involved in the mainstream negotiations. In Somalia, during the 14<sup>th</sup> round of peace negotiations, UNIFEM supported the women participants<sup>m</sup> technically to enable them participate effectively<sup>64</sup>.

During protracted conflicts, women and girls account for a great proportion of those adversely affected. They are vulnerable and often victims of sexual and gender based violence and other forms of human rights abuses due to a complete breakdown of social and community safety nets and at times adversaries at war also use sexual violence as a

<sup>64</sup> UNIFEM,2006, Annual report,UN

war strategy. Majority of the internally displaced persons and refugees turn out to be women who are either heading households singly or who are acting as care givers for their extended families as a result of men's conscription into the war or death during the fighting. This is further compounded by the fact that there is a rise of feminised poverty<sup>65</sup>.

Traditional and cultural practices can present formidable obstacles to the inclusion of women in peace processes or post war governance<sup>66</sup> Culture and traditions often treat women's human rights violations as cultural or private issues that are very complicated for other persons outside the community to understand. For example gender based violence is treated with a lot of privacy and the society is unwilling to recognise it as a violation of human rights. This is coupled with weak and poor enforcement of laws that beat the attempt by women to voice out their concerns even during peace negotiations and peace building activities. This leads to women's human rights not overtly addressed during post conflict peace building activities.

## **2.2 Somaliland women mobilizing for peace**

Intrastate wars can be civil where one, often-marginalized group seeks to have autonomy or transformation of the state. The conflicts can also be caused by the fragmentation of the state as has been in the case of Somalia (Bushra and Lopez, 1993). The clan system forms the basis of society in Somalia and its breakdown has been one of the main fuelling factors in the civil war. This breakdown of the clan system was brought about through colonial interference and through about 20 years of manipulation by the previous

<sup>65</sup> *ibid*

<sup>66</sup> UNFEM,2005

government, headed by Siad Barre<sup>67</sup> The conflict between clans had a very divisive effect on the whole of the community further fuelling animosity among groups and individuals and intensifying the conflict leading to intra and inter clan wars.

In such situations, gender relations are affected by the increase and lengthened physical, social and economic insecurity. Men of combat age are recruited into the war and may even be killed. In the absence of men through conscription, death of flight, women are left with the main burden of maintaining their households under situations of risk and insecurity. Due to the social fragmentation, women become very vulnerable and their potential is severely constrained.

According to ILO (1998), the type of conflict, demographic changes, the disruption of the economy and the labour market, and the peace process, inter alia, have profound implications for women and the structure of gender roles during and after conflict<sup>68</sup>. The role of men and women played in conflict is often considered in binary and oppositional terms: men as aggressors, women as victims<sup>69</sup>. Women often form the majority of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) further leading to vulnerability.

In Somaliland, the social structures broke down and there was an escalation of violence particularly targeting the minority clans, the small households and particularly the

<sup>67</sup> Williams et al, 1994, the Oxfam gender and training manual, Oxfam,uk

<sup>68</sup> Gender Guidelines for Employment and Skills Training in Conflict-Affected Countries, ILO 1998.

<sup>69</sup> The Fallen Country by Tracey L. Cousin. - 2000

female-headed households. A complete breakdown of law and order led to a grave violation of human rights and more so sexual and gender based violence leaving women in need of protection. This has had severe and long-term effects on the women's emotional, physical and social well being.

In May 1991, a clan conference organized by the Somali National Movement (SNM) leadership, in Somaliland held in Burao and attended by all the clan elders ended the hostilities and a framework for peace was established and marked the long road to peace negotiations. Somaliland now had declared independence and the clans living in the north lived in an initial euphoria. However, the euphoria was broken by interclan and sub clan fighting in the towns of Burao (1992) and Berbera in the same year.

Women in denouncing this war, majority could not fathom being engrossed in the war again. The women mobilized together (Bushra and Gardner, 2004) to collectively urge the traditional leaders to resolve the conflict and more convincingly about 300 women took to the streets of Burao, with white bands tied around their heads-a sign of mourning-and demonstrated in the streets, singing wailing and crying songs, poems (*baranbuur*<sup>70</sup>) and urging the fighters to relate to the horrible past they had just come through and running through between the two warring sub clans.<sup>71</sup> This was very instrumental in a ceasefire that was signed within a matter of days.

<sup>70</sup> Baranbur Is the name given to the poetic form used by women as a means of resistance

<sup>71</sup> Dahabo Farah, Hassan, Amina Adan and Amina Warsame, in Saskia Wieringa(Ed), 1995, *subversive women; historical experiences of gender and resistance*, London, zed books.



Women also used collective prayer meetings to pray for peace. Traditionally, Somali people come together to share food and to pray to Allah to help them overcome their difficulties such as drought, sealing trust and forging friendships, known as the *Allabari*. The women used these forums to pray for peace and gave the meetings a new meaning<sup>72</sup>.

Further women, after the Berbera 1992 conflict, addressed their grievances to the government and when this did not work, they wrote a declaration to the national council of elders and the government and copied it to the press and the warring factions basically requesting a stop to the war and a supply of basic necessities such as water and security from the police.<sup>73</sup>

The women then marched down the streets on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1992, with banners and slogans to the presidency urging the government to solve the conflicts. The declaration was read by women's representatives and the demonstrators refused to leave till a peace process had been agreed on. In the afternoon of the same day, a peace committee composed of the governments' representatives and the two warring parties was formed to come up with a peace plan. This was a milestone for the women, although none of the women was a member of the committee as traditionally, formal mediation in Somali community is a male affair, two women representatives were sent in as observers. The committee was slow in action and therefore the women again organized a peace march with demands for immediate action. The women gave the committee an ultimatum that if an agreement on holding the reconciliation meeting was not reached and agreeable to all,

<sup>72</sup> Bushra and Gardner, 2004

<sup>73</sup> WSP.2005

the women would stone the venue of the meeting. This worked and a peace conference, the "*sheikh tawfiq*" October 1992 was organized.<sup>74</sup>

The women again were not represented in the formal reconciliation conference but were in charge of all the preparations (food, logistics) and the success of the conference has been attributed to their resilience. Interestingly, as documented in Bushra and Gardner (2004), the warring factions agreed to exchange 30 young brides as a peace offering and to seal the peace agreement. It is however, said that the exchange was symbolic as it never happened in the real sense. The exchange -known as *godob reeb* carries an expectation that, the girls once wed would give birth to boys who would take clan identity of the father thereby replacing the men lost at war.

This conference marked a milestone in the Somaliland history as it led to the Grand conference on National reconciliation, held in Boroma, in 1993 and lasted for four months. The conference employed the *beel* (clan) system and almost all Somaliland clans, represented by about 2,000 men attended this conference and a national committee made up of 150 men was formed as the official voting delegates, and later became the members of the upper house in the national parliament (Bushra and Gardener, 2004). Ten women<sup>75</sup> participated in this meeting after a petition by the women's organizations. In as much as the women were allowed to present their views in front of the conference, none of the women had voting rights and the decisions lay with the male fraternity. Notably,

<sup>74</sup> Bushra and Gardner, 2004

<sup>75</sup> The women represented two organizations (Somaliland women's development association -SOWDA and Somaliland women's organization-SOLWO)

the women created peace songs, poems, speeches, pamphlets and *baranbuur* with the support of the others outside the conference<sup>76</sup>.

The Somaliland women also continuously lobbied with the elders for their concerns to be addressed more so with the insistence of peaceful coexistence to avoid further suffering. Further, Zeynab Hassan in Bushra and Gardener (2004), states that, the women who attended the conference suggested that the Boroma voting committee be turned into the house of elders, the *Guurti*. This house of elders, within a bicameral national parliament, was envisioned as having the role of peace building. It later became institutionalized and is now referred to as the upper house of elders and now acts as a check on the executive and the elected members of parliament<sup>77</sup>.

The women as in the other *sheikh tawfiq* conference supported the Boroma grand conference with food, logistical and financial support for the five months that the conference lasted. This was a self financed conference by the Somali communities and was hosted by the Boroma community.

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The Boroma conference has been described as the water shed of peace making and political development in Somaliland<sup>78</sup>. It successfully concluded interclan fighting and established a future peace process and a new civilian administration. The main outcomes

<sup>6</sup> Zeynab Mohammed Hassan, Noreen mirano.Shukri Hariir Ismail and Amina Yusuf, Women and peace making, in Bushra and Gardener(ed), 2004

<sup>77</sup> WSP, 2005

<sup>78</sup> WSP international, 2005, Rebuilding Somaliland, issues and possibilities, the red sea press int, Asmara, Eritrea.

of the workshop were, firstly, a national charter was adopted and this served as a working constitution for Somaliland for the period 1993 to 1997; secondly, a peace charter for the Somaliland clans was adopted which set out methods for conflict reconciliation and peace agreements to be mediated by the *Guurti'*, thirdly a President and vice president were elected and finally a parliament was formed comprising the 150 voting delegates of the conference (WSP, 2005). In most documents however, since women did not participate formally (through voting); their support has not been acknowledged.

The interim charter led to the formation of an interim government and more importantly defined a hybrid system of the Government- including an elected house of representatives and the house of elders, *Guurti*, a presidential executive and an independent judiciary. However, not all grievances were solved and a variety of clan based meetings and conferences were undertaken in the period between 1992 and 1996.

Notable, however is the role of the introduction of a new currency in Somaliland in 1994, that some argue was the turning point for the government whereas others argue that it led to the Somaliland war in 1994<sup>79</sup>. At the same time, the administration tried to gain control of the Hargeisa airport, which at the time was controlled by airport militia peacefully through extensive talks and consultations. A confrontation ensued and fighting broke out between the government forces and the clan militias in November 1994 in Hargeisa and spilling over into Burao leading to massive displacements from the two regions. Attempts to a peaceful solution were made through a series of interclan conferences which culminated in the Hargeisa Peace and Reconciliation Conference in October 1996 to

<sup>79</sup> WSP,2005

February 1997<sup>80</sup> funded by the government. A total of 315 delegates attended 150 parliamentary members and another 165 delegates representing all clans in Somaliland, this time with women allowed in as observers.

It is in the wake of this National Reconciliation Conference that Nagaad<sup>81</sup> umbrella organization, an umbrella organization comprising of thirty two member women organizations was founded in 1997, in Hargeisa<sup>82</sup>. As a result of the challenges for participation of women in the peace and reconciliation conferences due on the basis of clan affiliations, the women's organizations, which were thirty in number, coalesced together to seek a solution and this led to the establishment of the first women's umbrella organization in Somaliland<sup>83</sup>. The main aim was to establish a platform for women's voices to advocate for their political, social and economic rights.

In the Hargeisa conference, the women were not invited and they started to lobby for their inclusion and participation in the meeting. They were again denied entry on the basis that they had to be sent in as clan representatives, which traditionally no clan would send a woman. They exerted pressure and finally a total of thirteen women were allowed to participate but again not to vote for their choice of candidates. As a result the women organizations came together to address this problem and in May 1997, Nagaad was established<sup>84</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> Bryden matt, and farah A.Y, 1996, the Somaliland peace committee: case study of grassroots peace making initiative, UNDP,EUE

This is a Somali word meaning "after hardship, we have come to rest in peace". The name symbolizes the difficulties that women went through during both the war and the post conflict phase.

Nagaad, 2003

[www.nagaad.org](http://www.nagaad.org) accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2007

[www.nagaad.org](http://www.nagaad.org)

In this historic conference, the national charter was replaced by a provisional constitution which stipulated the validation process through a referendum<sup>85</sup>. The conference enabled the reconstruction process to continue, consolidation of peace and stability and this over the years, though Somaliland is not internationally recognized has led to cooperation of the government with the international community albeit modestly (WSP,2005).

### **2.3 Impact of war on Somaliland women**

In Somaliland, and indeed throughout Somalia, women, who constitute over half of the population, have not been accorded the same basic rights as the men.<sup>86</sup> Violence against women in conflict is one of the history's greatest silences<sup>87</sup>. Many women suffered from sexual violence during the war and after the war in the refugee camps and in the internally displaced persons settlements<sup>88</sup>. However, very little is documented on the wartime rape of thousands of Somali women and girls between 1991 and 1994 and later on in the conflict, which is still an ongoing crime in some pocket areas such as the IDP settlements (Gardener and Bushra (2004).

### **2.4 Case studies; Sudan and Congo**

According to the international crisis group (Africa report no 112), an organization working to prevent conflict worldwide, there has been historical indifference and resistance in Sudan, Congo and Uganda towards giving women entry into one of the most

<sup>85</sup> WSP, 2005

<sup>86</sup> UNDP,HDR,2001

Elisabeth Relin and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, The independent experts assessment, women war and peace, progress of the worlds women, 2002, vol. 1, UNIFEM,NY,USA

<sup>88</sup> UNDP,2001

male dominated of enclaves, the security sector. Further, the report states that, across the three lands, women peace builders, often without support are trying to bring security and peace to their regions. Yet for too many policy makers, recognising the role of women in conflict resolution remains as an after thought. Many see improving the status of women as an issue to be addressed further down the road in times of peace.

In the more than forty years of war in Sudan, majority of women were displaced but key women leaders and civil society organizations played both formal and informal roles in the several peace processes and have consistently transcended conflict lines across the country. They lobbied for increased participation of women in all aspects of the peace processes and putting forth women's needs and voices. Their experiences have led to key women in the newly formed government of south Sudan.

In the Congo, women were disproportionately affected and faced many challenges but strived to be involved in the peace processes. They played a key role despite challenges of being excluded from high level negotiations, no women participated in the 1999 Lusaka ceasefire talks, and there were only 10% women at the intercongolese dialogue in 2002.<sup>89</sup> The Congolese women have been able to mobilise collectively and individually although they still face high resistance.

It is important not to approach the issues of women's role on peace building as uniform as the contexts in the countries are different and the conflict dynamics different. However

<sup>89</sup> T> Emily Schroeder, a window of opportunity in the Congo: incorporating gender considerations in disarmament, demobilization ad reintegration process, in peace conflict and development vol, 5, university of Bradford, July 2004, <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk.pdf> accessed on 27 august 2006.

it is almost uniform that most women in the conflict countries remain focused on survival during the turbulent times, meaning remaining as far out of sight as possible rather than publicly opposing the Male structures. In this context therefore, there is need to explore and document the plight of women during peace building processes and their role in the search for peace.

## **2.5 Theoretical framework**

This study is premised on the socialist feminist theory, which is a branch of feminism that focuses upon the private and public spheres of a woman's life and argues that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both economic and cultural oppression of women. The socialist feminist theory is the extension of feminism onto theoretical or philosophical ground in a variety of disciplines, prominently including the approaches to women's roles. The theory aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality<sup>90</sup>. Further, the theory analyzes gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights and issues.

Socialist feminists argue, that women's situation is as a result of the system of social relations that ensure male domination over women. Further, socialist feminists maintain that Marxism and Marxist feminism offer an inadequate formulation of women's status, and also that radical feminists analysis of patriarchy is inadequate, as it is historic and universalistic and thus in this argument socialist feminists insist on materialist analysis of women's oppression. In this sense, the analysis centres more on production and

<sup>90</sup> [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org) accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007



reproduction within the family and the larger political economy; patriarchal oppression is tied to the need to control women's fertility, sexuality and labour<sup>91</sup>.

In this context then, the Gender and Development (GAD) theory, one of the major feminist development theories whose focus is on the unequal power relations and gender inequalities that prevents women's full participation in development; provides a substantive and holistic conceptual structure for guidance in the examination of participation of men and women as the centrality to social and economic development of the community.

The GAD perspective lays its basis on the social feminism theory and calls for a synthesis of issues of materialistic political economy and the radical feminism issues of patriarchy and patriarchal ideology. GAD, drawing heavily from the socialist feminists, argues that women's status in the society is deeply affected by the material conditions of life and by their position in the national, regional and global economies. It recognizes that women are deeply affected by the nature of patriarchal power in their societies at different levels from the household to the national. More over, women's material conditions and the patriarchal authority are defined and maintained by the accepted norms and values that define roles in a particular community<sup>92</sup>.

GAD adopts a two pronged study to women and development; first it investigates women's conditions and class positions and secondly; the patriarchal structures that

<sup>91</sup> [www.feministezine.com/feminist/modern/socialist\\_feminism-](http://www.feministezine.com/feminist/modern/socialist_feminism-) accessed on 2nd September 2007

<sup>92</sup> Sen. and Grown, 1987

define women's subordination. It pays recognition to the socially constructed relations between men and women, as the main determinants of women's position in the society. Further the theory focuses on the interconnectivity of gender, class, race and the social construction. The GAD theory focuses on both the strategic and practical needs of women and further proposes addressing the root structural inequalities that are the basis of women's subordination. The theory reminds policy makers and development practitioners that it is important to address the practical and strategic needs as identified by women and men through a people centred development. Thus the ultimate goal of this development framework is equitable, sustainable development with both women and men as the decision makers. Thus the theory recognizes women as change agents rather than recipients of development.

In this study, the Gender and Development theory is more applicable as compared to the Women In Development (WID) as it pays more attention to gender relations, women's subordination and examines women's inequality and their empowerment as one of the key strategies for change. On the other hand, WID views the absence of women in development plans as the problem and only focuses on women as they comprise of more than half of the population and thus advocates for integration of women in the already existing development plans with a special focus on women's projects or components in the mainstream plans. WID thus tends to focus on women's practical needs and overwhelmingly uses the strategy of increasing women's ability to look after their households.

The GAD perspective further identifies the cultural values and the social institutions that give men power over women as needing change. Thus GAD advocates for a long term changes through addressing the root causes. Further it assists in relating of an issue to other issues within the society which leads to proposition of effective solutions.

This theoretical framework is relevant to this research as it primarily explores the situation of women, the social relations and the unequal power relations that curtail women's full participation in development.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 5.0 Methodology

#### 3.1 Research site

The study was carried out in the region known as Somaliland which is the North Eastern region of the Republic of Somalia, found in the Horn of Africa. The study covered the whole of Hargeisa town, which is the chief/capital city of Somaliland and where Nagaad umbrella organization is based and where the bulk of the women group's members under Nagaad umbrella organization are headquartered and carry out their activities from.

#### 3.2 Sampling

Two National women's umbrella groups were identified, before hand; these are the Nagaad umbrella organization and National Women's Organization (NOW). Using purposive sampling, Nagaad was earmarked and identified due to its historical background in activism around women's human rights and their participation in all decision making processes that affect women's lives. Further Nagaad umbrella organization strives to make all voices of women heard and the fact that it was formed at the height of women's clamour for representation and involvement during the peace processes in 1997 offered a more logical choice for the study<sup>91</sup>.

Upon discussions and consultations with the Executive Director of Nagaad Umbrella organization; Ms. Amina Warsame; the pre-existing list of member organizations, now to be referred to as the Sampling frame was availed. By use of simple random sampling

<sup>93</sup> www.nagaad.org, Nagaads vision and mission accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007

methodology, a total of ten member groups were identified as the representative sample from a total of thirty four. Starting with the first group on the list, a group was identified  
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after every 4 group on the list up to a total of ten selected groups. Further, from the identified groups<sup>94</sup>, an available member of the steering committee (chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary or treasurer) were identified and contacted by phone or courtesy call/visits to establish their availability. Appointments were then made with the available group leaders by the lead researcher on phone and through courtesy calls and visits to the offices.

The group leaders then availed their group lists and through random sampling; four other members were drawn from the list of membership of each group, making a total of five respondents from each of the identified groups totalling to 50 female respondents. The group leaders shared relevant contact information such as telephone numbers and actual /physical location of the respondents' residences for ease of communication and in setting up the appointments. These respondents were subjected to a semi structured questionnaire by the lead researcher and the two research assistants upon consent.

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Further, using purposive or judgemental sampling, a total number of twenty (20) women comprising of, female legislators/parliamentarians, key women activists, key women leaders working with the existing female led NGOs and women who have been involved in the formal peace negotiations were also drawn to form the bulk respondents for the key informants and in-depth interviews. The lead researcher communicated with these

<sup>94</sup> Find the list of groups identified and involved in the study in annex 6

respondents through telephone and emails prior to the field mission and obtained their consent.

Further, a sample of 10 male respondents were identified from Hargeisa, through random sampling, and subjected to in-depth interviews to gauge their attitudes and views on the role of the women in peace building. A total number of eighty (80) respondents were contacted and interviewed for this study.

### **3.3 Research design and Data collection**

Both primary and secondary sources were used for data collection. The study was exploratory, with the aim of documenting the role that women played in the arena of peace building in Somaliland. This was a holistic study, which tried to gather as much information as possible to get a clear picture on the study objectives. During the data analysis and synthesis, the findings were generalized and disengaged from single person's views and occurrences, to focus more on the commonality of the information gathered.

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The field study was designed to be undertaken in fourteen days by the lead researcher supported by two research assistants. The data collected was analysed through SPSS and other qualitative methods such as by use of a developed checklist.

#### **3.3.1 In-depth and key informant interviews**

Due to the descriptive and exploratory nature of the study, In-depth interviews and key informant interviews were very instrumental in examining the role that the Somaliland

women played in the peace processes that resulted into peaceful agreements and the current peace being enjoyed in Somaliland. Sampling was purposive and relied more on well informed female persons who were either involved in the peace processes or are in positions of authority and decision making, these were such as female legislators, women leaders and women activists.

The two methods were used to probe respondents on their feelings, beliefs and more importantly a descriptive explanation of the actual experiences in the peace building arena using exploratory open ended and semi structured questions. Further, the key informant interviews and the in-depth interviews also revolved on discussions on the barriers to women's participation and practical recommendations on how to effectively involve Somaliland women in the post conflict transformation of Somaliland.

These interviews were the main source of information and also supplemented data and information that was gathered using the structured questionnaires and materials from secondary sources such as reports from stakeholders such as organizations.

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### **3.3.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

Focus Group Discussions were applied to the study to both male and female respondents to examine the attitude and perceptions of the community on the role of women in peace building and also to bring out additional information due to group interactions. Further, the discussions also centred on the identification of challenges and barriers that women encounter in participating in peace building activities at various levels. The female respondents were drawn from SOWDA, one of the identified women group members of

the Nagaad umbrella organization by default. The chairperson had been requested to contact a total number of four respondents for the structured interviews, however, she organized a meeting of eight (an extra three) group members together and thus, the interview session was changed to a focus group discussion. One FGD was conducted to male respondents, giving a total of two FGDs.

### **3.3.4 Secondary data sources**

Secondary sources of information such as reports, web publications, publications and position papers were obtained from the key international, regional and local agencies and civil society organizations working on women's empowerment, conflict resolution and post conflict rebuilding in the region.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

Different data analysis methodologies were used for the different kinds of data collected. Quantitative data, which was collected using structured questionnaires (attached in annex 1), was analyzed using the SPSS statistical software. Prior to the analysis a Codebook (attached in annex 7) for the various quantitative variables was prepared. The Codebook was prepared based on the numbering system of the questionnaires. (All the questionnaires had been numbered before data collection for ease of referencing). This was significant in isolating the quantitative data from the qualitative data from each of the structured questionnaires. However, the qualitative data in the questionnaires was used to describe and explain the quantitative data.



All the quantitative variables were chronologically arranged with respect to the questionnaire outline and this ensured that the correct coding was issued for variables. The data, in form of the coded variables, was then entered into the SPSS sheets and posted on the Y axis of the SPSS Sheet while the questionnaire numbers were presented on the X axis of the Sheet. Data entry was followed by editing to ensure that information entered for each questionnaire in each variable was correct. Using the coded variables and the questionnaire numbers, it was easy to edit erroneous data and verify the data entered. All data entered was analysed using the various SPSS tools and various graphical presentations such as tables, bar graphs and pie charts were developed for ease of data presentation and clarity.

For qualitative data, which was mainly gathered from key informants, in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and to a lesser extent from the open-ended questions in the questionnaires; a qualitative data checklist was developed (attached in annex 5). The checklist was clustered along the main themes of the research to ease the consolidation of information and interpretation. The main themes in the checklists included; Level of involvement of Somaliland women in Peace Building and conflict resolution initiatives; Nature of their involvement; awareness on frameworks that promote women's participation in conflict resolution and peace building; the level of networking by women groups; barriers to women's participation in conflict resolution and peace building mechanisms/initiatives; and lastly recommendations for promoting women's representation and participation in conflict resolution and peace building; and Conclusion. The checklist made it possible to collate the scattered information under

particular themes. This in turn aided generation of discussions, analysis and interpretation of information under these main themes.

For recorded information such as case studies, transcription and transliteration were used. The verbatim records were important in generating powerful quotes from the interviews to reinforce the data presented after the analysis. They also provided a back up for crucial information which could not have otherwise been noted down by the interviewers when using other recording methods, for example, writing.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. 0 Findings

#### 4. 1: The various traditional conflict resolution mechanisms undertaken by the women's networks during the peace processes

Evidence from the study indicates that women had different perceptions on what they considered as peace building activities in the traditional conflict mechanisms setting.

Table 1 below illustrates the activities perceived by women as the peace building activities.

Table 1: Activities Women Considered as Peace Building Activities

Activity	Frequency	Valid Percent
Participation	1	2.0
Representation	1	2.0
Financial Contribution	5	10.0
Moral Support	4	8.0
Conflict Resolution	2	4.0
Advocacy	18	36.0
Lobbying	16	32.0
Others	2	4.0
None of the Above »	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Primary Data from the Questionnaires

Deducing from the above tabular presentation, 36% of the female respondents subjected to structured interviews considered advocacy for peace as the most important traditional mechanism for peace building activities while 32% of the total respondents considered lobbying. These two; advocacy and lobbying were considered by the women as the main mechanisms open and available for women.

Only 10% of the interviewees on the other hand, considered financial contribution as a peace building activity traditionally, while 8.0% of the total interviewees identified moral support as a peace building activity. Very few women perceived formal representation (2.0%), participation (2.0%) and conflict resolution (4.0) as peace building activities. 4.0% of the total respondents interviewed considered other activities such as cooking for the peace negotiators, providing cleaning services and entertaining the peace negotiators as the peace building activities that women could undertake and had undertaken as peace building mechanisms. 2.0% didn't perceive any of the above activities as peace building activities.

The above data indicates that the perceptions of involvement in peace building activities of the majority of the respondents is confined to lobbying and advocacy, financial, moral support and other gendered roles such as cooking and cleaning the venues for the male peace negotiators in the traditional context. They did not consider formal representation and participation of women in peace negotiations and other peace decision making forums as well as involvement in conflict resolution dialogues as peace building activities that women could participate in.

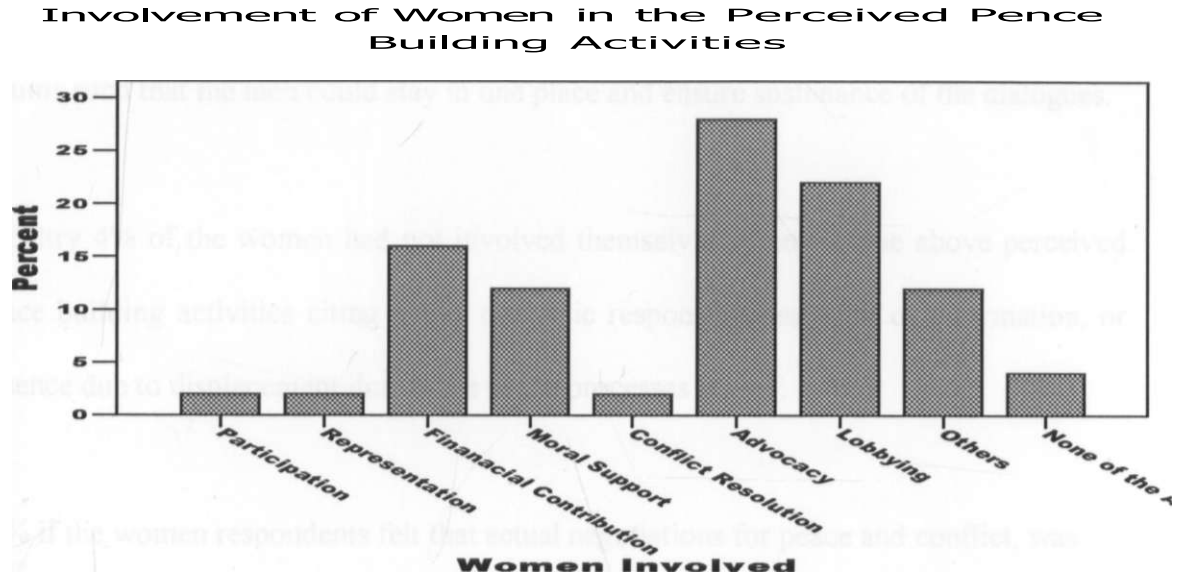
This indicates a strong perception by women in Somaliland that women play supportive roles in the public sphere in the arena of peace building traditionally. It is however notable that the financial contributions, which carry 10% in the responses, were confined

to purchase of food for the whole length of periods that the clans/men were in negotiations.

On whether the respondents had been involved in the above activities all of them were affirmative albeit differently involved. The graphical presentation illustrates the actual involvement of women in the activities they considered as peace building activities.

**4.2: The various ways in which Women's Networks engaged in the Formal peace and processes in Somaliland.**

Figure 2: Involvement of women in peace building activities



Source: Primary Data from the Questionnaires

Majority of the women respondents had engaged in advocacy for peace (28.0%), lobbying (22.0%), financial support/ contributions (16.0%) and moral support (12.0%) to peace negotiators as indicated in the graph above ( figure 2). They also gave company to the peace negotiators by being present outside the venue throughout the negotiations. Only very few women had participated in the actual peace negotiations (2%), present at the peace negotiation forums (2%) or engaged in conflict resolution mechanisms (2%), notably, this respondent ( only one) went in as an observer and not as a decision maker.

12% of the respondents had engaged in other activities they considered as peace building activities such as cooking and providing cleaning services for the peace negotiators and

serving as peace emissaries and conduits for information on one hand and on the other hand there is anecdotal evidence that they have been used as spies between the warring parties. In this category, songs and poems were also identified as key activities that women participated in as an advocacy media. The financial support offered by the women during the peace processes was to cater for food and drinks for the negotiation forums such that the men could stay in one place and ensure sustenance of the dialogues.

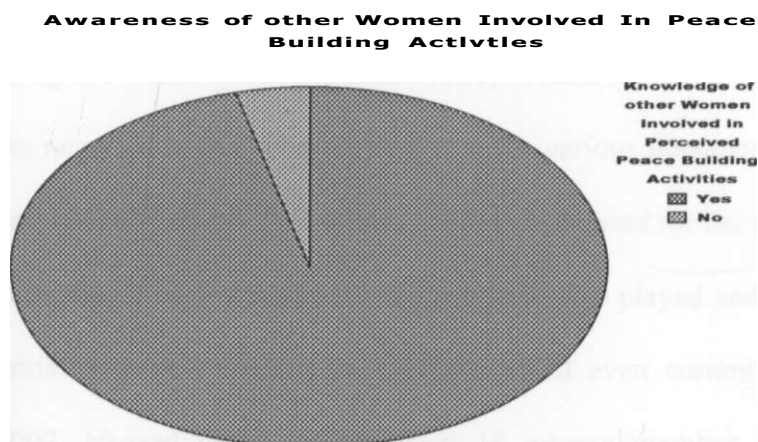
A paltry 4% of the women had not involved themselves in any of the above perceived peace building activities citing heavy domestic responsibilities, lack of information, or absence due to displacement during the peace processes period.

98% of the women respondents felt that actual negotiations for peace and conflict, was traditionally reserved for men and hence it became difficult for women to engage despite being affected as much as the men in the civil war. However, they felt that they played an instrumental role, since through their lobbying and the social support; the men could not leave the venue without a solution for peace. Even the women who were allowed in the venue did not participate as negotiators but were pivotal in gathering information and disseminating it to the women activists outside the venue, who in turn would lobby with individual and official clan negotiators for peace and women's concerns.

The study established that mobilization and networking among the Somaliland women in peace building was very strong as this was and still is a space open for them in the traditional settings. This is indicated by the fact that 96.0% of the women interviewed

pointed out that they knew and had engaged with other women who had and were still involved in peace building activities as illustrated by the pie chart below.

**Figure 3: Networking and mobilization for peace**



Source: Primary Data from the Questionnaires

This portrays very strong networking and mobilization skills in Somaliland women irrespective of clan affiliation, economic class and political divide; the women solidly approached peace as women whose experiences were similar and whose main goal was one, peace and security. The fact that Nagaad as an umbrella organization was formed during this clamour for peace, is a strong indication of the women's passion for solidifying and amplifying their voices in the peace building arena.

The following roles of women in formal and informal conflict resolution and peace building mechanisms were also identified, expounded on and discussed in details by the key informants as the various ways in which women participated in the peace processes.

**Resource Mobilization:** Evidence from the study indicates Somaliland women were instrumental in mobilizing financial resources to facilitate negotiations for peace. They



mobilized funds through selling their personal possessions such as jewellery and remitted the funds to elders to cater for food during the peace negotiations expenses both at the national and clan levels.

**Services Provision in Peace Negotiations:** Additionally, they provided food for the clan delegates to ensure their comfort. They looked for the food, prepared, cooked and served the negotiators and other delegates in the various documented conferences. Women also prepared and ensured cleanliness of the venue used for the peace negotiations.

**Initiating Peace Dialogues:** Women have also played and are still playing a key role in initiating peace negotiations in Somaliland even currently. For instance, in February 2007, Nagaad mobilized and sent 15 women member delegates to initiate dialogue among warring factions over grazing land near the Ethiopian border. The women delegates went with white flags to the fighting soldiers. The women cried reminding the soldiers of the past. They also sang wailing songs highlighting the sad effects of war and recited poems depicting the need to end the war. The fighters were very touched by the women's messages and as such, laid down their weapons and stopped fighting. 70% of female key informants cited this February 2007 clan conflict case as the most recent conflict resolution initiative "by the women networks. There is also evidence from the secondary sources of information, that women were the first to raise alarm over insecurity after the civil war and mobilized to push for a peaceful dialogue.

**Peace marches and demonstrations:** Women organized peaceful demonstration and marches protesting against war and conflict in Somaliland to put pressure to the clan elders (at the clan level) and government (at the national Level) to end clan conflicts. During the demonstrations, the women would carry banners, placards, sing wailing songs

and recite poems depicting their suffering as a result of war and urging the clan leaders to end the conflict and open up space for them to take part in peace negotiations. In addition women camped outside the venues of formal peace conferences to express outrage on insecurity and the cost and consequences of war on their land. For example in 1991, there was a lot of fighting with heavy presence of militia and proliferation of weapons in Somaliland. During this time women demonstrated in Hargeisa town en masse against the war advocating for peace in Somaliland. The women pressurized the warring faction to embark on peace negotiations to end the conflict. During the peace negotiations the women stood in front of the venues demanding concrete resolutions for peace as well as their dissatisfaction in their omission in the negotiations.

**Lobbying and advocacy:** Women intensively lobbied key decision makers in peace negotiations to ensure that cease fire agreements were signed and upheld especially along clan lines. As cited elsewhere in the text, women could have dual clan affiliations due to marriage and could use this to lobby for peace with both clans.

**Poems, songs and written petitions:** In 1997 during the Hargeisa peace conference, the women wrote petitions to the authorities. In this petition, women requested the committee to sign a peace agreement, establish a police force and provide basic social services. The petition was presented by one of the twelve women observers allowed into the peace negotiations while the others waited for over ten hours for the outcome composing and singing poems as a means of supporting their colleagues. They hired loudspeakers to drive home their demands. As a result a police force was established to provide the much needed security in the region. Celebrating a new dawn for peace in Somaliland, the

women from their own contribution bought the first sets of uniform<sup>95</sup> for the police force and went further on to fund the celebration to inaugurate the new police force. The women needed security as they undertook their businesses since they were the majority traders as the men were either idle chewing *Khat* or fighting. The petition by the women was instrumental in setting up a mechanism for security provision in Somaliland.

**Daring Initiatives:** Women used extreme daring mechanisms to stop war in Somaliland. For instance, women respondents explained that, in a town called Berbera, during an inter clan conflict; women having been badly affected by and tired of war and displacement, mobilized and sent women representatives to the battle field to reconcile the warring clans. The women daringly stood in between the warring fighters and dared the fighters to shoot them or end the inter clan fighting. The brave act brought peace within the two clans as none of the fighters would have dared to shoot women knowingly.

**Informal mediation and negotiations:** In their efforts to contribute to peace, Somaliland women were instrumental in supporting disarmament. After the ouster of Siad Barre and secession of Somaliland, women lobbied with their folks at home to hand over their guns. They were also able to convince the militia, negotiated with them to hand over their guns and other weapons. They also mobilized funds and invited the community for hand over ceremonies. They accomplished this through songs, poems, dances and awareness on the merits of peace to hand over the guns to the government. Due to their strategic mobilization and disarmament, within two months, arms, from the armies had been repossessed.

<sup>95</sup> From interviews with the women it was established that 351 pieces of uniforms were purchased by women for the first police force in Somaliland.

**Peace emissaries and go betweens:** The study established that women have been used to relay messages between warring factions in a bid to end conflict. Women have also acted as go-betweens in situations of conflict playing a key role in reducing conflict and animosity between warring clans. For instance in 2005/6 in Sool/Sanaag, a region under contentious jurisdiction between Somaliland and Puntland, during a conflict, there were Prisoners of War held by Puntland authorities. A woman married in Somaliland but hailing from Puntland acted as a go between to negotiate release of the incarcerated prisoners of war. She would deliver messages to the authorities of the factions who had been warring. Eventually the Prisoners of War (POWs) were released. This is not an isolated case, but was indicated as the most recent.

**Moral support:** During the formal negotiations for peace the women would stay with the negotiators giving them company and moral support. The women were eager for peace and they would wait anxiously waiting for agreements to be reached upon on ending war and bringing peace. Women would also give moral support to soldiers who were fighting insurgents who were destabilizing peace in different parts of Somaliland. Women would fight alongside soldiers who wanted peace to eliminate trouble makers.

**Networking and collaborations:** through forming networks and coalitions, women were able to marshal up resources, from their own contributions, to augment peace building processes by providing basic social services such as health services, education centres especially for girls who had missed out formal education during war, literacy and numeracy classes, skills trainings for the youth, environmental conservation by collecting debris as a result of years of war, among others.

In essence the women, through women's network were instrumental in the quest for peace in Somaliland. Due to their effective mobilization skills, irrespective of their clan affiliations, they were able to mobilize resources to support peace building initiatives. One of the key informants and who participated as an observer in the 1997 Hargeisa peace conference, noted;

*"The women's networks played a big role in promoting women's participation in the peace processes. No clan would think of sending women to negotiate for peace. Were it not for women mobilizing to form a network and a platform for advocacy, we would never have seen the inside of the negotiations. "* (Key informant who participated in the 1997 Hargeisa conference)

76 % of the respondents felt that these mechanisms in which women have been involved in, have worked and actually led to conflict resolution. Advocacy campaigns for peace, through demonstrations, song, dance and reciting of poems; and lobbying with individual clan leaders for peace were identified as the best strategies that women have used to contribute to conflict resolution.

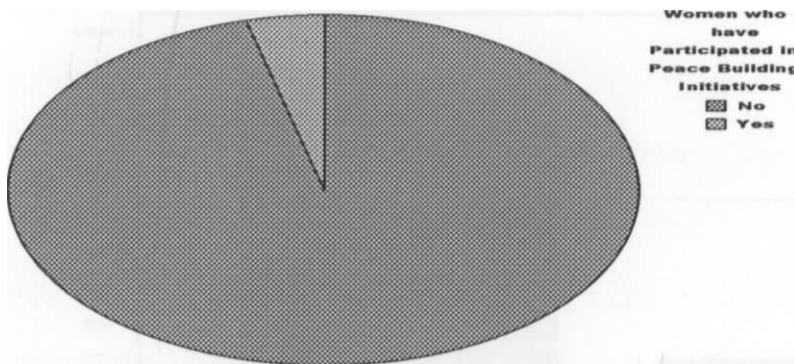
However, despite the fundamental roles that the Somaliland women played in search of lasting peace, women have been left out in peace negotiation conferences and forums. Despite their active participation in traditional conflict resolutions mechanisms 90% of the respondents indicated that women have not been adequately represented in political and decision making processes.

A bulk (98 %) of the total women respondents (including key informants and in-depth interviewees) had not participated in the formal peace negotiations forums as either (i.e.

they had not sat at the table nor shared their concerns during the peace negotiations) as indicated in the pie chart below.

**Figure 4: Women involved in the formal peace processes**

**Woman Who Have Participated In Peace Building Initiatives**



Source: Primary Data from Questionnaires

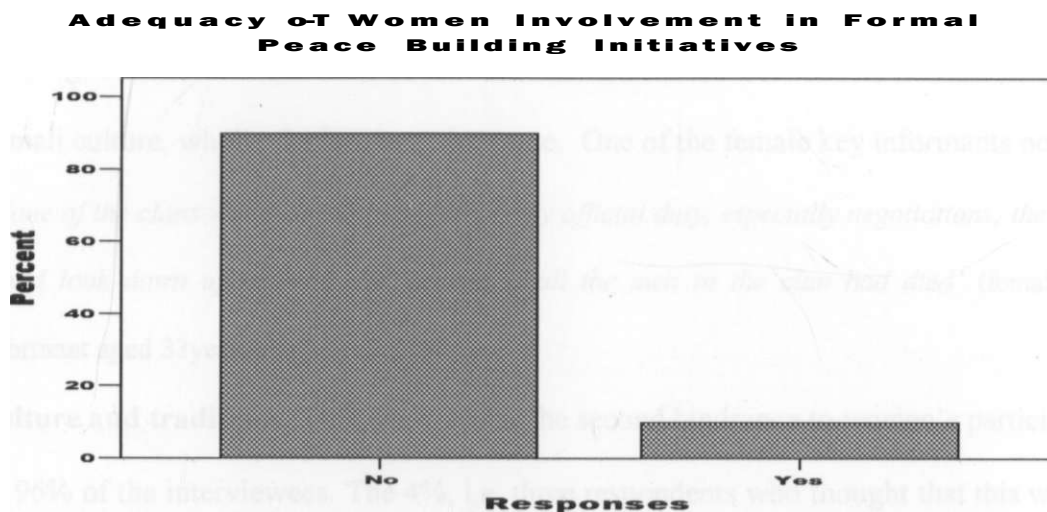
The only affirmative answer was from a female respondent who participated as an observer and actually presented the women memorandum at the 1997 Hargeisa peace conference after intensive lobbying by the women activists. Though this did not translate to positions of power for the women at the end of the conference, women still consider it as a milestone as it had not happened before in the history of Somaliland. As depicted by these statistics, women's involvement in formal peace building processes has been very low.

#### **4.3: The main barriers to women participation in peace building in Somaliland**

The study sought to examine whether women are adequately involved in peace building initiatives and what the respondents felt hindered their participation as well. Data from the questionnaires and in-depth interviews indicated that 99 % of the respondents felt that

women were not adequately involved in formal peace building initiatives to date as indicated in the graph below.

Figure 5: Adequacy of women's involvement in peace building



Source: Primary Data from Questionnaires and In-Depth Interviews

Interestingly, only one male respondent indicated that women are very well presented in the peace building and development even currently. He said;

*"Somali traditions give men the role of leading the community including the women therefore, we represent them in all areas. Men in Somalia are very respectful of women and all decisions which are made consider women. Further, we cannot abandon traditional traditions because they call forth God's wrath"* (Male respondent 55 years old)

Among the key factors identified as barriers to women's participation were Clanism, culture and traditions. Others included high levels of illiteracy and ignorance among women, negative attitudes towards women by men and lack of laws and policies to promote women's participation in peace building among others.

The above barriers are discussed here below:

**Clanism:** All the respondents interviewed in this study, apart from one male respondent during an in-depth interview, cited Clanism and particularly strong affiliation to clans as the main barrier to women's participation in the key decision making spaces in peace building initiatives. The fact that women cannot become clan elders, as dictated by the Somali culture, wholly denies them the space. One of the female key informants noted:

*'None of the clans would send a woman for any official duty, especially negotiations; the others would look down upon them and wonder if all the men in the clan had died'* (female Key informant aged 33 years)

**Culture and traditions:** This was rated as the second hindrance to women's participation by 96% of the interviewees. The 4%, i.e. three respondents who thought that this was not a barrier for women in participating in peace negotiations were all men. Thus when it comes to decision making in peace negotiations and peace building, women are deliberately left out and only allowed to undertake their assigned gender roles such as cooking and cleaning up, while the men deal with the more "important matters" in the society. The traditional law, known as *xeer* which is used in collaboration with Shariah and secular laws is a formidable system of conflict resolution. During a focused group discussion, one of the participants, a middle aged woman explained;

*"The traditional law is the strongest law used by our community, in most cases it suits the men and it is administered by the men, how would you expect women to access their rights in any situation? In cases to do with sexual violence and divorce, the women are at the mercy of men, are they not the same who commit these crimes?"*

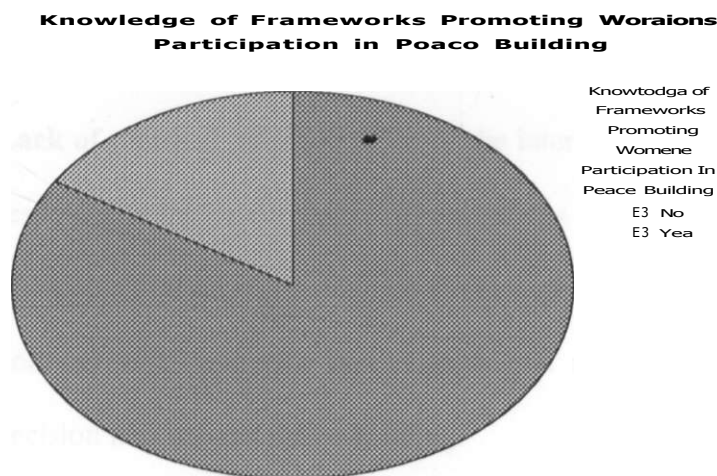
This clearly in a nut shell explains the influence of traditions and culture on women's status.



**High illiteracy levels among women;** 80% of the key informants identified high illiteracy levels among women as the third main barrier to women's participation in peace building decision making positions and other leadership positions. During the FGDs, women indicated that women in general lacked the confidence to participate due to lack of knowledge and exposure on global issues. They also felt intimidated by the presence of men and as such even if they were selected for participation or had a different view; they easily turn down the offer or they just attend and endorse men's decisions.

**Lack of information:** 54% of the respondents indicated that lack of information on their rights in critical documents such as Quran, the Somaliland constitution and international conventions on women's rights e.g. UN Resolution 1325, CEDAW, BPFA, MDG's, etc was also a barrier for women. For instance, 85.0% of the respondents were not aware of such frameworks at all levels and the Somaliland constitution as indicated in the pie chart below.

**Figure 6: Knowledge of national, regional and international frameworks and instruments**



Source: Primary Data from Questionnaires and In-Depth Interviews

Only the Somaliland Constitution and UN Resolution 1325 were cited by a cross section of the respondents as known to the respondents, however the contents were not easily understood by the respondents. Almost all the female respondents had no idea what these frameworks were even at the local level. This underscores the need to create extensive and intensive awareness on all local, regional and international conventions on women rights among Somaliland women.

**Lack of policies that promote women participation in decision making:** All the female interviewees, key informants and in-depth, pointed out that lack of policies to promote women's participation at all levels of decision making including peace building as a major obstacle. 50% of the male interviewees felt that presence of these kinds of policies, would in some way, improve women's representation and participation in peace building decision making. All the female interviewees pointed out that the adoption of policies that promote their representation in decision making in crucial national documents and particularly an affirmative action policy for women's representation. The poor representation of women at governance levels was sited as the evidence to this

96

view .

**Lack of political goodwill:** >6% of the interviewees cited this as a barrier. However, the respondents indicated positive interventions such as the creation of a ministry in charge of women's affairs as a positive development. The respondents felt that, with a positive political will, women's participation and representation can greatly be enhanced in decision making and peace building.

<sup>96</sup> There is only one full female cabinet minister, two members of parliament one of whom is nominated and only 2 representatives at local governance level out of 334 local representatives.

In a nutshell the above factors have been the major hindrances to women's participation in peace building and conflict resolution. Considering the significant contribution by women in informal peace building activities, it's imperative that these barriers be addressed to increase visibility and participation in conflict resolution and the peace building dialogue.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

Women's peace loving nature is paramount in their role in encouraging peace through the informal mechanisms of advocacy and through lobbying. The women were committed to peace and went out of their way to mobilize the communities at large and particularly the women folk across the clan lines to lobby for peace even when in danger. The sale of their personal possessions (e.g. jewellery) to support the continuity and sustenance of the peace processes proved without doubt that their vision and commitment to peace was a driving force. The women were also able to utilize the traditionally open mechanisms to amplify their voices and reach out to the whole community such as the communal prayers and demonstrations.

The Somaliland women having been ardent participants of informal peace building activities and a wide array of social activities were able to network through formation of groups. They have further transformed the groups into community social support structures offering a wide array of basic social services to communities. However, the political nature of these activities has been undervalued by the leadership; such that women have been excluded from the formal political decision making processes. Their interventions are seen as more of social, voluntary and within their gendered roles. The social, physical and economic risks that the women underwent to challenge gender relations in their families, at the community level, are not recognized nor have they been

rewarded in the political or other leadership arenas. Currently, the Somaliland Government has only one female minister in charge of women affairs, two female legislators, one of whom is nominated and three councillors at local governance.

Changes in gender roles as a result of the protracted war rendered many women as the only bread winners for their households when the men were out fighting. This has been a critical role as the women have a bigger burden on the social reconstruction of Somaliland to date. Notably, women were the first to support the establishment of the first police force due to their need for protection while conducting their small businesses in the markets and bought the first police uniforms by mobilizing for funds through Somali Women's Development Association (SOWDA) a member of Nagaad. Women further organized the platforms for demobilization and integration of the fighters into the community, they talked to the men in their own households and convinced them to lay down their arms and organized community functions to hand over the fighting arms.

Anti war protests, poems (*baranbuurj*, song and dance are traditional mechanisms open to women which they have consistently used to press for peace as evidenced by the Somali women's experiences. There are high illiteracy levels amongst the Somali women, and thus this channel of communication proved useful. By turning their discontent into public demonstrations, turning their messages into songs and poems and galvanizing for support using acceptable community forums, they contributed greatly to the transformation of the country and also built networks of solidarity amongst themselves that are still strong to date.

Somaliland women were able to use traditionally revered prayer meetings, which are public forums attended and respected by all community members, to mobilize for peace, stopping the war and also for advocating for disarmament of the fighters. Somali women's lack of an exclusive clan identity enabled them to move from one clan to the next safely and lobby for peace or for negotiations between warring clans.

Somali women were not an exception to war Violences; they were particularly affected by gender specific forms of violence, especially sexual violence during flight and as refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. They also had to protect their children and fend for them during flight without any social support or clan protection as many of the men were engrossed in war. This suffering and added responsibilities became a driving force to women's quest for peace and normalcy in the community. They did not want a resurgence of the civil strife and became strong advocates for peace.

As the Somaliland women's case shows, it is not easy to translate this activism and mobilization for peace into presence in the formal peace negotiations and peace building activities. Their organizing and mobilizing efforts were viewed as support roles by the community and not as a part of the main action, the formal negotiations. The majority of the respondents credit the sustenance and success of the peace conferences to the organizing and support by women activists. They also indicate that the women who were allowed into the peace conferences as observers, contributed to a change in the nature of dialogues due to their presence and sharing of their concerns. However, it is notable that

this did not culminate into a formal recognition in the power sharing and the political processes as women were not given any decision making positions.

Clanism, culture and traditions present a formidable barrier to Somaliland women's inclusion in formal peace building and post war governance. The leadership of the clans; the clan elders are predominantly male and use traditional laws to settle disputes and to negotiate for peace. None of the clans has a space for the inclusion of women and thus this alludes to the lack of formal women's perspectives and concerns in the quest for peace and in the reconstruction processes. High illiteracy levels amongst the women folk, lack of information and the socialization process also compound women's status in the Somali society in engaging with the peace building processes and the integration of their perspectives and concerns.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Harnessing, tapping and utilizing the women's mobilization and advocacy skills around peace in the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms should be a unique strategy by authorities and governments in a bid to achieving sustainable peace and development. As evidenced from the study, respondents attested to the fact that, largely it was due to the women's persistence through peaceful demonstrations and lobbying, that the male delegates were put under pressure to sign peaceful agreements. Further, the women supported the peace conferences through their own contributions and unwavering moral support to the men, to ensure that lasting solutions for peace were arrived at. If women's unique skills, persistence and resilience were integrated within the formal structures of

decision making at governance levels, then significant milestones on development would be achieved in line with global development targets such as the MDG's.

Recognizing and addressing gender roles and promoting women rights, empowerment and gender equality are strategies that are critical for the success of post conflict peace building and reconstruction. Critical numbers of women must be equal partners with men in peace making and post conflict decision making processes and all stakeholders must understand the role of both men, women and the gender interrelationships in the processes and address them adequately.

Initiatives to include women in greater and more critical numbers in decision making should go hand in hand with an effort to change attitudes in the broader community. As found out from the study, women are generally excluded from the clan based councils and during the peace processes, none of the clans would accept to send a female delegate to either the negotiations or any political discussions. Thus the need to change the attitudes of the traditional, religious and cultural leaders, who have a main stake in the political decision making structures, as evidenced by the role of the house of elders (*Gimrti*) in Somaliland cannot be understated. This would be instrumental in opening up spaces for women's participation in the otherwise patriarchal settings. There is also a need to build the capacities and confidence levels of the women themselves as peace builders and not as victims of war.



Often, communities' perception of women as victims of war and civil strife obscures the multiple roles that they play during the conflicts. The women act as facilitators between warring factions, as the sole bread winners, as the peace envoys, as sustainers and guardians of the formal peace processes and thus there is need to change the perceptions of victim hood to peace builders in the reconstruction. There is also the need to raise awareness on the how women and men experience conflict and violence differently and consequently ensure that the different needs that stem from these experiences are addressed. It should be understood that the extreme violence that women and girls suffer, particularly sexual violence, during conflict does not only arise solely out of the conditions of war; it is directly related to the violence that exists in women's lives during peace time. It is fundamental therefore, that women and women's concerns should form a core element in peace building.

There is need to build the capacities of the strong women's partnerships and networks in a diverse range of areas such as peace education, mediation, negotiation, peace advocacy and transformative development. This will enhance their responses to conflict resolution and management as it is evident from the study that they are still active in that area with the minimal skills that they have. These skills building initiatives can also be induced with cross fertilization with experiences from other regions, best practices and lessons learnt from different regions that have experienced conflict to enhance response. In particular, experiences from regions where women have used unique approaches to peace building should be documented and integrated in the capacity building initiatives as most of the knowledge is never shared nor disseminated. Mentoring of younger women should

be promoted and seen as an investment for sustenance of the women's critical mobilization and advocacy skills.

Support to the adoption of Policies that guarantee women's rights and participation in decision making spaces and political participation post war should be adopted by Governments. The quota system can have the single and greatest effect as it would ensure women's participation at all levels in peace building and post war reconstruction. However this still remains controversial as some policy makers argue that positions should be open to all and not favour any particular group. However, quotas; at least as temporary mechanisms remain essential to pressure power holders to relinquish some control and allow a critical mass of women leaders to step up. Further, having the adoption of a quota system would ensure that the role of women in the stabilization is institutionalized. Women would participate in the design and implementation of programs and contribute relevant information and knowledge to the processes of peace building from their perspectives.

Finally, best practices and lessons learnt from women's role in previous and past stabilization and peace operations, should be identified, assembled and documented so that they are fully integrated into future engagements and planning processes

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## Annex 1: Semi structured Questionnaire

### SECTION A

#### CONSENT FORM

##### **Study title: The role of women in peace building; the case of women networks in Somaliland**

The researcher will explain the purpose and objectives for the study to the respondent. Material gathered during this research will be treated as confidential and securely stored.

Please answer each statement concerning the collection and use of the research data.

I have been explained to and understood the purpose of the study and I have agreed voluntarily to be interviewed.      Yes      jP      No      P

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study.      Yes      f      No      V

I have had my questions answered satisfactorily.      Yes      f"      No      ?"

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give an explanation.      Yes      f"      No      f"

I agree to being identified in this interview and in any subsequent publications or use.      Yes      f"      No      ("

I agree to my audiotapes (in line with conditions outlined above) being archived and used by other bona fide researchers.      Yes      P'      No      P

I would like to see a copy of my transcript.      Yes      P      No      f™

Name (printed)

The names of the main researchers:

Njoki Kinyanjui- Lead researcher  
Francis Kimani- Assistant Researcher  
Ifrah Rashid- Assistant researcher

**SECTION B**

**Bio data**

*Name*

*Respondent number.*

*Age:*

Below 20                      •

20-30                         •

30-40                         •

40-50                         •

Above 50                   

*Region*

*Women's group*

*Position held in group:*

Board member             

Chairperson               

Secretary

Member                     

Other                         •

*Date when joined women's group*

**Women's involvement**

*What nature of activities do you consider as building peace?*

Participation   

Representation (members'of groups)   

Financial contribution   

Moral support   

Conflict resolution    •

Advocacy   

Lobbying   

Others   

*None of the above*  
*Have you been involved in any of these peace building activities?*

Yes                         •

No

*If yes, which ones and when?*

Type of activity	How	When

*If not, what are the reasons?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

*Do you know other women who have been involved in peace building activities?*

Yes      1 = 1

No      c m

Number

*If yes, how have they been involved?*

Type of activity	How	When

### **Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms**

*In what ways have women been involved in resolving conflicts traditionally in the community?*

Negotiation      I I

Mediation      ^\_^





Arbitration

Advocacy campaigns

Lobbying for peace B

Others •

*If any, have these conflict resolution mechanisms worked?*

Yes

No B

*If yes, how have the above resolution mechanisms worked?*

<b>Conflict resolution method</b>	<b>Excellently</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fairly</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
Mediation						
Arbitration						
Negotiation						
Advocacy campaigns						
Lobbying for peace						
Other						

*If not how do you think women can be involved in peace building?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### **Women's capacity**

*What skills exist among women and women's organizations in peace building and advocacy for peace?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

*How can the women, women's groups and networks strengthened?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

*What frameworks exist that promote women's involvement in peace building?*

National

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Regional

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

International

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Barriers to participation**

*Are women adequately involved in peace building?*

Yes •

No •

*If yes rate the involvement*

<b>Excellently</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fairly</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
--------------------	------------------	-------------	---------------	-------------	------------------

*Give two main reasons for your answer*

- 1.
- 2.

*What prevents women from meaningful participation in peace building?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

*Are there any prevailing attitudes and cultural norms and practices preventing women's participation?*

Yes

No

*If yes, which ones?*

1.

2.

3.

4.

### **Recommendations**

*What steps should be taken to ensure women's participation in peace building activities?*

2.

3.

4.

*How can women be supported to participate effectively in the post conflict rebuilding and reconstruction?*

1.

2.

3.

4.

## **Annex 2: Key informants and in-depth interview guide**

1. How have Somaliland women networked and involved in peace building and conflict resolution at the: family level, clan level, national level, international level
2. What do you think is the role of women groups and women networks in peace building and conflict resolution?
3. What conventions, frameworks, laws and practices protect women rights (customary, statutory, Islamic law) to participation? Are they adequately utilized? Under what circumstances?
4. What are some of the traditional and cultural barriers that hinder women's participation in peace building processes?
5. Have women been adequately involved in peace building in Somaliland? What has been their key role?
6. What do you think should be done to enhance the participation of women in peace building?

### **Annex 3: FGD guide**

1. What is the role of women networks in peace building in the traditional structures?
2. What mechanisms and strategies worked best for Somaliland women?
3. What are some of the main barriers to women's participation in peace building?
4. What can be done to support the women in peace building processes?

**Annex 4: Male key informants guide (attitudes and perceptions on women's participation in peace building)**

1. What was the role of Somaliland women during the peace and reconciliation processes in Somaliland?
2. How have Somaliland women been involved in peace building and conflict resolution at the family, national and international level?
3. Are the roles adequately recognized in the current governance processes in Somaliland?
4. What should be done to increase women's participation?

## **Annex 5: Check list for Qualitative Data Analysis**

### **Themes for the analysis**

1. Level of involvement of Somaliland women in Peace Building and conflict Resolution Activities/Initiatives;
2. Nature of their Involvement;
3. Awareness on frameworks (Local, Regional and International) that promote women's participation in conflict resolution and peace building;
4. Extent of the frameworks Application in Somaliland;
5. Level of networking by women groups;
6. Barriers to women's participation in conflict resolution and peace building mechanisms/initiatives;
7. Recognition of women's role in conflict resolution and peace building by the mainstream governance processes in Somaliland
8. Recommendations for promoting women's representation and participation in conflict resolution and peace building;
9. Conclusion.

## **Annex 6: List of groups**

1. SOWRAG- 1988- Somaliland women's action and research Group  
Area of focus: Promotion of women's rights socially, politically and economically and research.
2. HAVOYOCO-1994- Horn of AFRICA Voluntary youth committee.  
Area of focus: Education, income generation and advocacy for human rights
3. SOWDA-1992- Somaliland Women development association  
Area of focus: Education, health, environment and advocacy for women's rights and peace building
5. WADA- 1994-Women's Action for development association  
Area of focus: Education, income generation and advocacy for human rights
6. WAAPO-1997-Women's action for advocacy and progress organization  
Area of focus: advocacy for human rights, health, environment and income generation
7. BAKWA-1996- Barqwo-la kulan women, children and youth organization  
Area of focus: Promotion of human rights, awareness raising on HIVADS and environmental protection
8. SOLWO-1993- Somaliland women's development organization  
Area of focus: Education, water, agriculture, environment and human rights
9. WORDA-1997- Womens rehabilitation and development organization  
Area of focus: education, income generation and human rights advocacy
10. Ayaan- 1996- Ayaan Women development  
Area of focus: Education, income/employment generation, human rights and community awareness.



## Annex 7: Code book; Quantitative data analysis

### CODE BOOK

VARIABLE LABEL	VARIABLE	CODE S	RESPONSE CATEGORIES
Va0001	Age	1-5	1. Below 20 2. 20-30 3. 30-40 4. 40-50 5. Above 50
Va0002	Activities women consider as peace building activities	1-9	1. Participation 2. Representation (Members of the group) 3. Financial contribution 4. Moral support 5. Conflict resolution 6. Advocacy 7. Lobbying 8. Others 9. None of the above
Va0003	Have you been involved in any of these peace building activities	1-2	1. Yes 2. No
Va0004	Do you know other women who have been involved in peace building activities	1-2	1. Yes 2. No
Va0005	Ways in which women have been involved in resolving conflicts traditionally in the community	1-6	1. Negotiation 2. Mediation 3. Arbitration 4. Advocacy campaigns 5. Lobbying for peace 6. Others
Va0006	Have these conflict resolution mechanisms worked	1-2	1. Yes 2. No
Va0007	Have women participated in formal peace building initiatives	1-2	1. No 2. Yes
Va0008	Are you aware of local, national, regional and international frameworks promoting women's involvement in peace building	1-2	1. No 2. Yes
Va0009	Are women adequately involved in peace building activities	1-2	1. No 2. Yes
Va0010	Are there any prevailing attitudes, traditions and cultural norms and practices preventing women's participation	1-2	1. Yes 2. No