

814 8098



WAR-TORN SOCIETIES PROJECT



UNITED NATIONS RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

Library

IRC International Water
and Sanitation Centre
Tel.: +31 70 30 889 80
Fax: +31 70 35 899 64

WAR-TORN SOCIETIES PROJECT NORTHEAST SOMALIA REGIONAL REPORTS

North Mudug Region

February 1998

UNRISD Palais des Nations 1211 Geneva 10 Switzerland Tel +41 (22) 788 86 45 Fax +41 814 - 50 98 - 14772

World Wide Web Site: <http://www.unrisd.org/wsp/>

PREFACE

In January 1997, the War-torn Societies Project (WSP) started its interactive research programme for Somalia in the geo-political entity of Northeastern Somalia -grouping the three regions of Bari, Nugaal, and North Mudug.

A researcher was stationed in each regional capital (Gaalka'yo, Boosaaso and Garoowe) both to facilitate more participatory consultative work with communities at the grassroots level and to assist the nascent administrations in defining their developmental hurdles. Research work started with informal (mostly one to one) consultation with members of the local administrations (regional/district), the traditional and titled community elders, local NGOs, businessmen, intellectuals, women's groups, the political leadership and other concerned individuals. International NGOs, UN and other Agencies operating in each region were also consulted.

On the basis of these discussions, three descriptive and analytical "Regional Notes", addressing critical reconstruction issues, were presented in a draft form in late 1997 to internal and external actors in the North East, and to representatives of donor and aid agencies in Nairobi. Consultations then took place in all three regions with selected representatives of these groups, with the aim of soliciting their comments, corrections and suggestions to the content of the Notes. Two Regional Project Group meetings in Gaalka'yo and Boosaaso each, and three in Garoowe, were held. Participation was very high and the team of researchers received many valuable comments and corrections to the draft Notes. The comments and suggestions coming from these discussions as well as comments from development officers working with aid agencies have now been incorporated into the final Regional Notes, presented here.

In view of the numerous common themes running through the Regional Notes, the findings have been synthesized in a single Zonal Note for the whole Northeast. This document is meant to present the most compelling challenges that face Northeast in the pursuit of meaningful political, social and economic rebuilding. It is also intended to highlight the elements that unit this zone in a single unit, and to suggest - in many different ways - to the way forward.

Dr. Ahmed Yusuf Farah, Research Associate
Adam Jama Bihi, Research Co-ordinator, NE Somalia
Ahmed Abbas Ahmed, Researcher, Bari
Abdulgaffar Haji M. Abdulle, Researcher, Nugaal
Abdissalam Ali Farah, Researcher, North Mudug

February 1998.

LIBRARY IRC
PO Box 93190, 2509 AD THE HAGUE
Tel.: +31 70 30 689 80
Fax: +31 70 35 899 64
BARCODE: 1 4 7 7 2
I.O: 814 5098



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| I. NORTH MUDUG REGION PROFILE | 3 |
| The Land and its People | 3 |
| <i>Geographical and climatic characteristics</i> | 3 |
| <i>Land and Population</i> | 4 |
| II. LEGACY OF THE CONFLICT | 4 |
| 1. Armed Struggles from 1977 to 1993 | 4 |
| <i>The Al-Itixaad bid to take power</i> | 5 |
| 2. Present Identity and Political Allegiances | 6 |
| 3. The Region's Economy and Infrastructure | 7 |
| 4. Social Services | 8 |
| III. REBUILDING NORTH MUDUG REGION | 9 |
| 1. Political Rebuilding | 9 |
| <i>Formation of a regional structure</i> | 10 |
| <i>The new administration</i> | 11 |
| <i>Main constraints</i> | 12 |
| 2. Economic Rebuilding | 13 |
| <i>Factors that inhibit economic growth</i> | 14 |
| <i>Initiatives of the business community</i> | 15 |
| 3. Social Rebuilding | 16 |
| <i>Health</i> | 16 |
| <i>Education</i> | 17 |
| <i>The role of women in society</i> | 18 |
| <i>Civic organizations</i> | 19 |
| 4. Security | 20 |
| <i>The police</i> | 21 |
| <i>Potential sources of insecurity and preventive efforts</i> | 21 |
| <i>Presence of landmines</i> | 21 |
| 5. Conflict and Conflict Resolution | 22 |
| IV. RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT | 23 |
| THE CHALLENGE | 27 |



INTRODUCTION

The War-torn Societies Project (WSP) was initiated in 1994, by the joint efforts of two research bodies based in Geneva, Switzerland: the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and the Programme for Strategic and International Security Studies (PSIS) of the Graduate Institute of International Studies. The War-torn Societies Project is neither an implementing agency nor an aid co-ordinating mechanism. It is a project that aims to assist the international donor community, the UN and international organisations, NGOs and local authorities and organisations to understand and respond better to the complex challenges of post-conflict rebuilding. The project is supported by nearly 30 multi- and bi-lateral agencies, organisations and governments, who participate in its activities at the international or country levels.

The War-torn Societies Project (WSP) is a field-oriented project currently operational in a number of post-conflict situations where, after years of civil conflict, peace has been reached and needs to be consolidated. These societies which have recently emerged from a protracted civil conflict include: Eritrea (although not in the classic sense), Mozambique, Guatemala and Somalia. Somalia was the latest to join the list and WSP initiated its activities there in January 1997.

Unlike other WSP countries, however, Somalia remains without an internationally-recognised national government, an effective peace agreement, or even a forum for inclusive dialogue. Collapse of the Somali state has left the national scene confused and fragmented, with competing and often contradicting political factions, economic and religious interest groups, clan elders and community leaders all competing for the leadership of the dismembered Somali society. Despite this, however, people in some parts of former Somalia have begun to emerge from the dislocation and trauma of conflict to rebuild their shattered lives. The North-eastern Zone of Somalia was the first part of the former Somali Republic to meet the preconditions for WSP action.

In the three regions of Northeast Somalia (NES) - North Mudug, Nugaal, Bari - the security situation is relatively stable and some rudimentary political and administrative structures have been put in place, while Boosaaso port has the potential to provide a solid base for the vital import and export economy. The Mudug Peace Agreement signed in Muqdisho in June 1993 by the respective clan elders and prominent political personalities of the three local factions of SSDF (Majerteen/Darood), SNDU (Leelkase and Awrtable/Darood) and USC-SNA (Habar Gidir/Hawiye) paved the way, not only for the return of the former residents of Gaalka'yo, but also the arrival of thousands of internally displaced Somalis from all parts of the country.

Originally the project was designed to embrace the southern part of Mudug, the traditional territory of USC-SNA political faction. However, due to an unexpected increase in local tensions and related security concerns, WSP decided to limit its research activity to North Mudug, controlled by the alliance of SSDF/SNDU factions, the latter being part of the larger Northeast Somalia zone, and the region where most of the war-time clan-clashes had been concentrated. Since WSP Somalia's primary aim was to help consolidate the fragile peace agreement signed there between the warring parties and to facilitate the rebuilding process of this still polarised and war-ravaged region, the frustration of this important objective offered an early indication of the constraints WSP is likely to face as the Somalia programme progresses.



WSP is currently operational only in Northeast Somalia. As conditions elsewhere permit, WSP will expand to other zones and may ultimately contribute to the establishment of consultation networks at inter-regional and, possibly, national levels amongst the various project sites. Overall, the project hopes to promote a better understanding of post-conflict recovery in a country without a central government. To Somalis, the project represents an opportunity to explore alternative ways to the highly centralised and authoritarian systems that constituted the former Somali Republic. To external actors and donor countries the project will provide a window on social, economic and political dynamics at a regional level, with which many are unfamiliar and uncomfortable.

WSP Somalia will strive to bring together all internal and external actors present in the regions and to set realistic priorities and achievable goals through consensus in their reconstruction efforts on behalf of stakeholders of NES. Like other parts of Somalia, this entails the resuscitation and/or strengthening of vital institutions and government structures that can enable the people to pursue a better life.

Like Eritrea, Guatemala and Mozambique, WSP-Somalia uses interactive and participatory methodology. While the core of the project is the research team, its real base and strength is the Regional and Zonal Project Groups. The present Regional Notes will attempt to map out and analyse the current state of the region and shed light on the challenging political, economic and social agendas that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

The results of this analysis will be presented to the first Regional Project Group meetings scheduled to take place in the regions of the Northeast in January 1998, and will serve as the basis for discussion and exchange of ideas on possible courses of action. Then, through consensus, the main actors of the three regions will select, with the help of WSP researchers, the more pressing and priority areas (Entry Points) to be investigated in depth during the main, interactive research phase. Criteria for the selection of a particular issue as an Entry Point are: i) that both external and internal actors at different levels are involved in addressing the problem area, and ii) that it is likely that the outcome would be improved if the actors concerned were able to work in a more integrated and better co-ordinated manner.



NORTH MUDUG REGIONAL NOTE

Prepared by Abdissalam Ali Farah
Regional Researcher

I. NORTH MUDUG REGION PROFILE

The Land and its People

Geographical and climatic characteristics

Geographically, Mudug lies at the centre of Somalia, with Nugaal bordering it to the north, Galguduud region to the south, the Indian Ocean to the east and the Somali-inhabited Ethiopian Somali National Regional State (ESNRS) to the west. Gaalka'yo the regional capital, is the most important commercial centre of central Somalia and is situated halfway between Muqdisho and Boosaaso. Mudug has a coastline of some 100 km, giving it access to some of the richest fishing grounds in the world.

Mudug is a semi-arid region, with a maximum annual rainfall of 300 mm in the wetter areas. There are no perennial sources of water and droughts caused by the total absence or scarcity of rainfall are recurrent.

North Mudug is divided into four main topographical zones:

- The valleys (mainly Mudug Valley and Golol Valley), which has good grazing land and dwarf shrubs;
- Hawd, the north-eastern woodland, with tall trees and bush;
- Adduun, the central and southern and western plateau, with shrubs, best known for its bountiful grazing and scarcity of water sources.
- Deex, constituting the coastal plains along the Indian Ocean with its distinct climate, rainfall and very short grass and almost total absence of trees.

All four ecological zones are reasonably suitable for livestock production, in spite of the sparse vegetation (mostly *acacia* & *commiphora*).

Low and erratic rainfall, high evaporation and soil salinity are typical of the North Mudug region, rendering crop production marginal. It is more suited to traditional animal husbandry that optimises seasonal migration between water points during the dry seasons and grazing areas during the wet seasons.

The year is divided into two dry and two rainy seasons: *gu'* (April to June) is the main rainy season and *dayr* (September to November) being the secondary one. The "*Deex*", is also known for its "*xays*" rains during the dry season following the *dayr* rains. Annual precipitation in the region is around 300 mm with an evaporation rate of about ten times the precipitation rate. Apart from rainfall, the main sources



of water are shallow wells, deep underground bore-holes, and communal/ private catchments (dug-in underground cemented water tanks known as *berked*).

North East Somalia - land and population

Generally there are no agreed upon national demographic data for Somalia. A population census was carried out in 1975. That census today must serve as a basis for any intelligent approximation (approximation being the right word) of the figures for the population of Somalia today. Taking the three regions of Bari, Mudug and Nugaal together, total population was 561,016 in 1975, which in 11 years increased to 645,680 people by the year 1986. From this base, and assuming similar percentage increase from 1986 to 1997, and adding on top an empirical 25% increase in population due to high immigration rate we conclude that a working figure for the population of North East Somalia at end of 1997, should be in the region of 845,875 people, with a land mass of 186,385 km² representing approximately 30% of Somali territory of 630,000 km². Although not, definitive, these figures may serve as a rough point of reference.

While the other two regions of the Northeast are dominated by Majerteen sub-clans, Mudug is shared by clans belonging to two different families: the southern part of Mudug is inhabited by the Habar Gidir of the Hawiye family, while the Majerteen and other allied Darood clans live in the northern part of the region.

II. LEGACY OF THE CONFLICT

1. Armed Struggles from 1977 to 1993

The first armed opposition to the Siyaad Barre regime started under the leadership of disillusioned military officers and educated civilians, mainly from the Northeast, and especially Mudug. From 1978 up until the outbreak of full-blown civil war, Mudug remained, for all intents and purposes, a theatre of war. The regime meted out brutal reprisals against the civilian population in retaliation for their sympathy and support to the armed insurrection. The fighting between government forces and Ethiopian-based SSDF guerrilla army, mainly affecting the border areas, destabilised the region and forced the local people continually to move across the border and within the region.

Gaalka'yo was affected by the Ethiopian-Somali war of 1977-1978 more than any other town in Somalia, except perhaps Hargeysa. Both became centres of the war effort on the Somali side and the launching-pads of Somali military operations. Consequently both suffered heavily from the air-bombardments of the Ethiopian air force and later from allied Russian/Cuban air-strikes.

The civil war in Mudug started in 1985, some time before the rest of the country was engulfed in social upheaval. This fighting was mostly instigated by the military dictatorship which exploited the traditional conflict between rival clans over the control of scarce grazing and water resources. In the view of the Darood, another cause of the conflict is the continued attempts by the Sa'ad (the Hawiye sub-sub-clan in Mudug) to extend their control to the city of Gaalka'yo and surrounding areas. The Hawiye of course advance a contradictory view of the causes of conflict, highlighting one of the most divisive and dangerous issues between the two communities. As a result of these factors, Gaalka'yo witnessed some of the most fierce strife of the Somali civil war. The city twice changed hands, and as a consequence, was severely devastated. It remained practically deserted and a ghost city from February 1991 to June 1993. During that period it was ransacked and stripped bare by successive marauding free-lance bandits



(collectively known as Jirri, Mooriyaaan and Dayday in the vernacular of the Northeast, Southern Somalia, and Somaliland respectively) and armed militia loosely associated with rival clans.

The fighting in Mudug created the first, of many, waves of displacement as early as 1979. Whole families and villages fled their habitual areas of residence to escape persecution in the hands of the regime who retaliated against the civilian population for the establishment of the first armed opposition - SSDF - to the regime. Businessmen, prominent personalities and civil servants, moved away from Gaalka'yo and other major settlement towns to avoid harassment, arrest and torture. The government vigorously enforced a decree which established that no Majerteen person should be allowed to hold a responsible position of power in Mudug. Again in 1989, more people fled Mudug, especially Gaalka'yo, in the face of intensifying civil strife. With the advent of the full civil war and the capture of Gaalka'yo by USC forces a third wave of displacement occurred, to be followed by the fourth displacement; waves of IDPs from other parts of Somalia and from neighbouring countries who continue to arrive in these regions up to the time of compiling this Note. The region was thus affected by successive waves of displaced population over a longer period than any other part of Somalia, and experienced no meaningful peace and security from 1977 until 1993 when the peace accord was signed.

The damage suffered by Gaalka'yo was never fully repaired by the military regime, nor were the land mines removed that were inherited from inter-state conflict of the 1970s. The traditional territories of the Majerteen and other Darood clans in Mudug, straddling the border, remain until today some of the most mined areas in Somalia. During the civil war of the 1990s, areas separating the rival Majerteen and Hawiye families living in Mudug were also heavily and haphazardly mined.

Since June 1993 an uneasy truce has prevailed in Gaalka'yo, facilitating the return of displaced townspeople. Both major clans have resettled in their separate quarters - although the Majerteen more than the Habar Gidir - clearly indicating a mutual desire to live together in peace and turn their attention to rebuilding shattered lives. Acts of violence motivated by ancient inter-clan feuds, blood vendettas, camel rustling and opportunistic plunder have diminished, but still take place and endanger peace.

There is little social interaction between the northern part of Mudug inhabited by allied Darood clans and southern part inhabited by the Habar Gidir. In the districts and villages of North Mudug outside of Gaalka'yo, clan-based mechanisms facilitate free movement of people and goods, but it is still dangerous for kinsmen of the rival clans from the south to intermingle with their counterparts in the North. Even in Gaalka'yo, where the clansmen of the rival groups live in distinct quarters, there is no easy intermixing. Communities basically trade during the day at the centre of the city, and otherwise keep rigorously to their respective sides. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the possession of arms is widespread and that there are freelance militia who live off the land, posing a constant threat to peace and stability in a region populated by mutually antagonistic kin groups of different clan origin.

The Al-Itixaad bid to take power

The failure of local authorities in the Northeast to form an effective administration, and the prolonged vacuum created by the collapse of the centralised Somali state, have provided fertile ground for experimentation with unorthodox models of rule. Religious fundamentalism, which has historically flourished during periods of national crisis, now seems well-placed to capitalise on the continuing institutional crisis and the genuine need for law and order. In particular, the fundamentalist group *Al-Itixaad*, has promoted itself and its rigid religious rule among the people of North East Somalia (and continues to present itself elsewhere in Somalia as an alternative to disorder and misrule. Initially, the activities of *Al-Itixaad* were not opposed, and were even welcomed in some areas, due to factors such



as: (a) a feeling of compassion and tolerance for religious revival; (b) a widespread desire to give a chance to an alternative system of rule, in the face of SSDF failure to set effective administrations; (c) distrust of politicians and a discredited political elite; (d) a sentiment of disgust and disillusionment of most people in North East Somalia with the type of centralised rule that is associated with past atrocities.

The political intentions of *Al-Itixaad* eventually became clear as the group attempted to impose its rigid interpretation of Islam upon a highly democratic society. As a reaction to that development, popular support shifted back to the SSDF, who seized the opportunity and rallied the secular forces of the Northeast against the armed *Al-Itixaad*. In the fighting which followed, brother had to take arms against brother, many devout followers being indigenous to the region, and the trauma fostered by this experience still remains. After its defeat at the hands of the SSDF, the *Al-Itixaad* organisation seems to have adopted a low profile. Politically they are no longer overtly active in NES, and seem to have adopted a longer term perspective for attaining their objectives. Their present activities are mainly confined to religious teachings and business, and they are suspected of covert activities aiming at longer term control.

Mudug, as can be seen, has been ravaged by a series of brutal conflicts over the past years. Economic dislocation and regression and the physical destruction of most of the public infrastructure and private property are visible and quantifiable losses. But the conflict also claimed many lives on both sides and produced a great deal of animosity. The scars left in the hearts and minds of the survivors are likely to linger on for a long time.

2. Present Identity and Political Allegiances

The civil war appears to have shaped the development of multiple identities for the Majerteen and the allied Darood groups living with them in the northern part of Mudug. In spite of the violence suffered by the Majerteen clan under the ousted Siyaad Barre regime, and afterwards during fighting with the USC - and solid grounds for rejection of the south - the Majerteen in Mudug and their clansmen elsewhere still widely support the resurrection of Somalia and Somali unity - not in its former shape but in a more federal or confederate arrangement. Unlike Somaliland, which has already declared independence from Somalia, secession by the Northeast is not considered an option.

Below this national level of identity, there is also a very strong feeling among the inhabitants of north Mudug of belonging first and foremost to the Northeast, and therefore a strong solidarity with the other Majerteen sub-clans and allied Darood groups with whom they share the Northeast. It is unlikely that any region of the Northeast, and particularly North Mudug, would accept a future outside the framework of a Northeast polity: it is also a widely and strongly held belief, openly advocated, that no matter what the future form of government in Somalia, the people of the Northeast will stick together. This second layer of identity, that is "Northeasternism", at times supersedes loyalty to Somalia and to the emergence of a Somali state.

A third level of identity for the inhabitants of north Mudug relates to Mudug region as an administrative unit inhabited by mutually hostile clans. People in North Mudug accept the reality that they have to live with their Habar Gidir neighbours controlling the southern half of Mudug. Unless otherwise obliged by strategic considerations and self-defence, the Majerteen in Mudug endeavour not to escalate the conflict. The feeling is strong among the Majerteen in Mudug and among many Habar Gidir, that peace and stability in the region must be obtained through dialogue. This third level of identity (Mudugism) is a



social reality in the region at present, even though it can sometimes represent a contradiction to the other two levels of identify.

Lack of progress towards a final negotiated settlement to the complex issues in Mudug seems to be reinforcing a separate Majerteen identity and political aims that will not permit the separation of north Mudug from the other two regions of the Northeast to which it is culturally and economically linked, and encouraging the *de facto* political partition of Mudug region into North and South.

3. The Region's Economy and Infrastructure

In spite of the people's self-imposed segregation, Gaalka'yo is booming once again and beginning to regain its former position and importance. The volume of business and trade is on the increase. Its former status as a trans-shipment point and internal market of exchange of goods and services is slowly being re-established. People are coming back in large numbers and business construction is expanding in Gaalka'yo and all over North Mudug. Tiny, sleepy villages of yesterday are becoming small towns of bustling activities and growing importance today. Families long separated by the upheavals of the past twenty years are getting back together and finding new energies and drive in recreating their environment.

Mudug's economy is largely based on livestock: it has the highest per capita amount of livestock in all Somalia. It is estimated that the dependency of the population on livestock for subsistence and foreign currency earnings is even higher than the national average. However, despite its crucial role for the survival and well-being of most of the population in Mudug, traditional livestock production is becoming marginalized.

The provision of water for both human and animal consumption remains one of the most important concerns of the people. However, drought-preparedness measures and policies are totally lacking. Unplanned creation of settlements and villages, the digging of private ground water reservoirs (*berked*) to catch rain-water in important grazing areas, and the subsequent semi-sedentarization of nomads, cause the cutting down of trees for fencing, for fire wood and for the construction of huts. Deforestation and soil erosion is on the constant increase. War-displaced returnees who have joined kinsmen herding stocks in rural areas are adding further burdens on the fragile environment as many of them have started to raise animals to become independent herders. Until now the region has fortunately escaped the destruction of forests for charcoal production for export, which is threatening the limited forest reserves in Bari and Nugaal.

Development of the under-utilised fisheries sector has been gaining in importance in North Mudug since the collapse of government in 1991. Fisheries seem to be attracting investment by local entrepreneurs, thus creating employment opportunities for skilled workers who were forced to return to the region by the civil war. It is not unreasonable to imagine that fish products may soon become the second most important export of Mudug. Already lobster tails, whole lobsters, shark fins, and - since the 1997 fishing season - ordinary fish, are being exported to the United Arab Emirates. Dried shark meat is exported to Kenya. Commercial air traffic between Gaalka'yo (which has a 3,000-meter paved runway) and the Arabian Gulf has now been established in order to facilitate exports, including fish products.

There are however a number of problems emerging in the fisheries sector. In the absence of a national or regional authority, there is (i) widespread illegal foreign fishing, (ii) indiscriminate and continuing killing of small and female lobsters carrying eggs (even during breeding seasons) and (iii) unfair pricing practices by the lobster-importing countries. Many of these activities are related to profit-motivated,



clan-based protection rackets, which are developing at an alarming rate. And the sea environment is being endangered by toxic wastes reportedly dumped in the seas of Northeast Somalia.

The urban water system has never been developed in Mudug. Even Gaalka'yo, the biggest town, has never had either piped water or even a rudimentary supply of safe water. Brackish, foul-smelling water full of minerals and calcium, extracted from shallow, open wells often dug within a few meters from pit latrines, is the main source of water for the town's inhabitants. Seepage between household pits and the shallow wells and consequent pollution is a permanent concern and possible source of disease.

Before the civil war only Gaalka'yo had public electricity. But during the upheaval, not only the generators in the power-house, but even the electrical cables, most of the poles and the wiring disappeared. Recently, a private entrepreneur installed two old generators and started lighting a small part of the town. It is felt that this private endeavour - laudable as it may be - is not sufficient to provide electricity to this ever expanding city. Much of Gaalka'yo and all the districts and villages use small, privately-owned generators.

Economic and social activities within the region and interaction with neighbouring regions are handicapped by the extremely poor road infrastructure off the main highway passing through Gaalka'yo, and connecting Muqdisho with Boosaaso. Furthermore there are many mines on some roads, for example, between Gaalka'yo and Galdogob, and between Gaalka'yo and Jirriiban which endanger traffic and hinder the revival of healthy economic activity.

4. Social Services

Health services, like other essential services, were not developed to any extent in Mudug by the military regime of Siyaad Barre. Many people claim that health and most social services were at much a higher level in Mudug in 1960 (on the eve of independence) than in 1991 when Siyaad Barre was ousted. There is one large hospital in Gaalka'yo which once served as the referral hospital for much of central Somalia, Northeast Somalia, and Eastern Ethiopia. However, people from South Mudug use the facility today only in extreme emergencies, because of their strained relations with the inhabitants of North Mudug. The physical structures and equipment of the hospital did not escape the destruction visited on Gaalka'yo by the civil war. Along with the General Hospital, a MCH centre, a centre for Respiratory Diseases and a Malaria Control centre functioned in Gaalka'yo before the civil war but these did not escape destruction, either. Outside Gaalka'yo, there were small health clinics in Jirriiban, in Balli-busle and in Galdogob (the latter destroyed during the opposition to Siyaad Barre and never repaired). At present, in addition to the Gaalka'yo Hospital which is being rehabilitated and set up with assistance from MSF-Holland, there are altogether seven Mother and Child Health Centres functioning in North Mudug, of which two are located in Gaalka'yo. The tuberculosis clinic in Gaalka'yo was opened and operated with assistance from two international NGOs (succeeding each other) from 1993 to 1995, but had to be closed down when the support of the international NGOs was withdrawn and the community realised its inability to provide for this most demanding and costly health service.

All educational institutions ceased to operate in Mudug in 1987. All school buildings in Galdogob were destroyed during the opposition to Siyaad Barre, and in Gaalka'yo and Balli-busle during the civil war. Since the end of the fighting the remains of school buildings throughout the area have been occupied by displaced people. Education, in such circumstances has been slow to get going again. At present there are about six community-run schools functioning in six different towns and villages outside of Gaalka'yo, and a similar number in the town of Gaalka'yo itself. All kinds of curricula, diverse media of instruction, poor quality of teachers are among the problems that face the education sector. Support



from the weak regional administration has been almost non-existent and from the international donor communities very limited, uncoordinated and sporadic.

The delivery of social services is in no better shape in South Mudug. There is only one functional MCH in south Gaalka'yo, set up with UNICEF assistance and receiving maintenance and supplies from the SRCS/SRC. In addition, there is one Italian NGO, CISP, in Haradheere, which is engaged in the sectors of health, water and education. Because of security risks, UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR, who were all involved in some form or another in the rehabilitation process of the area, do not extend their activities to South Mudug from this end.

III. REBUILDING NORTH MUDUG REGION

1. Political Rebuilding

Seven years since the fall of the last regime, the Somali people are still groping for a new political solution acceptable to the different parties. The Somalia that will eventually emerge will most likely not be the same as the one of the past. It is a widely accepted assumption that the days of centralised government, with all powers concentrated in the capital city, are gone forever. Decentralisation and the devolution of power and authority appear to enjoy widespread support. The underlying desire of many is to prevent centralisation and the associated abuse of power by a single, dominant ruling clan. Political plurality, power-sharing arrangement based on a popular constitution, and respect for the interests of diverse social groups are all desired goals.

While looking forward to the return of some form of national government, the people in North Mudug are also waiting for the formation of a unified administration for the three regions of the Northeast. The fact that the establishment of a unified administration has not yet been achieved is a source of continued frustration. Until such time that a definitive decision is made on the future of the North East as a political unit, all attempts at independent regional administrations will remain temporary and incomplete.

Failure in this vital aspect of the lives of the "Northeasterners" is attributed by many people to the political leadership represented by the SSDF. People accept its leadership role, but want to see results. Such sentiments were amply manifested in an EU-sponsored seminar on Decentralised Political Structures for Somalia held in Boosaaso in the second half of 1997. In the two-day seminar all the three regions of NES and all sectors of the community i.e. women, traditional elders, intellectuals and politicians, were represented, and they opted -with one disagreeing voice out of 30 participants- for a federal system for Somalia and a unitary decentralised state for NES. The SSDF adopted a similar position during the Sodere conference in January 1997, but has only recently begun to take concrete steps in that direction.

In Mudug and the Northeast, SSDF is expected to take an active role in establishing inter-regional administration through consultation and collaboration with the other acknowledged sources of power and authority, including traditional lineage elders (who enjoy a high degree of respect and following based on centuries-old traditions). For the SSDF to try to act alone, and without the consent and active involvement of the *Isimo* (traditional leaders) and prominent elders, would be futile. Conversely, for the traditional elders to try to chart a political course on their own without the consent of SSDF would be regarded as a kind of "coup d'etat." The convocation of a Northeastern "Constitutional Conference" to discuss future political and administrative arrangements which would be broadly representative of the



population of the Northeast is emerging as a compromise course of action. It is strongly felt that the planned pre-constitutional conference meeting of (a) SSDF Provisional Political Council, (b) the traditional Elders of the North East and (c) representatives of the Regional Assemblies and Regional Executive Councils in February in Garoowe could, if properly handled, represent a significant opportunity for the top leadership of the zone (political, traditional and administrative) to (i) chart a common course for the North East, (ii) set the agenda of the planned North East Constitutional Conference on firm grounds and (iii) to allay the fears of the doubters.

The fact is very important that there is only one political party (SSDF) in Bari and Nugaal and that it is the senior partner in North Mudug (although not the only party) and that no alternative political party has been able to take root in spite of semi-permanent internal opposition and factions. Even the junior political partner in North Mudug (the SNDU - Somali National Democratic Union - of the Leelkase and Awrtable/Darood clans) has an overall policy and philosophy similar to those of the SSDF and the two often share a joint political platform. This tends to give SNDU a bigger say in ordinary administrative matters of North Mudug and ensures that it maintain a good rapport with the SSDF.

Formation of a regional structure

From the signing of the peace accord in June 1993 until mid-1996, the inhabitants of North Mudug entertained the hope that the Habar Gidir would participate in the restoration of normalcy to the region, and in the development of a representative joint administration for the whole region. However, the political leadership of Habar Gidir in Muqdisho were reluctant for some time to participate in a regional administration formed beyond their remit, and when eventually a faction of Habar Gidir showed general interest in setting up regional administrations, agreement over proportional representation proved elusive. The administration therefore remained confined to North Mudug, without the participation of the Habar Gidir.

The SSDF-SNDU decision was influenced by events elsewhere. In 1996, after long and tedious deliberations, Bari Region set up a Regional Authority, based on a Regional Legislative Body and an Executive Administrative structure. This sparked off the desire of people in North Mudug not to wait any longer for some kind of unified government for NES or the country as a whole. After much internal debate, the people in North Mudug decided that they would no longer wait for South Mudug to make up its mind and they would follow the example of their kin in Bari and set up a "regional" parliament.

This was achieved after months of painstaking political negotiations (modelled on the Bari Region administration). The USC-SNA was invited to join in the formation of the new administration but declined. The new regional administration, however ineffective it proved to be, became operational in Gaalka'yo and in the two districts of Jirriban and Galdogob where there are only clans belonging to the Darood family and owing allegiance to the SSDF or SNDU. In Gaalka'yo district, members of the Habar Gidir live side by side with the Darood. The Darood presently form the majority in Gaalka'yo district and the Majerteen claim the area as theirs, on the basis of historical precedent - although the Habar Gidir refute that claim. However, even the present Regional Administration in Gaalka'yo acknowledges that it is not possible to establish effective administration without the co-operation of the Hawiye clan. Law enforcement, security arrangements, taxation, provision of essential social services, and all development, are affected by this absence of generally accepted and all encompassing administrative structures.

All the Darood groups found in North Mudug fully participated in the congress that led to the formation of the North Mudug regional administration. Traditional elders, local politicians, intellectuals, community leaders, women's groups and religious people representing the local clans of the region were



all represented. Issues were openly discussed. In the end, a basic law or “constitution” defining the overall structure, responsibilities and functions of the regional administration was prepared and publicly endorsed. The constitution provided for a clear separation of powers of the organs of the administration and established adequate checks and balances and an independent judiciary based on Islamic Shari’a Law.

The congress elected a legislative parliament for North Mudug of 36 members representing the various sub-clans of the region (an additional 15 members were reserved for USC-SNA who later rejected this power-sharing arrangement) and an executive branch was formed, headed by a governor and two deputies. Nine departments or “ministries” were created.

The regional legislature was given wide powers to make laws and to monitor and sanction the activities of the executive branch. The president of the assembly is, in fact, the nominal head of the region. It was further agreed that similar, district level administrations be set up, but so far none has been established and the UNOSOM-sponsored district administrations are still in place in Jirriiban and Galdogob Districts. The current regional administration was mandated to be in office for two years, but what is not clear is whether this one-sided political solution represents an intermediary step to a united regional administration, or a *de facto* partition of Mudug. Political developments shaping up in the North East will have a major impact in the future of Mudug..

When the regional administration was set up, the executive body started to draw up what it called an “Agenda for the Future,” rather than a comprehensive plan. The priorities for the first six months include the strengthening of law and order, and the revitalisation of social services. For their two-year mandate, the regional administration has chosen among its top priorities restoration of the rule of law, the creation of a taxation system, and the establishment of essential social services i.e. schools, hospitals, MCHs, health posts, piped water systems, as well as the generation of electrical power for major urban areas.

The new administration

Unfortunately, even its modest plan of action has proved very difficult to implement. After a year and half since its formal inception, the administration is unable to show tangible results to its constituents. Security matters are still very much in the hands of lineage leaders. Many people still carry guns and the police force remains ineffectual and demoralised. Overall security has even deteriorated, especially in relation to South Gaalka’yo. No regular tax-collection system has been put in place and the feeble attempts to start some tax collection at only two selected sectors (livestock exports and imports of *qaad*) are not working well; as a result, the region is virtually bankrupt. The limited revenue collected on *ad hoc* basis is used to pay the expenses of the police, the prison ward and for Radio Free Somalia in Gaalka’yo, but is not enough. Regional officials are not properly paid, and the portion of the revenue from Boosaaso port allocated for North Mudug region is not received for a period of months at a time because of administrative problems at the port. Only when the SSDF was in total control of the port, prior to the establishment of existing regional administrations in 1995, did some resources come from Boosaaso port, in support of the region’s defence capability, and these were sporadic.

The regional administration has not received any external assistance to manage its affairs. Despite all these problems, however, the administration has managed to maintain a precarious existence. It also serves to fill what would otherwise be a vacuum. Understandably, it is accused of being inactive and not innovative by the people, while the administration accuses the community of not being participatory and



supportive. In reality, the regional authority is not able to administer the town and restore civic rule, let alone discharge basic functions. People illegally build new houses in the main squares and in the streets or simply occupy government offices and compounds intended for official use. In one instance, the regional governor himself was beaten up while trying to stop the construction of illegal private houses in front of the general hospital (but he eventually won that battle).

Unable to wield sufficient power to enforce decisions, the administration relies on the community elders for carrying out minimal functions. For example, if a clan member tries to construct an unlawful building in front of a public place or in a public square, the elders of that clan are summoned by the administration to persuade them to stop the illegal action of their kinsman. In the words of the governor: "Almost 80 percent of the people in the administration have no prior experience in management." The selection process of public officials is not based on merit or qualification and a review of the present criteria for selection would seem a priority. What could be said in favour of the administration is that it has helped to prevent the further deterioration of the situation, although even this cannot be achieved without the support of the traditional lineage leaders of the local clans in North Mudug.

Main constraints

When the administration was set up in September 1996, everyone in the region was aware of the enormous problems that needed to be tackled. It cannot realistically be expected to solve the daunting tasks involved in restoring the decomposed centralised institutions of a modern political and management system. Rebuilding political institutions in North Mudug/Northeast will be a gradual and long-term process. At best, the incumbent administration can initiate this process by laying the foundations upon which successive administration may build.

Of course, it is the primary responsibility of the people of North Mudug to rebuild political structures and institutions that are harmonious with their history and culture. However, the consolidation and preservation of peace and security, and the creation of a peaceful environment for rebuilding are formidable challenges to a population emerging from some seven years of trauma and violence, and with relatively little experience in self-government. The assistance of the international community can be instrumental not only in delivering required financial assistance but also for training and capacity-building. Intervention by the international community in North Mudug region in these sectors has not so far been meaningful.

The reasons for the absence of international community intervention, even to the level of the other North East regions, are many and people differ on their interpretation. Members of the international community are likely to give the following as the reason for their absence: (a) fear of latent instability based on the continued division of Gaalka'yo between rival clans and factions; (b) evident absence of a representative and inclusive administration and of effective interlocutors in Mudug; (c) lack of progress with the initially successful 1993 peace agreement in Mudug.

On their part, internal actors are likely to put forward the following reasons for the absence of the international community from Mudug: (a) excessive consideration given by international agencies to the claims of the USC leadership in Muqdisho; (b) insistence on the creation of a joint administration, despite North Mudug's decision to establish its own administration; (c) residual effects of the harmful policies of UNOSOM which is believed to have actively engaged in a programme aimed at discouraging international activity Somalia in general and in Mudug in particular, simply because the 1993 peace accords were not initiated by the UN; (d) The distance of Gaalka'yo from Boosaaso and the tendency of agencies to concentrate all their activities in the NES capital and surrounding areas.



Some sceptics say that seven years of disorder and lawlessness have produced not only in Mudug, but throughout Somalia, a class of "entrepreneurs" across clan lines, who do not wish to see an improvement in the current crisis. The creation of legal and effective systems of government would not, they fear, serve their own narrow economic interests. There are others who believe that the Somalis are predisposed to resist power and authority. The SSDF and its junior partner, the SNDU, are seemingly unable to help because of the inherent weaknesses they share with other Somali political factions. They prefer to concentrate their efforts on popular projects like public mobilisation for defence and external affairs.

To sum up, the following factors combine to hinder, among other things, the formation of a viable regional administration:

- Fierce competition between local groups for the control of the administration in the absence of any agreed formula for the distribution of positions of power and authority;
- Selection of officials based on lineage membership rather than on merit or profession, which produced a class of administrators mostly interested in personal advantage to the detriment of everything else,
- Disintegration of public institutions and infrastructures;
- Scarcity of material and financial resources;
- Presence of armed clan militiamen;
- Shortage of professionals and skilled people;
- Existence of a considerable number of internally-displaced persons (or IDPs) occupying former government buildings;
- An influx of people to the cities from the rural areas, who have little respect for the rule of law and public ownership;
- Indifference or mistrust shown by the public towards public authority.

2. Economic Rebuilding

Following the June 1993 Mudug peace agreement, commercial activities have been reviving rapidly. The centrality of the region is a key element in this development: as we have seen, the region is located at a cross-roads connecting the northern and southern parts of Somalia and the economically and culturally-linked Ethiopian Somali National Regional State, inhabited by ethnic Somalis. Gaalka'yo benefits from much of the trade network linking this wider zone. Imported, manufactured consumer goods and essential foodstuffs such as rice, pasta, sugar, wheat flour and cooking oil are brought from Boosaaso, and lately also from Berbera, and are distributed throughout central Somalia and beyond. Beans, maize, fruits/vegetables, sesame oil, and traditional home utensils arrive from the south and go to the north and the rest of the Northeast via Gaalka'yo, while potatoes, onions and other agricultural products, including *qaad* and coffee, come from Eastern Ethiopia.

Livestock is the chief source of foreign currency and the proceeds are used to purchase imported foodstuffs and consumer goods that are traded in the regional markets. In the 1997 *Haj* season, livestock exports from the region, or routed via the region, achieved their highest levels for many years. The remittances sent from members of the Somali diaspora to their kin in North Mudug is another source of hard currency and many families in the region depend upon it. A much smaller, but promising foreign exchange earner is the fishing sector: about 12 registered and a number of non-registered small-scale fishing companies are operational during the fishing season and an association of private fishing companies employs more than 1,000 people in the fisheries sector in North Mudug alone, on a seasonal basis. Exports are mainly to the United Arab Emirates and include lobster, and shark fins.



Women are at the forefront of economic regeneration and the reconstruction of war-affected families living in the major towns and trading villages in rural areas. Widowed or more impoverished by the civil disturbances than men, an increasing number of women have either assumed the role of breadwinners for their families, or partially contribute to the income of the households, thus assuming new responsibilities in addition to their traditional ones of house-keeping and child-rearing. They have also become the connecting thread of the highly-segmented Somali society as women are allowed to move with relative freedom across clan boundaries. War ethics do not traditionally allow violence against women and children. Women also engage in "transclan" small-scale business, something which men cannot do at the moment. All these new developments tend to enhance the status of women, in addition to their traditional kinship roles as members of their fathers' descent group and as mothers to their husbands' descent group. It seems likely that, as a consequence, their role in other sectors of life will continue to grow in the future.

In contrast to the stagnant public sector, private sector-driven reconstruction and development is under way in North Mudug without being centrally planned and managed. Despite the uncertain political situation, people are striving to make their lives better. New houses are being constructed in Gaalka'yo, and the old ones rehabilitated. A new and dependable telecommunications system is in place, with telephone and fax services provided by two different telecommunications companies, and third has brought in telecommunications system, but is as yet reluctant to install it in Gaalka'yo. Connection with smaller towns and villages are made through HF radios. Each week an average of ten flights from Dubai, Nairobi and Muqdisho carrying people and cargo touch down at Gaalka'yo airport. The region is no longer as inaccessible as it used to be. ✓

Factors that inhibit economic growth

There are considerable obstacles hampering the economic growth of the region. An important one is the extremely poor road infrastructure beyond the main highway that connects Gaalka'yo with Boosaaso. The road between Gaalka'yo and Jirriiban and Gara'ad, where most of the animals are concentrated, and between Gaalka'yo and Galdogob -in their present shape- hinder all normal social and developmental activities. They are sandy, rocky and uneven. The 70-kilometre stretch between Jirriiban and Gara'ad is the worst of all. Improvements made in the regional road network would promote the free-flow of goods and services between the regional capital and the outlying districts and settlements, while contributing to the general well-being of the region and the better delivery of essential social services.

Other factors limiting the economic growth of the region include lack of good, reliable markets, the absence of an environment conducive to business, in which the security of people and their property is guaranteed, absence of local partnership culture, lack of financial institutions and of business data, and the inability to enter binding business agreements or open letters of credit (LCs).

Another major concern for the whole of Northeast zone is the destructive methods being used by the foreign fishing companies illegally exploiting the marine resources of the country, taking advantage of the present disorder and lack of effective authority to regulate the economy. Among these fishing pirates are ships from some EU member countries, and Taiwanese, Japanese and Pakistani vessels.

Other illegal activities that are detrimental to the future development of the Northeast are: i) trade in arms and ammunition; ii) illegal export of female livestock and wildlife; iii) export of charcoal; iv) increasing imports of *qaad* (not technically illegal), which is now estimated to cost the NES some \$US18 million a year.



Given the importance of the livestock sector, the fact that animal disease has become rampant due to the virtual absence of veterinary services, constitutes a further obstacle to growth. The livestock population is exposed to outbreaks of epidemics and diseases. Although nomads show willingness to pay for veterinary services as need arises, the dissolved public health services have not yet been replaced by private service.

Man-made developments following deregulation of the economy, like production of charcoal for export, expansion of settlements to the detriment of unrestricted grazing areas and the construction of permanent water reservoirs all seem to be accentuating desertification and the pastoral economy is becoming increasingly vulnerable to drought. The current provision of water is inadequate both for human consumption and for livestock watering.

In view of the limited possibilities for further expansion of the pastoral sector, alternative future potentialities of the region include expansion of fishing, production of irrigated vegetables and cash crops in fertile locations, trade and commerce, services and transport.

Initiatives of the business community

In spite of the lack of institutional support, e.g. banking and financial institutions, business in the Northeast region is, relatively speaking, blossoming. Developments in the private sector are mainly due to the efforts of aspiring entrepreneurs, but the activities of the merchant class are not wholly driven by self-interest. The business community in Mudug, for example, in the absence of effective and active regional administration, has played an instrumental role financially in restoring the prevailing peace and stability. At times of need, business people form their own committees and act as fund-raisers for the general well-being. From August 1995 until 5 September 1996, business people covered the policing and security expenses of the region and paid the running costs of Radio Free Somalia in Gaalka'yo, as well.

In addition, merchants have also undertaken local initiatives of their own. For instance, to minimise car theft and highway robbery (and possible loss of life) along the highway linking Northeast Somalia to Yiroowe (near Burao and Laas Anood in Somaliland) as well as to the south of Somalia, where there are strong trade ties, a co-operative of Transports in North Mudug, initiated and developed an agreement with their local counterparts in other parts of Somalia, stipulating the settlement for acts of violence against merchandise and trade trucks. Whenever a car is hijacked, its goods stolen, or someone in it gets hurt, the matter does not go to court, but is usually resolved through arbitration by committees of inter-regional transports. The Transport Co-operative in Gaalka'yo first contacted individual traders, transport owners or elders in the Yeroowe and requested them to assist in resolving a specific issue involving two or more people from their respective regions. From that initial co-operation it was found that many tricky cases involving loss of life and of property could be resolved quickly and effectively. In most of the cases the peace-makers did not meet their counter-parts on the other side, but acted only through contact by radio. Yet trust and confidence was built quickly. Soon the initiative was extended to other cities, and other committees were set up in each area. The process now covers all of Somalia, and contributes not only to the general stability of the region but also improves the flow of trade between the north-west and the Northeast Somalia and with the rest of the country. In the words of the chairman of the Transport Co-operative in Gaalka'yo who initiated the process, by the beginning of February 1998, this initiative has succeeded to return 43 trucks, lorries or other transport vehicles to their owners and mediated in the payment or restitution of goods worth Shs.465 million (US\$67,000). To cite another example, the Gara'ad Fishing Companies, besides generating employment for the otherwise sleepy



Gara'ad settlement and its surrounding area occasionally raise funds to help the community defend itself or invest in community development.

3. Social Rebuilding

Mudug regional population is composed of traditionally rival descent units who now belong to opposing political factions. The peace accord signed in mid-1993, and subsequent abortive attempts to implement some aspects of it, have not brought about a lasting solution to the rivalry and opposition in Mudug. The division of the region into North Mudug, populated largely by Majerteen, and the south, populated by Habar Gidir -mostly Sa'ad-, is rigidly observed. Social interaction and intermingling has greatly diminished since the civil war. Anger, animosity and suspicion linger just beneath the surface. Thus it is difficult for the rival communities to share the few facilities that exist in the region, as most services are located in the more stable northern part of Mudug and the northern section of Gaalka'yo.

However, even in the relatively advantaged northern part of the region, services have not been adequately restored and are inadequate. The administration tries very hard to persuade the IDPs to vacate badly-needed buildings but few are willing to leave and most claim that they have nowhere else to go, and the administration has been unable to offer any assistance with alternative lodging. Encouragement for IDPs move from public buildings, has been given some modicum of assistance by international agencies in other regions of the North East.

Health

Health infrastructure is limited. Besides the hospital in Gaalka'yo, which caters for many patients from the Ethiopian Somali National Regional State, Muqdisho and the inter-riverine areas, as well as a few Oromos, there is a 3-room hospital in the district of Jirriiban which presently shelters displaced people. And, apart from the two Mother and Health Care Centres in Gaalka'yo, there are MCHs in Galdogob, Jirriiban, Harfo, Ba'adweyn and Ballibusle. The external supply of essential drugs for the hospital is scanty and irregular. At the moment, there are four physicians in the region: two surgeons, a gynaecologist, and a general physician. Doctors believe that TB is the most prevalent disease in the region: tuberculosis and other respiratory malfunctions account for a high percentage of all cases diagnosed by physicians. Other prevailing diseases include malaria, hepatitis and parasites.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), or Doctors without Borders from Holland, have entered the scene recently and are assisting the regional hospital management to deliver better services. They have already started rehabilitation work on the hospital and plan to provide the hospital with drugs and other essential materials. An original agreement between MSF-Holland and the Regional Authorities in North Mudug included reactivation of the TB ward. There are indications, however, that MSF may want to revise that understanding, with regard to the TB Clinic. Most important of all are the capacity-building measures MSF is embarking upon: staff training and refresher courses are in full swing. Prospects for the regional hospital look positive in the short term, although the sustainability of these interventions remains questionable.

Another initiative in the health field is spearheaded by a well-known Somali doctor, with the backing of the region's local communities and members of the diaspora. A privately-owned clinic with modern medical equipment is being constructed outside the town and the plan is to hire the best doctors available locally and to match them with highly qualified doctors from Italy and elsewhere. This would be a welcome development also for the neighbouring regions and beyond, as the vast majority of the



people of the region have no direct access to modern medicine and must depend solely upon traditional healing methods.

One unfortunate consequence of the deregulation of health services has been the proliferation of drug kiosks and analyses laboratories staffed by unqualified people. People in Gaalka'yo and indeed in most towns of the North East joke that drug stores outnumber corner-stores for food and other household needs. Analysis laboratories are wide-spread as well. In the total absence of any regulatory form, the most unqualified people have set up drug-stores or laboratories. Sub-standard medicines, expired medicines, medicines prepared in the black market, and even false label medicines are sold to any one in the community without medical prescription, or concern for usage. Similarly, laboratory analysts use unqualified staff, old or imitation equipment and, at best, expired, chemicals and reagents. The results of both these are most damaging to the community. False and unreliable diagnosis for illness and use of expired or inappropriate medicine take their toll on the general health of the community.

Education

Like other services, public education in Mudug region is in poor shape. Many consider education in North Mudug to be the least developed of services and decided far behind developments in Bari and Nugaal. About a dozen or so privately-run schools with curricula as diverse as the individuals involved are operating at present, with the majority concentrated in Gaalka'yo. Not many of the teachers are formally qualified for their work and with few exceptions the schools use rented houses as most of the previous school buildings are occupied by the IDPs.

A number of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like the Somali Women Concern (SWC), Rahmo Relief Organisation (RRO), the Somali Women Association (SWA), the Somali Welfare Society (SWS) and the Somali Social Development Committee (SSDC) and a number of other voluntary associations or individual efforts have ran in the past or are now running schools of their own. The Somali Welfare Society (SWS) uses the only secondary school building in the town for an orphanage; in their syllabus, religious teachings are emphasised. This organisation is supported by wealthy individuals from Kuwait and other Gulf Countries. There is also one technical institute in Gaalka'yo, but it is not yet functioning: its construction was completed in 1994 with Islamic Bank funds. There are no other external actors in the education sector as yet. Most people in the administration and the education department view the role of UNICEF in the field of education in North Mudug negatively, although they acknowledge that over the years (1992-1998) it has totally or partially funded the rehabilitation of 3 schools in the region. Its support to education and supply of school kits is said to be erratic and ad hoc, at best. UNESCO-PEER is, instead, now present in Nugaal and is planning to get involved in education in North Mudug. A team of Egyptian teachers arrived in Gaalka'yo in late 1997 and started one primary school in Gaalka'yo which had just been rehabilitated with funds from UNOPS, who are also funding the rehabilitation of other schools in Bur-Salah and in Beyra. In Balli-busle, there the first wholly community rehabilitated and run school of its kind in the area. The first pre-school child-care centre had also been recently established by SWC.

Unlike this erratic development of structured schooling, Qoranic schools, informal religious education in the Mosques and private informal institutions teaching either one or a combination of subjects to grown up school-age children (languages, maths in the majority of cases) as well adult literacy classes have increased tremendously during past years. There are indications that the traditional Qoranic school (*the Dugsi*) is slowly venturing into new areas of teaching basic mathematics and the use of exercise books and pens, instead of the traditional wooden tableau "*the loox*". This may represent a new departure which can create useful linkages between the *Dugsi* and the formal school in future.



The role of women in society

Within the confines of the household and the family, Somali women have always participated actively in the decision-making process of family affairs and their views are respected within that environment. This has perhaps been more so in the North East and the North West of the country due to established traditions and history: the harsh, independent nomadic way of life, where women shoulder their fair share of the work in the household and exercise direct managerial responsibilities, has contributed to this situation of acceptance. Somali women have, in general, always shied away, however, from too much exposure to and involvement in issues that transcend the family business. Religious conservatism, in contradiction to and counter-balance to the free-spirit of nomadic life, is ever present and contributes to the shaping of this self-denial.

With urbanisation, women initially lost many of the prerogatives and decision-making enjoyed under the nomadic life. Without the livestock to manage, without the perennial cycle of fight for survival, and with bread-winning responsibilities left to the male, urban women became more focused in home-making chores. With time, the social mobility of women improved with opportunities for education, professional careers. In this setting, achievement of equal political rights with men became an uphill battle. Urban men, partly influenced by the proximity of Arab culture with its more rigid attitudes towards liberalisation of women, have resisted women's ascendancy to high political office and to top management in business and government. The dictatorship of 1969-1990 paid some lip-service to women's advancement by appointing selected women to some junior and middle management and political postings of a transitory nature, but took no lasting steps in improving their status or standing. What further robbed these postings of their meaning was the fact that selection was almost always based on favouritism rather than merit.

The role played by urban women during the upheavals leading to and following the civil war suddenly catapulted women into positions of responsibility and economic importance (increasingly becoming the breadwinners) and societal standing (seen as the upholders of family unity and saviours) and has gained them more importance and added prestige. Today, women visibly dominate the small-scale business in all the markets of the North East (whether in Boosaaso, Galkayo, Qardho or in smaller settlements). Their growth and potentiality in terms of income generation and upward movement is impaired by lack of entrepreneurial skills and appropriate opportunities. The overwhelming majority of these women could greatly benefit from provision of custom-tailored training packages and availability of adequate credit finance schemes, and could thus realise their potential as the most dynamic human resource capital harnessed for development.

Demographic reality, proven capacity for enterprise, the need to mobilise all available human capital resources in the land, and historic inevitability all point to an expanding role for women in Somali society. Already women are moving, increasingly in the field of social voluntary and social service provision sector. As the country settles down to better and more strengthened governance institutions, women will eventually move into the arena of public administration and political life, participating in the decision-making mechanisms of the North East. But for such a change to take place will require greater focus on (a) more assertive education for girls at all levels and development of career opportunities for women, (b) better and more custom-tailored as well as generalised training in skills, professions and management, and (c) continuous, incessant awareness building, mobilisation and political education. The upcoming administrations and the overall political leadership have so far failed to face this urgent task and to afford it the deserved priority. The international development agencies' performance has also been lack-lustre in their delivery of development programmes targeting women in a practical manner. Activities undertaken so far is perceived by many people to be meant exclusively to ferment social unrest and political turmoil.



In the social sphere, women have a long way to go. Negative traditional attitudes and customs, like the trauma of female genital mutilation, the resistance to equal education for girls, and many others are still widespread, and need to be confronted with effective and well co-ordinated programmes of intervention. Women also need to develop their own leadership, rather than awaiting an invitation from men or from international agencies, if real change is to take place.

Civic organisations

A number of civic and community organisations are engaged in a variety of activities: these include women's groups like the Mudug Women Group (MWG) and the Somali Women Association (SWA), the Environment and Community Development Organisation (ECO), former NES mine-clearance teams, and the Muruqmaal Labour Organisation, a new association representing low-status minority groups and which works to improve their well-being. The main organisations working in North Mudug are however SWC, SWS, RRO and SSDC. These four organisations have varying track records. Somali Women Concern and The Somali Welfare Society are by far the most effective of the local non-governmental organisations operating in the region, and both have external partners. SSDC seems also well placed in attracting external partners and donors.

The biggest constraint to the development and consolidation of civic organisations, like the NGOs, is their failure to develop strong local funding and support base, and that many people perceive them as a means to attract external funding.

The rehabilitation of social services does of course require more than simply innovating community services and facilities like hospitals and schools. It needs persistent and gradual psychological healing of individual people's traumas, the promotion of tolerance and forgiveness, and the restoration of the mutual trust that once existed between the rival clans. For the two opposing parties in Gaalka'yo have no choice but to live together and revive social and economic interaction. Civic organisations in Mudug therefore tend to emphasise fundamental characteristics of Somali society: Islam and the remaining positive aspects of Somali culture and tradition.

In spite of the catastrophic political and economic disasters that have engulfed the people of Mudug, malnutrition and starvation-related deaths are remarkably rare. This is mainly due to the fact that Somalis are thoroughly interdependent and share available resources, however limited. The economic assistance and co-operation between closely related kinsmen may seem awkward and outmoded to outsiders, but it has saved the lives of many people during the turbulent years of war and economic dislocation.

As for the recurring violence, many townsmen blame it on the total ascendancy of the rural people over the urban. Most of the gun-toting youngsters are from the interior and their understanding of Islamic values may be weak, as the religion rejects violence and the killing of innocent people or looting of other people's property. A longer-term solution aimed at reforming these people will be required when the dust finally settles. A wise man in Gaalka'yo is remembered to have called for the destruction of the camels in Mudug as they are known to be the main cause of clan feuding: herders of the interior practise the forbidden acts of camel rustling, which may involve killing members of the same faith, belonging to different lineages.

Radio Free Somalia in Gaalka'yo remains an essential mass medium serving Mudug and the Northeast. Since its inauguration in July 1993, it has spread messages of peace between the neighbouring local groups. It was jointly established by the International Amateur Radio Network in Australia and



members of the Somali Diaspora (belonging to NES) in Australia. To extend reception, in mid-1994, the Australian government funded a limited improvement of the radio station, through an Australian NGO. The objective was to help local-level and national reconciliation processes through this medium.

Despite these and other reconciliation and peace-building efforts, no way has yet been found to demobilise the armed militiamen and reintegrate them into the society to become law-abiding and productive citizens once again. Armed youth constitute a serious destabilising factor: militiamen, child soldiers and young people, having lost all hope of their own, frustrate the hopes of others. Job-creation in the form of income-generating activities for the displaced and the returnees is another vital issue that needs tackling.

4. Security

Although the agreement made by the opposing parties in Mudug finally ended the violence, on the war front the truce is uneasy and militiamen from both sides remain armed, not having been demobilised. There have been occasional minor clashes involving camel stealing and old clan feuds can still polarise the community.

A number of factors seem to contribute to the continuation of the present state of uncertainty and the lack of progress towards implementing the second phase of the Mudug Peace Accord. Chief among these are:

- traditional rivalry between opposing groups and competition for political ascendancy;
- unresolved property rights;
- land conflict and competition for access to scarce pastoral resources;
- failure to establish inter-clan institutions and structures in the region that are capable of consolidating peace and directing the energies and interests of the people towards more constructive activities;
- absence of an effective and inclusive security force, judiciary and penal system;
- outstanding substantive issues, e.g. settlement of past grievances and claims of properties and blood-money for deaths caused in the past; power sharing and form of administration;
- continuing acts of violence by militia under the direct control of political faction leaders who interests have shifted since the peace accord was signed four years ago (for example, the USC has since fragmented into two rival factions, with divergent objectives and methods).
- the prolonged civil war accelerated an increasing trend of "ruralisation of the city" by new arrivals, often uneducated and illiterate (*tuulo joog*) from the outlying nomadic areas, who often lack respect for law and order.

The prevailing truce in Mudug is not so much founded upon a firm commitment to the June 1993 agreement, but on the widespread desire for peace on the part of a war-weary population still separated by political differences, and on the peace-keeping role of the elders of the opposing parties. It has however to be borne in mind that the USC/SNA that signed this agreement is no longer united. The two protagonist factions of USC have fought in Muqdisho and its surrounding areas but, interestingly enough, not in Mudug.



The police

The police is not fully inclusive, although there are moves to form a joint police force, at least for Gaalka'yo, and participation is currently limited to the northern part of the region.

UNOSOM used to provide salaries and equipment to a 160-men force, spread out across the districts of Gaalka'yo, Galdogob and Jirriban. Due to shortage of funds, the current administration cannot afford to pay them even a minimum survival wage, and they therefore possess neither the resources, nor the motivation to carry out their sensitive security task. As a result, their number has dwindled: there are now about 40 of them, mostly elderly men. Militiamen from the SSDF are still stationed at the check-points and at the airport, and are used at times to support the overall police activities.

Potential sources of insecurity and preventive efforts

A breakdown of fragile peace is unlikely to come from the local elders, or the rival communities that live in Gaalka'yo, as they are weary of war. The resumption of hostilities might come instead from a disillusioned and disgruntled peace partner like claimants to a Somali "government," who would like to extend their authority throughout the country - certainly provoking a local reaction. In such circumstances, both Gaalka'yo and Kismayo, where there is significant Majerteen interest, would probably be engulfed by a new round of violence.

The dialogue between the two sides concerning the renewal of a mixed committee of elders, and the formation of a joint police force under this committee is ongoing, in order to consolidate the fragile peace, which has been threatened by a series of violent incidents and the breakdown of channels of communication between the various sides. The committee includes 15 elders from each side. The parties have already started the collection of funds to make the joint police activities operational.

Previous attempts to form joint peace committee and police have proved difficult to sustain and often collapsed rapidly. Both communities know, however, that there is no alternative to continuing the process. The efforts of the elders need to be further strengthened and complemented by the activities of a strong, collective administration. In the absence of shared, local institutions, the efforts of the elders can simply be wrecked by a lone gunman seeking to settle an old vendetta.

Another positive development is that the Ausoma telephone company in Gaalka'yo has established a telephone link between the rival parties, as it operates all over the city. This action is principally profit-motivated - to increase the number of company clients - but it could also be used as a "hot line" between the two sides of the city in case stability is threatened by acts of violence. This is a notable contribution by the business community to the ongoing peace efforts, and a clear indication that business programs of common interest can and do operate.

Presence of land-mines

One of the greatest security problems is the presence of land mines and unexploded shells that continue to maim and kill. It is estimated that there are 25.000 to 30.000 mines and other items of unexploded ordinance in Mudug. They are concentrated in the two districts of Gaalka'yo and Galdogob where most of the factional fighting took place, and to a lesser extent in the District of Jirriiban. Today the victims of these weapons are not soldiers or militiamen but rather civilians, including women and children, and nomads herding their camels, which restricts their access to scarce pasture and water. No significant demining or mine awareness initiatives have yet taken place.



5. Conflict and Conflict Resolution

The scale of devastation in Mudug distinguishes it from other regions of the Northeast. The following points seek to illustrate the complexity of the conflict and explain the need and importance of advancing the process of conciliation between the communities.

For a long time there existed a dispute between the Darood and the Habar Gidir cohabiting the former Mudug Region (present Mudug and Galguduud regions) along a clan border stretching some 500 kilometres from east to west. This dispute is related to the central issue of control of scarce grazing and water sources. Clan differences, rivalry and competition for political ascendancy and control of land date back to the colonial era. To resolve this issue, following protracted negotiations in which each side presented its case, the Italian Colonial Administration of Somalia settled the issue and drew up maps demarcating traditional territories of the Darood and of the Habar Gidir in 1932 (the Tomaselli line), establishing a ruling on the matter. The short-lived Somali civilian regime (1960-1969), also sought to confirm and consolidate that established border line, while encouraging coexistence and peaceful integration of the two clans. The Habar Gidir however continue to claim certain areas in the part of Mudug designated as Darood territory by the ruling. One such area of continued claim by the Habar Gidir (especially Sa'ad) is the city of Gaalka'yo. While the Darood recognise the Habar Gidir presence, they insist that the territory belongs to them exclusively. The fierce and brutal fighting in Gaalka'yo which started in the mid 1980s has its roots in that conflict, fuelled by the political interests of the military regime.

Modern changes, like rapid urbanisation and access to education had initially helped to attenuate clan differences in the large urban centres and to create a multi-clan society that was less affected by the kinship dynamic. However, these embryonic forms of urban culture were eventually crushed by the regime of Siyaad Barre. While publicly demonizing "clanism" as a social evil and a major obstacle in the process of change towards "scientific socialism", the Barre government systematically and cynically manipulated clan differences for its own political survival.

In the heavy-handed suppression of dissidence, the Majerteen early on became collective victims of Barre's rule. Majerteen military officials, and others in prominent positions in the government, as well as in the private sector, were subjected to intimidation and reprisals. The regime intensified its collective punishment against the Majerteen following the armed opposition launched by the Majerteen-based SSDF in 1978. Along with blind reprisals, which failed to distinguish between civilian and military targets, Majerteen inhabited areas were deliberately neglected and denied their share of national development resources. The security apparatus organised frequent and brutal security crack-downs, including livestock raids and destruction of permanent sources of water (e.g. dynamiting *berked*) ostensibly to discourage the rural populations suspected of sympathy with and support for the SSDF.

In Mudug in particular, the traditional rivalry between local clans was exploited to the limit; a deliberate government policy of divide and rule sparked off civil conflict of 1985 in Mudug between the Majerteen and the Habar Gidir. Until the civil war finally engulfed the entire country in 1991, the fighting in Mudug continued unabated with the regime playing off one clan against the other in accordance with its political interests of the moment. The responsibility of the government in instigating clan violence is well established: elders speak of numerous occasions when the high representatives of the regime, including the president himself, encouraged one clan or another to establish exclusive control over this multi-clan region. These sinister tactics included the provision of armaments and financial assistance to



one warring party, and sometimes to both. Therefore, inter-clan conflict in Mudug was not only the making of local circumstances: a formidable external actor - Siyaad Barre's regime - was fully involved and had a vested interest in perpetuating it.

Following the fall of Muqdisho to USC forces, the Habar Gidir militia intensified its military campaign to establish control over Gaalka'yo town and the surrounding area. This campaign is believed by many Darood to have been an integral part of a broader political scheme aspiring to extend Habar Gidir (and indeed all Hawiye, initially) influence throughout Somalia, via the USC. Instead, the conflict generated Majerteen solidarity behind the SSDF and the conflict soon stalemated, degenerating into a war of attrition. After more than two years of sporadic combat, the warring parties agreed to come to the negotiating table to sort things out. In June, 1993, the peace deal was signed.

Unfortunately this opening first round of discussions that produced a cease-fire did not progress any further, and the peace process remains incomplete. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have been over-stretched during the civil war and matrilineal ties (inter-clan marriage) and social interaction between embattled neighbouring clans have diminished during the civil strife. Without a definitive and comprehensive settlement of unresolved differences between the rivals in Mudug region it is not feasible to embark upon reconstruction and long-term development. Absence of a lasting peace impedes the formation of much needed joint administrative structures, and hinders the planning and implementing of rebuilding work which would benefit all the diverse kin groups of Mudug. At present the two communities in Mudug continue to live apart and separately in the four districts of Galdogob, Jirriiban (Darood inhabited), and Hobyo, and Harardheere (Hawiye inhabited), While in Gaalka'yo City proper, a minority of Habar Gidir/Sa'ad live alongside the resident Darood clans.

There are more elements of mutual interest than differences linking the different clans of the region: co-habitation in Mudug, affinity relations and economic interaction as well as common historical experience. A considerable number of the founding members of the Pan-Somali nationalist movement (Somali Youth League or SYL) and their immediate supporters, who strove to surmount parochial clan interests, were from Mudug region. Eventually, the movement established firm support and gained a widespread following in Mudug and the other regions of the North East. Regardless of clan difference, there is a strong sense among the inhabitants of Mudug region of being the sons and daughters of Mudug and "Somali".

IV. Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

In February '91, exactly one month after Muqdisho fell to the hands of USC, Gaalka'yo was also attacked and taken over by USC forces a battle that led to the deaths of hundreds of civilians and created a major internal displacement. Displaced Majerteen moved to Burtinle, Garoowe, Boosaaso and other towns in the NES, (displaced Hawiye moved south) and sought shelter wherever they could find it and all government facilities, including schools, were occupied. Thousands of makeshift houses, known as "*bush*", were erected in virtually any available space in all towns. Many people were in real despair.

Little or no help was forthcoming from the international community. The International Committee of the Red Cross brought in a limited amount of food. The Italians, after many requests and approaches, provided a negligible amount of aid. The total amount of emergency aid from all sources to the Northeast during the most difficult period (1991-1992) of the massive influx of returnees and locally displaced IDPs, can at best be described as negligible.



The burden of assisting the newcomers thus fell upon the local population. Families in the rural and urban areas of Mudug and the Northeast in general welcomed their dispossessed kinsmen and shared their meagre resources with them, while remittances from abroad constituted another source of assistance. Despite the difficulties, no death from starvation was reported in the Northeast in those difficult times. The international community focused instead on Muqdisho and the south where the situation was indeed disastrous, leaving the Northeast virtually to their own devices.

In the closing months of 1991, and as a result of clashes within the USC, a new exodus of war-affected people, comprised largely of the light-complexioned 'Banaadiris' and people from the inter-riverine areas, arrived in the Northeast. Most of them moved on, crossing the Red Sea via Boosaaso to become refugees in the neighbouring Republic of Yemen. Others have settled in the three regions of NES and still live with local inhabitants. These urban and farming southerners have brought with them carpentry, construction, car-repair, gardening and other important skills.

In addition to the internally displaced, the civil war also produced Somali refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring countries of the Horn and in the West. Hundreds of thousands of Somalis sought asylum in Kenya but as that country could not afford to maintain such a large influx of people on its own, international humanitarian agencies stepped in to help the refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) took the lead among the international agencies and donors. Many of the refugees still remain in the camps, in the care of the Kenyan Government and of various humanitarian agencies. Some refugees have settled in third countries, like the United States of America and Canada. Others have chosen to go back to their ancestral clan areas, the security situation there permitting.

Some 6,000 registered refugees were voluntarily repatriated by UNHCR from Kenya in 1995 and 1996, although it should be noted that the number of refugees who have returned on their own without any form of help is estimated to be greater than these officially-assisted refugees. The repatriated were airlifted, mainly from the sprawling refugee camp of Utange, near Mombasa, to their home areas in NES, and to the regions of Sanaag and Sool in north-western Somalia. UNHCR used the airports of Berbera and Gaalka'yo for this operation and in the absence of a government, took over the responsibility for the returnees, opening offices in Boosaaso and in Gaalka'yo.

In Mudug region, UNHCR has so far funded a few quick impact projects (QUIPS). These small-scale activities were implemented through local NGOs, community elders or co-operatives made up of the returnees, but considering the magnitude of the problem, UNHCR assistance -whether direct or indirect- has been very limited. Other QUIPS carried out by UNHCR include the rehabilitation of schools as well as of health facilities like the out-patient department of Gaalka'yo hospital and clinics and the improvement of a birth attendants' centre in Gaalka'yo. They have also assisted to set up a brick-making factory and to construct a small carpentry workshop for new arrivals. The work of *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF Holland) at the central hospital of Gaalka'yo had been carried out with partial UNHCR funds.

Though the extent of the international community's intervention in the Northeast seems greater now than it was several years ago, their limited presence in Mudug, the region most affected by war, is hard to explain. It is true that a few agencies are now operational in the region and contributing to people's well-being. For example, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has begun a number of community-based projects. Those completed or under way include: the rehabilitation of the regional administration offices in Gaalka'yo, the regional court, and one primary school. In Harfo settlement, 70 kilometres further north, a bore-hole was rehabilitated and the town's water delivery system completed. In Ba'adweyn, a women's public market was constructed. In Marqama, Beerdhagaxtuur, and Beyra,



three water catchments and two primary schools have either been rehabilitated or constructed. From the outset, UNOPS projects are designed and planned with the local communities using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodology, in which community participation (in kind and in cash) and ownership are maximised. However UNOPS' intentions are limited to a maximum of \$1.5 million annually per year for the whole Northeast.

The Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS), with the funding and guidance of its senior development partner, the Swiss Red Cross, is engaged in improving the health and water systems of Mudug and Nugaal regions. In Mudug, they have established three Integrated Health Clinics in south Gaalka'yo, Ba'adweyn, and Ballibusle (MCHs plus OPD). Besides the medical supplies, the agency also provides incentives to eight health and non-health staff of the various health centres.

In the water sector, the SRCS plans to drill new bore-holes, rehabilitate old ones, or install community water pumps. In Galdogob and Ballibusle, piped water and tank have been installed in the centre of the village to shorten the long distance between the settlements and the bore-hole. A new bore-hole has been made operational in Bursalah. Rehabilitation works have been completed on the bore-holes of Rigomane, Beyra, Jirriiban, Harfo, and Seemade locations. ICRC is also engaged in both the regions of Mudug and Nugaal, supporting the health and water sectors. In addition to the supply of first aid and emergency kits to the general hospital in Gaalka'yo, Galdogob and Burtinle. IFRC also maintains two MCHs, in Harfo and Jirriiban.

UNICEF's activities here have been carried out in the past mostly through partnerships with a local NGO, the Somali Women Concern (SWC). Among the projects carried out in the years 1994/95 is a water and sanitation survey of the three districts of Gaalka'yo, Galdogob, and Jirriiban and their surrounding villages. Another rapid survey of the practice of female genital mutilation in Gaalka'yo district was made in 1995. UNICEF has also rehabilitated and installed with hand-pumps some 30 hand-dug shallow wells in Gaalka'yo, through SWC.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) supplies drugs on an irregular basis to Galdogob health centre and Gaalka'yo hospital. The most important project carried out by WHO in the North East in the major campaign of immunisation against polio, which had been carried out all over the North East and North West Somalia during November and December 1997. This campaign is part of the efforts to eradicate polio, and it is reported that the rate of success of this campaign in which local doctors and volunteers from the communities participated, has been high. It is therefore expected that the campaign will be repeated in each of the following two years.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is providing food-for-work (FFW) rations for a number of community-based projects in Mudug. Small projects are funded with provision of rations, which are monetized in the local markets. These projects included feeder roads, small-scale farms manned by co-operatives in Ba'adweyn, Rooh, and Gaalka'yo, as well as to women's groups who have up-graded the health and sanitation of the Gaalka'yo slaughterhouse. The school for the orphans, and a privately-run electricity house have also been given some rations by WFP. Prior to 1996 WFP provided FFW to teachers, health workers and mechanics maintaining bore-holes, however this policy was terminated by WFP to the consternation of all concerned.

UNA, an Italian NGO dealing with the improvement of veterinary services, has recently arrived and started its contacts with the rural communities. It plans to assist the whole of the Northeast zone. Diakonia of Sweden is also said to be planning to expand its activities to North Mudug from Nugaal region where it is based, with an initial program of Low-Cost-Housing, found most successful in Nugaal, if funding is provided by the European Community. Diakonia hopes to become engaged in other



activities as well. Its programme of assisting displaced families to move from public buildings may be expanded and institution building initiatives are also contemplated.

Though less active in Mudug region, the most affected region, the international organisations operating in the Northeast are, in the absence of a strong regional structure, the largest providers of the much-needed social services and this is generally recognised. Nevertheless, their activities are uncoordinated and, at times poorly executed, so that the impact is less effective. There exists a general need to increase the participatory role of the beneficiaries so as to inculcate in the hearts and minds of the targeted population a sense of ownership in order to make the development projects sustainable, out-living their intervention phase. This is crucial in a situation in which public property had become no-one's property, and, hence, ransacked and pillaged. The PRA formula currently utilised by UNOPS seems to be a step in the right direction, and is an approach worth pursuing, provided that formation of community-based steering committees is not used, as is feared in some quarters, as a means to by-pass and weaken the nascent administrations.



THE CHALLENGE

As in other war-torn societies, reactions to the complex problems of the post-conflict environment tend to be reactive and ad hoc, as people become entangled in the many urgent problems, and tend to lose sight of the longer term issues. There often appears to be little time, or interest, for consultation, collective understanding and planning; where the time and capacity exists, it is often divorced from the policy makers who need it most. The challenge will be to achieve a collective understanding of the situation, and better define the policy alternatives available to decision makers in the political, economic and social spheres. Doing so requires analysis not only of the issues, but also the complex linkages between them and the inter-relationships between different policies of different actors at different levels of society, and the engagement of all actors in this analysis so that they are better prepared to make sound, timely decisions, exploiting their respective comparative advantages and complementarily.

Northeast Somalia, as a de facto entity, has been defined throughout the last seven years of statelessness and political uncertainty by the pervasive kinship social order of the Majerteen: the three administrative regions of North Mudug, Nugaal and Bari that actually delimit and define Northeast Somalia as a cultural and territorial entity neatly replicate the customary land frequented and controlled by the Majerteen clans and allied Darood groups. Yet the relatively stable Northeast has not been able to form institutions of governance that are required to regulate and facilitate action in political, economic and social spheres. Instead, the population of the area has been served throughout the prolonged social upheaval by the survival of the traditional system of rule. Peace and stability have been secured in the Northeast mainly by the effort of traditional leaders who have been propelled to public life by the absence of modern institutions of governance.

The existence of two strategic economic assets in the Northeast - Boosaaso port and the Boosaaso-Mogadishu and Boosaaso to Hargeysa highways - has permitted the vital import/export trade to thrive, generating new economic opportunities. The relatively robust local economy has encouraged private investment in the reconstruction of urban centres and in expansion of the service sector, transforming the Northeast from a remote backwater into one of the most dynamic parts of post-war Somalia, and mitigating the impact on the resident population of the influx of residents, returnees, and displaced with limited international assistance.

This generally positive economic progress has been entirely unplanned and unregulated. Economic actors include freewheeling and fiercely competitive individual traders who often are bound to their kin groups by guarantees of protection for their lives and their property. These merchants have benefited from the absence of controls on economic activity, but they have also suffered from the absence of institutions which could facilitate commerce and protect their individual (and collective) interests: local traders are adversely affected by the inability to plan and organise export operations in order to maximise returns; they are exposed to vagaries of external markets and are at the mercy of foreign merchants and brokers. The productive sectors in the Northeast, on which the export economy depends, are also being threatened by a trend of increasing appropriation and commercialisation of public assets, and the over-exploitation of scarce pastoral resources. In the absence of supportive public administration, and as peace and stability returns to other parts of Somalia, the Northeast will increasingly find itself in commercial competition with other regions, and may not be able to sustain the current level of exports through Boosaaso; part of the trade via Boosaaso has already begun to shift to other ports in Somalia.

Resources for reconstruction and development in the Northeast ultimately depend upon local exports of livestock, frankincense and fish - the proceeds of which are used to purchase imported food stuffs and manufactured consumer goods to be traded in the markets of the Northeast or transhipped to other parts



of Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. Taxation on exports and imports is the most important source of potential revenue for public administration over the short- to medium-term; its collection and management will be essential to the restoration of local government, and of institutions capable of maintaining public safety and the rule of law. The sustainable use of the region's natural resources (and primary export products), and the promotion of trade are thus inextricably linked to the development of a revenue base for emergent local administrative structures and the restoration, even to a limited degree, of social services.

In the absence of public institutions, the Northeast has witnessed rapid development of social service delivery by the private sector, successfully challenging the entrenched public perception that provision of basic services is exclusively the domain of government. However, private service delivery is neither planned nor co-ordinated, and its profit-driven expansion has so far limited it to lucrative areas like telecommunications and transport in the urban sector, and construction of private sources of water in the nomadic range lands; health and education services are uneven, and often of poor quality, so far failing to fill the gap left by the collapse of state-run services. Nevertheless, the unprecedented dynamism of the private sector, and the meagre resources available for development of the public sector, suggest that, unlike the previous regime, the role of a future administration will be primarily the regulation of private services, rather than direct provision.

The unique situation of Somalia has placed international actors in a situation in which they have assumed growing responsibility for delivery of basic services like education, health, water supply and even maintenance of strategic facilities (ports and airports). The function of many programmes has therefore been to usurp basic functions of government, including delivery of health, education and water services to the local population. But if external aid is to make a truly constructive and sustainable contribution to recovery, it must focus instead on strengthening local actors. Without the full participation and co-operation of local authorities and the wider beneficiary population in the decision-making and management of social and economic rehabilitation, the direction of the reconstruction process will remain essentially in the hands of myriad, uncoordinated donors and international actors based in Nairobi, Europe and North America. Local and international actors involved in reconstruction of the Northeast, and Somalia as a whole, are bound to co-operate in this vital task.

Statelessness and decomposition of institutions of government, as well as unresolved political differences between clan-based factions, distinguish the Somali case from the other WSP country projects. Where in other countries reform and democratisation, including devolution of power and authority represent a crucial challenge to the rebuilding process, in Somalia the key issue facing the rebuilding process constitutes reconstruction of basic institutions of government. The Northeast remains suspended in a "permanent transition" seven years after ousting of Siyad Barre's regime. A fragile peace kept by the good offices of traditional authority has certainly promoted social and economic stability, but clan-based peacekeeping cannot substitute for the law and order functions of a modern state. Nor can the informal economy replace the functions of formal public and financial institutions. The private sector cannot fulfil all social needs, particularly those of the poorest and most vulnerable. But until the key actors in all of these sectors perceive common institutions as an opportunity rather than a threat, and government as a forum for common interest rather than special interest, then rebuilding the Northeast will remain the hostage of competing and contradictory agenda.