



# The roles of clan's headers in peaceful conflict resolution in Mogadishu Somalia

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## ABSTRACT

The Horn of Africa is one of the multi-ethnic and unstable regions in the world. The Somalia is a country that is highly affected by intra and inter-state conflicts--clannism, endemic clashes over resources and power, and territory and boundary disputes with the neighbor countries. The state of Somalia, which is the state of Mogadishu-Somalia, has been governed by the traditional governance structures (TGS) of the different Somali clans since precolonial times. The purpose of the study is to investigate on the contribution of clan leaders and conflict resolution mechanisms in Somalia. Firstly, the role of clan leader in conflict resolution is analyzed. Secondly, the impact of clan protection and influence on conflict resolution in the country is discussed. Finally, a case study is presented. The results of the case study show that the clan leaders have a significant role in regulating the social interaction of the communities. It is concluded that the Somalia clans are both apt to discipline and subservient to command. This concept is indicative of how the Somali traditional values are imbedded with an inherited traditional form of governance which observable in all Somali societies even in this contemporary world. The findings of this study suggest that there is a need for the development of a credible government that is accountable to its citizenry and sensitive to their needs. In addition, the international community, institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Somalis in Diaspora, need to come to the aid of Somalia by providing funds to rebuild the ruined infrastructures.

**Keywords:** Role clan leaders, clan protection, Somalis in Diaspora, conflict resolution, World Bank

## INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa is known for being riddled with conflict. The great northeastern shield of Africa is comprised of Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti, and conflict persists in all four nations. The disagreements between these nations are longstanding and complex, described as first a clash of tribes, then imperial consolidation and foreign colonialism. Once independent, these expectant nations desired to test their newfound sovereignty, which was complicated by superpower support during the years of the Cold War. Violence continued through revolution, fractured militia competition, and a failed state. To understand the progression of the Horn's conflicts, colonization of the region must first be examined.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGAD) was created in 1986 with a very narrow mandate in the order of the issue of Drought and Desertification. While

then, and especially in the 1990s, IGADD become the acknowledged medium for regional security and political dialogue. (IGAD, 1996: 1) The founding members of IGAD decided in the mid- 1990s to revive the organization into a fully-fledge regional political, economic, development trade and security entity alike to SADC and ECOWAS.

It was envisaged that the new IGAD would type the northern sector of COMESA with SADC representing the Southern sector. One of the primary motivations for the revival of IGADD was the survival of numerous organizational and structural problems that made the implementation of its goals and principles unsuccessful. The IGADD Heads of State and governmental met on 18 April 1995 at an extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa and resolved to revitalize the Authority and expand its area of regional cooperation. On 25 March 1996, the Heads and government at the second Extraordinary Summit in Nairobi approved and adopted an Agreement establishing the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The elders function as a court with broad and flexible powers to interpret evidence, impose judgments, and manage the process of reconciliation. The mediator leads and channels discussion of the problem. Parties typically do not address each other, eliminating direct confrontation. Interruptions are not allowed while parties state their case. Statements are followed by open deliberation which may integrate listening to and cross-examining witnesses, the free expression of grievances, caucusing with both groups, reliance on circumstantial evidence, visiting dispute scenes, seeking opinions and views of neighbors, reviewing past cases, holding private consultations, and considering solutions. The process may be time-consuming and encourage broad discussion of aspects that may seem unrelated to the central problem, as the mediator tries to situate the conflict in the disputants' frame of reference and decide on an appropriate style and format of intervention. The elders or other traditional mediators use their judgment and position of moral ascendancy to find an accepted solution. Decisions may be based on consensus within the elders' or chiefs' council and may be rendered on the spot. Resolution may involve forgiveness and mutual formal release of the problem, and, if necessary, the arrangement of restitution.

*Influence of poetry.* Poetry is a celebrated art form in many societies. Poets are highly respected in the community and have been traditionally involved in peacemaking. In many cultures, poetry is widely understood and enjoyed, and has the power to influence opinion.

In inter-clan peace conferences, distinguished poets recite poems advocating peace. Poetry in places like Somalia can help move people toward either war or reconciliation. Poetry can help identify grievances, argue for causes, rights and responsibilities, and justify the views and demands of different groups. The modern parallel of the traditional mechanism of poetry is mass media's effect on public opinion. Religious figures. In many traditional societies of the Horn, religious men are somewhat dissociated from society at large. They are considered separate from warriors and are the repository of traditional wisdom and sometimes the vehicle of religious judicial systems, such as sharia law. This special place in society makes them an ideal link between feuding groups who might otherwise have be unable to establish a dialogue.

*Local peace conferences.* Overall cross-clan peace conferences should be preceded by a combination of subclan deliberations about grievances, issues and representation, and a series of cross-subclan deliberations and consultations. Through this process perspectives are gathered, procedural steps are negotiated, and the basic parameters are set for moving toward a more explicit forum, guided by the elders' council (called the Guurti in Somalia). The larger forum or peace conference can take the form of large, usually public meetings, which involve



lengthy speeches and the extensive use of poetry. Preparing for and holding such a series of peace conferences commonly takes four to six months. Throughout the process, elders prepare, moderate, listen, and often arbitrate procedural problems. They help formulate an eventual consensus of the clans. Various inter- and sub-clan deliberations occur on the side simultaneously. Key authority structures of conflicting parties must be included in the process, including traditional, military, administrative, and religious leaders.

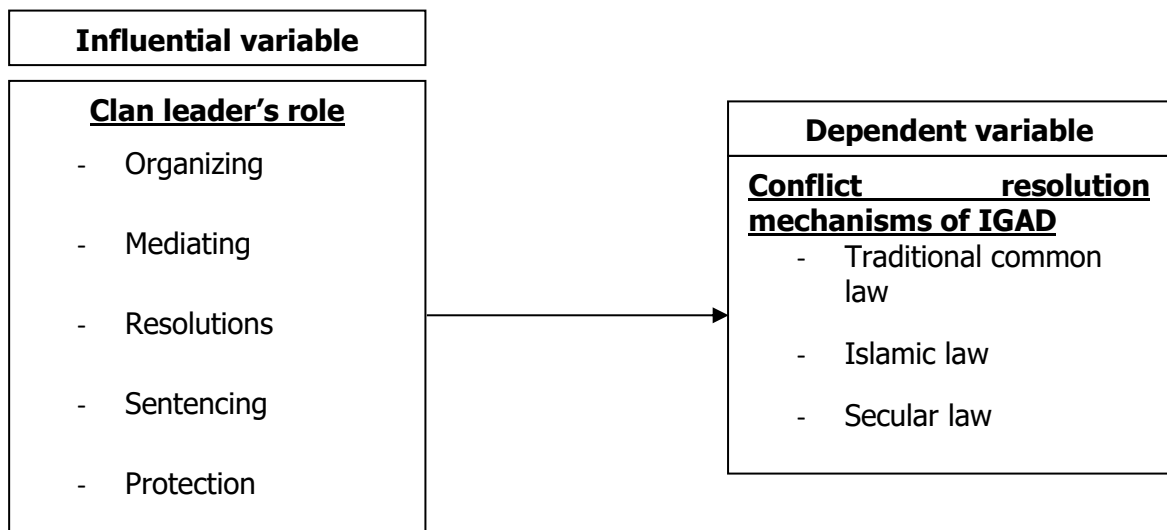
Somalis turned back to clan and subclan structures to meet basic needs, including security, with the state's disappearance and breakdown into warlords. While the ascendancy of clan politics in Somalia encouraged certain patterns of conflict, traditional mechanisms were revived and adapted to resolve interclan killings and conflicts over resources. Lineage elders, who led smaller units within the clan, returned to prominence and the mediating authority of Akils heads of lineage groups—was reestablished. Their functions expanded into the vacuum left by the collapse of the national government. According to a survey of traditional local structures commissioned by the UK-based NGO ACTIONAID, such structures have enabled Somalis in some areas to break the momentum of war.

IGAD aims to develop the areas of regional collaboration, enhance the members' dependency on one another and encourage policies of peace and stability in the region in order to reach food security, sustainable development management and sustainable development. In general, there is no consensus on the states that compromise the region, but, for this paper, I will consider the following IGAD's member states; Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan (North and South) and Uganda because of not only geography of the region but its politics.

In many areas residents have achieved agreements to end fighting through local peace conferences. These peace conferences brought together and were guided by the elders of interdependent subclans. The conferences dealt with immediate concerns, made local leaders responsible for interclan fighting, and helped identify appropriate representatives for clan concerns. Once such local agreements were secured, it was possible to repeat a similar process at a higher level with a wider set of clans. These processes included a reliance on elders, lengthy oral deliberations, creation of a forum or assembly of elders, and negotiations over access to resources and payments for deaths between clans.

Clan elders authorized peace conference agreements but other traditional leaders' politicians, military officers, religious figures, poets—have played crucial roles in the peace process. Religious figures such as sheikhs or wadaads (Islamic scholars) have peacemaking responsibilities, with authority based on the esteem with which they are held as spiritual leaders. Spiritual leaders are seen as ideal, neutral arbiters who have allegiance to universal Islamic values that transcend clan loyalties. They do not settle disputes themselves, or sit in judgment; this is done by councils of elders. The responsibility of religious figures is to encourage rivals to make peace. Delegations of renowned holy men participated in all major peace initiatives between clans in Somaliland.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The methodology of the research, the various tools and procedures that were applied in the research findings. These include the design, population, sample size, research limitations and methods, data instruments, among others.

This research is correlation research with a cross-sectional design. It is co-relational research because it examines the relationship between clan leaders and conflict resolution mechanisms in Somalia. It is of a cross-sectional design because the data was collected once. The research was carried out in Mogadishu-Somalia, the target population of this study consisted of 132 respondents; these respondents included government officials, local community, NGOs, clan leaders, and mediators.

This research employed the Slovenes formula in determining Sample Size for Research Activities. The formula used for these calculations was:

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$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(0.05)^2}$$

## DATA ANALYSIS

According to Amin (2003) sampling is the process of selecting elements form the population in such a way that the sample elements selected represents the population. The study used Purposive Sampling techniques as the population of the study area is precise and limited to the company's employees.

Primary source of data collection was the original and first-hand information which has not existed before. This involved interviewing and use of questionnaires to get the first-hand information from the respondents.

Interview; Interviews was provided to some of the members of the community and the clan leaders in order to ascertain the research findings.

Questionnaire; There was systematic designed questionnaires which will be closed ended

questions printed on the piece of paper to be answered by the participants. So printed questionnaires were given out to the selected respondents who can understand the questions clearly and are able to answer them then after to be retrieved for the analysis.

Secondary data refers to re-analyzing data that has already been collected for some other purposes other than the one at hand. The data in literature review was mostly obtained from this source such as text books, and internet.

Documentation and library; The researcher also gathered information from other related literature from various documentations concerning the study topic which was used in the research.

The researcher ensured content validity of the questionnaire by constructing items that were in conformity with the study conceptual framework. Questionnaire pre-tested were carried out to identify and eliminate those questions that could pose problems. Inputs were obtained from human resource experts and senior lecturers in the field of management in College of Higher Degrees and Research of Kampala International University who calculated the relevance and clarity of items in the instrument. Content validity index (CVI) was calculated using the formula:

$$CVI = \frac{n}{N}$$

Where N represents total Number of items (questionnaires) and n represent Number of items declared valid in the questionnaire.

Reliability of the instrument on multi-items variables was tested using reliability statistics. It was very consistent and realistic. The instruments were finally checked for accuracy, consistency and completeness using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (Sikaran, 2003). The instrument had a high degree of reliability, with all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for all items tested. The standardized Cronbach's alpha can be defined as;

$$\alpha_{\text{standardized}} = \frac{K\bar{r}}{1 + (K - 1)\bar{r}}$$

Where  $K$  is as above and  $\bar{r}$  the mean of the  $K(K - 1)/2$  non-redundant [correlation coefficients](#) (i.e., the mean of an [upper triangular](#), or lower triangular, correlation matrix).

### Data Gathering Procedures

Data gathering procedures was divided into three phases, these will include before, during and after. The researcher followed these phases to reach to the conclusion of the data gathering procedures.

**Before**, before the research, the researcher was required to get an introductory letter from the College of Higher Degrees and Research. After this letter, the researcher was required to present this letter to the field officials before carrying out the data gathering.

**During**; in the process of collecting data, the researcher educated the respondents about the research and also inform them about the future use, benefits and outcomes of the research report. This was done by the researcher with the help of three to five people by distributing the questionnaires to the respondents.

**After**; after collecting the data from the field research the analysis process and presentation will emerge. The researcher will make sure she collects all the questionnaires from the respondents since the questionnaires will be vital in data analysis procedures and presentation. The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data analysis to analyze data that will be collected from the field. Qualitative techniques of data analysis will be employed by writing down the data, and editing it on each day of carrying out the research from there, the data will be quantified by renaming it using numerical figure, and summarizing it into meaningful pattern. On the other hand, quantitative techniques of data analysis will involve the following use of descriptive statistics. This will enable the researcher to derive meaningful description of scores or measures using descriptive indices or statistics.

Frequency distribution tables, pie charts, and bar graphs will also be used to analyze the data, there will be used so as to add meaning to the data, and also for easy interpretation. The bar graphs and pie charts will be created using Microsoft Excel. Microsoft Excel will be used to create the bar graphs and pie charts because it will be readily available, and also easy to use.

**Table 1: Summary of the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Category		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:	Male	82	62.2
	Female	50	37.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>
Age:	20-39	22	16.7
	40-59	50	37.8
	60 and above	60	45.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>
Education Level:	Diploma	30	22.7
	Degree	60	45.5
	Master	31	23.9
	PhD	11	7.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital status	Married	82	62.1
	Single	30	22.7
	Widowed	20	15.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, length of service, level of education, and marital status. Males were 82 (62.2%) and females were 50 (37.8%). This implies that males dominated the sample as evidenced in their large numbers in the studied population.

Out of the 142 respondents involved in the study 22 (16.7%) were between 20 and 30 years of age, 50 (37.8%) were between the age bracket of 40-59 and 60 (45.5%) were in the age bracket of 60 years and above. This implies that most of the respondents were in the age brackets of 60 and above and the ages of 40-59, and the minority were in the age bracket of 20-30 years.

Out of the 142 respondents, 30 (22.7%) were holders of Diploma in secondary education, 60 (45.5%) had attained degree in various fields, 31 (23.9%) had master's degree in various field but related to business and conflict management or international relations and 11 (7.9%) only had attained PhDs. The study findings showed that majority of the respondents had attained

Bachelor's degrees in various fields concerning business, and social studies.

Out of the total of 142 respondents, the research findings showed that only 82 (62.1%) were married and 30 (22.7%) were single and the rest (15.2%) were widowed, this was therefore concluded that the respondents were mainly married followed by singles ones and there was a small portion of the widowed respondents.

**Table 2: Traditional Mechanisms of conflict resolution with IGAD**

**Table 2** shows The responses from the survey results show that, according to the respondents,

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
<b>Traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution with IGAD</b>			
The traditional legal system is helpful in conflict resolution	3.2	Satisfactory	5
The Islamic law system is helpful in conflict resolution	3.1	Satisfactory	6
Secular laws are helpful in conflict resolution	3.0	Satisfactory	7
Enabled effective distribution of aid	3.0	Satisfactory	7
Created the unity of forces from different countries	3.5	Satisfactory	9
The court system is also helpful in conflict resolution	3.1	Satisfactory	6
Sharia courts have helped in conflict resolution	4.0	Very Satisfactory	9
Elders being put on pressure has helped in conflict resolution	3.1	Satisfactory	8
Brought law and order	3.0	Satisfactory	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.2</b>		

most of them are satisfied with the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in the country. Somali women and children have been living in harsh conditions for more than twenty years. The subsequent years of drought and conflict led to repeated crop failures, a decline in livestock numbers, rising food prices, a deterioration in purchasing power, an erosion of coping mechanisms and a prolonged state of emergency in which women and children bear the brunt of being already poor and defenseless. . Although Somalia recorded positive developments in 2012 in terms of policies, access to humanitarian assistance and food security, the majority of children still suffer from some of the greatest vulnerabilities and poverty in the world. Many of them are still beyond the reach of UNICEF support. On August 1, 2012, the National Constitutional Assembly in Mogadishu adopted an interim constitution that significantly strengthens the rights of children. On September 10, 2012, the new Somali parliament elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are already in office. The government's sphere of influence has expanded through the activities of the African Union Peacekeeping Force (AMISOM) and the Somali National Armed Forces. This opened up areas for life-saving humanitarian operations for the first time in five years. Acute watery diarrhea/cholera is endemic and kills hundreds of people each year, particularly in densely populated areas of the CSZ, including internally displaced persons camps.

Somali elders practice reconciliation and derive their authority from delegation and accountability to their communities. Hajji Abdi Hussein Yusuf speaks from his perspective as a respected elder in Somaliland about the qualities expected of Somali elders and the role they play in peacekeeping. It is clear that Somalia urgently needs good economic planning, good governance, effective institutions and leadership, but is unable to emerge from its fragility and ensure human security given its current dependence on proven international support. As Rwandan President Paul Kagame simply said, “The history of international assistance to Africa is a dead end.” President Kagame said that the international community has provided \$300 billion in aid to Africa since 1970, without success, largely because she spent it on creating and maintaining clientelistic regimes of one kind or another, with no regard for economic growth and social development.

results (see *Dead Aid* by Dambisa Moyo). On October 10, 2013, Naoyuki Shinohara, deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, confirmed President Kagame's observation and said that previous IMF approaches had not resulted in the implementation of effective measures in fragile states.

However, Somalia will not achieve human security and become a unified nation unless it finds a way to extricate itself from this strangulation and focus on its own internal solution. It is true that the country cannot function without the stabilization of the security forces, and at the same time foreign forces and assistance cannot ensure national and human security. Only Somalis themselves can do that.

reinforce or contradict each other over time. The question of whether we need a new vision that frees us from dependence and constant charity is a question of degree. As I was writing this article, I was struck by the significant gap between modern concepts of government and those prevalent in the past. As a result, I became more concerned about the growing gap between the reality of the country we all so desperately wanted to create and the theory that guided it in the first place.

Somalia's economic recovery continues to be hampered by difficult security situations, poor infrastructure and the country's limited financial resources. The Somali economy remains heavily dependent on large amounts of aid and remittances. According to UN sources, humanitarian and development assistance to Somalia amounted to US\$750 million in 2012, one of the highest per capita figures in the world (African Development Bank Group, 2013). At an estimated \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion per year, remittances contribute the most to national capital inflows and the country's wealth (2013). In the past, Somalia relied primarily on its own resources, be they land or sea, before looking outside. For example, the 1974 famine was a time of psychological awakening for the country, and Somalia showed its resolve by focusing on managing the land for food security and economic development.

It appears that achievements and innovations in our Somali culture have now been lost and dependence on artificial international aid has become the sole focus of survival. Focusing on food and water supplies, law and order, human rights, etc. will have a major impact on human security. The country's security and development programs must be adapted to the real situation on the ground. This means that the government must create and manage its support in line with local commitment and local determination of long-term needs and capacity development.



By defining problems and solutions locally, people can have a genuine interest in actively participating in and solving problems and creating the kinds of communities they want to be a part of. Prioritizing a development and support area depends on the specific context of the problem and requires a good understanding of local leadership, capacities, situations and conditions.

The government's role is then to find ways to generate revenue from the country's resources and businesses and put these into the hands of the public. For example, investing in the public and private sectors is a great way to create jobs and collect taxes. In this context, priority must be given to youth and women, who make up more than half of the Somali population and, for women, are often responsible for the daily care of the family and wider social networks

The problems of young people and women are problems of society as a whole and thus change economic, political and social situations. Specific programs need to be created to promote real opportunities for women and young people to fully enjoy their rights, autonomy and inclusion; and help them build their own capacity to overcome situations of vulnerability, instability and dependence. There are many displaced refugees in Somalia, some 1,373,080, in Mogadishu alone (possibly more today), according to UNHCR's 2013 National Operations Report. This means that the need is great and resources are scarce, but with allocation and proper planning it is possible to create human security. When people are free from fear and hunger and their basic rights are fulfilled; They tend to live with each other in dignity and harmony and build a culture of sustainability.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Somalia political instability has been attributed to internationalization of the conflict by the Barre's regime in its aim of achieving the Greater Somalia vision. The use of clannism as a clarion call backfired with the defeat of the army in Ogaden, leading to the collapse of the state. The raise of the tribal warlords keeps on fueling the conflict and complicating the peace process in the region. The immediate post independent era was marked by internal socio-political instability centered on the merger of the colonial territories and the support of irredentist conflict activities in the north-eastern Kenya and south-eastern Ethiopia. When Barre consolidated his power base he adopted a calamitous policy, which favored his clan, and this led to disintegration of the Army that was formerly the central figure of his power structure. The collapse of the state in 1991 left the country without a central government or viable infrastructures. However, the disaster in Somalia was not created by fighting alone, but rather by the massive, persistent and deliberate violations of human rights committed by all factions. The collapse of the state has been followed by diverse mediation efforts. These range from regional bodies, UN, US and many others without success. The most recent and successful effort has been under the auspices of IGAD. The outcome of the 14th Somali Peace and Reconciliation Conference in Kenya led to a possible rebirth of the Republic of Somalia. The conference elected 275 members of parliament and new president, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf. The prospects are however gloomy for the new government as it is faced with anarchy, and fears of growing terrorist groups. This is why Kenya, a terrorist victim in 1998 and 2002 has been in the forefront to ensure that order, stability and security prevail in Somalia. Another challenge is repatriation of about three million refugees back into the country; who are spread in many parts of Kenya, Horn of Africa and the rest of the world. A reconciled Somalia will offer hope for security, stability and peace in the whole Horn of Africa.

The leaders need to work on a progressive plan aimed at restoring peace, security and stability by involving the clans and their leaders and not just the warlords, especially in disarmament to pacify the process. That the government must face the challenge of reconciling people at all levels of the society including inter and intra clan and sub-clans, factional and political groupings. The people have to be determined to support this new dawn and future.

The conflict has resulted to disunity on the basis of clan, ethnic, political, and sectarian religious lines. Rehabilitation, reintegration and transfer of skills to generations of gunmen and women who missed school and vocational training opportunities in all disarmament programmed will therefore be critical.

Emphasis has to be put on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of basic infrastructures to prepare the country to enter a constitutional phase. This will include building institutions of democratic governance, rule of law, decentralization of power, protection of human rights and safeguarding the integrity of the country.

All disputes must henceforth be settled through dialogue, negotiations and other peaceful legal means. In keeping with the United Nations arms embargo against Somalia, the neighboring countries have to cooperate to make sure that their borders are not used for weapons movement. The international community needs to assist in establishing an impartial National Somali Army and Police Force.

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