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The Impact of War on Somali Men

An Inception Study

LOGiCA Study Series





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The Impact of War on Somali Men

An Inception Study

A Rift Valley Institute Research Project
Funded by the LOGiCA trust fund of the World Bank



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The Rift Valley Institute (www.riftvalley.net) works in Eastern and Central Africa to bring local knowledge to bear on social, political and economic development.

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The RVI Nairobi Forum is a venue for critical discussion of political, economic and social issues in the Horn of Africa, Eastern and Central Africa, Sudan and South Sudan.

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The Rift Valley Institute

The Rift Valley Institute (RVI), founded in 2001, is an independent, non-profit research and training organization, working in Eastern and Central Africa. The Institute is currently active in Somalia, Somaliland, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The aim of the Institute, and its Nairobi Forum for Research, Policy and Local Knowledge, is to advance useful knowledge of the region and its diverse communities, bringing a better understanding of local realities to bear in social and political action. The RVI works with institutions in the region to develop and implement long-term programmes that combine action-oriented research with education and public information. RVI books, research papers and briefing papers are available for download from www.riftvalley.net.

Introduction

Background to the Study

This report summarises findings from the inception phase of the research project *The Impact of War on Somali Men* (IWM) undertaken by the Rift Valley Institute (RVI)¹ between December 2013 and May 2014. In this project, the Rift Valley Institute is working with Somali men and women to investigate the impact of prolonged war and conflict on Somali men and boys. The IWM study aims to contribute to development and stability in the Somali regions through better-informed policy and practice, by deepening knowledge and understanding of the enduring effects of war and violent conflict on Somali males, and the consequences for Somali society.

This is the first extensive study of Somali male experiences of the war and its consequences. It builds on an earlier study on Somali women's experiences of the war, documented in the publication *Somalia The Untold Story – The War Through the Eyes of Somali Women* (Judith Gardner & Judy El-Bushra [eds], 2004). According to the women in that study, women's and girl's lives would not fully recover until the impact of the war on adult and young men had been addressed. Eight years later, despite a growing interest globally in war and masculinities², there is still little understanding of the impact of more than two decades of war, dislocation, exile and chronic instability on Somali men and male youth. Little is understood of what it is like to be male in Somali

society today, how men and boys' fates and opportunities are shaped by their gender identity, as well as their other identity markers such as clan, class, age, and social and marital status. Nor is much understood of the challenges men face in trying to uphold traditional male gender roles and responsibilities in a radically changed context, or of what options exist outside these normative roles.

A forum held in Nairobi in 2013 as a preparatory step in the design of the IWM project concluded that the international community's commonly-held stereotypes of Somali men — as inherently violent, prone to extremism, a threat to Western security interests and to their own society — are based on flimsy evidence about men's engagement in violence and about the impact war has had on their lives. Yet these assumptions are influential in shaping international and national policy and practice. The intention of the IWM project is to make a timely contribution to improved policy and practice by providing a more nuanced and grounded view, of relevance both to Somalia policy, and to policy relating to gender in insecure contexts more broadly.

Conceptual framework

From the theoretical and policy perspective, the IWM study seeks to contribute to current international debates about gender, peace and security, and in particular to discourse around the links between masculinities and violent conflict.

Why a study of men and war?

Over the past 20 years or more the global women's movement has succeeded, to a degree, in creating channels for women to voice their concerns and perspectives at the highest levels of decision-making. In the field of peace and conflict, the issue of women and war has become one of the defining concerns (in rhetoric at least) of the international community

1 www.riftvalley.net.

2 It joins a growing body of social research exploring manhood and masculinities in relation to conflict. See for example G. Barker and C. Ricardo, *Young Men and the Construction of Masculinity in Sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for HIV/AIDS, Conflict and Violence*, World Bank Social Development Papers, No26 2005. Some, like this study, are attempts to look beyond the post 9/11 Western stereotype of the Muslim male, including for example, Farha Ghannam, *Live and Die Like A Man: Gender Dynamics in Urban Egypt*, Stamford University Press, 2013.

in the early 21st century, building on the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in October 2000.³ Resolution 1325 was followed by a series of related U.N. Security Council Resolutions addressing issues such as sexual violence in war, child soldiers, and women's role in peace negotiations.⁴ In addition to the Security Council resolutions, there have also been numerous regional and national adaptations of these resolutions,⁵ as well as projects and programmes across the world designed to inform women's organisations about the resolutions and to support them in advocating for their rights.⁶

These initiatives together make up what has come to be known as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Together they have strengthened the international community's commitment to addressing the needs of women and girls in war, articulating a global commitment to protect women in war, to take their work in peace-making seriously, and to combat impunity for those who commit abuses against them. The agenda has become a cornerstone of the international response to conflict and state fragility, such that few international interventions in fragile contexts are now without a WPS component.

However, in this process of legitimising women's voices and women's activism in conflict and peace, some questions have also been raised. In the first place, doubts have been expressed as to what has really changed for women – has WPS actually led to women being more secure, safer from sexual vio-

lence, or recognised as participants in political decision-making? The answer from many parts of the globe is a resounding 'no'.⁷ Beyond that, a number of other questions have been raised, which can be summarised as follows:

- How true is the stereotype of women as victims in war and men as the perpetrators of violence? Many examples can be found of women participating actively in war and violence, and of encouraging and supporting others to do so,⁸ while many men oppose violence and militarisation (and often suffer for doing so).⁹ And is it not men who are largely targeted in war?¹⁰
- Men may indeed be responsible for more of the world's violence than women – as perpetrators of violence and as managers of the institutions that enable it – but does that apply to all men? Aren't there differences in access to power and resources between men (for example between younger and older men, or between men of different classes or ethnicities)?¹¹
- If the policy and humanitarian community holds that only women can be vulnerable, what are the human rights consequences for vulnerable men for whom no support is provided? There is increasing recognition that men suffer in conflict in specific ways that often go unacknowledged in mainstream discourse and policy, and are hence ignored – in fact sometimes

3 The text of the resolution is available at http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf, accessed 16th July 2013.

4 Key resolutions include 1820 (2008) and 2106 (2013) on sexual violence in war, 1888 (2009) on monitoring progress, 1889 (2009) on women's participation in peace processes, and 1960 (2010) on sexual violence in war against women and children. Texts can be found at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml> accessed 12th February 2014.

5 For example the Dakar Declaration covered the implementation of Resolution 1325 in West Africa, see http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/ecowas_outcome_document_1325.pdf accessed 12th February 2014. The National Action Plan for Somalia has not been finalised by time of writing.

6 Sanam Naraghi Anderlini. *Women building peace: what they do, why it matters*. (Lynne Reiner, 2007).

7 Sanam Naraghi Anderlini. *What the women say: participation and UNSCR 1325*. (International Civil Society Action Network and MIT Center for International Studies, 2010).

8 Caroline Moser and Fiona Clarke, eds. *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. London: Zed Books, 2001.

9 Oozgur Heval Cinar and Coskun Usterci, eds. *Conscientious Objection: Resisting Militarized Society*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2009.

10 Adam Jones. "Gendercide and Genocide." In *Gendercide and Genocide*, edited by Adam Jones, 1–38. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004; Carpenter, R. Charli. *"Innocent Women and Children": Gender, Norms and the Protection of Civilians*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.

11 R. W. Connell, "Globalisation, Imperialism and Masculinities" In *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*, edited by Michael S. Kimmel, Jeff Hearn, and R. W. Connell. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005.

frankly denied - in the targeting of services.¹²

- As societies are composed of both men and women, might exclusively focussing on women have negative consequences for both women and men? There is evidence that an inclusive approach to gender, rather than addressing women's situation in isolation, permits the identification of both men and women as key actors in the transformation of gender relations and is likely to be more effective in enhancing women's position and condition.¹³

Raising such questions is controversial, because some fear it may risk losing the gains that women have made. It is possible that this agenda of 'men and war' might be a retrograde step, taking us back to the days when men's dominance was unquestioned. However, it is also possible that a genuinely new range of insights and understandings, of benefit to all, might emerge from a broad, relational gender approach.

One of the main themes of this discourse is that in order for male violence to be contained, it has to be understood, and understood in a political and social context both locally and globally. While it seems undeniable that men are globally more strongly associated with active violence than women are, this seems to be a result of structural features that shape men's outlooks and opportunities, rather than emerging from a natural propensity to violence. These structural features are open to modification, implying the possibility of change. Crucially – although this point has been explored much less within the men-and-gender discourse – this also implies the possibility that men can be the targets and objects of vio-

lence and other forms of abuse (from women and other men) as well as perpetrators, this vulnerability being a legitimate area of concern within a gender or feminist approach.¹⁴

If men are now gaining prominence in the discourse around gender, conflict and peace, this is because new ways of thinking about men are now possible, using a gender lens. Whereas in the past men were default humans – an undifferentiated group standing for the whole population - it is now possible to ask about men a range of questions similar to those that gender analysis asks about women; and in the process it is possible to tease out new understandings of what conflict means for men, and for different sorts of men, as well as the implications of masculine identities for conflict and peace.

Conceptual framing of the research design

The study's approach is framed by a combination of social exclusion analysis and relational gender analysis. Both frameworks address entrenched power dynamics, particularly power that has evolved through historical trends, is supported by economic and political structures and relationships, and is validated through culture, religious practice and media. Both are relevant to an understanding of violent conflict and of peace, since unequal and oppressive power relations contribute towards the build-up of violent crises: at the same time, such crises have the potential to become thresholds on which new relationships can be negotiated.

The focus of social exclusion analysis (SEA) is on uncovering the nature of power relations and their structural underpinnings.¹⁵ In SEA, systems of exclusion are composed of four elements: first, discriminatory attitudes and values, and second, historical and cultural circumstances which empower dominant groups and give them access to resources that permit them to translate these attitudes into

12 Chris Dolan. "Militarised, Religious, and Neo-Colonial: The Triple Bind Confronting Men in Contemporary Uganda." In *Men and Masculinities: Politicising Masculinities*, edited by Andrea Cornwall, Jerker Edstrom, and Alan Greig, 126–138. London & New York: Zed Books, 2011; Alison, Miranda. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Women's Human Rights and Questions of Masculinity." *Review of International Studies* 33, no. 1 (2007): 75–90; Dolan, Chris. *Into the Mainstream: Addressing Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict*. London, 2014; Adam Jones op cit.

13 Myrntinnen et al. *Rethinking Gender in Peacebuilding*. London, 2014.

14 Workshop on Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict Situations. New York, 2013, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.

15 We have used a version of SEA adapted by ACORD and described in El-Bushra and Sahl 2002.

discriminatory actions. Third, in combination, these values and sources of power create conditions in which discriminatory actions against subordinate groups become not only permitted, but also accepted as natural and desirable, including by the people discriminated against.

Fourth, over time these actions build up into a systematic pattern of denial of rights and opportunities (an ‘ideology of superiority’). The targets of discrimination respond variously; they may resist, accept, deny or actively buy in, often cushioning themselves against discrimination in ways that might in turn lead to further exclusion (for example, by specialising in specific occupations and thereby choosing to operate in separate social and economic spheres). These responses may also help perpetuate the system, providing the discriminators with evidence to justify their attitudes.

The notion that power has both overt and unexpressed forms permeates the SEA model; researchers are thus encouraged to look beyond physical manifestations of power and seek out forms of power, often more impervious to change, that are rooted in economic, social, political and cultural structures and relationships.¹⁶ The SEA model emphasises that different discriminations operate in similar ways and often reinforce each other, thus enabling researchers in the field of gender to conceptualise the problems facing men and women as being systemically linked, rather than as competing for policy attention.

The second component of the project’s conceptual framework is the relational approach to gender analysis in the context of conflict and peacebuilding.¹⁷ Sustainable peace requires the peaceful management of differences and conflict; managing gender relations is a key dimension of a society’s conflict-handling propensity. A relational approach to gender analysis understands the gendered identities of men and women to be constructed in relation to

each other. Relationships between men and women vary from one context to another and are shaped by their positions within the multiple axes of power around which a society is organised.¹⁸ These axes reveal the intersection of gender with other identity markers such as age, ethnicity or economic status: universalising all men, and all women, obscures the true differences between them in any particular setting and disregards the power differentials among men and among women. The relational view of gender is a significant tool in peacebuilding because it leads to a nuanced understanding of power relations, and may therefore be useful in explaining how conflict becomes violent.

Selected key concepts guiding the analysis of findings

Key concepts that the IWM research team found useful are the following:

Multiple masculinities and femininities: There are many different ways of being a man or ways of being a woman, and no universal pattern can be assumed. Age, economic class and ethnicity all play a role in framing gender identities, as does personal orientation or choice; however, circumstances may limit the possibilities of personal choice, either because of limited material means or because of social sanctions.

The gender order: Power differentials among men and among women, as well as those between men and women, result in a complex layering of gendered categories often described as the ‘gender order’, which may severely disadvantage men at the bottom of the hierarchy. The gender order varies from context to context.

Patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity/ies, and subordination: in any one place, particular versions of masculinity, imbued with specific characteristics, hold superior positions at the top of the power hierarchy. These characteristics are exalted by the culture and underpinned by links with insti-

16 The study drew on Lukes, Steven. *Power: A Radical View*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1974 for an understanding of the importance of power that is not overtly manifested.

17 Myrntinen et al 2014.

18 ‘Women and wars: towards a conceptual framework’ in Cohn, C. (ed.) *Women and wars*, pp. 1 – 35, Cambridge, Polity Press 2012.

tutional power. Practitioners and exemplars of the hegemonic form perform a role as standard-bearers for patriarchy, defined as a system of relationships that 'guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women'.¹⁹ The values and attributes associated with the accepted hegemonic forms of masculinity change over time, as the conditions on which patriarchy is built shift, requiring new competencies and characteristics. If some men are associated with hegemonic power, the converse is that other men are in a subordinate position. Nevertheless, the hegemonic model of masculinity creates opportunities from which all men benefit directly or indirectly.

The normative framework: this describes the expectations that society has of men and women at different stages of their lives, the value-laden standards against which people are judged by others and judge themselves. The normative framework may in practical terms be unattainable without causing mental and social stress. However, while lived realities may change and demand adaptation on an everyday level, underlying values and expectations appear to be relatively resistant to change.²⁰

Gender, masculinities and violence: There is much debate about the contribution of gender identities, and of masculine identities in particular, to the performance, management and perpetuation of violent conflict, and about the implications of this for intervention strategies and practice. Men have been variously perceived as perpetrators of violence against women (including sexual violence against women and girls as an integral part of armed conflict), as victims of violence themselves, and/or as potential collaborators with women in the evolution of more equitable gender and other relations. A number of mechanisms are suggested in the literature whereby

gender is causal in violent conflict. For some theorists, socialisation encourages men to value aggressiveness or warrior skills and provides incentives for them to put these into practice.²¹ For others, violence (especially interpersonal violence) is triggered by the thwarting of gendered aspirations or the clash of conflicting models of masculinity.²² For yet others it is the global world order that disempowers men at the local level, creating anxieties and driving them into militarism.²³

The above concepts both framed the research design and were explored through the process of data collection, with the intention of assessing how far the theoretical assumptions are born out in the Somali case.

Study design and methodology

This study invited Somali men to reflect on and share their experiences of being male and living through the dramatic social, political and economic changes and violent conflict of the past 30 years.²⁴ The inten-

19 Connell, R. W. *Masculinities*. Polity Press, 1995. p. 77.

20 El-Bushra, Judy. "Fused in Combat : Gender Relations and Armed Conflict." *Development in Practice* 13, no. May (2003): 252–265. doi:10.1080/0961452032000073215.

21 Cockburn, Cynthia. "Gender Relations as Causal in Militarization and War." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 12, no. 2 (2010): 139–157; Connell, Raewyn. "Organized Powers: Masculinities, Managers and Violence." In *Men and Development: Politicizing Masculinities*, edited by Andrea Cornwall, Jerker Edstrom, and Alan Greig, 85–97. London and New York: Zed Books, 2011; Mukhta, Parita. "Gender, Community, Nation: The Myth of Innocence." In *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*, edited by Suzie Jacobs, Ruth Jacobson, and Jen Marchbanks. London: Zed Books, 2000.

22 Moore, Henrietta. "The Problem of Explaining Violence in the Social Sciences." In *Sex and Violence: Issues in Representation and Experience*, edited by Penelope Harvey and Peter Gow. London and New York: Routledge, 1994; Dolan, Chris. "Collapsing Masculinities and Weak States – a Case Study of Northern Uganda." In *Masculinities Matter! Men, Gender and Development*, edited by F. Cleaver, 57–83. London & New York: Zed Books, 2002; Gilligan, J. *Preventing Violence*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001.

23 Greig, Alan. "Anxious States and Directions for Masculinities Work with Men." In *Men and Masculinities: Politicizing Masculinities*, edited by Andrea Cornwall, Jerker Edstrom, and Alan Greig, 219–235. London and New York: Zed Books, 2011; Silberschmidt, Margrethe. "Have Men Become the Weaker Sex? Changing Life Situations in Kisii District, Kenya." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, no. 2 (2011): 237–253; Daley, Patricia. *Gender and Genocide in Burundi: The Search for Spaces of Peace in the Great Lakes Region*. Oxford and Bloomington: James Currey and Indiana University Press, 2011.

24 Fuller accounts of this context can be found elsewhere, for exam-

tion in this inception study has been to bring to the fore their voices and their life stories. It has necessarily been exploratory, owing to the newness of the subject matter. Interviews were carried out with targeted groups in a selection of locations, with the aim of covering as many categories of men and variations of the Somali male experience as possible.

The study was carried out in the three Somali territories plus the refugee camps of Dadaab and the Eastleigh suburb of Nairobi - a research landscape with a full spectrum of peace and conflict contexts: ongoing armed conflict with international dimensions (in parts of South Central), liberated areas dependent on clan-based security (Baidoa), internationally supported state-building versus militant Islamist insurgency (Mogadishu), locally maintained peace in a fragile state (Puntland), contested zones (Sool and Sanaag), post-conflict peace in a democratically elected but weak state (Somaliland), displacement and life in refugee camps (northern Kenya), and life in the diaspora in Eastleigh. See Annex 1 for more details.

Care was taken to ensure that in each location men interviewed included older, adult and young men. In some locations, some groups were identified as being of particular relevance such as veterans of the Somali National Movement in Hargeisa who fought against the Siad Barre government, or a group of young war-disabled men in Dadaab. Individuals with special knowledge of the locality, or who had particularly significant stories to tell, were interviewed separately. In each location, a group of women was also interviewed with the intention of providing validation for the men's perspectives. In keeping with RVI's general approach to research, the study also sought to involve Somali academic insti-

tutions in the research process.²⁵

The main data collection methods were individual interviews, focus-group discussions, and the collection of individual men's life stories. Life stories, collected from individuals and sometimes over two days, focus on men's personal lives. They offer up both the minutiae and, taken collectively, the bigger picture of men's experiences stretching back into the 1950s. Forming a rich seam of evidence, the analysis of the study's collection of men's life stories is ongoing. Additional insights were generated through critical-thinking workshops in Somali universities. Initial conclusions of the study were presented at two validation meetings. From December 2013 to April 2014, approximately 400 men and 90 women participated in the study through 32 individual interviews, 29 focus groups, 47 life stories and two critical-thinking workshops (see Annex 1 for fuller details of the respondents).

The timeliness of the topic and the readiness of men, young and old, to speak to us has generated a far greater volume of information than originally anticipated for the inception phase. The subject struck an emotional chord with every male and female respondent, with the researchers regularly told it was 'about time', 'the first time', 'the only time' men had ever been asked to talk about themselves. Men said, 'We are used to being asked about women and children but never about ourselves', and 'This is the first and only time we have heard of any organisation taking an interest in men'.

Structure of the report

The purpose of the inception phase was to define a methodology and a set of guiding questions for the main study, the design of which will take into account the findings outlined in this report. The overarching research questions for the inception phase were drawn up with the above conceptual framework in mind, and were as follows:

ple: Africa Watch, *Somalia: A Government at War with its Own People*, Washington / New York: The Africa Watch Committee, 1990; Samatar, Ahmed I. *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?* Boulder, CO/London: Lynne Rienner, 1994; Simons, A, *Networks of Dissolution: Somalia Undone*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995; Besteman, C. & Cassanelli, L.V. (eds), *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*, Boulder, CO/ London: Westview Press / Haan Publishing, 2000; Bradbury, M. *Becoming Somaliland*, (African Issues), Oxford, James Currey: CIIR, 2008.

25 See Annex 1 for a full account of the research team, locations, and participating institutions.

1. In what respect have models of manhood and masculinity been affected by the war?
2. In what respect have men's ability to achieve these models been affected by the war?
3. What has changed and why?
4. To what extent are men able to fulfill expectations of manhood today, and if they are not, why and what are the consequences of that?
5. In either case, what contribution does that make to on-going violence and conflict, or to peace?

This report aims to incorporate the most salient findings from the team's preliminary analysis of the field data gathered during the inception phase. Section 1 of the report outlines the key findings relating to the impact of the war on men and on ideals of

masculinity (questions 1-4). Section 2 presents an analysis in relation to question 5 on the implications for understandings of conflict. The third and final section summarises key policy implications.

1. Key Findings

Overview

Kinship has been described by anthropologists as the organising principle of Somali society²⁶ and the key to understanding politics, organised violence, trade and conflict management. Somalis are conventionally described as belonging to one of several clan families that subdivide into clans and sub-clans. As all Somalis are born into this social structure, kinship is a critical source of an individual's identity that defines a person's relationship to other Somalis. Clans are not static forms of social organisation but dynamic social constructs, in which alliances are formed and realigned in response to internal and external events and processes. Social relations are also influenced by other factors such as wealth, educational qualifications, gender and age, and geography, age-groups, neighbourhoods, workplaces or religious affiliation can all provide an alternative basis for social bonds between people of different lineages. Kinship is, nevertheless, an important feature of Somali social, political and economic life.²⁷

Political order and social relations are maintained through the kinship system, through collective social institutions and through reciprocal, rule-bound behaviour defined in customary law (*xeer*). In the course of the war, and in the absence of state institutions and other forms of political organisation, the kinship (or clan) system, and its institutions of elders, *diya*-paying groups and customary law (see Annex 2), have provided a critical structure for organising inter-group relations and governance and defining an individual's rights and social obligations.

As evidenced in the fieldwork for this study, some aspects of male clan membership, such as age-related *diya* group obligations, vary across sub-cultures

and even within different segments of the same clan family. However, across all, the notions of masculinity in this patriarchal society are intricately linked with the clan-based social structure.

In this chapter, we summarise the main findings from the interviews, focus-group discussions and life-stories. Section 1.1 presents how male and female respondents described the normative social and cultural expectations, definitions, roles and responsibilities associated with being identified as male, in the context of the family and the wider kinship-based system of social organisation, the clan. Section 1.2 describes the impact of the post-independence era on men's lives, while section 1.3 presents a preliminary analysis of the impact of the war and state collapse on men and masculinities.

1.1 Somali Manhood: the Normative Framework

“Characteristics of a Somali man are to be courageous, generous, an orator, patient, humane and capable.”
[Traditional elders, Mogadishu]

As the quote above indicates, Somali society has exacting and high expectations of its men. Asked, ‘What responsibilities, roles and characteristics are associated with being a man, at family and at clan level?’ respondents, male and female, young and old, found the question easy to answer. They readily recited litanies of expectations; in total, over 70 differently expressed expectations were recorded, many described in detail and some illustrated with proverbs or sayings. Significantly, the core set of expectations given were the same regardless of respondents' location, age group, livelihood group, marital status or sex.

Born male in Somali society means you join the half of society that is expected to bear responsibility for everything and everyone else. This is the case whether you are born into a pastoralist, agri-

26 I.M. Lewis 1993: 47.

27 M. Bradbury 2008.

culturalist, urban or rural family. For, as summed up by a youth in Las Canood and echoed by other respondents, male and female, “*Men are responsible for the world, after Allah.*” This belief in a God-given all-male, all-encompassing responsibility - albeit one to be earned and not to be taken lightly - speaks volumes about the patriarchal nature of the kinship-based social structure, at the heart of Somali society. Binding males to one another through their paternal blood links, the clan system is a complex social structure forcing social cohesion and inter-dependency between groups of patrilineally related men, and women, in the pursuit of collective survival and security. Having evolved in an environment where competition for scarce natural resources and thus conflict and social fragmentation is an ever-present threat, the clan system, mobilises and controls significant reservoirs of human and social capital. In addition to blood ties, findings show the common thread that ties men together to form this essential bedrock of the traditional system governance²⁸ is voluntary compliance²⁹ with an exacting code of conduct and ideals of manhood. How voluntary compliance is achieved warrants further research; this report offers some tentative analysis.

The study material reveals a gendered social order or hierarchy in which not all men are born equal or have an equal status.³⁰ The portrayal of Somalia as a homogenous society has become a little less common,³¹ nevertheless in international policy and practice there is a persistent assumption that being male equals being powerful. This study’s findings do not challenge the basic, structural and cultural inequality between men and women in Somalia. What

28 Traditional Somali governance is kinship-based and centres on acephalous units in which (male) authority is exercised through alliance building, negotiation and the interpretation of customary laws (*xeer*) by men chosen by their kinsmen to represent them for this purpose.

29 The use of the term ‘voluntary compliance’ draws on the analysis presented in Centre for Research and Development (CRD), Traditional Governance in Somalia, South Central Somalia, draft report for the World Bank, 2005. <http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/153065/southcentralsomalia.pdf>.

30 It may be speculated that the same holds true for Somali women.

31 Challenging the popular view of a homogeneous Somalia, see Ali Jimale Ahmed (ed), *The Invention of Somalia*, Trenton NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1995.

it does evidence, however, are the structural and cultural inequalities between men as a result of ethnic and occupational identities. For example, men (and women) from what are called the caste and outcast groups are socially and politically powerless; they occupy the lowest social rungs of society, are expected to limit themselves to menial and culturally unclean occupations; marrying into a majority clan family is taboo. The study also evidences the lower position men occupy within their own clan family when they fail to live up to expectations or to successfully navigate the normative male trajectory. Unlike men from minorities, whose subordinate position is for life, findings show that for these men gaining status is a possibility.

For any man, status is inextricably linked to fulfilling social expectations of manhood. The Somali term *raganimo* roughly translates as ‘manhood’; for many Somalis it is a shorthand for the wide-ranging collection of attributes and ideals considered desirable and valued in a man. Despite some significant sub-cultural connotations,³² generally speaking, to ‘have *raganimo*’ means you are excelling as a man, to lose it means you are failing.³³

As a male, you grow up judged by other boys and men and by women, according to the exacting ideals and codes of manhood. Boys from pastoral clans are taught at a young age to show fearlessness and never publicly cry or show other signs of emotional weakness. To do otherwise is un-manly and humiliating, for the individual and by extension for his clansmen and women. A male’s *raganimo* is enhanced if he survives an attempt to humiliate or intimidate him without showing fear.

Bravery and dry eyes are crucial markers of a man. Findings also make clear that a ‘real man’ - i.e. one who meets the normative model of manhood - is

32 Use of the term *raganimo* varies across the regions and sub-cultures; especially among northern Somali nomadic pastoralist society *raganimo* refers to all aspects of being what translates as a ‘real man’. In the north east and in the south, and among non-pastoral cultures such as the Bantu and Reer Hamar, it is used slightly differently. In Puntland it refers specifically to a man’s physical virility and sexual prowess.

33 In some parts, including Somaliland, the term *raganimo* can be applied to women, as well as men, who show courage or ‘balls’. However, whilst courage in women is admired, in men it is considered an essential.

one who excels in fulfilling both his family and his clan responsibilities. These are extensive, and demand multiple skills and aptitudes. The clan-based system of social organisation relies on and enables the mobilisation of men for the pursuit and defence of collective interests; but that does not mean Somali society is militarised, nor is normative manhood in Somalia predicated on the demonstration of violence or on the violent oppression of women.

From an early age boys learn that being physically male and demonstrating manhood are not synonymous. A Somali boy cannot expect to attain and maintain manhood easily: he must master the skills and cultivate the qualities of a man and repeatedly prove himself throughout his lifetime. His standing as a man will be judged within the family and within the clan and in different social, economic and political contexts, including times of hunger, conflict, and peace-making. He will be judged by his close male and female relatives and by his wider network of clansmen. Nor is Somali manhood, if achieved, a milestone reached like fatherhood or adulthood. It is a dynamic concept - not immutable, but dependent on social recognition, validation and verification.³⁴ Throughout a man's lifetime, his manhood can be threatened, diminished, entirely lost and found again. It can also remain beyond reach. Life stories collected during the study³⁵ evidence the elusive and mercurial nature of manhood and its essential fragility.

How successfully an individual is able to attain and sustain his manhood depends on many factors but two conditions stand out as critical: his access to livestock or other forms of wealth, and being married with children, particularly sons.³⁶ The status of

his father will also have a bearing on his own trajectory. Attaining and maintaining manhood is a life-long challenge. A respondent conveyed this through the Somali proverb: "*raganimo waa raadkaaga oo roob qariyey*". Translated this means "*raganimo is like your footprints which are wiped out by the rain*". The message it conveys is that you have to keep making your mark, you can never assume that what proved your manhood today will still hold true tomorrow.

Findings point to the possibility of multiple normative masculinities, depending on context and life-stage.³⁷ Some are time- and context-bound, (youth, warrior, herdsman, farmer, elder); some overlap (father and husband); some are life-long (clansman); some spiritual, optional and or vocational (religious man, teacher); some nominated and or inherited (senior elder, *suldaan*). At the same time, for the majority of males, there is a singular and quite uniformly described clan and age-related trajectory along which they are destined to progress: from boyhood to youth (14 to 25 or 30 years) to adulthood (becoming a husband and father) and then elder. This normative male career path is a life-long pulse: as long as you are alive you are somewhere along its range, whether or not fully engaged or absent, for example living away from the rural area or studying overseas.³⁸ It comes with age-related responsibilities, obligations, and expectations. For example, wisdom is highly valued and usually related to age in Somali culture. Thus when it comes to clan-related decision-making typically older men are privileged over younger men.

The normative framework described by respondents speaks of and is rooted in a rural, pre-state context. Only in Mogadishu and Baidoa did discus-

34 This finding supports what Connell (2000, 2005) describes as the dynamic and active construction quality of masculinities, that they do change and "they come into existence as people act". It also supports Ghannam's observation from her recent study of masculinity in a suburb of Cairo... "Endorsed rather than ordained, manhood remains forever in doubt, requiring daily demonstration..."

35 More than 47 life stories have been collected so far. The collection will be presented as a published volume later on in the study.

36 Though a noted change since the war is the increased value felt for girls within their families. Men find it is typically their female children and relatives who look after and support them through times of need, not their sons. Some now say it is a blessing to have more girls than boys.

37 This supports the concept of multiple masculinities, as opposed to a uniform 'masculinity', which is one of the central findings to have come from a wide range of empirical studies on masculinities globally (see Connell 2002, 2005). The inception phase has concentrated on exploring just these two generic levels: family and clan but as Connell (2000, 2005 and elsewhere) notes there are 'multiple masculinities'; within any community and given setting there will be "different ways of enacting manhood, different ways of learning to be a man, different conceptions of the self and different ways of using a male body." Further contexts to be explored during the main study include: the mosque, militia-group, peace-talks and business community.

38 The study has not yet explored transgressions from the norm.

sion of male obligations and ideals make reference to the state or nation. Responses from women and elders were similar in this regard: “a man should be patriotic... defend his country... be responsible for the nation... take part in the military... learn the national duties... be loyal and honest to his country...” The latter was a view also put forward by a member of the youth focus group in Mogadishu. The elders noted, “a man should be a nationalist and clean citizen... he should pay tax”. Elsewhere, the normative framework charted by the study bears almost no trace of Somalia having been a modernising, ideologically-driven socialist state for almost 20 years, though this is a fact reflected in other aspects of the findings. Even respondents who have lived all their lives in an urban environment spoke of the same normative expectations, roles and responsibilities as those who had come from or still experience rural life.

As already noted, overall there were very few notable differences between respondents’ accounts, including between younger and older respondents, male and female. The main differences were in aspects of socialisation described by the Rahanweyn and so-called ‘Bantu’³⁹ participants, particularly in relation to marriage and maintenance of a marriage.

More research is needed to understand the full significance of this enduring, historically-rooted, and strikingly homogeneous, normative framework. It is possible however that future research will reveal additional social categories displaying divergence from the model, one of which might be the Somali diaspora.

What we do know from findings and from other forms of evidence is that in terms of collective power and control over decisions affecting others’ lives, even though individual men may have lost or gained, there is no evidence that the patriarchal ideology underpinning Somali society has been substantially damaged by the war or state collapse.

39 ‘Bantu’ has become a generic name for distinct groups of riverine agricultural communities in southern Somalia, some of whom are thought to be descended from peoples from Tanzania who migrated to Somalia or were brought to Somalia as slaves.

1.1.1 Normative male roles and responsibilities within the family

Findings emphasise the essential place a man has in the family. He is first and foremost the family’s shield and representative: “at the front line of the family and (facing) everything that comes towards (it)... (he) must be prepared to do anything, even steal another man’s livestock, for the survival of the family”. For the family’s status and respect in the community, the ideal family man should demonstrate problem-solving, generosity and sympathy, peaceful co-existence, and skills in conflict mediation. Through his behaviour and character a man both represents and cultivates cultural, social and political capital for his family.

Male roles at different stages in life

Boys, like girls,⁴⁰ are raised to conform to socially-constructed gender roles and responsibilities. Their growing-up is framed by a consciously socially structured socialisation process. Fathers are the role model and main educator during childhood and youth for boys.⁴¹ The goal is for a boy to learn everything he needs to know and do, to be able to “replace his father when he dies – to inherit his legacy and skills”. The father–son relationship is a crucial one for a boy: “the father is a son’s gatekeeper to the clan” meaning the father paves the way for his son’s access to social, economic and political networks among clansmen.

The age at which boys are considered to be youth varies across Somalia’s sub-cultures. Amongst southern Bantu and Benadiri communities and some occupational caste groups, a man is considered an adult and of marriageable age from 15 years.⁴² In the main pastoral and semi-pastoral clan families, youth-hood is prolonged, from about 14 to 25 years or even 30 and above.

40 See for example Rhoda M. Ibrahim, Women’s Role in the Pastoral Economy. In Gardner, J. & El Bushra, J, (eds) *Somalia – the Untold Story: the war through the eyes of Somali Women*, CIIR: Pluto Press, 2004.

41 Findings also evidence the importance of mothers and grandmothers as active partners in a male child’s gender socialisation, particularly in the absence of a father-figure.

42 Source: Bantu elder and IDP, interviewed Garowe.

Both the pastoral father and son are described metaphorically as “*the fence of the family*”, the guard between the family and the rest of the world. A man’s “*most fundamental responsibility is the family’s security*” for “*men are women’s shelter*”, so when his father is absent the son should “*try to fulfil the position of his father and take care of the younger children, defend them, and also he should take care of his mother*”. Pastoral youth also were, and to an extent still are, traditionally the warriors or fighters for their clan - “*kept for the fight*”, and are “*expected to fight and raid*” other clans for the defence of their own family and clan. A man from Hargeisa now in his fifties recalled, “*Young men in the rural area were supposed to learn how to take care of camels and how to use guns...*” Thus, in the normative framework youth is an age when instrumental and hostile forms of male violence are not only socially tolerated but sanctioned and encouraged.⁴³

From the late 1940s onwards, an increasing number of men and youths opted to leave the hard life of pastoralism to seek their fortunes and education in town, leading lives quite different from the norm followed in the rural areas. Yet ideals inculcated in the pastoral family persisted, since even in towns the goal for young men was to be “*useful and reliable so that he can be counted on by family members*”. The expectation that youth will repay the costs and expenses their parents paid to educate them, and will look after their parents in their old age, are listed by respondents as two of the many social expectations of men.

The passage from youth to adulthood is marked in all sub-cultures by marriage. Within the pastoral community a man is expected to stay single until he has accumulated his own livestock and enough resources to start a family, and his elder brothers have married. Husband-wife relations vary across the sub-cultures. Among the Bantu, for example, “*a man who is not obedient to his wife is not a man...*” whereas for pastoral men this would be anathema.

43 Reference to distinction made between instrumental and hostile aggression and violence, described by Earl Conteh Morgan in *Collective Political Violence* (2004). Instrumental being aimed at acquiring non-injury related goals such as material goods, prestige, social approval, sources of food. Hostile being: primarily aimed to injure the target and resulting from people angered or emotionally aroused.

In the north, physical violence towards one’s wife is frowned on whereas in parts of the south it is sought as evidence of a husband’s love. Among the pastoral and semi-pastoral communities, for men to undertake menial tasks is considered humiliating, while for Bantu men, helping with domestic tasks and assisting in childbirth are proof of a man’s *raganimo*. In Benadiri coastal communities it is normal for boys and men to assist in the kitchen; among pastoral clans men must “*stay out of the kitchen*”.

Despite these differences, common to all narratives about *raganimo* is that to be considered a man, to attain *raganimo*, a man needs to marry. One respondent put it simply that “*men were created to partner with women*”. From a normative perspective, a man’s primary purpose on Earth is marriage and the fatherhood that is assumed to follow.⁴⁴ However, it is not enough just to marry. The inter-dependence and partnership between man and wife emerge repeatedly and clearly from the findings as a key dimension of the ideal family. The ideal husband is emotionally sensitive to his wife’s needs, caring, kind and with a responsible attitude. At the same time, with some sub-cultural exceptions, no one is left in any doubt that in his God-given role as the responsible one, he is to be “*the decision-maker, leader and manager of the family*.”

Findings show that fatherhood and manhood are inextricably entwined. However, they also show that it is not enough just to produce children. A father’s parenting skills, and how well he brings up his children, are judged; how well he is assessed to be doing will determine how well he is considered to be achieving *raganimo*. He needs to demonstrate competence in some key areas of fatherhood and everyone knows what these areas are. For example, not only is it expected that a father will socialise his sons to be “*well-mannered, educated and self-reliant*” but that in doing so, he “*should be kind and manage his children by attracting them through kindness and talking to them nicely*”.

Paternal educational responsibilities are demanding; fathers need an exceptionally wide range of knowledge and skills to discharge them effectively.

44 Similarly, marriage and motherhood is the goal for women.

Box 1.1 Normative qualities and skills expected of a man by his clansmen and women

He must respect clan laws (*xeer*) and respect the elders of the clan.

A man must participate in decision-making

He must accept decisions and follow leaders (a man who does this is *gargaate*)

The clan expects contributions and *qaraan* (membership dues) and he must pay them.

A man who does not have income to contribute *qaraan* is not respected.

Those who don't have wealth should also be active in the clan; they can give their physical support.

A man must protect the dignity of the clan and promote its reputation; if he does not there could be negative repercussions for him.

He should be attached to his clan and show dependency; he should not be disconnected and isolated.*

He should be ready to protect clan politics because it is his insurance policy.

Defend and fight for the interest of the clan.

A man must be brave.*

A man should be capable.

A man should be a battalion.

He must visit the sick, know the condition and needs of neighbours and extend what support he can.

Attend funerals of clan members.

Socialisation encompasses imparting knowledge of the physical skills, technical knowledge and endurance plus the philosophical, legal and cultural knowledge needed to survive in the pastoral environment.⁴⁵ Fathers are expected to “*educate the children on religion, ethics, social norms, culture, socially acceptable behaviour and how to live with neighbours*”. They are expected to be close to their children but to know their place is outside the home. In the words of one woman, “*The man should not stay at home and sit with children and women. The man should wake up early and go out.*”

Significantly, when compared with findings about realities today, the research shows that a man's income or wealth, for example as measured in live-stock, were not enough to vouch for his status as a man. Certainly he needed income and resources to pay the family's clan contributions (see below and

Annex 3: Clan Contribution Payments); but as respondents pointed out, to fulfil his responsibility, and achieve manhood “*does not depend on income only; it depends on a man's wisdom and respect*”.

1.1.2 Normative male roles and responsibilities within the clan

“Every man is accountable for his clan's wrong-doing”
[Male respondent, Garowe]

Respondents identified a wide range of norms and expectations of a man by the clan (see Box 1.1). These are the minimum requirements against which he will be judged by his clansmen and clanswomen. Of particular importance is how well he fulfils expectations in the family (see section 1.1.1 above): respondents noted: “*a man who failed in his family responsibilities could not do much for the clan*” and thus would not go far in clan terms.

In theory, within the clan system all males are equal, including the youth, in that all are counted when it comes to *diya* payment and all, should they wish to, are allowed to “*sit under the tree*”, meaning they can participate in the clan elders' meetings and contrib-

45 Findings collected from among Bantu and Rahanweyne community members evidence the comparative importance within these agricultural and semi-agricultural communities of imparting skills in agriculture and horticulture during childhood and in partnership with school teachers.

ute their ideas. This is Somalia's famous 'pastoral democracy'.⁴⁶ In practice, as study material shows, there are regional and sub-cultural variations regarding the payment of *diya*, and there is an age-related hierarchical dimension to clan whereby, whilst all males are clan members, responsibility in the clan is allocated to elders and not all members are considered to be as worthy of responsibility as others. At any one time an individual's status depends on several factors including: his age, marital status, fatherhood status, and his proven capabilities, including evidence of his payment of clan contributions. Generally speaking, a rise in status follows a graduated trajectory,⁴⁷ corresponding with the male life stages outlined in section 1.1: childhood, youth, adulthood (marriage and fatherhood) and maturity. Some who are judged to excel as men - i.e. to manifest the attributes of hegemonic masculinity - can rise to what can be termed senior elder status. Smooth passage along this trajectory depends to an extent⁴⁸ on how well a man is judged by his clansmen to be living up to the ideals and normative values associated with manhood.

Men's position within the clan at different life-stages

Looking at the stages of life in turn, few findings were generated relating to childhood specifically. Every male birth is celebrated more than a female birth for the potential it holds to increase the size of the lineage and ultimately the clan's ability to influence and act (see Annex 2).⁴⁹ Elders will seek *diya* compensation [see Annexes 2 and 3] if one of their *diya* group's male children is murdered or injured. Male children are included in the calculation when

46 A term coined by I.M Lewis in his eponymous ethnography of the Somali, based on his research in the late 1950s.

47 There is no evidence of a comparable hierarchical structure for females but within the overall gender order some women have greater influence and power than others; whether a women's relative power directly or indirectly relates to the power of the men she is closely related to seems likely but it not yet confirmed.

48 Other factors at play are mainly political.

49 For some clan families, clan membership begins in the womb. Writing in 1962, I.M. Lewis noted that *diya* payment was claimable for a miscarriage caused by violence, as long as the sex of a foetus was identifiable so that the correct compensation could be demanded. Compensation for a male is twice that of a female (Lewis 1962).

the males are counted for collection and distribution of clan membership payments [see Annex 3], though there may be some sub-cultural variation.⁵⁰

Teenage boys and young men (see above for age definition) have what some respondents described as junior status within the clan; as unmarried males they are subordinate to older males. As such, young men occupy a liminal space between childhood and adulthood: among the pastoral clans their wait on the threshold of adulthood can span more than two decades. During this time they are subject to authority and their responsibility is taking care of camels, livestock, farming or grazing. Perceived to be largely irresponsible, headstrong and impulsive,⁵¹ they are typically not consulted by elders, nor expected to take part in clan-related decision-making. Reflecting on his own youth, a former Somali National Movement (SNM) combatant noted "*Young men were bothersome, 'fadqalad'*⁵², and full of violence... fights used to start over trivial things". Unmarried and without children, young men are the clans' warriors (*waranle*); they may be mobilised by their elders for any end if it is judged to be in the collective interests of the clan or lineage. Study material suggests this delay of adult status may be a tradition that is less than helpful in the current day.

A man transitions to adult status once he is married and has become a father. Marriage, fatherhood and making clan contributions (*qaraan*) are essential steps towards manhood and an adult male is considered, and expected to be, more responsible than a youth. Responsibility comes at a cost: as an adult male you must fulfil the mandatory demand for *diya* when a member of your *diya* group has injured or killed a person from another group. As a father you are responsible for paying the contributions

50 Women and girls are also under the umbrella of their father's *diya* group, at least until marriage when they may come under their husband's. In blood money terms they are calculated at half the value of males. See *Somalia – the Untold Story*.

51 As conveyed in this Somali proverb, "*Nin yar intuu geed ka boodo ayuu talo ka boodaa*". Translated this means "*A young man will make hasty decisions as fast as he jumps up a tree*". Similarly among the Mirifle there is a saying, "*Raatis nool ray bay ku iwm*", meaning "*A young man whose father is alive does not become a responsible man*".

52 The closest meaning in English is disturbance or disorder but it is also used to describe people whose behaviour is troublesome.

for your family members. Non-payment can result in fines and social isolation. A man also becomes his family's representative and ascends to elder status at this stage although, as study material shows, not every married man and elder is considered a person who should "sit under the tree". Generally speaking, the minimum requirements of an elder are that he meet his family responsibilities and pay the mandatory clan contributions. But becoming accepted to hold this greater level of responsibility is also linked to an individual's capacity in terms of time and skills, and his ability to make a valuable contribution. As a young father a man has less time for clan issues but once sons take on more of the physical labour for the family, older men are freer to attend to clan matters. With age they are also expected to be wiser. As elders in Mogadishu explained, an elder "will be expected to provide ideas and [improve the] quality of life. You are expected to provide labour and wisdom too."

A primary role of elders is to make decisions on behalf of the *diya* group of the wider clan, such as payment in *diya*, relations between clans, mobilisation for war or peace. This is collectively and by consensus with elders traditionally meeting under the shade of a tree. Participation in such meetings is a particularly important signifier of elder status, and is also an important indicator of one's *raganimo* or manhood. A man who demonstrates *raganimo* is "someone whose absence in meetings will be noticed". To be excluded from meetings is personally humiliating, as women in Hagadhere camp in Dadaab pointed out, citing this proverb: "Worst among men is the one who is not counted as present, one leaving the venue who is not stopped from doing so, and an absent person whose absence is not felt."

Thus, although in theory all men are eligible to become elders, in practice, only men who conform to the ideals of manhood would be "called to the meetings and to the wedding events and so on". A man enhances his value to the clan – and hence his family's social and political capital – by making the obliga-

Box 1.2 Excellence in manhood: most desired and honoured attributes of masculinity in the normative framework

He should be influential, vocal and active, an orator ("someone who can influence and mobilise others through the power of their verbal delivery").

He should be a poet – able to move and inspire others through language.

He should draw respect for the clan.

He should protect the dignity of the clan and promote its reputation.

He should defend and fight for the interest of the clan.

He should be active in conflict mediation.

He should be just, trustworthy, knowledgeable about tradition.

He should be truthful, able to compromise.

He should be generous.

tory contributions and by being invited to take part in clan meetings.

A man's value to the clan (his social, cultural and political capital) is diminished when he is resource-poor and has difficulty fulfilling his clan obligations, or when he acts in ways that leave him judged a lesser man. According to respondents, a man too poor or otherwise unwilling or unable to pay his contributions (e.g. a man who does not own livestock or have income), is not counted by the clan or invited to the important clan meetings.⁵³ However, respondents explained that the clan will (re-)embrace a man if his misfortune changes for the better.

The most respected elders are those whom some respondents referred to as "senior" elders, as "forces to be reckoned with, they are indispensable". They are a great asset for the clan when it comes to resolving clan matters and the clan cannot do without them. The men chosen by their clansmen to represent

⁵³ How material and social inequalities among men are perceived and affected by the clan hierarchy and governance structure and regional variations requires further research.

them will be from this calibre. Their collective task is to deliberate on matters affecting the lineage, negotiate, build alliances, declare war and peace, and exercise authority based on interpretation of customary law (*xeer*). The requirements (see below box 1.2) are demanding, including: knowledge of *xeer* and mastery of jurisprudence, proven mediation skills, powers of persuasion and a good memory for poetry and proverbs.⁵⁴

The value placed on these characteristics is very high. Respondents pointed out that in the past senior elders enjoyed protected status during times of war:⁵⁵ Elders in Erigavo said “*the real man with raganimo was never killed or targeted as he was revered for his ability to mediate among people*”. Not just a man’s own reputation, status, and power but the collective power of his lineage group depends on how well he is judged to fulfil his obligations within his family and his clan, and on how far he can demonstrate mastery of the ideal knowledge, skills and qualities of a man. Senior elders can be regarded as emblems of the normative masculinity; as such they display the most exalted and influential norms of masculinity that can properly be described as hegemonic.

1.1.3 Women – collaborators in the attainment of manhood

“You will not catch up a man in a day if he has better transport, you will not exceed a man in a year if he has a better farm, you will never ever be the equal of a man if he has a better wife.”⁵⁶
(Male respondent, Boroma)

54 As documented elsewhere (for example see Andre Le Sage, Stateless Justice In Somalia – Formal And Informal Rule Of Law Initiatives, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue report, 2005 and CRD, Traditional Governance in Somalia, South Central Somalia, draft report for the World Bank, 2005, first the colonial administrations and subsequently state governments altered the traditional system of elders by introducing paid positions to serve their own interests such as tax collection.

55 Along with religious leaders, women, children, the elderly and guests. See *Spared from the Spear – Traditional Somali Behaviour in Warfare*, Somali Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (1997).

56 Translation of the Somali saying: “*Nin maalin ma gaadhid, hadii uu kaa gaadiid wanaagsan yahay, nin sanad ma gaadhid, hadii uu kaa beer wanaagsan yahay, nin weliga ma gaadhid, haddii u kaa naag wanaagsan yahay*”

Women are key stakeholders and players in a man’s lifelong quest for normative manhood,⁵⁷ linked as it is to material and non-material benefits for the family and improvements in conditions such as security.⁵⁸ Within this strongly patriarchal society, men and women are subject to rigid gender roles and expectations, held in place by women and older men in a gender order built on patterns of domination and subordination. What seems to emerge from the findings is a social structure in which complementarity between men’s and women’s gender roles is a major contributor to the survival and security of individuals and society as a whole.

A man’s ability or inability to fulfil his clan obligations has serious implications for his family. Families whose male heads are not active in the clan are likely to be overlooked when they need support. Conversely, men need their wives’ help to ensure their place in the clan, and to excel overall, as conveyed by the quotation cited above. Knowing his manhood will be judged in large part by how well he manages his marriage, a wise man will consciously nurture a harmonious relationship with his wife. As young men in Hargeisa, apparently well versed in Somali pastoral traditions, explained:

Men with good relationships with their wives are much more able to achieve raganimo [...] In the past, men’s measurement of each other’s raganimo depended on their [relationship with their] wives – if he had a supportive wife a man could be judged better in terms of raganimo than others [...] If he is always fighting with his wife he can’t take responsibility and so does not fulfil expectations of raganimo... Women thus can contribute to the lowering of men’s raganimo!

Respondents explained that women can support their menfolk by ensuring that they eat and dress well⁵⁹ and that they are well prepared for clan meet-

57 Citing Connell (2003) and others, Barker and Ricardo note how, “A near universal feature of manhood is that it must be achieved – it requires behaving and acting in specific ways before one’s social group”.

58 Exploring how this relationship between women and manhood changed under the Barre government and the legacy of this for women’s rights today is a topic for future study.

59 Highlighting the significance of a man’s appearance, and linking

ings, giving them good ideas and advice beforehand. Women are excluded from clan meetings but those with a reputation for sagacity can be invited into a meeting to help with a specific issue, such as when advice is needed in order to break a deadlock in discussions.⁶⁰

An elder told the following part of a traditional story⁶¹ to illustrate the intelligence of women, and the fact that men know this but some doubt or are ashamed to admit it. The story also makes fun of men who cast aspersions on women in the belief it makes themselves look better:

There was a story of a leader called Wiil-waal who was feared by men. He asked his comrades to bring the piece of flesh that can unite men. Every man went home thinking of what to bring. They slaughtered animals and brought the best part they thought could make men happy and unite them. One elder told his daughter about the puzzle. She told him that it was a simple puzzle. She urged him to slaughter a young goat and remove the gullet. He did this and reluctantly took the piece of meat in a basket to the meeting place. When everyone emptied their basket in a big xeero (bowl) he saw others had brought all sorts of good meat. The elder silently rebuked his daughter for giving him an inedible part of the meat. "My daughter told me to take this piece," he said while putting the meat in the xeero. Wiil-waal, the leader, came and saw all the pieces of meat. He noticed the gullet and asked: "Who was the owner of this?" The elder admitted it was

this to the influence of his wife, an elder recalled: "In the past, it was clear that men with good wives were eminent ... They stood out from the rest due to their dress and decision making. Men used to say "This type of man is married to a woman who is rag – with male characters."

60 An elder explained women have a role as crisis managers when talks between disputing communities have reached stalemate. He said women (typically who are related to the clan in question and therefore have entry points among the men there) would be sent ahead of elders "to study the men" and help formulate proposals that they would accept. For "It is unlikely that the man will reject what the women propose".

61 The Wiil-waal story is a long traditional story that has two morals. 1) To show women have wisdom 2) To show the best way to deal with other men is to be friendly (not to fight or try to overpower them) which is vividly shown in the later parts of the story. It also says greed is common among men. (Source: Said M. Dahir and Dr Adan Y Abokor, researchers on the study).

*his while mentioning the decision was not his but his daughter's. The leader told his people that this is the piece of meat that unites all men, the gullet.*⁶²

However, the clan-based system of governance is an all-male domain: women do not attend clan meetings and are excluded from direct participation. Women who are accorded respect by the system are generally those who excel, but within their prescribed roles. Nevertheless, these findings underline the influential role women play, including in matters relating to war and peace. The research also provides evidence that the relationship between men and women is, and is recognised to be (at least by some), critical for the survival of society.

The study has found Somalis, both men and women, are well versed in the ideals and expectations of manhood. As some respondents pointed out, these social constructs of gender and hierarchy, along with customary laws (*xeer*), marriage practices, customary peace-making and rules of conflict, evolved among pastoral and agro-pastoral groups living in one of the harshest rural environments on Earth with ever-present competition over scarce natural resources such as grazing and water and where the need for co-existence was paramount.⁶³ Hence the need for qualities that exemplify intelligent relationship management such as alliance-building, negotiation, clan loyalty, leadership, defence strategies, conflict management, peace-making, and wisdom, as well as physical strength, mental and physical stamina and courage.

Though the detailed - and in many cases, exacting - ideals of manhood have their historical roots and relevance in the Somali pastoral and semi-agricultural rural ways of life, the study has found they remain the measure of Somali men today. The find-

62 In Somali culture, the gullet is a symbol of greed and love of wealth and men, though not women, are considered greedy. The throat or oesophagus is a passage for all that you eat or drink and all battles were about what to eat and drink to survive, especially in the old days. So, usually men fight or agree because of their interests and greed and that is why the gullet symbolized greediness. People who are extremely greedy are called "hunguri wayne" – "you have a big gullet".

63 Across most of the country urbanisation mostly dates from the late 1940s. See for example, APD, 2002, Impact of the War on the Family. http://www.somali-jna.org/downloads/APD_Family_23july02.pdf.

ings show that they are reproduced from older to younger generations, by men and women, educated and illiterate, urban and rural dwellers. This still happens despite the changed context the vast majority of men find themselves in as a result of urbanisation and educational developments since the late 1940s and the modernising cultural revolution of the Siad Barre era.

Reflections on the normative framework

A complex and detailed picture of the normative framework emerges from the study material. Rooted in a rural, pastoral way of life, the normative definitions and ideal practices describing masculinities and manhood are defined by the need to serve and sustain core collective interests. Fundamental to these are survival and security – physical and cultural – in an extremely harsh environment, where managing competition for scarce natural resources is an ever-present challenge. These imperatives underpin the patriarchal structure of Somali society.

In relation to violence, the normative framework assigns men, especially young men, the potential to be mobilised for conflict and war. At the same time, expectations and ideals of manhood appear weighted in favour of creating and sustaining peaceful co-existence against the backdrop of an ever-present threat of conflict. The potential for male-on-male and male-on-female violence is controlled and contained through collective (male) responsibility for transgressions. Conflict prevention and resolution is also a collective male responsibility, delivered through the skills and strategies of the normative male, whilst harnessing female social and political capital. Within this normative framework, the hegemonic or most desired and honoured⁶⁴ masculinity is one that demonstrates maturity, wisdom, legal and cultural acumen, strategic thinking and intelligence, poetic composition and oration. The capacity to further the survival, standing and supremacy of the clan provides the individuals who manifest it with the highest standing and influence, enabling them to lead their communities and be instrumental in decision-making for their followers.

64 Taking Connell's (2000, 2005) definition of hegemonic masculinity.

The study findings show that men and women, old and young, experience a profound disconnect between the normative and hegemonic masculinities and the realities of their lives today. The normative framework of masculinities has to a large extent failed to stand up in the face of the huge changes of the past 30 years or so. Chief among these changes has been the collapse of the economic and environmental resources which formed the basis of men's elevated role in the gender order and the consequent opportunities for an expansion of women's economic roles. Moreover, the collapse of the Somali state, the violence of the wars since its collapse, and the state-building interventions sponsored by the international community since the early 1990s, have been instrumental in the emergence of a new form of masculinity, one characterised by the accumulation of individual wealth and power. We hesitate to describe this as a new form of hegemony, since, although it confers egregious power and is linked to institutions of governance in complex ways, it is not culturally exalted. Indeed, the findings seem to suggest that as a set of values, ideals and guidelines, the normative framework endures in men and women's minds and has not yet been replaced or reconstructed because the social values it represents are still felt to be relevant by many, even in today's vastly changed contexts.

It may be over-interpreting the evidence, but it seems pertinent to speculate that the enduring relevance men and women feel for the social values that the normative framework of masculinities upholds partly explains why Somalia's wars and violence since 1991 have not been even more catastrophic or seen more men live by means of armed violence. It may also explain why populations in large parts of the country have been able to establish peace, stable co-existence and governance, without recourse to terror tactics or armed or structural violence.

1.2 Life for men after Somali independence, 1960-1990

In exploring and mapping the impacts of the war and state collapse on men, the study sought to learn about the lives of men during the modern state era, from 1960-1990. The study sought to understand whether or not men's lived experiences during that

period conformed to the normative ideals and obligations of manhood that interviews and focus groups had described (and which are summarised in section 1.1 above).

Respondents of all ages and both sexes spoke about men's lives during the period as if about a golden past. Respondents were unanimous: in their direct experience and/or opinion, men had much less difficulty 'being men' before state collapse and war than after. This statement, made by a youth and former member of an armed gang in Mogadishu, sums up the views of many respondents: *"It was easier for the man to fulfil his responsibilities – there was employment, there was order."*

Men's life stories from the late 1960s onwards highlight how the early Siad Barre era, with the development and expansion of the centralist state structure and bureaucracy, created an unprecedented opening up of new livelihood opportunities for men. Mobilisation programmes recruited people into what became an extensive public sector with education and health services, state farms and industries, a national army, and national security mechanisms. Roll-out of the socialist state and revolution required thousands of educated men to become civil servants and public sector workers. Educated women were fewer than men but also needed to be trained and employed, and were recruited on an unprecedented scale into lower-ranking positions.

The Family Law introduced in 1975, on paper at least, introduced major improvements in gender-equality that favoured women's rights, but did not translate into significant gains for the majority of women, who lived in the rural areas. Men and women benefited from the state-run mass adult literacy programmes of the early 1970s.⁶⁵ Male public sector workers also benefited financially from the regime's ban on tribalism.⁶⁶ Unable to completely end the

diya payments system, the state officially lowered the rates of contribution and took on responsibility for making the *diya* payments. It also outlawed the high bridewealth required for marriage,⁶⁷ and met funeral costs and wedding arrangements for its thousands of public servants.

A former pastoralist and now a senior elder recalled the sense of opportunity emanating from the revolution: *"I became a townsman. I learned how to write. I joined private schools to study Somali when the script was written. I joined there to become literate. That was an advantage which I could not get in the rural areas."* Like this elder, many older respondents remember the era of the state as a golden age when men attained manhood *"because they had jobs"* and they had jobs *"because there was government"*; and that they had more pride and purpose than they do now.

Nostalgic for a past when an educated man's position in society was assured, and referring to today's uncertainties, a man who had been a senior government official during the 1970s, told a young researcher on the study team who is in his 30s:

"You can't imagine the status of men because you grew up during the chaos..." This speaker, who has experienced the life of an elite male during the Siad Barre period, gives insight into what high-ranking men in government (i.e. the hegemonic males of the modern state era) would have experienced: "If you were a government staff... you would have an office and a separate one for the secretary. Sometimes you would have a whole compound as an office. You would also have many subordinates. If you were an official you would have security. ... I never moved alone... I had free electricity, and free water, a free telephone line and free access to any government offices even the presidential one... You would get doors open instantly when you even approach them... It was a complete manhood."

65 A standard Somali orthography was introduced in 1972 and with it came a national literacy campaign to address the very low levels of adult literacy. This hugely increased literacy at the time but by 1985 adult literacy rates were still among the lowest in the world: female adult literacy 14%, male 36%. By 1989, just 10% of children were enrolled in secondary school. [source: UNDP Somalia Human Development Report 2001].

66 Hamdi Mohamed (2014) notes an important impact on women

of the ban on tribalism was that among the urbanised and educated *"Women's loyalty had, to a certain extent, shifted from the kin network to the state and they were assuming public identity (sic) apart from the private ones of kin and community"*.

67 At the time it was outlawed in the early 1970s bride-price averaged 50 camels, a substantial amount for prospective grooms to have accumulated.

Findings from focus group discussions indicate that most respondents are of the opinion that life for rural men was easiest of all. One of the main reasons respondents gave was, as a young man in Garowe explained, “*In the past, a rural definition of a man was clear – he was brave or a coward, good or bad.*” Reflecting on his own experience, an elder in Garowe explained, “*Life was simple and men were responsible... There was a division of roles between women and men. Man was the provider and used to do all the physically hard jobs whereas women used to take care of the household chores.*” Note how close the fit is between this positive picture of rural male life prior to the war, but during the period of central government, and the normative model of male roles and responsibilities.

Rural life for men may have been regarded as simpler because it enabled or required them to fulfil the basic gendered social expectations of men. However, findings also show that in reality it was not necessarily an easier life, and not all rural men were satisfied with it or able to thrive economically. Within the clan, this had an impact on them socially as well as politically (see above). Speaking about his youth in the 1970s, an elder from Boroma explained, “*When I turned 18, I decided to leave the rural life and join life in the town... We were pastoralists, and I was specifically responsible for herding the livestock. That was a difficult life. Our economy depended on our production from the livestock, and from farming. We did not have any other source (of income). If you did not have a farm or livestock, or you did not have any products from any of these two, your income was not sufficient. You could not get by.*” This casts doubt on a widely held view among respondents, that male “*responsibilities were less demanding in rural areas because the family was dependent on livestock.*”

Youth's ideas about the past

In their teens and twenties, and therefore without experience of life before state collapse and the war, young male respondents nevertheless made clear distinctions between the present and the past. All demonstrated familiarity with the normative male roles and responsibilities and, echoing the opinion of other respondents, referred to the past as a better time because men fulfilled these expectations, the

implication being they do not do so today. The past was better for men because the “*government provided education and jobs*” and “*people were dependent on the law and government and not so dependent on the clan.*” Young men were the only group to point out the new demands facing men generated by a combination of urban living and technological development. Highlighting the difference between a rural and urban life, one respondent in Hargeisa said: “*In rural areas men are supposed to be brave, good orators and even be ready to go and loot livestock. Here in the urban setting we have mobiles ... everything needs money.*”

Responses from youths make more reference to men's relationships with their families than those of older men, whose responses tend to focus on employment and life outside the family. Some said that before 1991 “*men respected their responsibilities*”. For example, “*for a man to neglect his family was not very common*”, and men could not marry as easily as they can now, “*so once married, women were respected and cared for*”. Life stories from young men testify to a range of family concerns: families broken apart by the war, absent fathers, fathers whose polygamy has led to family break-up, fathers disabled, mentally and physically by the war, and dependency on female relatives' incomes and remittances from abroad (see 2.4 below).

The life stories collected evidence of the freedom of movement that men (and women) enjoyed, at least prior to the civil war, which, for populations in the north and north-east, started in the early 1980s. Young respondents particularly commented on the mobility that males had before the state collapsed compared to now. Living in Sool, currently a disputed zone, a group of young men reflected: “*Before, it was easy for men to change locations of their employment and also their jobs... Now the movement of men outside their clan territories has been reduced to a great extent; men cannot move to other places... unless you belong to the clan there.*” Young men in Mogadishu experience the same constraints when trying to make a living now, whereas prior to the war “*Central government was responsible for the law and order... and one could look for [work] opportunities in other communities. Trust between clans was not lost... There were employment opportunities with government, self-employment and working for other people.*”

Men's life stories show that by the late 1970s men's destinies, and to an extent their mobility, was becoming increasingly dependent on where and what clan they were from. By this time, the regime was adopting increasingly brutal methods to maintain control. Its signature was divide and rule, both along clan lines, by empowering people from specific clan families and clans to oppress, humiliate and disempower those considered enemies of the regime⁶⁸ and, according to respondents, between men and women by humiliating men and breeding mistrust between husband and wife. A former government official responsible for mobilising women to take part in orientation and self-reliance schemes recalled the culturally subversive way mobilisation was conducted, "*knocking on doors house to house and calling women – the women of other men - to come out and participate... and they did... Women had a lot of power.*"

From the early 1980s men from the northern Isaaq clan family became a target of the regime in response to the insurgency by the Somali National Movement (SNM), which drew its support mostly from the Isaaq. Their persecution culminated in 1988 in an aerial bombardment of Hargeisa that killed some 50,000 people and caused the displace-

ment of many more. Former SNM fighters with the SNM, the mainly Isaaq armed opposition group, recalled methods used by the regime to defeat them: "*We used to hear that government soldiers took our women... Wives of the militiamen were targeted by the government soldiers. They used to be called and interrogated in police stations and at times arrested. Some of them were even harassed and raped.*"

Somali customary law prohibits harm to women in the course of war. However, Siad Barre's regime used rape as a weapon of war, and it has been a notable feature of the civil war in the south. In the Somali cultural context, a man's fundamental responsibility towards his wife (and children) is to protect her. Besides the trauma for the victim, rape is intended to humiliate the man.⁶⁹

By the late 1980s most citizens were affected by Somalia's economic collapse and the encroaching civil war. Public sector workers could not afford to live on their salaries and urban unemployment was high. Social, political and economic deterioration in the years immediately before the civil war reached Mogadishu in 1991 and the final collapse of the state was severe. It is interesting that few respondents commented on this decline.

68 For detail of how Siad Barre's regime sought to gain and build its power through the manipulation of Somalia's clan and gender ideologies see Hamdi Mohamed, *Gender and the Politics of Nation Building – (Re)Constructing Somali Women's History*, Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, 2014.

69 See Lindner op cit.

2. Impacts of the Civil War and State Collapse

Overview

Exploration of the Somali concept of manhood/masculinity - *raganimo* - challenges the widely held view of Somali men – and society – as inherently violent. What emerges instead is that a core set of normative values relating to manhood and masculinity has been broadly consistent across the Somali regions throughout the recent past, and remains essentially unchanged in spite of the war. Key values of responsibility, self-discipline, courage and generosity emerge as common to all regions and age-groups; and they continue to be the essential criteria against which men measure themselves and are measured. These values are difficult to live up to at the best of times, though respondents tended to believe that expectations of manhood were relatively easy to uphold in the past. Today the resources and security available to men to fulfil their expected roles have been reduced by the war and state collapse. Men see themselves (and women see men) as being beset by extreme political, economic and physical insecurity, which has put the old values out of reach for the majority.

A tentative analysis of how this has happened is as follows: before independence, kinship and clan were the main mechanism through which men in rural areas, (i.e. the majority), gained access to resources, in a largely moneyless economy. Siad Barre attempted to break the power of the clans by making the state into a provider of social welfare and security (see above 1.2). The Barre era saw large numbers of men recruited into the military, public sector and civil service employment, and provided with a wide range of material benefits, including some previously provided by their clansmen such as the payment of funeral costs. The unravelling and collapse of the regime removed a major source of livelihood and left a political vacuum. The result: most men have neither the livelihood nor the security to enable them to exercise their responsibility and hence to retain their ascendancy.

The study validates this conclusion, revealing a significant gap between what society expects of men and their actions and agency since 1991.⁷⁰ The study seeks to identify any links with on-going conflict. Is there something about Somali models of masculinity that predisposes the society towards violence? How has the war affected men's lives and to what extent can violence be said to be the outcome of tensions between men's aspirations and their everyday lives? Answers to such questions are inevitably speculative. With this caveat in mind, the next section assesses how state collapse and the war have affected men, and constructions of masculinity.

Despite some contextual and time differences,⁷¹ the study finds remarkable similarity among the changes and challenges in the lives of men across the country. The overall picture painted by respondents from all regions is strikingly uniform:⁷² “*raganimo has ended*”.

The study has found that since 1991 two over-

70 It did not emerge clearly from the study's findings but APD's 2002 research in Somaliland into the impact of the war on the family found that the men who had fled to refugee camps after the bombing of Hargeisa in 1988 experienced the same or a similar disconnect when they found themselves unemployed refugees and their women-folk stepped in as the income providers for the survival of the family. See APD research paper: The Impact of the War on the Family, 2002. http://www.somali-jna.org/downloads/APD_Family_23july02.pdf.

71 The most notable being how the civil war that led to Siad Barre's downfall was, until the final months, entirely fought within the territory that is now Somaliland, and combat was, until the final months, between the largely Isaaq Somali National Movement (SNM) and government forces. Although most areas of the country have experienced different degrees of exposure to war, this is not the case for the Sool and Puntland territories, which have escaped direct war within their boundaries – but have experienced local armed conflicts.

72 During the validation processes a few men, notably from among the successful ranks of the diaspora in Kenya, but also in Hargeisa, challenged the negative nature of these findings and strongly criticised the study for posing what they regarded as biased questions. Their concerns were not shared by the majority of participants who agreed with the findings, but they will be considered and if necessary addressed in the main study.

arching changes have had a fundamental bearing on what it means to be a man in Somalia today: the centrality of clan membership in day-to-day life; and changes to gender roles and responsibilities within the family. In addition, three aspects of male perspective and experience stand out as significant: change in the family breadwinner role; leadership and governance; and insecurity and displacement. The study has also generated rich data on the generational impacts of the war, producing findings related to youth, male resilience, adaptability and positive agency as well as changes in the hegemonic forms of masculinity.

2.1 The pre-eminence and (re-)ascendance of clan identity

“The clan poured down like rain after the collapse of the government and during the war.”
[Elder, Mogadishu]

The speaker in the quote above is alluding to the fact that since the Somali state collapsed clan has become a defining discourse and framework for interaction between men, in a way that it had not been since before the modern state era (1960-1990).⁷³ Many respondents talk about how a man’s relationship with his clan has a bearing on every sphere of contact, relationship, potential and challenge.⁷⁴ For example, young men spoke in terms such as “*I am the clan, the clan is me*” and “*You must wear your clan like your shoes*” - i.e. you don’t go out without it.

Their experience of clan identity contrasts starkly

73 As noted above, tribalism or clanism was officially ‘buried’ during the height of Scientific Socialism and nationalism in the 1970s. However, although clan identity was still a taboo subject in 1989/90, Somalia had begun to fragment politically along clan lines as early as 1979 when opposition to Siad Barre’s rule emerged following the loss of the Ogaden War. Through the 1980s, until his downfall in 1991, Siad Barre ignored his own policy of anti-tribalism to pursue a violent divide-and-rule agenda in which he suppressed any opposition while concentrating power and resources in the hands of his close clansmen. The highly retributive nature of the violent inter-clan conflict in the south in the early 1990s, resulting in the death, forced displacement and exile of hundreds of thousands from Barre’s clan family, is seen by many to be a direct consequence of Barre’s hijacking of the state for his own and his clansmen’s and women’s interests.

74 The study has yet to explore in depth the life of diaspora men. Based on interviews in Eastleigh, Kenya, the conceptual reach and relevance of clan is trans-national; how far this extends to practical relevance is as yet unclear.

with how clan was thought about at the height of the Siad Barre era when tribalism was banned. Many men brought up in urban settings during the Barre era came to know their clan identity or genealogy only once the war had begun and clan identity had become a life-or-death matter.⁷⁵ An elder in Mogadishu recalled the moment his brother, captured by militia, faced possible execution if he turned out to be identified with the wrong side: “*He was asked about his clan and he could not answer. He could only say the name of his father. He had to call us in the south and ask us about our clan. One might think that he was stupid but that was how it was in the past - he did not know that he was from Hawiye.*”

As a result of state collapse and war, those men who had grown up and found work without reference to their clan identity had to adapt to clan being central to their existence. Findings confirm the influence of clan membership on men’s decisions, actions, opportunities, and access to resources and power, and ultimately for some, their fate. A man cannot change his clan identity, and findings suggest an individual’s access to resources is likely to depend on the relative power of his clan.

The (re-)ascendance of clan was a result of the breakdown of the state. In their approaches to re-establishing the state Somalis have struggled to deal with clan competition for supremacy by fusing state and clan through forms of proportional representation such as the 4.5 formula, or, as in Somaliland incorporating an upper house of elders in the government structures. Rightly or wrongly, a perception voiced by traditional elders in most regions, is that international community investment in central government has, albeit inadvertently, raised the stakes; exacerbating competition between clan groups for control of state resources and contributing to the proliferation of ‘elders’. The study repeatedly heard how these new ‘elders’ accede through wealth or the promise of wealth; lacking the qualification needed to be sound political representatives of their clan groups.

75 This seems not to have been the case for most men and boys from the north and north east of Somalia, where in the late 1970s clan-based armed opposition movements (the Somalia Salvation Democratic Front and the SNM) were formed.

2.2 Changes to gender roles and responsibilities within the family

“The expectation that men will look after the family has been lost”

[male youth, Hargeisa]

Previous research examining the impact of the war on women indicates that family break-up was a significant feature of the early years of the war.⁷⁶ Looking at the war’s impact from a male perspective, the current study confirms the dramatic upheaval in the concept of the family and the basic certainties of family life. Since the war and state collapse, a substantial number of men are absent fathers and husbands, or are present but dependent on their wives and children, contributing little or nothing to the household income and neglecting their children in ways that, according to respondents, would have been rare before 1991. This story told by a woman in Baidoa is typical of accounts heard across the country: “... a woman who has seven children and an unemployed husband. She provides for all the needs of the family and did not rest a single day for the last 23 years unless she was very sick. But the man has not worked for a day. Unfortunately, he lost the respect in the house and even his children do not listen to him.”

Empirical evidence shows how difficult it has become for many men to fulfil the normal expectations of a husband and a father (“*the decision-maker, leader and manager of the family*”), two cornerstones of manhood and clan membership (see above Section 1.1). In families where, at its most extreme “*men’s responsibility is dead now*”, normative male responsibilities are either being taken on by women and older sons and daughters, or have been forsaken. The tendency is for women to have stepped in to generate resources.⁷⁷ This shift in family roles is a countrywide phenomenon, and is found among refugee and diaspora men. It represents a significant change

in gender relations in the family. The changes have not affected all men in the same way. Factors other than maleness seem to play a part, such as education, class, clan, age, urban or rural location, and profession before the war. Further analysis will deepen understanding of the factors accounting for men’s differing abilities to adapt to and overcome them. At this stage, study material shows the following experiences are salient, all resulting from war-related hostilities and or state collapse and often in conjunction with forced displacement:

- Loss of employment and failure to regain a position of commensurate status;
- Combatant experience, from mobilisation into clan militia or rebel forces resulting in combat-related trauma, *khat*/drug addiction, physical and or mental disability, move from rural to urban life;
- Physical injury and/or psychological trauma;
- Separation from wife and children to secure own and/or their survival;
- Loss of and failure to regain assets, including land, property, money, material possessions, livestock, agricultural or other tools and machinery through theft, expropriation, terrorisation and forced displacement;
- Enduring insecurity, fear and threat of revenge killings;
- Encampment and employment rules governing life of refugees in Dadaab.

Respondents frequently expressed concerns that issues such as their involvement in illicit activities, loss of respect from clansmen and elders, and loss of positive male role models for children, would have a serious bearing on the family and on wider issues such as peace and security.⁷⁸

More research is needed to understand the full scale of the changes in the family and their implications. But it is clear that where men have lost or relinquished their family roles and responsibilities, the fall-out for families is significant. A tentative analysis

76 See for example Habiba Osman, Amina Sayid, Halimo Elmi testimonies in Gardner, J. & El Bushra, J. (eds) (2004).

77 APD’s report, *The Impact of the War on the Family* (2002), documents research findings from Somaliland. One elderly female respondent is reported as commenting: “*all women whether they live in rural or urban are fighting for the survival of their families, a responsibility that used to be for men.*”

78 See APD study 2002.

of why this is so points to the collective accountability and responsibility that lie at the core of male experience of clan membership. Group social, political and economic capital is depleted when a substantial number of men are unable to fulfil their clan membership responsibilities. Such men become a drain on their fellow clansmen. Their own influence and status within the clan diminishes and they may be left out of meetings and events attended by their clansmen.

A man's loss of status among his clansmen can affect his wife and children. The study heard, for example, how failure to make clan contributions jeopardises the whole family because the family cannot expect support when need arises. This can contribute to a downward spiral of marginalisation and poverty. To avoid this fate, some women use their earnings, however meagre, to pay their husband's clan contributions and thus keep the family close to the clan.

At present, men experience both power and vulnerability: their power is derived, as in the past, from being seen as controllers of resources; their vulnerability is multifaceted (see below) but most exposed when they depend on a woman's income – a break from the past when, as explained by elders in Erigavo, “*women were controlled with men's wealth...*” Men, especially older men, still make decisions about money, livelihoods, labour, markets, wealth, access to land, access to organisational resources and support. This tends to remain the case even in those families where women are the main breadwinners; most women interviewed who contribute financially appear to concede to the appearance of their husbands' decision-making roles. However, the power men hold within the family is tempered by ideals of honour and respect. A man gains respect from exercising power in an egalitarian and supportive way, consulting his wife and children. And the fact that women are now commonly breadwinners even in some male-headed households suggests these (older) men might be consulting their women folk more than in the past.

Outside the family, decision-making is still dominated by men, even when it is known that their financial contributions may be derived from their wives. Many women see it as being in their interests that

men should fulfil their obligations to the clan in order to support the family's survival and prosperity. Many respondents see this male role as ordained by God and thus required by religion.⁷⁹ This ideological underpinning has considerable power and helps to explain why questioning of men's leadership is limited.⁸⁰

Section 2.3.1 below looks further at findings related to the dynamics of male financial dependency on women.

2.3 How men's experiences of war have affected manhood

What have been the consequences of men's experiences of war and state collapse for ideals of masculinity? In this section we note three changes in men's expected role as breadwinners; changes related to power, control, leadership and governance; and the impact of insecurity on men's identities.

2.3.1 Male financial dependency on women

“Now...men are like children.”

[Older man, Eastleigh]

Men's new financial dependency on women is a war-related phenomenon that does not seem to be explained by men's laziness or by the assertion that women have taken over men's jobs: they evidently have not.⁸¹ True there are few formal job opportunities, but as the Academy for Peace and Development (APD) pointed out, the fact that Ethiopian migrant workers can be found working indicates there are jobs to be done.⁸²

According to respondents, a man can resurrect his *raganimo* and clan membership status through, and despite, being supported by women. For example, if

79 Some respondents referred specifically to Siad Barre's execution of religious sheikhs who opposed the Family Law of 1975.

80 Lukes, op.cit.

81 Very few women occupy positions in the public sector and civil service, for example, or other traditionally male-dominated occupations. The pastoral context may be the exception, where women's abandonment by men has left them no choice but to undertake the tasks formerly done by their menfolk.

82 APD, op.cit.

he marries a woman from the diaspora, or a woman who is influential within her clan, she brings him financial security and/or kudos. If with political change he is appointed to a prestigious position, or a position commensurate with his former status, he can regain social and political capital. Dependency on women for income is a source of shame for many men but not all. The study found examples of men who “do not bother to work” because they have found they can survive on the small income generated by their wife or from money remitted by relatives in the diaspora; critical of the generosity of relatives, some observed the remittance culture has allowed men “to slide into serious dependency”.

By no means have all men relinquished their responsibility to provide for their families. In all regions men dominate the formal business sector, the various civil services of the regional administrations and the paid political posts, police and defence forces. Life stories, especially from young men, evidence considerable effort to acquire a source of income for themselves and their parents and siblings (see Section 2.3.5 on Youth). Some occupations - shoemaking for example - formerly undertaken only by members of caste groups are now reportedly being taken up by men from the major clans.⁸³

Like the speaker below, some men who are unable to work provided support and companionship for their wives, who were forced by circumstances to become breadwinners: “I did not desert my family nor joined the militia life. I thank Allah that I stayed with my family throughout the war and shared with them the harsh conditions... I helped my wife, to begin with to sell tea at Bulu Hubey market and then vegetables and other basic items like salt, washing soap, matches and so on in front of the house. I was mostly at home and near where she was doing the small business. We managed as a family and shared family responsibilities. Though my wife was winning the bread for the family, I was still the father respected by the faithful wife and children.”

Although we don't know the scale, findings suggest many men are not trying to work or take on

83 Raising concern among the caste group, who find their jobs are less secure.

female responsibilities at home. Study material shows many men who survive on hand-outs from clansmen (*shaxaad*), and/or remittances and the financial support of wives and children, do nothing productive or in support of their family. Some men would like to work but their situation makes this impossible – these include refugees residing in the Dadaab camps, where idleness is enforced by the encampment policy of the host (see below, section 2.3.3). Women often refer to these as ‘idle men’. Factors affecting them, and which might be either cause or effect, or both, include: *khat* addiction, physical disability, depression, trauma, other mental health issues, and constraints on male mobility that are related to insecurity (see below 2.3.3).

Dependency on women is a source of shame for some men, especially many older men, but it may be viewed with pragmatism - even complacency - by others, typically younger men. As a male respondent from Mogadishu observed, “Men have seen that women can earn for the family and therefore many men do not bother to look for work which leads to inactivity and dependency.” Another, also from Mogadishu warned, “Women assumed man's role to fill the gap created by man's failure... but it does not mean that is an accepted set-up.” Whilst in general women have taken on the breadwinner role with remarkable equanimity, evidence shows many look forward to the day when, they assume, men will resume their share of family responsibilities. For example, some women in Mogadishu, according to elders there, “compel their husbands to take the gun and loot people.”⁸⁴

Some older male respondents, former government officials, choose to survive on *shaxaad* and their wives' income, rather than let down their clan by doing demeaning work, for, “it is about our dignity...

84 More research is needed to understand the impact a father's fallen status has on sons. Anecdotal evidence from Mogadishu suggests boys from families without an adult male breadwinner are more vulnerable to recruitment by extremist militant groups but this remains to be verified. Information about girls in female-headed households or households where the main income provider is female comes from research by the Somaliland women's network organisation, NAGAAD. In such households girls are more likely to drop out of school to replace the mother's role in the household and upbringing of children; such girls and their siblings may be more vulnerable to SGBV and early marriage.

dignity is more important”.⁸⁵ This speaker, referring to men like himself, remarked: “*You have education, you cannot go cooking pancakes in the street. Can you cook sambusa? I have been a DG [Director General], how can I?*” Women do not embody the honour and dignity of the clan in the same way as men. Therefore from a man’s perspective, “*a woman and a mother can do anything – there is nothing she can feel ashamed of.*”

Findings indicate that male financial dependency on women has an impact on domestic harmony and the institution of marriage. Respondents report no decline in the demand for marriage, by either men or women, but rates of divorce are reportedly very high and marriage patterns are changing. Evidence indicates it remains easier for a man to divorce his wife than vice versa, even when he is failing to fulfil his basic responsibilities towards her. Marital relations were not explored in any depth in this phase, but noteworthy is the infrequent reporting, by men and women, of an increase in male-on-female domestic violence resulting from male dependency on female income. However, both men and women report an increase of female-on-male verbal abuse.⁸⁶ This respondent’s account of domestic friction and marriage breakdown seems typical: “*My responsibility as a man has totally gone... Before she [my wife] used to live on what I earned for her. She used to stay at home, go shopping without working for that. But now when I come home in the evening I will find her with some meagre income she has earned that makes her think she has taken over responsibility for the family. She will start yelling at me, ‘He is sitting there idly!’ and she will continue, ‘Men go out and do some activities every day to earn but somebody lives on my income everyday!’ ...*

85 Alongside normative ideals of behaviour exist strict preferences relating to what kinds of occupations clansmen should engage in and avoid. Traditionally a pastoralist life is considered noble, whereas agriculture, and even more so occupations such as blacksmithing, hairdressing, leather work, and “*selling tomatoes on the street*” are looked down on and traditionally left to others. Respondents differentiated between what is appropriate for rural and urban men (by implication, uneducated and educated). Occupations deemed appropriate for older urban, educated men include: office-based work, management, political office, high-ranking police and army posts, business (but not petty trading), and professions such as being a doctor, lawyer, engineer, vet or teacher.

86 Young educated, unmarried women in Boroma for example, remarked: “*If she has resources or her parents are well-off, she will abuse him, tell him bad words, insult him, and despise him.*”

That is how we got divorced.”

Changes in marriage are not all directly linked to dependency on women. For example, a reported trend for men to make multiple marriages is unlikely to involve men who have no income of their own. But study material shows that domestic disharmony arising from dependency drives some to seek a way to finance multiple marriages or serial marriage. Respondents noted a continuing trend for early marriage among young people. Findings from elsewhere indicate some of the trend to early marriage has links to family income difficulties.⁸⁷

Study material evidences two other marriage trends, which may have direct links with male dependency on women’s income. Both are departures from the normative expectations of masculinity: they involve men seeking marriage partners who will support them financially. The most common form of this is ‘diaspora marriage’, whereby through his clansmen and women, and with the help of social media sites, a man searches for a diaspora woman to marry. Whether or not she knows his intention is unclear. Less frequently mentioned but practised in at least two fieldwork locations is a form of marriage that roughly translates as a ‘*gigolo*’ arrangement, whereby a young, healthy man marries an older woman to live as her sexual companion, assistant and financial dependent. Characteristically the woman is a working woman and has had children. She may be divorced or widowed, and unlike ‘diaspora marriages’ she is aware of the calculation. There appears to be no shame attached for either party.

2.3.2 Leadership and governance

“Today, every clan has ten faces or leaders. There is a mess and disharmony...”
(Elder, Erigavo)

Leadership and, paradoxically, compliance are high on the list of gender-specific responsibilities and expectations of Somali men. Referring to an age of

87 This is a finding from research undertaken by Fouzia Musse and Judith Gardner in Mogadishu for the EC Somalia Gender Profile 2014 where it was reported girls from low income families come under paternal pressure to married young so as to reduce the financial burden on the family. It has not yet been validated in other parts of the country.

BOX 2.1 *Khat* addiction and mental illness

"You know, we cannot stop chewing khat; we cannot do without it... My family [provide it]. They fear that I might curse them. My son doesn't chew. Thanks to God."

[elderly *khat* addict, Awdal region]

Khat addiction and mental illness emerge as both causes and effects of male failure to fulfil family responsibilities. Many respondents pointed to depression and a sense of alienation when they were no longer able to provide for their families, as described by this man from Garowe: "Women and children don't share their plans with men. They come and go as they wish. You stand there and you feel you're nothing, nobody." Not all such men resort to *khat* or other drugs but many do. Feeding *khat* addiction is costly, linked to mental illness and domestic violence, and a cause of family poverty and misery; at the same time, the sale of *khat* by women generates family income; rural women report hiding the family livestock from their husbands and sons because they know they have bought *khat* on credit in town, promising to pay in livestock; some women readily pay for their menfolk's daily *khat* supply to encourage them to stay at home with the children and prevent them from stealing from the family's livestock to pay for it.

Findings suggest there may be strong links between *khat* addiction among men and conflict-related trauma, unemployment or financial dependency on others, and mental illness. Men of all ages and backgrounds commonly recalled periods when they experienced some form of mental breakdown. Many of the young men spoke of avoiding *khat* or having managed to overcome a *khat* addiction and finding their mental health and lives in general improved.

'pastoral democracy', respondents across the regions noted: "In the past men were two types: those who make decisions and those who follow and accept decisions - there was no group in between. Men knew each other. They knew those who could lead. There was order and loyalty." Indeed, what emerges clearly from the codes of Somali manhood detailed by respondents is a traditional governance system that controls, and harnesses, male power for collective survival in the context of the pastoral environment (see section 1.1 above).

The Siad Barre regime built on cultural ideals of wealth-sharing and self-reliance and used them to control society.⁸⁸ Even in its last years, with the economy collapsing and civil war encroaching on the south, the regime maintained tight control over the population, exerted through various security forces, including the infamous National Security Service, and the self-discipline of citizens used to having "a government to fear", a government "which deterred

wrong doing". As is well documented elsewhere,⁸⁹ the collapse of the state unleashed a violent contest over resources and the state. Organised and fought largely along clan lines, the contest continues in South Central Somalia (SCS), with the added dimension of extremist and militant Islamist ideology in the form of Al Shabaab. In the absence of state and state ideology, people fell back on traditional forms of clan organisation and leadership, most successfully in Somaliland and Puntland where these institutions appear to have been more intact than in the south. The populations of these two regions established relative stability and governance partly through the efforts and agency of their traditional clan elders to successfully resolve inter-clan conflicts and bring about reconciliation.⁹⁰

88 Bradbury 2008 p.36.

89 For a forensically detailed, if controversial analysis of the contest for resources in southern Somalia, see Kaptjiens, L. *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*. Pennsylvania University, 2013.

90 Subsequent conflicts have since arisen, most notably over governance of Sool and Sanaag Regions.

An elder in Las Canood observed: “Men *do* manage their people, with the help of God... We take responsibility.” He went on to give examples of how he and other elders have tried to bring law and order.⁹¹ His story illustrates how, with state collapse male management and leadership has become a pre-occupation for many men – some nominated by their clansmen for the purpose and others self-appointed or imposed (see below).

Findings indicate this management of other men takes at least two forms, and typically these have divergent goals: as described by the elder above, an appeal to traditional male roles and responsibilities to promote peace, stability and (good) governance; manipulation and corruption of traditional male roles and responsibilities - the goal being accumulation and concentration of power and resources, for powerful individuals and their clansmen.

The study repeatedly heard men complain: “*Today only men with resources have a voice*”.⁹² In the past, it was clear, men became elders and some became senior elders, based on age, marital status, fatherhood, and nomination by their clansmen, merited by acquiring the skills, knowledge and characteristics associated with eldership. Nowadays, according to male respondents across the regions, these attributes are no longer valued: today what counts is whether a man has money or other resources. However, money and resources alone are not sufficient; a man will be made a leader in his clan or sub-clan only if by doing so he then opens up opportunities for his clansmen to access resources. Explaining how it works in Mogadishu under the Federal Government, a young respondent said, “*Men can become leaders of sub-clans if they bring ‘resources’ for the clan... if they stop fulfilling this role or do not ‘distribute the resources’ to the satisfaction of their fellow clan members, the clan can*

91 This elder gave the example of how in the absence of a jail, elders have taken it upon themselves to use their own homes to imprison fellow clansmen deemed to be a danger to society.

92 Both women and men voiced concerns about what they see as the loss of moral order, but preoccupation with leadership and disempowerment of traditional elders was very much a male concern. It is just speculation at this stage but possibly the situation for women has not changed so much as it has for men in this regard. Neither the old nor the new leaders have women’s interests in mind.

ask the President to appoint a different clan member in place of him.”

SCS, Puntland and Somaliland are regions varying in central authority and government reach. How law and order is managed, natural resources protected and shared, social needs identified and met, moral order restored or maintained, and human rights protected varies widely across the three regions with huge deficits in some areas and serious efforts in others. Whatever the region and form of established or contested authority, there is still reference to, and in many places dependence on, the clan-based traditional system of governance. What concerns many men, however, is that with the corruption of the system and lacking elders with knowledge of customary law, mediation and conflict prevention, and the accompanying respect of their clansmen, there is a deficit in local law and order, and insecurity prevails.

Several complex and connected factors appear to have driven this apparent change to the system of values. They converge on the contestation between clans and sub-clans seeking to secure the lion’s share of resources, job opportunities, and political decision-making and ultimately prestige. Though this end-goal appears more clearly in some regions than others (for example in Somaliland it is managed and moderated by the political party system), findings suggest it is in the minds of men everywhere.

And that is not surprising. One cause is every man’s need for income and livelihood opportunities. Another is that “*state collapse has increased the power of local leaders*” – the titled elders of clan lineages. Combined, these two factors explain why “*every [part of the clan] wants their own Suldaan because he can create job opportunities*”. Norms of clan membership actively encourage preferential treatment among clansmen. With state and public sector collapse, competition for positions and resources is fierce. Any man with the means to generate wealth for others, legally or illegally, becomes potentially powerful for their clansmen, and desirable; and part of the post-1991 male hegemony.⁹³

93 The role of women in the making and appointment of these ‘new

On the other hand, the traditional elders, the traditional hegemonic males, have no intrinsic means to generate resources for their clansmen; they may become dispensable or even an obstacle to be removed. Or, as seems to have happened quite widely, they may remain in position but find clansmen nominate “*new, influential men*” alongside or above them, men who may come from the diaspora or business community, or who have gained their resources as warlords. Unlike the traditional elders, these “*new leaders*” bring economic capital and promise to use their position to harvest resources for the clan. Respondents explain that such manoeuvrings have resulted in a “*proliferation of titled elders*” but a dilution of respect for elder authority because those appointed lack the credentials required to make them effective Suldaans or *malaqis*.⁹⁴

Inequalities among Somali men tend to be overlooked, or perhaps masked by the idea(l) of a pastoral democracy in which all men have an equal say. As findings show, there is (and has been in the past) a gender order in which some men are more powerful than others. In relation to leadership, the findings also evidence that a man’s relative power is linked to that of his clan’s position and that not all clans are equally powerful. Young men in Baidoa, for whom this is an everyday reality, pointed out: “*powerful clans are those that have warlords, politicians and better opportunities of employment*”. Other respondents explained how it may be advantageous to appoint as leaders men who are warlords with “*the ability to shoot, kill and create conflict that gives them... access to resources*”. This connection between relative male powerlessness and violence and insecurity is not unique to the Somali context and requires further research.

2.3.3 Manhood in a state of insecurity and displacement

“Men now are just trying to stay alive and stay safe.”
[Mogadishu elders]

Findings indicate a gendered dimension to security:

leaders’ remains to be explored.

94 Two examples of the various titles given to clan lineage heads, positions that are customarily inherited, within some clan families.

how Somali men experience security (in the sense of absence of danger) can be different from the way Somali women experience it. This difference appears to relate to the fact that men’s experience of clan is different from women’s. Three situations captured by the study illustrate this: the threat of revenge killing (Las Canood); the limits of clan identity as protection (Bay Region); and living as a refugee far from one’s *diya* group (Dadaab). In each situation, men find their security and agency impeded. Common to all is the fact that their situation has either been caused by, or results in, forced displacement and/or subsequent limited mobility.⁹⁵

The threat of revenge killing or ‘anno’

Findings show that in certain locations men face the daily threat to life through a revenge killing provoked by assassinations;⁹⁶ where this is the case, faced with the possibility of losing their husband through *anno*, wives have taken on the role of income-earner for the household – and in reducing their husband’s vulnerability they have also become their protector. In Las Canood, for example, respondents noted that there is “*too much revenge killing*” with the threat of assassination an everyday fear for many men. The risk to men is greatest in public spaces or in places outside their own *diya* group’s control. Protecting themselves has serious impacts on their mobility and hence their work opportunities. Women on the other hand, are not at risk as revenge killing targets men only; women can safely move in public spaces and within and between different territories. Re-

95 Population displacement has been a recurrent feature of the conflict in the south and conflict-related famine and humanitarian crises. Movement has not all been from city to rural area; famine victims sought relief in urban centres. And it has included significant influxes of rural males to the urban areas deployed as clan militia, followed by other clansmen and women wanting to benefit from the expropriation of property and other gains of their clan militia. The latter describes one important dimension of the cultural and demographic change in Mogadishu for example.

96 *Anno* or revenge killing is a customary institution whereby instead of accepting *diya* payment as compensation for the loss of their male relative, a family can call for revenge. With revenge, the deceased close male relatives are sanctioned to kill a man from among the perpetrator’s kinsmen, who is of equivalent age and status to the deceased. Like *diya* blood compensation, *anno* is based on the concept of collective accountability; casual killing between men should be prevented because the collective consequences are so great. To call for *anno* was forbidden during the modern state-era but has been re-ignited since 1991.

spondents did not comment on associated risks for the women concerned, such as greater vulnerability to sexual assault. It seems fair to assume that in some contexts their risk could be heightened.⁹⁷

Findings show that in places where revenge killing is a serious problem, the insecurity it creates has a profound effect on men. It seems an efficient tool of emasculation, a form of gender-based violence that can undo many men's lives by a threat to one. As respondents emphasised, "*men need peace to fulfil their responsibilities*" but *anno* ensures that insecurity for men prevails.

The limits of clan identity as security for men

The inter-clan dimension to the war has meant men are safest among their clansmen, i.e. their patrilineal relatives and *diya* group members. Some life stories are from men who have had either to grow up or seek sanctuary among communities of their matrilineal relatives. These are men from exogamous marriages, whose parents are from two separate clan families. Their stories evidence how insecure a man is among his matrilineal relatives out of peacetime. As one older man explained, "*If you are not within your clan and enjoy the protection of the clan you will constantly live in fear. You are powerless.*" The lack of trust these men describe is similar to that reported by women who found themselves living among their husband's or son-in-law's clan, rather than their own.⁹⁸ Yet whilst women still seem able to fulfil their gender roles and responsibilities, living apart from one's clan appears to have been particularly difficult

for men, especially in terms of personal security, opportunities to make a living and agency.

This is illustrated by the account collected from a man in his late 50s whose matrilineal clan identity favoured him during the days of government because it was the same as Siad Barre's, but whose patrilineal clan was unarmed and relatively powerless early on in the war. Once war reached Mogadishu and he had to flee the city, he sought refuge and found work in the rural territories of his mother's clansmen, not his father's. But not being a member of his mother's clan brought him difficulties and ultimately no security: "*I lost my manhood when the government fell. My mother comes from the Marehan clan and as a result, members of this clan are my uncles.*"⁹⁹ However, at times I felt intimidated... I could not raise my voice and was very careful not to offend anybody. I worked in Garbaharey for 8 years but it was not easy." Eventually, feeling his life was too much at risk, he left for Kenya. Explaining the privileging of clan over maternal kinship links, he said: "*Though the Marehan are my uncles, still they see me as a man from the Rahanweyn clan with which they do not enjoy friendly relationships.*" Had he been female, he would have been afforded protection by maternal clansmen, but being male the only real security is among his patrilineal relatives. However, the threat of revenge killing means that, unless there is peace, even among his own clansmen a man is never secure.

Life as an encamped male refugee in Dadaab

Perhaps the most abject accounts of male experiences of enforced or voluntary inactivity have come from men who were displaced from Mogadishu or elsewhere in South Central in the early 1990s and have ended up as either refugees or diaspora in Kenya. All the respondents in this category are in their late 40s or above. Some are men who were formerly employed by or beneficiaries of the Siad Barre regime; most were forcibly displaced by the 'clan cleansing'¹⁰⁰ of Mogadishu and elsewhere in the south during the early 1990s. Some have expe-

97 Enquiry into SGBV was not a formal focus of the study, though it will be in the main study. Experience of male rape was alluded to in one life story and an increase of male-on-female rape was reported in several locations. A notable exception was Las Canood, where respondents noted that rape cases are low and punishment is severe – they cited an example of brothers killing their own brother when they discovered he had raped a girl. No other details were collected but the indication would be that in the case of Las Canood, security is more of a problem for men than it is for women. Findings from elsewhere, such as Dadaab in the early 1990s, provide examples where sexual violence has been rampant and yet women have risked rape rather than let their menfolk collect water or firewood "*because men would be killed, we will 'only' be raped.*" See: Fousia Musse, War Crimes Against Women and Girls. Chapter 3 in Gardner, J. & El Bushra, J, (eds) 2004).

98 See Amina Elmi's testimony in Gardner, J & El Bushra, J, (eds) 2004.

99 Within the pastoral clan families, a man has a special relationship with his maternal uncle (Lewis 1961).

100 See Kaptjiens (2013).

rienced multiple displacement; initially from Mogadishu and then later from elsewhere in the south as a result of terrorisation by Al Shabaab.

Since 1991 hundreds of thousands of Somalis have sought refuge in neighbouring Kenya; numbers have fluctuated, but according to UNHCR there are currently more than 450,000 Somalis living in the refugee camps clustered around the northern town of Dadaab, the largest refugee encampment in the world.¹⁰¹ They are at risk of local sources of violence such as armed bandits. The dynamics of the conflicts inside Somalia cross national boundaries, severely affecting residents' security and well-being.¹⁰² At the time of the fieldwork visit (February 2014), recent killings thought to be Al Shabaab-related, had heightened insecurity, and had shocked and frightened male respondents.

To live as refugees, particularly under the restrictive Kenyan encampment policy,¹⁰³ is to have lost freedom and control over decisions affecting one's life in return for a food ration and the possibility of shelter, access to health services and schooling.¹⁰⁴ The findings reinforce those from other studies that this is

a stressful and distressing existence for both men and women.¹⁰⁵ For a man, socialised to be responsible, a clan member, a decision-maker and provider for the family, in the camp environment 'manhood', in the normative sense (see Section 1.1) becomes unachievable. When one man, a camp resident for 23 years, said, "*My responsibility as a man has totally gone*" his words echoed those of all the male respondents. Exploring why "*a refugee has no raganimo*" the study found one factor to be men's dependency on women for income, for reasons similar to those found inside Somalia. What is different for male refugees, and sets them apart from their female counterparts, seems to be the following experiences:

- Total dependency and loss of voice within and outside the family: men find they are dependent not just on women for income, but on the international aid organisations who manage the camps and food distribution, whose policies affect them directly but which they cannot influence. One respondent said: "*Our life is governed by others ... every one of us is experiencing the same dilemma of being governed by the food stores of the NGOs [non-governmental organisations].*"¹⁰⁶
- Leadership of the family undermined: men gave examples of how their leadership position within the family has been toppled by international NGO interventions designed to empower women and uphold their rights, intentionally or unintentionally; examples included being threatened with eviction from the household because it has been registered in the name of the wife, not the husband or jointly;¹⁰⁷ they saw as interference with normal relations between husband and wife the provisions put in place by international agencies to prevent and respond to violence against women. They found these provisions encouraged their wives to have them arrested if they "*so much as raise their voices*" at them. Referring to men's alienation from the

101 Interview with UNHCR Head of Operations in Dadaab, Ahmed Warsame, February 2014.

102 Local dynamics and encroachment from the wars in Somalia have always affected the security in Dadaab making it a highly dangerous environment for both residents and the aid community; SGBV incidence targeting women and girls has been well documented and responses developed (see for example, Fouzia Musse, War Crimes Against Women and Girls. Chapter 3 in Gardner, J. & El Bushra, J. (eds) 2004; African Rights, *The Nightmare Continues. Abuses Against Somali Refugees in Kenya*. London: African Rights, 1993. For an assessment of causes of violence in 1999 see Jeff Crisp, "*A State of Insecurity: the political economy of violence in refugee populated areas of Kenya*", New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper 16, Dec 1999.

103 Kenya's encampment policy means those arriving from Somalia without appropriate documentation must reside in one of the camps; to leave the camp, even to go into Dadaab itself, requires written permission. Without permission those caught outside can be imprisoned. For residents, work opportunities inside the camps are very limited; business thrives but according to respondents and UNHCR it is dominated by the Kenyan ethnic Somali community, not the refugees themselves. The international aid community is the biggest source of formal employment. Refugees, lacking work permits are paid incentive rates well below nationals and internationals.

104 For in-depth analysis of the economic and physical insecurity of camp life see Cindy Horst, *Transnational Nomads: How Somalis Cope with Refugee Life in the Dadaab Camps of Kenya*. Berghahn Books, 2006.

105 See Horst and Crisp for example.

106 For a detailed account of refugee grievances see Kenya: A Voice from the Voiceless: Dadaab Refugee Camps, Pambazuka News, Issue 477.

107 The same complaint was heard from IDP men in Garowe.

family as a result of international community interventions intended to empower women, women noted their own dependency on the UN and NGOs and thus their need to conform with policies and practice if they wanted to access resources. At the same time they voiced frustration that the needs of men are overlooked: *“We all want our men to become responsible but the truth is we are all under the protection of humanitarian organizations that have very little recognition for men.”*

- Redundancy of intergenerational difference and age-related authority: according to respondents, the normative male age-related trajectory (see Section 1.1) is effectively redundant in the camps where young men and older face similar problems. Age-related authority does not have a place in the camps, where governance, law and order, through the application of the *xeer* or customary laws, do not apply. One elder-aged man explained the implications for men like himself: *“Wisdom and accumulated experience mean nothing to these people [the UNHCR and international NGOs]. A culture of consulting the elderly and the experienced does not exist at all. So, there is no sense of manhood. All we [as elders] do is wake up and sleep again.”*
- Impairment of the *diya* group’s collective accountability and conflict management mechanisms: often far from the geographical territories of their clansmen, refugee men exist apart from the main body of their *diya* group of clansmen (see Section 1.1). Without proximity, the *diya* system of collective responsibility and accountability is impaired. It may still be that individuals are called on to contribute¹⁰⁸ but the group may not be in a position to act in support of a member who is in need but physically far.
- Stigma and loss of social and political capital: a consequence of their reduced lives and agency, is that, as one refugee put it, *“none of us are responsible for anybody, not even our own self.”* Lacking the responsibility intrinsic to man-

hood, men feel that *“No-one from the opposite sex will ever accept us for marriage nor trust us with any role.”* Findings suggest male refugees are also stigmatised by some of their peers in the diaspora, who view their powerlessness as a failing and a reason not to include them in a study of Somali men.¹⁰⁹

2.4 Male resilience, adaptability and positive agency

The study has sought to capture both positive and negative trends that have affected men’s lives since the war and state collapse. What came from respondents during focus group discussions was almost always how change has affected men for the worse. When asked about positive changes in men’s lives, respondents talked in general terms rather than about men. Respondents in Puntland had the strongest sense that the war has had a positive impact: *“Before the war, Mogadishu was the centre for everything. During the war, people were forced to go back to their [clan] homes, which were rural and under-developed. They arrived to find nothing and they have developed the places. Cities have developed; schools, hospitals and other infrastructures have been built.”* Young men in Garowe and in Erigavo pointed out that with the establishment of universities they now have better access to educational opportunities in these towns than they would have done before 1991. When encouraged to think about men who had benefited since 1991, however, the only group who respondents, including elders and women, could identify are men they variously described as ‘warlords’, ‘politicians’ and other ‘war profiteers’ – their common characteristic being they were taking advantage of their people and profiting from the war. The study has not yet looked into the experiences of warlords, politicians and other ‘war profiteers’; this will be a focus of the next phase. Some salient findings can be shared from men’s life stories at this stage. In common with stories collected from Somali women in other studies¹¹⁰ they describe individuals’ experiences of appalling hardship

108 The study heard of men in the diaspora who are ‘counted’ and called on by their clan to contribute their dues.

109 This is a reference to opinions shared during a validation event in Nairobi with men from the Somali diaspora.

110 For example, the testimonies of women collected between 1994 – 2003 for Somalia – the Untold Story.

and trauma and yet depict extraordinary courage and resilience. How these experiences of men and women differ needs further analysis; but the following points arising from the study responses appear relevant in relation to men.

In terms of how the war has affected them, the stories show that men of all clan families and minority groups have experienced displacement, loss of livelihoods, death and separation from loved ones, extremes of violence and insecurity.¹¹¹ The stories from minority men (Bantu and Midgaan) evidence experiences of consistent discrimination, which is not a factor in the life stories of other men.

Stories from men who identify themselves as having “*lost their raganimo*” and status, show this to have been a difficult, contested process, not an easy slide into oblivion. They are typically men in their 40s and above, married with children, and maybe divorced or separated. A common experience seems to be that of unexpected, almost overnight, loss. For example, when the state collapsed and war ensued, they lost their property and other assets, their employment or business; they had to flee the city, some without wives and children, and have not been able to return to Mogadishu or recover their losses. Typically, in the first years they used all their resourcefulness to find a way to make a living but the clan dimensions of the war, or the forms of violence and terror deployed by groups at certain stages,¹¹² or the fundamental insecurity brought about by their displacement, or their lack of finance, caused successive set-backs, often violent and traumatic. They have suffered from despair and depression and other forms of mental illness; their solace has come from *khat* and their survival is due to dependence on their wives and children, and the *shaxaad* from kinsmen.

Also in this age group and broad category are SNM ex-combatants who joined up in their teens, many illiterate rural camel boys. To encourage them to

fight and cope with the hardships and fear they encountered, their commanders reminded them, “*our men are killed or in prison... and our sisters and wives are being raped by Faqash.*”¹¹³ They promised them “*paradise when the war is won.*”¹¹⁴ Once demobilised, these ex-combatants, uneducated and unskilled for urban life, found disillusion, poverty, loneliness and disabling, traumatic memories of the war. *Khat* addiction, developed as combatants, made return to their rural homes impractical. Their commanders, on the other hand, tended to be educated and to have secured professions before they joined the SNM. Findings are limited so far but suggest this cadre of leaders has been better able to re-adjust after demobilisation and resume their professional careers.

Life stories from younger men indicate that age may be a relevant factor in male resilience.¹¹⁵ The stories of younger males (those under 35 today) are accounts of individuals growing up in war-affected communities in the absence of a state, or recognised state in the case of Somalilanders. Their accounts detail layers of personal and family catastrophe; they also illustrate adaptation to fast-changing and adverse circumstances. Their experiences include: combat, injury, separation from family, forced displacement, trauma and terrorisation, coercion at the hands of clan elders, major disappointments, failed attempts to reach the West, mental breakdown and despair. Their adaptations focus typically on finding employment, and for some seeking education is a route to this, though not always a successful one. The work they find tends to be below their educational level and depending on where they live it may involve armed violence; their options to move location are severely limited by security considerations; self-employment may be an option; sometimes mar-

111 Clan families represented by men who participated in the study included: Isaaq, Gadabursi, Dhulbahunte, Warsengeli, Mijerteen, Oga-deni, Marehan, Hawiye, Rahanweyne (Digil Mirifle) plus men from the minority groups known as the Bantu, Reer Hamar, Midgaan and Gaboye.

112 For example Al Shabaab's practice of assassinating community leaders.

113 Faqash is a derogatory term for Siad Barre's forces.

114 SNM fighters were called jabhadii, meaning jihadi.

115 See for example: 'Defining Disaster Resilience: A DFID Approach Paper' which defines resilience as: '...the ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses - such as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict - without compromising their long-term prospects.' The main study will look in more detail at male resilience or gender aspects of resilience and its relevance for understanding the prolongation of violent conflict.

riage secures helpful kinship support; mothers and other relatives in the diaspora are commonly the ones who provide financial assistance. Some young men have adapted by giving up armed violence and successfully rehabilitating their lives with the help of interventions such as NGO projects.

Common to all the young male life stories is that their end goals are simple: income and a better life. Almost all express determination and hope.

In their endeavours to make a better life young men speak of wanting to help key people in their lives - their parents, younger siblings, wives, and their children. This could be interpreted as conforming to one half of the normative social expectation of men – responsibility towards family. Less clearly common across the regions is how driven as a generation young men are to “*shine for the clan*” – that is, to conform to the other half of being a man. Focus group discussions show attachment to clan is widely understood to be essential for survival; and in group settings, young men spoke energetically about it. But in the life stories when clan was mentioned it was more often in relation to lacking the father figure and therefore being unable to benefit, disappointment at the moral corruption of elders, or at the most extreme, a sense of being trapped in a toxic, even lethal, relationship.

A number of people consulted as part of the validation process for the study findings expressed the view that the findings present too negative a view of men’s situation. They felt that it cast Somalia in an unduly pessimistic light and did not reflect all that has been achieved. Discussing this point, the study team pointed out that most respondents had indeed been negative about men’s situation. Becoming unable to adequately provide for their families, and seeing their family role and manhood diminished as a result is painful and uppermost in men’s minds when asked about the impact of the war. However, we know from findings and from other forms of evidence that in terms of collective power and control over decisions affecting others’ lives, even though individual men may have lost or gained, there is no evidence that the patriarchal ideology underpinning Somali society has been substantially damaged by the war or state collapse. As one woman bitterly put it, “*the man still has power even though he chews khat*”.

2.5 The Experiences of Male Youth

The study aimed to generate findings about what life is like for a young Somali man living in Somalia today or as a refugee in Kenya. In each fieldwork location the research team held a focus group discussion and collected life stories with a group of men between 15 to 30 or 35 years old, the age-range traditionally classified as ‘youth.’¹¹⁶ The findings shared here derive from both rural and urban youth, educated and uneducated, majority and minority clan. They also include some findings from male and female adults consulted in the course of fieldwork.

Normative expectations of male youth

Male youth have more narrowly defined roles and responsibilities than male adults (see 1.1) although, with some sub-cultural variations, social expectations of them are high.¹¹⁷ Whilst labour and production roles and responsibilities vary across the different livelihood groups (pastoral, agro-pastoral, agricultural etc)¹¹⁸ common to most categories of male youth are the following core social expectations:

A male youth should:

- Be capable of filling his father’s position in the family;
- Know and respect the cultural norms and practices;
- Be well mannered and exhibit good behaviour;
- Be a role model for younger siblings and peers;
- Fight and raid for the family and the clan;
- Look after his parents when they are in need or very old.

Findings about the lives of male youth pre-civil war and state collapse

116 See note in 1.1 regarding sub-cultural variations.

117 The analysis ACORD applies in youth in conflict (ACORD “Lost Generation” Young People and Conflict in Africa . Nairobi: ACORD and DCI, 2007) whereby youth are both ‘infantilised and demonised’ seems likely to be relevant here. This will be explored in the main study.

118 And fieldwork did not explore these labour roles in depth.

Some older male respondents pointed out that pastoral youth were typically considered “*bothersome and full of violence*”. The older men who shared life stories and whose own youth pre-dated state collapse and civil war, do not conform to this stereotype – though of course, this could be a limitation of the self-portrait methodology. What their stories communicate strongly is youthful curiosity, for example in urban life, an appetite for education and travel, and strategies that enabled them to leapfrog the prolonged period of ‘youth’ to ‘adulthood’. They also document the huge social and cultural change that came during the 1970s, with the state’s programme of Scientific Socialism when the youth were mobilised for the revolution, and made key players and beneficiaries, or targets, of the socialist modernisation and self-reliance project. Schools and education expanded exponentially along with other parts of the public sector; conscription was introduced and thousands of military and other training opportunities were created, for young men as well as young women. With the mass literacy campaigns of the early 1970s, male and female youth became their elders’ teachers in an unprecedented role reversal with gains on both sides. With the changes to Family Law, marriage became easier, with brides’ families no longer allowed to demand high dowries and the role of the clan family replaced by the state.

These men’s life stories also show that young men were both agents and targets of the regime’s brutality. One life story from a man handed the death sentence in 1980 when he was a young medical doctor, describes how it was the regime’s call for his execution and that of other young men, members of a self-help group he had been leading to improve the much neglected Hargeisa Hospital, that triggered the formation of the SNM and the start of the civil war.¹¹⁹

Findings reflect the fact that except for recruitment into the military,¹²⁰ along with the quality of the edu-

cation system, the state’s initiatives for male youth had declined, if not collapsed, long before the state itself finally collapsed in 1991.

Findings about the lives of male youth since state collapse

The findings on life for young men since 1991 illustrate the extent of insecurity, displacement, and the ambivalence of relationships, especially paternal, that has characterised many childhoods; and the tremendous pressures and range of conflicting interests confronting male youth throughout Somalia.

Findings come from youth with experiences that span a spectrum of family wealth and parental arrangements. Broadly speaking there is similarity in the perspectives and concerns expressed. Respondents point to the double standards they are expected to live with: on the one hand “*Young men are not believed or trusted*” and on the other, adults want “*youth to get wealth by whatever means*”. Young men are expected to be good Muslims and obedient sons, and to know right from wrong but at the same time obey fathers they find it hard to respect or communicate with, or older kinsmen who have bought or fought their way into power; or support kinsmen of dubious or immoral behaviour because they hold the key to employment and to the ultimate goal – income and better life.

Whilst the expectations on young men seem to vary little, there are very significant differences in the experiences of youth from different regions.¹²¹ For example, life stories from youth from South Central Somalia, with its prolonged period of conflict, describe direct involvement in armed violence – an experience that does not feature in youth’s stories from stable or safer regions. Young men brought up in Puntland appear to have been more exposed to military recruitment than respondents elsewhere, whilst experience of how nepotism can thwart ambitions is a concern of young, educated men in Somaliland. Currently, in the disputed Sool region, boys from Las Canood are being sent to live in the rural area,

119 Reference to The Hargeisa Group. See for example, Abokor, Adan, 20th February 1982: A Historical Day for the Somaliland Youth. Paper presented to the Somaliland Youth Conference, 2002. ICD: Hargeisa. And Bradbury, 2008 pp56.

120 The military budget – said to be almost 75% of the total budget in the early 1980s (Bradbury 2008, citing Ahmed Samatar 1985).

121 During validation it was agreed that the study needs to learn more about these variations and in sharing findings be careful not to over-generalise from the specifics. This report has been approached with this caution in mind.

for safety and cultural education. The knowledge they gain of the pastoral culture and the region's Dervish history has a noticeable influence on their outlook.¹²² Youth living as encamped refugees in Dadaab have some of the bleakest perspectives, describing themselves as “*particularly lost, disoriented, uneducated and feeling hopeless in this prison*”.

Parental pressure leading to high-risk actions

Findings suggest parental and clan expectations are pressures felt by all young men, and can drive high-risk behaviours.

Study material suggests many young men are growing up in broken families, with absent or unemployed fathers, and in households where the mother is the main income provider. Poverty leads to parental pressure on urban boys and male youth to find work or other sources of income. At its most benign, this pressure cuts short or prevents a boy's education; at its most extreme it leads “*boys and male youth to engage in dangerous and/or violent activities to meet (family) income needs*”. There are significant regional differences. Findings from Somaliland suggest the most likely mortal danger parental pressure results in is to the youth himself, e.g. through *tahriib* (illegal migration) where they entrust their lives to human traffickers in an attempt to reach the West.

Study material from other regions, especially from youth from SCS, indicates parental pressure can all too easily have wider, violent consequences. In SCS respondents pointed out that “*The expectation from families and the desire to earn a living are pushing youth into many evils including joining Al-Shabaab*,” where, although their life expectancy may be shortened, they will earn a monthly salary. Speaking from his own experience in Kismayo, one young male explained what motivates some parents: “*They look at some of their neighbours who have children abroad sending money home every month...*” and so “*they encourage their sons into tahriib ... piracy, or other evils. They do not see the risk*”.¹²³ On the other hand, high-

lighting the status and job security that can come with joining a clan militia, youth in Baidoa pointed out, “*For the youth, joining the clan warlord's militia is a very good employment option... It is [a job] respected by the clan. He feels safe in that net.*”

Compounding the risks that may result from parental pressure and lack of legal, safe opportunities to earn money, is a sense expressed by youth from SCS that unless they bring in income they are dispensable: they have lost their intrinsic value to the family. In the words of a young man from Mogadishu, they are “*of no value to their families¹²⁴ and they have become a problem... since they have no jobs, no education, no opportunities and no future and the family has little influence over them.*” Periods of depression and even despair, punctuate every life story collected from youth. However, as detailed in Section 2.3.4 above the young men's life stories also testify to their incredible resilience, overcoming and adapting to the huge challenges they encounter.

Clan membership, youth and manhood

In all regions, young men spoke readily of the pressure they are under to comply with the expectations of their clan and older kinsmen. These include showing respect for the clan, obeying clan orders, and showing inter-dependence by being close to other members of your clan. Youth in Las Canood and Mogadishu stressed the pressure and importance of being “*a good and active clan member - to insure yourself against problems.*” For youth, being ‘active’ means being ready to fight to defend your clan's interests, and in Las Canood this means defending your clan against Somaliland. This pressure is real for young men in some regions. One respondent in Mogadishu, a rehabilitated morayaan or armed bandit, explained why compliance and joining the fight is vital for your own interests and protection: “*During inter-clan conflict each sub-clan is expected to bring militias. If you refuse (to join) and something then happens to*

122 Reference to the Dervish uprising against the British colonialists, led by Sayyid Mohammed Abdalla Hassan, early 20th century.

123 In some sense, this practice seems related to the household security strategies many families deployed before the war which involved spreading risk and maximising opportunities by investing human re-

sources in a range of occupations, skills training, and even countries.

124 Findings from elsewhere (research by Musse and Gardner for the EC Somali Gender Profile 2014) suggest it is not only boys who should feel dispensable – respondents in Mogadishu report some families actively encourage early marriage of their girls so as to reduce the demands on the meagre household income.

you the larger clan will not support you. It is in your own interest therefore to carry a gun and defend the clan.”

Respondents added: *”Show support to the clan even if it involves nepotism”* because, as one young man put it, *”if you are harmless and behave well, your clansmen might not support and like you. They will force you to change. The clan members want the ones that blindly support the clan [whether it is] wrong or right.”* As mentioned above (see 2.3.2), the study found young men from all backgrounds expressed concern with the hypocrisy and, in some places coercion, they experience from or witness in older men.

Overall, their life stories indicate a preference for conventional values, though these may be a struggle to uphold, rather than those they are exposed to and expected to conform to on a daily basis. This was illustrated by former morayaan youth in Mogadishu, when discussing how the war has affected men’s relationships with their clan. One noted, *”A man can be useful... if he is a warrior warlord who can get land and property for his clan - that is what the bad people in the clan value.”*

In South Central Somalia, youth are facing challenges from which their counterparts elsewhere are currently largely free. Youth interviewed in Eastleigh who had fled the country to escape recruitment by extremist groups, described how boys and young men find themselves *”between a rock and a hard place”*. On one side the government and clan are pushing them to take up arms, while on the other they are targeted by Al-Shabaab, whose leaders and recruitment agents are also clan members and therefore able to exert clan-based pressure.

Overall in SCS male youth are coerced and recruited to sustain and expand older males’ political and economic interests. A group of young men brought up in various towns in the south but who fled to Kenya to escape recruitment by Al-Shabaab, spoke of their experiences: *”Leaders are misusing the youth for their own political and other interests and the interest of their foreign masters. They are pushing youth to war and the age group 20-28 years are the target. Without other opportunities youth are forced to join in order to earn some income. They socialize the youth into the clan system to understand and protect the interest of the clan. They ask the businessmen to buy guns for the youth. They entice*

youth with money to plant explosives and once you have taken the money and used it they threatened them with death. They know the poor youth cannot refund the money... The problem is elders. They control the mind of the youth.” An extract from one of these young men’s life stories (Box 2.2 below) vividly conveys the vicious circle of violence and coercion confronting vulnerable boys and young men in SCS.

Poverty has a major influence on a young man’s options- and not only in families of minority-group status. However, findings also suggest that there is a class and ethnic dimension that has not yet been sufficiently explored by the study. Elders from various clans and minority groups in Mogadishu said: *”Warlords used the youth from the poor families and ruined their future for their individualistic greed. But they sent theirs [their young people] abroad to study and later return and take on important government positions because they are educated and rule us.”*

Little wonder that when interviewed about men and manhood a young former freelance militiaman in Mogadishu concluded: *”Many men are treacherous. They have no feeling or moral responsibility. They take bribes and don’t care about the country.”*

2.6 Male vulnerabilities in Somalia today

Men as well as women are vulnerable in war.¹²⁵ Understanding the different Somali male experiences of vulnerability may help Somalis and international actors intervening in the country to design more effective programmes and policies. The study has found evidence pointing to a wide range of causes and sites of male vulnerability. Further work is needed to understand male vulnerabilities and their causes more fully but those identified to date include:

- *Male socialization:* during childhood and youth into the discipline and exacting expectations of manhood and male gender roles. Findings suggest a significant disconnect between the norms

125 Conceptually, this section draws on Chris Dolan’s presentation on Male Vulnerabilities and Conflict, delivered to participants of the study’s conceptualisation workshop. See RVI with African Rights, Meeting Report Nairobi Forum 29-30 April 2013, A War on Men? The Enduring Consequences of War and Conflict on Somali Men.

BOX 2.2 Extract from a young man's testimony - from Mogadishu*

I had a very devastating experience that continues to haunt me to date. While I was in Mogadishu I was approached by an elder to carry an explosive from point A to point B. I would not like to mention the name, I just fell into a trap. An elder approached me and asked me, "Do you want money?" I hesitated to answer him as I did not know the source of the money he was talking about. He followed me for many days to try to convince me. He said, "You will just carry this item from here to that place and you will get your money". Eventually I agreed to take the money but was hesitant to be involved. The elder then decided to threaten me. I got convinced at some point that he may kill me if I don't do the job. I then decided to accomplish the work. He gave me the explosive. It was about 1½ kg and I was to take it past a road block manned by AMISOM and the Somali army. I put the explosive in a paper bag together with some of my clothes and took off. While I was engaged in the process a friend of mine realized what I was planning to do and asked me, "What are you doing?" I told him, "I am doing this to save my life". I knew I was getting involved in a very risky venture. Both ways I would die - if I am caught with this explosive by government soldiers or AMISOM that is the end of me and if I don't fulfil the mission the elder will plan to eliminate me. So I decided to face the fate. I carried the explosive in a paper bag with my clothing as I have just explained and started the journey.

This story ends with the young man's mother finding out what he had been forced to do. Fearing for his life, she funded his escape to Kenya. He was visibly nervous when sharing his story and told the interviewer he lives in fear of Al-Shabaab finding and killing him. Nevertheless, he asked to share his story so that people will understand how difficult life is for young men like him who are poor and therefore vulnerable.

and young men's abilities to fulfil them – at least without transgressing or recourse to illegal or criminal ways of life. There are examples of how this disconnect affects individuals, commonly causing humiliation for example. How the disconnect affects peer groups, or men collectively, and any connection to phenomena such as gender-based sexual violence is not yet clear.

- *Paternal parenting*: a father is the gate-keeper to his son's relationship with his clan and his role model and source of cultural knowledge. Study material indicates that the impacts of war and state collapse and some international responses to it have affected many men's confidence, interest and capacity to fulfil the basic norms of fatherhood. Implications are wide-ranging for male children.¹²⁶ Overall, young male respondents seem worst off, i.e. most vulnerable when there is no father figure present in the family.

The most common father-problems identified are: absent fathers or fathers who are present but do not engage with the family and play no role in their children's upbringing; marital breakdown and/or re-marriage; fathers so affected by *khat* addiction and/or mental and/or physical disability that they depend on their wife and/or children; fathers who have become marginal to their clansmen and thus unable to assist their sons to lever social, political or economic support. There are also boys and young men who do not know the identity of their fathers and thus their clan identity is in doubt.

- *Family*: as elaborated above, the war's impact on the family has been dramatic. Expectations of men in the family have been extremely hard if not impossible for many men to fulfil, among other things because of their engagement in conflict as combatants. The outcome is loss of confidence and *raganimo*, and humiliation resulting from their inability to protect loved ones.

126 It is likely that implications are also wide-ranging for female children.

- *Demonisation and vulnerability of male teenagers:* young male respondents from SCS reported that male children are nowadays “*seen only as a problem*” by their parents and wider society. This view has not yet been explored in any depth, and it did not emerge in other regions. However, the demonization of youth is not a new phenomenon. Discernible country-wide is a perception that young urban males lack a proper place in society, and can be more of a liability than asset for their family in the current context. Findings from women in Mogadishu indicate mothers worry a great deal about male children, especially teenagers. Reasons given include: they may become militarised and or radicalised and thus targets of attack; they may be the target of AMISOM arrests at check-points; or the target of assassination; they may be collateral damage in an attack. In Las Canood, many parents send their sons to stay with relatives in the rural area – partly to keep them away from possible dangers such as assassination or involvement in crime, and partly to ensure they learn about their culture and traditions.¹²⁷ In other areas, the study learned that parents encourage their sons to marry young, with or without income, in the hope that this will give them a focus and prevent them from going astray.
- *Militarisation and de-militarisation:* Young former members of armed militia in the south point to their lack of education and family financial needs as drivers of their involvement in violence. Ex-combatants who lost education and their best years due to their role in the civil war speak of feeling forgotten and neglected by the citizens they fought for; many report *khat* addiction, physical and mental disabilities and enduring trauma.
- *Psychological stress:* severe psychological stress feature in many of the life stories collected, from men of all ages.
- *Economic insecurity:* male loss of livelihoods and ability to provide for the family; very high male youth unemployment; pressure on men to pay clan contributions; parental pressure on male (but also female) adolescents to bring income for the family. Study material shows young men in all regions trying hard to secure income, mostly without recourse to illegal or violent means.
- *Physical insecurity:* men and boys have been the targets of gender-based violence in the form of systematic massacres, revenge killing (*anno*) and kidnap.
- *Spiritual insecurity:* Islam and Islamic beliefs are of central importance to the lives and perceptions of almost all Somalis, male and female. In their life-stories many men cited their strong faith as the source of strength that enabled them to endure their worst sufferings. However, what people report indicates that for a substantial number of men spirituality is not the safe sanctuary and source of brotherhood and guidance it used to be. Male respondents in Dadaab, Mogadishu and Baidoa reported feeling so vulnerable to Al-Shabaab-related killings that they no longer felt safe enough to worship together in the mosques. Moreover, the insecurity is perpetuated in such a way that it is undermining their basic trust in one another as fellow Muslims. Given this insecurity, it is perhaps not surprising that so far the study has generated few other findings in relation to how the war and state collapse has affected men spiritually. However, this will be a subject of future research.
- *Ethnicity and minority status:* male as well as female members of minority groups, who lack the same level of clan protection as members of majority groups are vulnerable to physical and verbal abuse, physical violation, intimidation and humiliation. In some places, men and women from minority groups have been forcibly removed from their land or made to labour on it under slave-like conditions. Males in certain occupational castes have lost their livelihoods or seen them reduced as non-caste group males enter the supply system in their own search for income.
- *Generational:* in some places study material shows some age-related norms have been overturned, while others have been reinforced. For example, nowadays if he has sufficient wealth a

127 It may or may not be connected but interestingly, respondents in Las Canood reported very low levels of SGBV are found.

relatively young and inexperienced man can become appointed a senior elder in place of a wiser but poorer older man. A young man without income or resources can marry. Country-wide, however, the study found evidence that teenagers and young men are the age-group most likely to be drawn into high-risk conflict-related or criminal activities.

- *Illegal migration: or tahriib.* Life stories from young men who have attempted to reach the West evidence the horrendous risks and suffering involved. Life stories depict how easily young people are coerced into playing the part of human traffickers in a cycle of exploitation and intimidation. The impact on families, emotionally and financially is considerable; though respondents in SCS report many parents encourage their children to undertake the journey, oblivious to the lethal hazards they will face.
- *Prevailing humanitarian and development aid engagement:* Such interventions routinely overlook or deprioritise men's vulnerabilities, or in some cases, pursue interventions that address female vulnerabilities but compound or worsen male vulnerabilities -thus deepening male humiliation and possibly undermining family resilience. IDP male respondents cite how easily a marriage can break up when IDP housing is registered in the name of the wife rather than both the husband and wife. Were it in both their names they would need to seek reconciliation should marital dispute occur. Being in the wife's name only, means she is essentially free to evict the husband, or at least this is how it is perceived. The decision to evict might be made easier still if he brings no income to the household. Were this the other way around and the husband was inadvertently or advertently empowered to evict his wife, it would presumably not pass unchallenged.

2.7 Changes in masculinity

The respondents suggest that hegemonic (dominant forms) masculinities have changed over time, associated with roughly three different time periods.

In the pre-revolution period (living memory up

to-1969)¹²⁸ —which, despite increasing urbanisation and the cosmopolitanism in Mogadishu, is in many respondents minds associated with a 'pastoral democracy'—respondents described senior clan elders as the men who displayed excellence in the qualities sought from men, and hence had decision-making power. Individual elders did not generally wield direct, overt power, but strongly influenced people and decisions, and were in a position to shape outcomes. In this they were distinct from other adult men (who participated in clan affairs but not with the same level of responsibility), from young men (who were to varying degrees excluded from decision-making) and from women (who had no formal or overt decision-making role but who had ways to influence their menfolk in some circumstances). Senior elders can therefore be described as bearers of the hegemonic form of masculinity during that period.

Respondents identify a change during the Barre regime (1969-1991), when the attempt was made to establish a unified Somali state, taking the place of the clan as the unit of governance. This entailed the establishment of state institutions and bureaucracy, which became the main decision-making fora (at least until Siad Barre's authority began to crumble in the mid-late 1980s). Urbanisation and policies affecting pastoralism also contributed to the changes in this period; urbanisation went hand in hand with the growth of employment and hence with an alternative form of resource mobilisation. The role of the clan in decision-making and the position of senior clan elders were deliberately undermined during this period, and instead a new hegemonic form emerged which was associated with education and the modern professions it led to. Men who rose to the top in this period were deployed around the country and lived away from the areas traditionally claimed by their clan; most found employment in urban areas and the most able or well-connected gravitated to Mogadishu. These men (and the few women who were able to advance politically during this period) were distinguished by their education and administrative capacities from those in the rural

128 The IWM study materials did not provide evidence on whether this description applied to the pre-colonial and colonial periods.

areas, those who lacked education, and those who clung to traditions of religion and custom; they were able to hold their heads up as Somali men because employment offered what seemed like a guaranteed source of income. This income sustained the individuals concerned, their immediate families, and to an extent also their extended family; perhaps equally importantly, their government positions enabled them and their families to gain comfort, security, respect and influence.

The post-Barre era up to the present day is identified as a third period of change to masculinities; in which the state and its institutions have effectively collapsed, with attempts to shore them up only recently gaining a toe-hold. Although clan has come into its own again as a – possibly in some cases the – governance institution, the situation is not as it was before Barre: the state, weak as it is, has international backers, globalisation and the diaspora have created incentives for international links, and the international community are actively engaging in the re-establishment of the normative model of the state. The new dominant masculinity, as so many respondents recounted despondently, is able to negotiate this context, not predominantly by upholding the values that counted in the past, but mainly through guile, force of arms, criminality and the exploitation

of youth. Yet the majority of the population continues to view the uncorrupted version of masculinity as the normative ideal.

How to explain the apparent disconnect between the values which respondents associate with a real or mythical '*golden era*', and which the majority continue to uphold, and those of warlords and corrupt politicians who, as reported in this study, now mobilise their clansmen for wealth and power? Should we conclude that it is the capacity to advance the interest of one's clan that has always been the true marker of hegemonic masculinity, and that the skills of sagacity, oration and mediation were merely temporal indicators? Or would it be more accurate to say that norms and values are shifting, and that materialism is taking over, under the influence of globalisation and a new economic world order? Or perhaps the struggle to capture state power is inherent in the concept of the state, and hence an inevitable shaper of modern masculinities, one that supports the emergence of a global hegemonic masculinity? Whilst speculation around these questions could take the debate in several different directions, the message coming clearly from the respondents in the study is that this new form of dominant masculinity is not something they welcome or consider to be true to their identities as Somalis.

3. In what way does this contribute to conflict and or peace?

To what extent can the stresses, tensions and contradictions in Somali masculinities be said to generate or perpetuate conflict, or to have the potential to contribute towards peace? A number of hypotheses have been put forward over the past twenty-five years concerning the causal factors in violent conflict. Some of these are relevant to our enquiry though not articulated around gender identity, while others seek to trace a specific link between gender identities and violence. Although it is not possible to address these hypotheses exhaustively here, we offer comments on some of the theoretical currents that may have explanatory force in relation to our research findings.

3.1 Culture and socialisation

In this view, socialisation encourages men to value aggression or warrior skills:¹²⁹ men, objects of violence from other men, are recruited into masculinised structures of violence and coercion in such a way that violence is made to seem a natural attribute of men.¹³⁰ This view suggests that both men and women contribute to a culture of violence, with women encouraging male violence in a number of ways, including through mockery and the withholding of domestic and sexual services, thereby encouraging men to live up to violent ideals of masculinity by being aggressive towards whomever is regarded as the enemy.¹³¹ Furthermore, concepts of masculinity focused on violence may in some cases be encouraged by the State to serve its militaristic interests.¹³²

Hassan Keynan, seeking to link the “heavily masculinised/patriarchal order that defines and animates the Somali equation and ... the Somali tragedy” proposes that at the core of the society lies “a kind of siege mentality and a primeval quest for survival, with men assuming the role of protectors and providers. This in turn has led to the emergence of a pattern of socialization that glorifies and rewards aggressiveness, bravery, courage, strength and toughness, traits associated with the macho male”.¹³³ Feud, the “most characteristic institution” of the clan,¹³⁴ requires men to retaliate for offences against the clan, and this assuages the humiliation they experience from being attacked. The corollary of this clan-centered siege mentality is an extreme imbalance in the power relations between men and women: the clan system, as the society’s main organizing institution, represents a “nightmare”¹³⁵ for women.¹³⁶ In direct contrast to men, women are the repository of peace-making skills, so that their repression by men closes off the society’s only possibility of pulling away from its tragic trajectory; for men to change their attitudes towards women represents a critical pathway towards reversing that trajectory.

Evidence from our study corroborates some elements of this account, but suggests that gender relations are not as clear-cut or as monolithic as Keynan suggests, and that overall the picture is more varied

129 Cockburn op cit.

130 Connell 2011 op cit.

131 Mukhta op cit; Kanogo, Tabitha. “Kikuyu Women and the Politics of Protest: Mau Mau.” In Images of Women in Peace and War, edited by S Macdonald. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987.

132 Klein, Uta. “Our Best Boys’: The Making of Masculinity in Israeli Society.” In Male Roles, Masculinities and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective, edited by Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell, and Ingrid

Eide, 163–180. UNESCO Publishing, 2000; Cinar and Usterci op cit. on Turkey.

133 Keynan, Hassan. “Male Roles and the Making of the Somali Tragedy.” In Male Roles, Masculinities and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective, edited by Ingeborg Breines, R. W. Connell, and Ingrid Eine, 189–198. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000. p. 189-191.

134 Ibid p 191.

135 Ibid 193.

136 The writings of Somali novelist, Nurruddin Farah also often refer to Somali society as ‘cruel’, particularly in relation to men’s treatment of women. See for example, *From a Crooked Rib* (1970).

and ambiguous than he portrays. Respondents did provide some evidence of young men being trained or encouraged in martial skills to defend their clan's interest, and of both younger and older men being socialised to see themselves as part of traditional practice whereby male youth are their clans' warriors and fighting force.¹³⁷ However, it is not clear whether this applies to all young men or whether it still applies in the present day at all. Though a number of respondents described their personal histories of being fighters or combatants, few referred to this role as fulfilling their ideals of manhood. Somalia does not emerge from this study as being a deeply militarised society.

Young men are expected to contribute economically to family and clan, and at whatever cost, which may sometimes lead them to violence; and clearly some parents condone this. For example, we know from a Mogadishu testimony that the need for income can drive mothers and fathers to push their sons into activities such as moryaanism and piracy, in which males are the predominant actors and use violence and the threat of violence to achieve their ends. The threat of humiliation by women to spur men on to violence, as well as women's financing of violent campaigns, has been evidenced from other studies.¹³⁸ However, this implies that women's role as peacemakers is ambiguous to say the least.

At the same time, the study does provide evidence that men are also socialised to prevent conflict. "*The best bed a man can have is peace*" as a Somali proverb says, meaning that for a man to be able to fulfil his responsibilities there needs to be peace. Findings reveal a social and governance system constructed around the potential for conflict (over natural resources and livestock) but in which the overriding need is for peace. The generational hierarchy of the clan system could be described as providing manpower for both scenarios, separating men into youth and adults, warriors and elders - the one allocated the task of defending the group's identity, and the

other to promote reconciliation.¹³⁹

Findings emphasise the requirement for men to be responsible at many levels, and this includes developing skills of conflict mediation as well as directly seeking to prevent conflict. Men are expected to sacrifice their individual interests to those of the clan. Men are enjoined to avoid violence in the home and outside it, and to avoid bringing their clan into disrepute through violence; clans bear the financial cost of interpersonal violence through the system of *diya* payments, and this functions as a disincentive at both the individual and the institutional level. Although some forms of violence are permitted, or even expected in circumstances where the survival of family and clan require it, other forms are proscribed,¹⁴⁰ suggesting that conflict management and the containment of violence is a function of the clan.

Whatever the influence of the cultural context, it is clear that many men resist violence in various ways or are indeed victims of violence from other men. Testimonies describe incidents where men sought to disarm other men and promoted an end to violence. In the absence of an effective judicial system, some elders have taken it on themselves to contain (incarcerate) other men when they are recognised to be a threat to the community due to their violence. In some places (including Las Canood, Boroma, Dadaab and Mogadishu) a number of testimonies revealed men living in fear of violence from other men, and experiencing extremes of personal insecurity, particularly arising from the threat of *anno* (feud) assassination or from armed groups such as Al-Shabaab.

Both younger and older men described how they seek a variety of means to avoid violence: physically moving away (moving to town, moving to another town, undertaking *tahriib* or otherwise seeking life in another country, physically escaping those trying to coerce them into violent activities such as piracy

137 See section 2.4 above.

138 See for example, Habiba Osman testimony. In Gardner, J. & El Bushra, J. (eds) 2004. The present study found little evidence of this, however.

139 See I.M. Lewis, study of northern Somali pastoral society, 'A Pastoral Democracy', (1961) on the division of men into warriors (*waranleh*) and men of religion (*wadaad*).

140 See, 'Spared from the Spear- Traditional Somali Behaviour in Warfare, (1997)..

or people-smuggling); changing status through marriage; voluntary disarmament when an opportunity for an alternative livelihood has been found or promoted; education and study; self-employment and business enterprise. Such examples strongly suggest a link between the availability of livelihoods and the reduction of violence.

3.2 The thwarting of gendered expectations and identities

Theories of masculinity and violence suggest that frustration and humiliation are frequent triggers for violence,¹⁴¹ that violence is the result of conflicting gender identities,¹⁴² or that conditions that limit the scope of men's practice of their gender identities lead to frustration, and from there to violence towards family members and/or oneself (the latter in the form of alcoholism, drug abuse, criminal behaviour and suicide, for example). Thus it is not gender identities as such which generate a propensity to violence, but rather the impossibility of living up to these identities.¹⁴³ Global economic processes such as liberalisation and proletarianisation operate to limit men's economic operations and mobility, disabling them from living up to the expectations their fathers raised them with, and generating 'thwarted entitlements' to the means of fulfilling their expected roles as providers.¹⁴⁴ These approaches tend to focus on forms of interpersonal and household-level violence such as domestic and sexual violence.¹⁴⁵

Our study has generated plentiful evidence of gender identities being thwarted as a result of circumstantial constraints: frustration and humiliation are the leitmotifs of respondents' accounts of their lives. However, the main response to this thwarting tends

to be of two types: resignation and resilience. There is little evidence from the study material that thwarting translates into direct physical violence, at either individual or group level.¹⁴⁶ Evidence of resignation or passive acceptance is provided by the widespread addiction to *khat*, and by men's frequent economic dependence on women. At the other end of the spectrum we find among some interviewees an extraordinary resilience or determination, such as encountered in tales of *tahriib*. Examples here tend to be mostly but not exclusively younger men. Often they have endured psychological and or physical violence from other men at different times, including their fathers in some cases.

What is suggested by the testimonies, however, is a deterioration in a number of features of family life. Study material suggests that high levels of divorce are occurring (we heard for example of young men having been married three or more times before the age of 30), as well as increased family break-up (dating from when the war reached Mogadishu as well as since then); an increase in polygamy; the rise in early marriages between male and female youth even when the male partner has no income; older men divorcing wives and marrying young girls (thought to be more submissive); the increasing desirability of marrying a diaspora wife (likely to be relatively well-off and to want to live independently); the rise (spoken of most frequently in Las Canood) of the 'gigolo', whose goal in marriage is to be a kept man in a sexual relationship and who repudiates the traditional responsibility of the paterfamilias. Evidence from elsewhere supports these trends: extra-marital sex, consensual or non-consensual (i.e. rape) is reportedly much more common than before 1991, and there is also documentation to suggest that some girls are married for short periods in order to sanction otherwise illicit sexual relationships – reportedly regardless of the consequences, such as children, that may result.

On fatherhood some significant inter-generational issues seem to be emerging. We have findings from men now in their 20s and early 30s who grew up

141 Gilligan op cit.

142 Henrietta Moore op cit.

143 Dolan 2002.

144 Kimmel, Michael. "Reducing Men's Violence: The Personal Meets the Political." In *Male Roles, Masculinities and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective*, edited by Ingebord Breines, R. W. Connell, and Ingrid Eide, 239 – 248. Paris, 2000; Silberschmidt op cit.

145 It is not possible here to go into the theoretical discussion of whether, and if so how, interpersonal and mass violence is causally linked.

146 This is by no means meant to imply any comment on levels of interpersonal violence, merely that we have been unable in this study to identify clear links between thwarted gender identities and violence.

separated from their fathers, who had abandoned or lived apart from their wives, but whose lives were nevertheless dictated by their absent fathers; we have findings on men in their late 40s and upwards not fulfilling their responsibilities as fathers as a result of the war and loss of self-esteem, and fathers of this age dependent on their children and wives for income.

While the findings do not offer evidence that 'thwarting' appears to have led significantly to violence in the Somali case, they do seem to support the notion that men's aspirations towards the virtues of *raganimo* are being blocked by circumstances, and that the sense of responsibility in relationships is suffering as a result.¹⁴⁷

3.3 The impact of the global world order

Feminist international relations studies have long sought to trace the impact of global military and economic hegemony on local gender relations, and have demonstrated its distorting effect on local economies and local economic relations.¹⁴⁸ A more recent body of work develops this analysis, looking specifically at the impact on men and masculinities. According to this approach, globalisation disempowers men economically, generating anxieties that have consequences for intimate relationships¹⁴⁹ and sweeps them up into militarism.¹⁵⁰ This strand of thinking also maintains that global and local trends affect each other and cannot be analysed separately.¹⁵¹

As suggested in section 2.3.6, there is a hypotheti-

147 During conceptualisation of the study it was hypothesised that 'thwarting' might lead to identification with fundamentalist Islam, including militant Islamic groups but evidence to support this hypothesis did not emerge. At the same time, it was not refuted and remains a subject to explore further. See also Roland Marchal, *Islamic Political Dynamics in the Somali Civil War*, on how identification with Islam can become a means to seek security in a highly anomic situation. In Alex De Waal (edit) *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, Hust and Company, 2004. Pg 123.

148 Enloe, Cynthia. *The Morning after: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*. University of California Press, 1993.

149 Greig, op cit; Silberschmidt op cit.

150 Daley op cit.

151 Connell 2005 op cit.

cal case for arguing that international attention to Somalia and its international linkages via the diaspora and via statebuilding and peacekeeping efforts may have introduced new, and for many people unwelcome, dimensions to the values and hegemonic practices attached to masculinity. The study did not specifically attempt to chart the links between the local and the global, and there is little direct evidence from respondents that would link international relations causally to the moral vacuum in leadership that they describe. However, respondents were acutely aware of the external world's view of Somalia, and in particular its focus on the War on Terror, resulting in the "degraded status of the Somali male worldwide". This has clear implications for any Somali wishing to travel outside the country. Worse, it has led to the prolonged presence of a foreign force on Somali soil (AMISOM), bringing a heightened sense of insecurity, and consequently of hopelessness and disempowerment, especially in the South Central region where AMISOM operates. Some respondents suggested that AMISOM troops had raped and kidnapped Somali women, a claim backed up by Human Rights Watch.¹⁵² This contributes further to the sense that men in this part of Somalia have failed in their primary duty to ensure the security of their communities; instead they are dependent on foreigners for this function, and foreigners who cannot be trusted to boot.

3.4 History and ethnicity

Ethnicity - and the manipulation of ethnic identity and ethnic discourse - has long been suggested as a possible explanation for recurrent genocides, for example in Central Africa.¹⁵³ Gender and ethnicity are clearly linked in as much as men and women may be targeted in different ways, as demonstrated by the examples of Bosnia and Rwanda.¹⁵⁴ In some docu-

152 Reference to: Human Rights Watch report, *The Power These Men Have Over Us: sexual exploitation and abuse by African Union Forces in Somalia*. September 2014. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2014/09/08/power-these-men-have-over-us>.

153 Lemarchand, Rene. *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009; Chretien, Jean-Paul, and Richard Banegas. *The Recurring Great Lakes Crisis: Identity, Violence and Power*. London: Hurst, 2006.

154 Jones op cit; Carpenter op cit.

mented instances, gender can be traced as a motivating factor towards violence.¹⁵⁵

Ioan Lewis, writing about ethnicity in Somalia, pointed out that Siad Barre mobilised Somali participation in the Ogaden war by emphasising the religious differences between Muslim Somalia and Christian Ethiopia, while his manipulation of clan identity led to his downfall as well as precipitating the years of conflict that followed.¹⁵⁶ Study material, as well as other sources, provides some evidence of clan identity being a basis for political violence. Yet there is little to suggest that gender identity was being directly utilised to stoke violence against other clans.

3.5 Greed, grievance, opportunity and impunity

The notion that conflict is generated by combinations of economic and political exclusion is entrenched in mainstream discourse around the causes of conflict. Debate hinges on whether political or economic causes are more salient¹⁵⁷ and under what conditions these factors do or do not become triggers.¹⁵⁸ Paul Collier emphasises that whatever the details of a specific context, the opportunity to engage in insurrection (meaning, essentially, access to sufficient material means to prosecute and maintain war) is a key variable determining whether a conflict turns violent or not. Most work in this orthodox conflict-analysis tradition overlooks gender variables, although some later work seeks to claim gender as a significant variable, at least in a society's internal resilience and capacity to avoid a return to violence

155 In Rwanda, for example, Radio Mille Collines mobilised Hutu extremists by referring to stereotypes of Tutsi and Hutu women (AVE-GA. Survey on Violence against Women in Rwanda. Kigali, 1999).

156 Ioan Lewis, 'Clan conflict and ethnicity in Somalia: humanitarian intervention in a stateless society' in David Turton, ed, *War and ethnicity: global connections and local violence*, 1997, Woodbridge, Suffolk, Boydell Press; pp 179 - 201.

157 Collier, Paul, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom. "On the Duration of Civil War." *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 01, 2004): 253–273. doi:10.1177/0022343304043769.

158 Stewart, Frances, Manuel Barrón, Graham Brown, and Marcia Hartwell. *Social Exclusion and Conflict : Analysis and Policy Implications*. Vol. 2005. Oxford, 2006.

after civil war:¹⁵⁹ the impact of gender difference however, appears to be highly variable, such that few generalisations are possible. An elaboration of this approach suggests that in specific contexts, where deprivation gives rise to violence and where institutions of control are weak, men can achieve what they want through violence without sanction.¹⁶⁰

This study's research findings do not provide evidence that deprivation in general is a direct cause of violence, although some respondents did describe situations where men felt obliged to use violence in order to survive. Research data does indeed suggest that social control mechanisms are in crisis; however it is not clear from respondents whether they think institutions of control are weak, or merely corrupted. Numerous respondents reported that institutions such as that of the elders have been corrupted, and that access to social capital and political power comes through access to resources (including weapons in some places, and wealth in general) rather than wisdom, leadership and oratory. Young men described how they may be under pressure to go along with more powerful clansmen, even when these are engaging in morally wrong and/or violent activities. Indeed, for some respondents, the institutions of control (i.e. institutions of the clan) are themselves violent and lack credibility. However, for many respondents, the corruption they identify around them is a matter for despair and disillusionment, not for abandoning restraint.

A subject that requires more detailed investigation is the differences between Somaliland, Puntland, and South Central Somalia. While law enforcement institutions are weak throughout, not all experience armed violence on a large scale or high levels of violence. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, the north and south of Somalia have followed divergent trajectories with very different outcomes. In Somaliland and Puntland, peace and

159 Buvinic, M., M. Das Gupta, U. Casabonne, and P. Verwimp. "Violent Conflict and Gender Inequality: An Overview." *The World Bank Research Observer* 28, no. 1 (November 29, 2012): 110–138. doi:10.1093/wbro/lks011.

160 Samset, Ingrid. "Sexual Violence: The Case of Eastern Congo." In *The Peace in between*, edited by Astri Suhrke and Mats Berdal. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.

stability have generally prevailed; in south central Somalia pockets of stability exist but the prevailing milieu is one of instability and the prolonged use of armed violence to assert control over populations and resources. Within each of these zones, different eras have also been more or less violent; for example, during 2006 when the Islamic Courts Union held Mogadishu, law and order was largely restored. Key variables relating to these differences over time and space remain to be identified.

3.6 Inclusion and gender as a contributory factor in peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is described as the process of strengthening a society's capacity to manage conflicts without recourse to violence or compromising the society's future.¹⁶¹ For many peacebuilding agencies, inclusivity and gender relations are key to building this capacity.¹⁶² There is some evidence of statistical correlations between key indicators of women's rights and an absence of civil and international war,¹⁶³ and some documented examples of projects that have reduced levels of post-conflict violence by promoting public debate about gender and ethnic relations.¹⁶⁴ However, although the theory of hegemonic masculinity asserts a link (though not a clearly defined one) between inequalities between men and violence,¹⁶⁵ there is less evidence of peace being assured through the active reduction of inequalities between different ranks of men.

What capacity for conflict management does Somali society have at present? This is far too large a question for this study to answer. However, some conclusions do emerge that may be relevant. First, as seen above, the classic model of the clan provided mechanisms for conflict handling, including the containment of violence where appropriate; this model continues to be evidenced in the present day in local peace negotiations in parts of the country that remain conflicted.¹⁶⁶ Second, on the other hand, if equality as a principle of social organisation is indeed a key component of peace, it remains far from reality in Somalia. While inequalities between men and women may be stark, we have seen how further inequalities between men are also key shapers of many people's lives (men and women). Inequalities described by respondents were first and foremost those between adult/elder and young men, but also include those between clans, between main clans and minorities, between the able-bodied and those with disabilities (including mental illnesses), between 'remaining' Somalis and the diaspora, and between those in settled locations in Somalia and those internally displaced.¹⁶⁷ It is also clear that key to these differences is access to economic resources and to the skills and links that provide that access. The overriding question for the international community must be: what strategies are likely to be most effective in enhancing men's access to resources, especially among those most disadvantaged, and in reducing competition for political and economic advantage?

161 International Alert. Programming Framework for International Alert, 2009.

162 See websites of peacebuilding organisations such as International Alert (<http://international-alert.org/>) and SaferWorld (<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/>) accessed 26th October 2014.

163 Caprioli, Mary. "Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict." *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (2005): 161–178; Caprioli, Mary. "Gendered Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 1 (2000): 51–68; Stone, Lauren. "Can Women Make the World More Peaceful?" *The Guardian*, August 11, 2014.

164 Harris, Colette. The Importance of Post-Conflict Socio-Cultural Community Education Programmes: A Case Study from Northern Uganda, 2012; Kandirikirira, Nikki. "Deconstructing Domination: Gender Disempowerment and the Legacy of Colonialism and Apartheid in Omaheke, Namibia." In *Masculinities Matter: Men, Gender and Development*, edited by F. Cleaver, 112–137. London & New York: Zed Books, 2002.

165 Connell, R. W. *Masculinities*. Polity Press, 1995.

166 For information on local Somali peace processes see: Bradbury, M (2009), and Bradbury, M. and Healy, S. "Whose Peace is it Anyway? Connecting Somali and International Peacemaking."

167 There may be other forms of inequality between men – on grounds of sexuality for example – which are too deeply buried to have been even mentioned.

4. Conclusions and policy implications

The overall aim of the IWM study is to deepen knowledge and understanding of the enduring effects of war and violent conflict on Somali males, and the consequences for Somali society. Exploring the perspectives and experiences of ordinary men, and women, it seeks to shed light on what it is like to be male in Somali society today, the challenges men face in trying to uphold male gender roles and responsibilities and how men and boys' fates and opportunities are shaped by their gender identity, as well as their other identity markers such as clan, class, age, and social and marital status. As the inception phase findings show, these are critical issues for Somalis, both men and women, and therefore important for international and national policy makers and practitioners to understand and take on board. Although still tentative, our analysis suggests the issues that have emerged have implications for a wide-range of interventions including: peace-building, state-building, humanitarian response, resilience programming, stabilisation, reconstruction and social development dimensions of post-conflict recovery.

In analysing and interpreting the findings two contextual considerations have emerged, in particular. One is that the war has taken different forms and conflicts have occurred over different timescales in different regions. The other is that the intensity and form that the impacts of the war and state collapse have had vary along age, class, ethnicity, as well gender lines. And it is necessary to be aware of the full range of experiences and contexts before reaching firm conclusions. What follows here are some tentative policy implications and conclusions.

Conclusions

Perhaps the most striking observation arising from the fieldwork is that 'the war' in Somalia, i.e. the various manifestations of mass violence from around 1988 onwards, is intricately linked to changes in the

nature of the state. Models of masculinity, and the range of options open to men for actualising these models, have been affected not only by the war itself but also, and perhaps even more profoundly, by these changes to the state. Under the Siad Barre regime, the government was the major employer, providing not only salaries but other financial benefits, as well as status and respect to its employees. Many more men than women were employed by the state. State employees gained income and respect from their employment and, especially in the case of senior government figures, self-respect from being in a position of influence. Although by the end of the regime salaries had sunk to low levels, the loss of jobs and positions after 1991 was a personal catastrophe for many men, from which many have not recovered.

In the urban setting, employment is an important signifier of status for men. However, for many, menial or manual jobs and jobs associated with women's work are not considered acceptable. Some respondents in our study stressed that men consider themselves unable to take on such work. Yet in some cases men have reached such levels of desperation that they have started to undertake occupations – such as shoemaking – normally reserved for outcast groups, something they would never have countenanced in the past. Somali society is still transitioning from a situation in which the state underwrote the possibilities of men attaining ideals of manhood to one where the prevailing model of manhood is largely unachievable, and where there is little space for gender relations, roles and expectations to be re-considered and re-negotiated.

Moreover, although security in the country as a whole deteriorated rapidly after 1988, for most of the Barre regime the state was able to guarantee some level of law and order most of the time. Currently, however, physical security for both men and

women is extremely low. Testimonies and focus groups made it clear that security is sometimes more of a problem for men than for women: we heard of men fearing for their lives in Las Canood and Sool, Mogadishu, Baidoa and Dadaab - for somewhat different reasons perhaps, but throughout as a result of the rule of law being either lacking or unable to protect them. Lack of security for men has a double impact, a direct impact on themselves and an indirect impact on their sense of self as they are unable to provide protection for those family members for whom they are responsible.

Men's behaviour and sense of manhood is shaped by their socialisation into a world of expectations that in today's context are beyond the reach of the majority (even though a small number have profited financially and in terms of power and influence). And yet, although individually men may have been disempowered (at family level) by the war, collectively male dominance and patriarchy are sustained and reinforced, now not through the state but through the institutions of the clan and religion. In the process, gendered hegemonies are re-ordered, with new opportunities for economic or political power opening up for those in a position to take them.

A key finding of the IWM research, which can hardly be stressed enough, is that the majority of men find themselves dispensable, with no meaningful role and no stake in the future. For men (unlike for women, for whom gender transformation is actively being canvassed by the international community) there is no space, other than reformist Islam, to discuss the implications, hence few alternative trajectories for men to achieve manhood.

Policy implications

Key issues emerging from the study that could have implications for state-building and other policies (order does not indicate priority):

- i. **Conceptualisation of the Somali male:** findings clearly show that the international community's commonly-held stereotypes of Somali men (as inherently violent, prone to extremism, a threat to Western security interests and to their own society) risk missing opportunities to engage with Somali dynamics through a more

nuanced and grounded view of men and leadership, social norms and moral expectations.

For example, respondents provide insight into the importance of the normative model of masculinity, encapsulated in the concept of *raganimo*. *Raganimo* offers men a highly exacting code, detailed for all the different stages of a man's life but essentially comprising key values of responsibility, self-discipline, courage, legal and cultural acumen and generosity. These values remain the measure of Somali men today, being reproduced from older to younger generations, by men and women, educated and illiterate, urban and rural dwellers. That they are still the dominant ideas of what ideal men should demonstrate suggests they represent a kind of moral compass – a valuable reference point also for policy makers and practitioners, and a resource for peacebuilding and reconstruction in particular.

- ii. **Power relations and inequalities between men:** findings indicate the war and state collapse has expanded unequal power relations between men, creating winners and losers on a wide scale, and affecting men far beyond the traditionally marginalised groups. In the discourse of international policy and practice there is a persistent assumption that being male equals being powerful, and in the context of Somalia that all men stand to benefit from their clan membership. In fact, however, whilst the findings do not challenge the basic, structural and cultural inequality between men and women in Somalia, what they show is that by no means are all men able to take advantage of the 'patriarchal bargain' or by extension, share equal benefits from clan membership. What the study finds is that power inequalities between men are significant.

The consequences of this finding need further research. Findings so far evidence: individual and collective vulnerability to exploitation, particularly of younger men by older men; mental breakdown and ill-health as major problems affecting individuals, families and communities; grievance over lost status and assets; vulner-

ability of family members to violence, including gender-based violence; impoverishment of individuals and family; dependency on wife and children for income. Thus male inequalities have policy implications, not least in relation to stabilisation, reconciliation, the rule of law and building accountable governance structures.

- iii. **Changes in the nature of clan authority and leadership:** findings show that since 1991 in the absence of the state men have depended on their kinship connections i.e. clan, for survival, particularly for welfare support and income. This dependency ensures the social and political power and authority of those within the clan who have wealth and/or control material and financial resources – either from positions within government or, as potential spoilers outside it. At the same time, according to respondents, because this elevated status is based on wealth rather than the normative and still socially valued attributes of clan leadership such as sagacity, mediation and governance skills, in their eyes it devalues the credibility and nature of actual clan authority. Any accountability is between the individual whose status has been elevated and his close kinsmen who promoted him and expect to gain the most.

The message coming clearly from the respondents is that this new form of hegemony is not something they welcome or consider to be true to their identities as Somalis. Some saw its growth, manifest in the fission of clan lineages into smaller branches and the subsequent proliferation of ‘titled elders’, to be linked to the international community’s preoccupation and investment in rebuilding a centralised state rather than the development of more localised forms of governance and authority. Not surprising perhaps for losers in this configuration ‘clan’ as the defining framework for governance has outlived its validity, and for some Islam emerges as a more inclusive option.

- iv. **Masculinities and Islam:** Until recently, the international community has underplayed the emerging importance of Islam as an organising force in Somalia, focussing instead on clan. This

study has evidenced the centrality of clan for post-1991 masculinities and state-building but it has also identified the emergence of reformist Islamist movements as offering an alternative masculinities discourse and ideology. This seems a critical policy-related issue and will be further investigated through the main study.

- v. **Male vulnerabilities:** evidence from the study points to a wide range of causes and sites of male vulnerability, each having implications for the security and well-being of women and girls as well as men and boys. The political economy is currently such that it provides incentives for the powerful to exploit male vulnerabilities where they exist, impacting both on less powerful men and on their womenfolk. Understanding the different Somali male experiences of vulnerability may help Somalis and international actors intervening in the country to identify targets for support and their needs in a more nuanced and accurate way, designing more effective programmes and policies.
- vi. **Youth dilemmas:** with state collapse ‘youth’ have been re-assigned a subordinate position in the male hierarchy characterised by delayed adulthood, marginalisation from political processes and a prolonged period during which as juniors in the clan hierarchy they are expected to comply with their older clansmen’s instructions. Unsurprisingly perhaps, findings indicate youth’s experience of clan membership and ‘voluntary’ compliance may differ in some significant ways from that of older men, yet there is little opportunity for dialogue around these different perspectives. These youth-specific experiences have important policy implications.

Conversations with youth respondents reveal ‘double bind’ type experiences are common and sources of stress and frustration, and may lead to high-risk-taking decisions. For example, all youth spoke with keen awareness of the vital importance of acting in ways that show they are ‘close to their clan’ i.e. through demonstration of loyalty and compliance. At the same time, many expressed their strong dislike of their older clansmen’s moral corruption but felt they had

no options but to go along with it if they wanted to succeed in life. (Older men too may well experience the same dilemma but did not describe it to the researchers). For youth respondents, there are no easy solutions to their situation: empower oneself through acquiring wealth, legally or illegally; leave the country i.e. undertake *tahriib*; or join an Islamist group. A key strategy for peacebuilding interventions would thus be to open up opportunities for young men and women to articulate and meet their aspirations.

vii. Men's status and family resilience: The research findings to date have started to fill a gap in our understanding of gender in the Somali context, and invite us to look at the whole family as a unit and how the war has affected it rather than just one element – usually women and girls. The relationship between men and women, both at a household and at a societal level, is in the process of shifting; study findings suggest the international community should consider carefully how best it can support the changes that are taking place. There is no evidence that the patriarchal ideology underpinning Somali society has been substantially damaged by the war or state collapse. Findings show marriage and fatherhood remain central to manhood and status within the clan; and men are expected to have overall responsibility for the integrity and welfare of the family and pay its clan contributions as required. Significant numbers of men are unable or failing in this regard; many exist in the household as dependents of their wives and older children. However, in the view of women respondents, their menfolks' status impacts on them and their children as it determines the social and political capital, and hence welfare and security, enjoyed by the whole family.

Multiple-level implications include: household resilience, women and children's vulnerability to forms of gender based violence, including SGBV, household poverty and vulnerability to poverty; women's empowerment; children's access to education, especially for girls.

viii. Household access to economic resources: access to economic resources is a key survival

issue for the country as a whole. The inability to access economic resources such as employment or other sources of livelihood has huge implications for relationships between men and women, young and old. It is also a key driver of high risk-taking decisions, by men and women, and presumably, contributes to de-stabilisation and insecurity. A key policy question must be: what strategies are likely to be most effective in enhancing access to resources for households, including men, women and children, especially among those most disadvantaged?

ix. Gender policy formulation and communication: there are clearly improvements to be made in the way gender policy towards Somalia is developed and communicated. Findings indicate 'gender' is almost always considered synonymous with women and girls. This study does not refute the primacy of women and children in terms of assistance needs. However, it does indicate that husbands and fathers are of critical importance to family well-being, and that their effectiveness is contingent on their own well-being (see above). The international community and national policy makers too need to demonstrate interest in understanding and exploring this further. Other and related key issues raised by this research include the insecurities and vulnerabilities faced by men, men's relationships with their clan, male inequalities and powerlessness, and the relational nature of male and female gender roles and responsibilities, as a basis for improved dialogue and hence improved programming.

Future evolutions

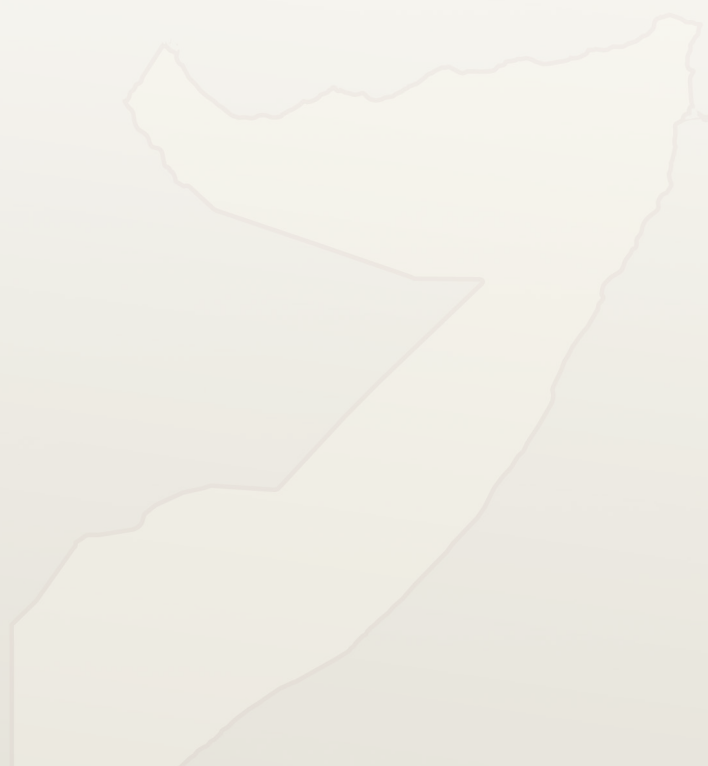
How might this evolve in the future? Changes in women's economic and decision-making roles are key to the current evolutions. Although some older men harbour the expectation that when peace prevails men will get back to work and women return to their traditional roles in the home, many younger men (to some extent influenced by diaspora Somalis), with the exception of those whose views align with reformist Islamist ideology, have little or no expectation that this will happen and in general welcome the change. While some believe that women's

new-found role is unlikely to shake the foundations of men's overall responsibility, and while sharing of domestic tasks is only happening in a minority of households, young men on the whole value women who earn an income and accept that "*transition of gender roles has started ... a new culture is coming*".

Young men and women are indeed key to the future evolution of Somalia. At present the outlook

for many is bleak indeed, with prospects of education, employment, and accession to the accomplishments of adulthood largely blocked, both by the limitations of the context and by the unwillingness of their elders to share power. The large number of young Somalis undertaking the arduous journey to Europe and elsewhere, in search of work and a better life, is testimony to the impoverishment and frustration they face.

ANNEXES



Annex 1

Methodology and process

Fieldwork has been conducted by a team of experienced Somali researchers plus trainee researchers who are Somali graduates, (seven men and three women in total), in nine locations spanning south central Somalia, Puntland, Somaliland, and Kenya.

Somaliland	Hargeisa
	Boroma
	Erigavo (in Somaliland / Puntland disputed zone)
	Las Canood (in Somaliland / Puntland disputed zone)
Puntland	Garowe
South Central Somalia	Mogadishu
	Baidoa
Kenya	Dadaab refugee camps (Hagadere, Ifo, Dagahaley)
	Eastleigh (Nairobi)

The three Somali territories and the refugee and diaspora communities in Kenya have provided a diverse spectrum of environments: on-going armed conflict with international dimensions (south central Somalia), 'recovered areas' dependent on clan-based security, areas of peace and stability maintained in a weak state context (Somaliland and Puntland), refugee camps (northern Kenya) and diaspora communities (Nairobi).

The inception phase findings have been generated from consultation with over 400 men and 90 women using the following research methodologies:

- **Focus group discussions (29):** in each location FGD were held, individually with older men, younger men and a validation group of mixed age group women, in order to identify and map out the key issues that should be explored through the study and the relevant target groups.
- **Semi-structured interviews (32):** following up on specific issues raised during the focus group discussions, constructing a historical time-line for each location and helping to identify respondents for life-story (testimony) collection.
- **Life-story (testimony) collection (47):** for each location the researchers sought older and younger men, urban and rural, majority and minority clan willing to share their life-stories. Each life-story was digitally recorded, transcribed and translated into English.
- **Critical thinking events (2):** the study partnered with Hargeisa University and Puntland State University to convene two critical thinking events, one in Hargeisa, Somaliland and one in Garowe, Puntland.

The Respondents – the categories and types of men consulted

Categories of Men	Young men (15 – 35 years)	Older men
Urban (the majority of respondents)	Former members of armed groups	Traditional elders and senior elders
Rural	Herders	Former members of Somali public sector, civil service, military
IDPs and refugees	Returned <i>tahriib</i> migrants	Ex-combatants (SNM)
Minority group members	Students (secondary school and university)	Businessmen
Majority clan members		Civil society activists
Employed and unemployed		Former professionals (teachers, health service, vets etc)
Literate and illiterate		
Religious leaders		
Husbands, fathers, sons		
Married and unmarried		

Consultations with Women

In each location the study held a FGD with women. This was partly to validate the findings from the other FGDs and to hear women’s perspectives in their own right. The women consulted were drawn from the following groups: educated and uneducated, professional, self-employed and traditional women; youth, adult, older women; religious leaders; minority and majority clans; civil society activists and local and national government representatives.

Validation of the Findings

Several meetings to present and discuss the research findings were held:

- Validation event (1): Nairobi with Somali diaspora
- Validation event (2): Hargeisa with key male stakeholders
- Validation event (3): Mogadishu with men and women (pending)
- Validation event (4) Hargeisa with women representatives

Research Constraints

Due to security constraints and associated costs, research in south central Somalia and Puntland covered fewer locations than in Somaliland. This will be rectified in the main study and already a follow on visit has been made to Baidoa.

Al Shabaab-related insecurity in Dadaab meant focus group participants did not feel able to speak as freely as they would have liked for fear of retaliation and revenge attacks. The men consulted were keen to talk but visibly nervous.

We did not hear much about religion in general, reportedly because in the current climate people are worried about sharing their views and experiences in relation to fundamentalism and Al Shabaab. This is an area the main study will seek to explore in more depth.

Ten to twelve days were spent in each location which proved sufficient time to complete planned activities but insufficient time to process, analyse and follow up findings as they were generated.

Annex 2

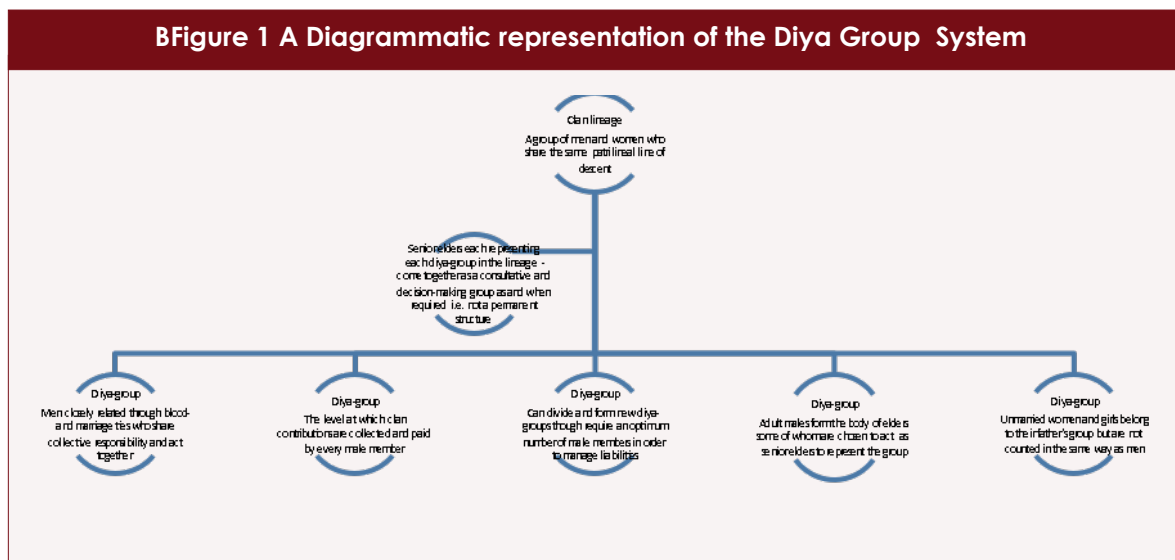
Diya Groups and Customary Law

Diya-paying groups

The *diya*-group is the collective social institution that has most day-to-day relevance for men for it is at this level that collective action takes place and collective accountability is realised. It is also the level at which the political and social implications of clan membership are most clearly defined and collective security derived. A single group may comprise several hundred families who are united through genealogy and marriage ties and who are obliged to protect one another and to pay and receive blood compensation (*diya*) for murder and other injuries. Traditionally *diya* is paid in livestock [see Table 1 in Annex 3 below]; the threat of losing livestock to *diya* payments acts as a deterrent against violence and reinforces collective responsibility.

Diya payment was made illegal during the 1970s in Siad Barre’s attempt to eradicate clanism. State administered accident and death insurance was introduced instead, though as the state structure had little reach into the remote rural areas the customary laws and *diya* system endured.¹⁶⁸

Figure 1 below gives an annotated diagrammatic representation of the *diya* group system. The diagram takes a single clan lineage as an example. Depending on its size, each clan family comprises a number of main clan lineages. As the male population grows so too do the lineages and over time they divide into sub-lineages. In this way a main lineage will grow with branches of sub-lineages, some stronger and some weaker, depending on the number of men they comprise. Thus the basis of a lineage’s potential strength and power is numerical - and what is counted is males. Because they can call on more kinsmen the larger branches are likely to be stronger and more powerful than the smaller ones. This issue of numerical inequality has political and social implications.



168 Sources: Bradbury ibid.

Within some clans and sub-clans, a man's obligations to his *diya* group and clan depend on his marital status. For example in the west of Somaliland unmarried men are not required to pay *diya*, but, crucially, they also do not receive it. In the east all men, regardless of marital status are required to pay. A man who does not give his share when required will be socially isolated and will not receive any *diya* contribution or other types of clan support when his own needs arise. It is not only the man who suffers in these situations but his wife and children too.

Customary law or *xeer*

“Kinship ties alone are insufficient to achieve social cohesion and cooperation. This requires rules of behaviour and agreements between groups that define collective rights and responsibilities and further common interests. These rights and obligations are laid down in unwritten agreements or contracts between clans, known as *xeer*, that are transmitted orally through generations. *Xeer* exist at different levels of lineage segmentation. Collectively they form a repository of customary law (*xeer somali*) that defines basic social norms and values. Together the collective councils of elders, the office of the titled lineage heads and the *xeer* provide institutional mechanisms for managing turbulent change and conflict.” (Bradbury 2008)

Annex 3

Table detailing the most common clan payments and contributions expected from men

Table 1. The most common clan payments and contributions expected from men			
Contribution	Explanation	Type	Obligation
Qaadhaan (northern regions) Qaaraan (southern Somalia)	General name for all the contributions men pay to the clan and community	In kind or in cash	It can be mandatory or not
Shaxaad	'Small support' given to individual men from your clan or community e.g. for Qat, transport, accommodation, food etc.	In cash	Not obligatory
Diya	'Blood money' collected to pay compensation for death, injury, defamation, calculate in numbers of camels. [see above for details]	Mostly in cash; can be in kind	Obligatory
Siyaaro	Given to the clan or community when they gather to remember one of their great ancestors.	In kind or in cash	Obligatory
Aroos	Given by men to newlyweds or those who want to marry.	In kind or in cash	Not obligatory
Allabari (common in the north but not the south)	Given (by men and women) while community or a clan are making their common prayers to prevent evil happenings or ask for rain, etc. Other forms of these contributions are (xirsi xir, shaadali, etc).	In kind or in cash	Not obligatory
Tacsi	Given by men at the deaths of a members of a clan to cover funeral costs and support the family of the deceased.	Mostly in cash	Mostly obligatory
Guus (specific to agricultural communities in the west of Somaliland)	Support farmers give each other at harvest time. Can also be the support given to a family when they are erecting fencing around their houses.	Usually labour	Not obligatory
Hiil/taageero dagaal	The material and non-material contribution made by men (and by women) to their clans in support of their clan during active wars with other clans.	In kind or in cash	Mostly obligatory
Shirarka	Contributions made by the clan members to hold common clan meetings and big gatherings.	In kind or in cash	Not obligatory
Contributions to elections, education, water points, mosques	Nowadays men are required to pay to the common funds and accounts created by clans for specific purposes such as schools, fees of teachers, health, roads, water points, mosques, or in Somaliland and Puntland to support political candidates in elections		

Source: table compiled by Said Mohamed Dahir, study team researcher.

Annex 4

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