

# HERITAGE

I N S T I T U T E



# GALMUDUG

**GOVERNANCE, STATE FORMATION, CONFLICT DYNAMICS, AND RECONCILIATION**

March 2024

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# 1. Executive Summary

Somalia has made slow and steady progress in its state-building process, yet there remain significant challenges and vulnerabilities that could weaken the legitimacy of public institutions, the process of state formation, peacebuilding, and state-building, and citizens' participation in governance. Cultivating and strengthening trust in the formal institutions of Galmudug at all levels and empowering citizens, particularly youth and women, to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility are crucial steps in enhancing the legitimacy, effectiveness, and transparency of these institutions and in moving forward.



*Talo Wadaag Phase II Program aims to enable Somali citizens in Galmudug to effectively participate in governance, peace, and state-building processes*

In pursuit of the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (HIPS) vision of a stable and peaceful Somalia guided by evidence-based policies, the Talo Wadaag Phase II Program aims to enable Somali citizens in Galmudug to effectively participate in governance, peace, and state-building processes. This study was undertaken in the framework of the Talo Wadaag Phase II Programme. The study investigated factors shaping the processes of state formation in Galmudug. These factors include clan politics, economic considerations, conflict dynamics, governance, elections (both direct and indirect), the condition of internally displaced persons (IDPs), peace, and the reconciliation processes. The authors of this study expect that the findings will help peacebuilders, policymakers, university students, community practitioners, and international communities interested in Somali affairs to understand the historical processes of the evolution of Galmudug formation, and its current situation, and that it will assist them in predicting future state-building trends. Such an understanding will also help the abovementioned target groups develop relevant policies that address challenges encountered in the processes of the state formation, reconciliation, and governance. Similarly, the findings will assist the target audience to understand the sensitivities attached to the process of the state formation and how to respond in a culturally appropriate manner. The study has some limitations. First, it is based only on a literature review and therefore, it cannot capture or present people's direct views and feelings on the topic as would direct interviews and observations. Second, the study was conducted mainly in 2023; since that time some changes have occurred to the state-building processes. Third, while the authors tried to review and investigate the topic as much as they could, all literature about Galmudug has not been exhausted.

Information gleaned from the available studies about Galmudug demonstrates that the more institutions adopt inclusive policies and practices, the more they consolidate the processes of peacebuilding and prevention of violent conflicts. In Somalia, however, when the term inclusion is used in discussing traditional governance, it is primarily associated with accommodating (male) clan elders. Similar to that in other federal member states, cultural practice largely restricts the involvement of ordinary Galmudug citizens—notably women, youth, and marginalized groups—in the formal governance and state-building processes. In Galmudug, women in particular are underrepresented in local government, parliament, and the cabinet, which may diminish the process of the formation of inclusive and stable state-building.

As noted above, this paper reviews the literature about Galmudug with special emphasis on clan politics, conflict dynamics, the IDP situations, and citizens' participation in reconciliation processes and state formation, including in indirect local government elections. The challenges limiting women's involvement in local government and state-building are highlighted. The important role women can play in reconciliation will be underlined. This paper also provides an overview of the role of internal and external actors in building a state as well as local reconciliation in Galmudug.

### The research found that:

- “  
The formation of Galmudug was largely shaped by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS)
1. The formation of Galmudug was largely shaped by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) while the international community provided technical and financial assistance. In many ways, the state is still dependent on the FGS and to a lesser extent on the support from the international community. As Galmudug was not a locally driven project in the first place, community ownership was not strong; however, as time passed, community ownership has improved.
  2. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, there have been numerous clan-based reconciliation activities supported by both local communities and international NGOs. As a result, Galmudug's capacity to reconcile clan-based local conflicts has improved. While reconciliation may reflect positively on the ground and with local governments, political tension at the state level is simmering on the horizon due to the end of President Ahmed Abdi Kariye's tenure at the end of 2024. This possible political crisis requires intervention before it is too late. The FGS, supported by the traditional elders, religious scholars, and women, are best placed to take preventative measures.
  3. It is argued that successful state-building starts with local councils. However, the vast majority of Galmudug districts have only commissioners but no local councilors. Local councils are the first contact point for ordinary people and grassroots activities. In this bottom-up approach, local citizens can exercise their rights and participate in public life in general. At the same time, they can interact with their local authorities and contribute to improving governance, state-building, and solving local problems. If handled well, local councils can be a community-reconciliatory process.
  4. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region face a miserable situation caused by drought, insecurity, and heavy rain in Galmudug that continued for several weeks. The war against al-Shabaab was limited by the rain that saturated the land. This situation has been aggravated by IDPs' inability to become full citizens unless they are aligned with local clan dynamics. As a result, the IDPs, particularly women, are unable to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes that touch their everyday lives.
- “  
Successful state-building starts with local councils
- “  
If handled well, local councils can be a community-reconciliatory process.

5. Galmudug is teetering economically. The state has very limited income-generating sources except for airports. As a result, Galmudug’s survival is contingent on FGS and international NGO support. Galmudug’s wealthiest businesspeople have invested in Mogadishu rather than in their own state, while Galmudug politicians offer only very limited service to the issue of the long-awaited Hobyo port. However, in a new development, Galmudug’s current president inaugurated the construction of Hobyo seaport on December 10, 2023. In a landmark agreement with Hobyo Investment Company (HICO) signed in December 2023, the Galmudug government allotted 60km of land and other requirements to HICO, which will invest 300 million USD to manage, finance, and develop the port of Hobyo. The Galmudug Parliament passed the agreement in early 2024.

## 2. Introduction

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making institutions  
less centralized  
and more inclusive  
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conflict prevention,  
peace, and stability

Somalia’s military government collapsed in early 1991. Therefore, the project of Somalia’s federalism was adopted to address the challenges and violent political conflicts inherited from extreme centralism. The World Bank and the UN reported that making institutions less centralized and more inclusive are the keys to conflict prevention, peace, and stability. Galmudug is one of the five federal member states. Federalism in Somalia was adopted in principle during the 2002–2004 Somalia National Reconciliation Conference led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Kenya. Despite that fact, federalism and formation of federal member states (FMS), with the exception of Puntland, began for practical purposes after the 2012 Provisional Constitution was agreed.<sup>1</sup> The formation of Puntland had preceded even the establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the subsequent federal member states.

The formation of Galmudug state has been influenced by a complexity of factors including the defeat of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), the emergence of al-Shabaab, the subsequent rise of Ahlu Sunna Wa Jama’a (ASWJ), the involvement of the eleven stake-holding clans, and various political entities. Similarly, the Federal Government of Somalia played a major role in the establishment of Galmudug. The international community has also contributed significantly to the logistics and technical support.<sup>2</sup> This report is an attempt to provide evidence-based knowledge drawn from the literature available from Galmudug. While the findings shed light on the process of state formation in the general sense, they cannot present all local experiences and strategies followed during formation across Galmudug. Therefore, further studies are required to delve into a deeper level of state formation for Galmudug.

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2. Horncenter, (2023). Mapping the foundations of peace in Galmudug state, Somalia: Reconciliation, security and rule of law, state-building, democratization, and decentralization. Horncenter.

### 3. Research objectives

This paper explores the process of Galmudug's state formation from the early 2000s until today and:

- Examines how national and local politics have impacted state formation and governance
- Identifies security and conflict dynamics together with the main internal and external actors involved in the state-building processes
- Investigates the importance of fairly conducted indirect local government elections for stability, social trust, governance legitimacy, and preparation for regional and federal elections
- Explores challenges limiting the participation of marginalized groups in the process of democratization
- Highlights political and social reconciliation processes in Galmudug since the early 2000s
- Examines issues surrounding internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their role as citizens in governance
- Provides understanding of Galmudug's economic challenges and opportunities

### 4. Methodology

The paper employs descriptive and analytical methods of reviewing literature. The descriptive research method describes the existing situation using information available about any given topic. The researchers measure and report what has happened or what is happening using literature, comparative and correlational methods, and fact-finding enquiries. For the analytical method, the researchers use facts and information that have already been documented, analyzing and evaluating these critically to explain the situation.<sup>3</sup> This paper also utilizes the snowball technique, which helps in identifying important publications relevant to the researchers' topic of interest. The study methodology is limited literature reviews focused primarily on Galmudug. Security, political, and socioeconomic issues in Galmudug have been developing and changing over time. Such changes may expose the limitations of this study.

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## 5. Geography

Situated in the southern center of the country, Galmudug is one of the five federal member states of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The term Galmudug is a recent concept that emerged in the late 2000s.<sup>4</sup> It is a combination of the Galgaduud and Mudug regions. Geographically, Galmudug consists of Galgaduud and South Mudug

Galgaduud province comprises several old and new districts: Cabudwaaq, Cadaado, Dhuusamarreeb, Balanballe, Ceelbuur, Ceeldheere, Xeraale and Baxdo. One report<sup>5</sup> estimated the population of Galgaduud at 689,872 in 2022. Galgaduud province shares borders with the regions of Mudug, Hiiraan, and Shabeelaha Dhexe (Middle Shabelle), as well as with the Somali region of Ethiopia and the Indian Ocean. Hawiye clans are the dominant clans in Galgaduud though the Mareexaan, and other clans also inhabit the region.

South Mudug is also composed of several old and new districts: South Gaalkacyo, Hobyo, Xarardheere, Afbarwaaqo, Wisil, Ceelguula, Gallinsoor, and Bandiiradley. In 2022 Mudug's population was reported at 1,317,403 including both the Galmudug and Puntland sides.<sup>6</sup> An earlier report in 2021 stated that the Mudug population was 717,863.<sup>7</sup> Gaalkacyo, the capital city of Mudug, is divided between Galmudug and Puntland. The Mudug region shares borders with Galgaduud, Nugaal, Ethiopia, and the Indian Ocean. South Mudug is inhabited mainly by the Hawiye though other clans such as the Dir clan also have a presence.<sup>8</sup>

## 6. Clan politics, state formation and governance



*Before independence in the mid-1960s, the Italian-governed Somali territory consisted of six administrative regions; one of these, then known as Mudug, included the same boundaries as the current Galmudug*

For centuries, the Galmudug region was inhabited by Somali tribes and ruled by Sultanates, traditional clan elders or religious authorities who had good relationships with the Ottoman caliphates.<sup>9</sup> Among the tribes mentioned in the early history of this area were the Hawiye and the Marehan, who were referenced in fighting against the Abyssinians.<sup>10</sup> Before independence in the mid-1960s, the Italian-governed Somali territory consisted of six administrative regions; one of these, then known as Mudug, included the same boundaries as the current Galmudug.<sup>11</sup>

4. Platform, S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process (unpublished). The Somali Dialogue Platform (Wadahadalada Somaaliyeed) is a programme, implemented by the Rift Valley Institute, that works to facilitate agreement amongst Somalis on contentious political issues. Please check: <https://riftvalley.net/projects/horn-of-africa/somali-dialogue-platform/>

5. European Union Agency for Asylum. (2023). Somali: Security situation. Accessed, [https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/2023\\_02\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Security\\_Situation\\_EN.pdf](https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/2023_02_COI_Report_Somalia_Security_Situation_EN.pdf), p.138.

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11. Paolo Tripodi, P. (1999). Back to the Horn: Italian administration and Somalia's troubled independence, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 32/2-3 (1999): p. 367.





*The formation of Galmudug was a contested and difficult process that in many ways symbolized the country's complicated federal project*

Today, Galmudug's clan structures shape the social and political systems of the state.<sup>12</sup> These systems are based on power-sharing between eleven clans: the ten clans of Salebaan, Sacad, Cayr, Duduble, Mareexaan, Murursade, Dir, Suruur, Wacaysle, Sheekhaal plus several smaller clans, such as the Madhibaan, Tumaal, and Haskul that together are considered as one group. This eleven-clan arrangement is a bit controversial and some argue that it only serves the interest of a few powerful clans.

The formation of Galmudug was a contested and difficult process that in many ways symbolized the country's complicated federal project.<sup>13</sup> The State of Galmudug emerged out of various local, amalgamated administrations run by sub-clans and, in some cases, by joint clans. Federalism was not a simple remedy for a fragmented society where the political state had disintegrated.<sup>14</sup> Instead, it was intended to address protracted conflict, instability, and an exclusionary political system inherited from the collapsed military regime.

In 2006, members from Sacad, (Habargidir), Sheekhaal, Dir, Hilebi (Murusade) and Madhibaan in southern Gaalkacyo formed the Gaalkacyo Regional State, electing Muxammed Cali Kiimiko as the first president and designating south Gaalkacyo as the capital. Other clan-based administrations in Galgaduud, such as Ximan (Himan) and Xeeb (Heeb), were formed and were administered by two Saleebaan sub-clans as a vehicle to resolve disputes. Ahlu Sunna Wal-Jama'a (ASWJ, a multi-clan Sufi group including Cayr, Dir, and Mareexaan) in Dhuusamareeb, Guriceel, Caabudwaaq, Balanbale and Xeraale (originally supported by Ethiopia) emerged as a new administration after they had defeated al-Shabaab.<sup>15</sup>

In 2014, Galmudug, Ximan, and Xeeb jointly signed an agreement with Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a in Mogadishu to endorse the new Central Regions State.<sup>16</sup> The minister of Interior and Federal Affairs of the Federal Government of Somalia, Abdullahi Goodax Barre, appointed a technical committee consisting of twenty-six members that included four women in order to form Galmudug.<sup>17</sup> The Puntland authorities of that time rejected its establishment, arguing that it contravened the provisional constitution<sup>18</sup> which states that federal member states should consist at least of two regions<sup>19</sup> and that Galmudug was only one full province composed of Galgaduud and South of Mudug. After pressure from the international community, Puntland accepted the establishment of Galmudug.

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13. Ibid.

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19. Article 48 of the provisional constitution of Somalia states: "Two or more regions may merge to form a federal member state."



*In 2015, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud launched the state formation conference in Cadaado, which brought the eleven stake-holding clans of Galgaduud and South Mudug together to negotiate power-sharing and state-building. It was a defining moment in the establishment of Galmudug.*

In 2015, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud launched the state formation conference in Cadaado,<sup>20</sup> which brought the eleven stake-holding clans of Galgaduud and South Mudug together to negotiate power-sharing and state-building. It was a defining moment in the establishment of Galmudug.<sup>21</sup> The constitution of Galmudug was adopted in Cadaado by the eleven clans in July 2015. It was decided that a Clan Elder Council (Guurti) consisting of twenty-five members would choose the eighty-nine members of the parliament according to the local clan distribution. Parliament elected the speaker and his deputies, the first president, Abdikarim Hussein Guleid, and the vice president. The president named his cabinet. In Galmudug, there are also two regional governors, district commissioners, district councils and an informal local council of elders that cover a range including clan and community reconciliation as well as judicial and governance functions.<sup>22</sup>

ASWJ, which had occupied parts of the Galgaduud region, including the capital city of Galmudug Dhuusamareeb, boycotted the process,<sup>23</sup> arguing that its efforts fighting al-Shabaab had not been recognized. As a result, ASWJ felt that it was marginalized during the state formation processes.<sup>24</sup>

In 2017, the Galmudug parliament elected Ahmed Duale Geelle (Haaf) as president. Following negotiations in Kenya and Djibouti facilitated by IGAD, ASWJ joined Haaf's government<sup>25</sup> after he created the "Chief of the Cabinet" post for them.<sup>26</sup> Some politicians from certain clans were unhappy that ASWJ's leader, Sheikh Shaakir, had received such a prominent role, as he and Haaf both belonged to the Habargidir, a sub-clan of the Hawiye. They argued that the new position for Sheikh Shaakir has weakened the roles of elected officials, such as the vice president and the speaker of parliament.

The government later moved from its interim seat at Cadaado to Dhuusamareeb, making Galmudug the only state except Puntland to operate in its capital city. To please Saleebaan, the Hawiye sub-clan inhabited Cadaado, two former Galmudug presidents, Abdikarim Guled and Ahmed Duale Gelle (Xaaf) promised that the parliament (not the cabinet) would operate out of Cadaado, though the latter did not fulfill his promise.<sup>27</sup> Xaaf was succeeded by Ahmed Abdi Kariye (Qoorqoor). However, ASWJ rejected Qoorqoor's election.<sup>28</sup>

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And on February 28, 2020, Haaf's government, supported by FGS forces, defeated ASWJ and seized full control of Dhusamareeb.<sup>29</sup> Some of ASWJ's armed groups were then absorbed into the Somali army and the Galmudug security forces.<sup>30</sup> In a new development, ASWJ pledged in Guriceel in June 2023 to support the FGS's war against al-Shabaab.<sup>31</sup> In September, ASWJ militia from Wisil district joined Galmudug security forces on the offensive against al-Shabaab.<sup>32</sup>



*Qoorqoor administration enjoyed enough political stability for the president to then play a significant role in the political turmoil of the national level elections*

The consolidation of his government in the capital Dhuusamareeb provided a unique opportunity for Qoorqoor to form his government without the involvement of ASWJ. Although capturing Dhuusamareeb was bloody, the Qoorqoor administration enjoyed enough political stability for the president to then play a significant role in the political turmoil of the national level elections.

It is clear that the formation of Galmudug was an ongoing process of negotiation and testing of relationships among various power-holders, regional political leaders, and the FGS.<sup>33</sup> Its formation was strongly influenced by the federal government, which was heavily involved in the process of state-building along with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Somali Stability Fund (SSF) and Finnish Church Aid (FCA). Some analysts argue that Galmudug was a platform contested by rival political actors based in Mogadishu rather than a genuine reconciliation process for local communities. As a result, local ownership and involvement were weak.<sup>34</sup>

The current Galmudug leadership has recently taken positive steps to consolidate security, governance, and unity. Piracy has been stamped out and al-Shabaab largely defeated. Yet its complex, clan-based politics have left the state weak, fragile, and vulnerable to internal disputes. Clans were militarized during the conflict with Ethiopia in the 1970s, and after the collapse of the military regime, countless weapons fell into the hands of civilians.<sup>35</sup> In 2019, there were numerous checkpoints run by various militias and each collected their own taxes.<sup>36</sup> However, the situation has improved since and most checks have been removed.



*Clans were militarized during the conflict with Ethiopia in the 1970s, and after the collapse of the military regime, countless weapons fell into the hands of civilians*

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30. Hiiraan Online. (October 23, 2019). Reconciliation process of Galmudug State: Success factors and lessons learned. Accessed, [https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2019/oct/165911/reconciliation\\_process\\_of\\_galmudug\\_state\\_success\\_factors\\_and\\_lessons\\_learned.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2019/oct/165911/reconciliation_process_of_galmudug_state_success_factors_and_lessons_learned.aspx).

31. Hiiraan Online. (June 24, 2023). ASWJ pledges support for federal government's anti-al-Shabab operation. Accessed, [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2023/Jun/191971/aswj\\_pledges\\_support\\_for\\_federal\\_government\\_s\\_anti\\_al\\_shabab\\_operation.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2023/Jun/191971/aswj_pledges_support_for_federal_government_s_anti_al_shabab_operation.aspx).

32. Caasimada. (September 13, 2023). Wararkii ugu dambeeyey ciidamada qaranka oo la wareegay degaano dhowr ah. Accessed, <https://www.caasimada.net/wararkii-ugu-dambeeyey-ciidamada-qaranka-oo-la-wareegay-degaano-dhowr-ah/>.

33. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: Federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.safeworld-global.org/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>.

34. Barise, Z. (September 2019). Hobyo peace conference. Accessed, [http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE\\_revised\\_&\\_final.pdf](http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE_revised_&_final.pdf).

35. Dialogue Platform (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process (unpublished).

36. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/> p. 4.

## 7. Main actors

Main internal actors include pirate syndicates that are now defunct and ASWJ (once the most powerful military actor fighting al-Shabaab but now dormant), the FGS, the Galmudug State, the eleven clans that established Galmudug, the Macawisley<sup>37</sup> clan-affiliated militias, and al-Shabaab.

Each of the eleven clans has a considerable political stake, though three in particular of the eleven clans have an outsized influence: Gaalkacyo-based Sacad, Cadaado-based Saleebaan, and the Dhuusamarreeb-dominated Cayr. On the other hand, the disunity of these three powerful sub-clans is central to the fragmentation of Galmudug. Therefore the Hobyo reconciliation conference of Habargidir was to reconcile and unite all Habargidir sub-clans.<sup>38</sup>

“  
The line between the state’s armed forces and local clan militias is blurred.”

The line between the state’s armed forces and local clan militias is blurred.<sup>39</sup> Galmudug and the FGS have recently liberated large areas of the state from al-Shabaab. That success was attributed to the involvement of civilians and Macawisley clan militias who joined with Galmudug Darwish and the Somali National Army (SNA) to wage war against al-Shabaab.<sup>40</sup> The areas still controlled fully or partly by al-Shabaab are primarily inhabited by the Hawiye sub-clans: Duduble, Murusade, and Wacaysle. These sub-clans are concerned with the Habargidir domination of the government, making al-Shabaab a convenient partner from their perspective.<sup>41</sup> However, some people may argue that these three Hawiye sub-clans are not involved to the same extent in regard to their engagement with al-Shabaab. While Habargidir sub-clans were armed more to defend themselves from al-Shabaab, it is argued that other Hawiye sub-clans like Duduble, Murusade, and Wacaysle were overpowered and ruled by al-Shabaab more than fifteen years.

Externally, Ethiopian security forces working to prevent al-Shabaab from spreading across the border were included among the external actors.<sup>42</sup> However, their role in Galmudug has decreased since Abiy Ahmed’s rise to power.

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37. Macawisley is a clan-based non-state actor. It started its armed activities in the Middle Shabelle region of Hirshabelle State in Somalia when al-Shabaab attempted to force the residents of Gulane village to donate money, weapons, and boys to fight against Somalia government. A group of men led by a man called Hibad rejected those efforts and began fighting al-Shabaab. Then the Macawisley style spread into Hirshabelle and Galmudug. Please check: Maruf, H. (October 4, 2022). Ma’awisley’ militias in central Somalia mobilizing against al-Shabab. VOA. Accessed, <https://www.voanews.com/a/ma-awisley-militias-in-central-somalia-mobilizing-against-al-shabab-/6776048.html>.

48. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/>.

39. In normal situations, “soldiers” refer to formal army troops recruited by governments. Soldiers receive salaries and rations, are part of a unit, and have chain commanders. In contrast, the term “militia” refers to bands of locals armed by their clans and communities to defend them. In general, militias operate in situations of fragile, failed, collapsed, or disintegrated states such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, Syria, Somalia, Central African Republic, and so on. Thus, militia groups can be organized along narrow political/clan lines, and religious groups—like al-Shabaab—to represent the aspirations of their groups and defend their territory. Please check: Accord. (2016). Understanding civil militia groups in Somalia. Accessed, <https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/understanding-civil-militia-groups-somalia/> and also Easo (2021), Somali actors: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021\\_07\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Actors.pdf](https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_07_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Actors.pdf), p.98.

40. European Union Agency for Asylum. (2023). Somali: Security situation. Accessed, [https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/2023\\_02\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Security\\_Situation\\_EN.pdf](https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/2023_02_COI_Report_Somalia_Security_Situation_EN.pdf), p. 140.

41. Easo. (2021). Somali actors: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021\\_07\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Actors.pdf](https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_07_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Actors.pdf), p. 98.

42. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/> p. 4.

Other external actors include African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)—recently changed to African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and represented by Djibouti security forces—stationed in Dhuusamareeb to protect the airport.

Several international NGOs, including SSF and UN agencies such as United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and UNDP, are—among other external actors—working on Galmudug’s state-building processes.<sup>43</sup> UNSOM has an office in Dhuusamareeb and has recently acquired land in the capital to provide a base for UN agencies and other international bodies. This may help the international NGOs to support Galmudug in developing its institutions and strengthening reconciliation, peace, and state-building processes. It may also boost democratization and election processes and deliver much-needed basic services, especially in the areas recently recovered from al-Shabaab.<sup>44</sup>

## 8. Indirect local government elections

Somalia’s President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has said that the next national elections will be one-person, one-vote and based on a political party system, a departure from the indirect voting system that has often triggered crises in the past.<sup>45</sup>

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Indirect local elections can facilitate public debate and constructive talks between traditional clan elders about their respective grievances and acknowledge each side’s needs and feelings.

In local government, however, research has shown that indirect local government elections can contribute positively to unity.<sup>46</sup> New studies focused on Southwest State found that indirect local elections were perceived to be innovative and to promote reconciliation, in contrast to the indirect state and federal elections that are seen as mired in widespread corruption and violence, “where politicians present imposters as clan leaders.”<sup>47</sup> Indirect local elections can facilitate public debate and constructive talks between traditional clan elders about their respective grievances and acknowledge each side’s needs and feelings. This alleviates grievances, removes hurdles on the path to the formation of local governments, and promotes the election of respected, active, and effective members of local communities.<sup>48</sup>

In Galmudug, the city of Cadaado, which was largely unharmed by Somalia’s civil war is a positive example of locally selected/elected district leaders. Cadaado has an effective local administration, chosen by local delegates, that runs its municipal affairs.<sup>49</sup>

43. Easo. (2021). Somali actors: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021\\_07\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Actors.pdf](https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_07_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Actors.pdf).

44. UNSOM, (February 11, 2023). United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia. Accessed, <https://unsom.unmissions.org/visit-dhusamareeb-un-signs-agreement-establishment-office-galmudug>.

45. Citizen Digital. (March 22, 2023). Somalia’s President commits to universal suffrage. Accessed, <https://www.citizen.digital/news/somalias-president-commits-to-universal-suffrage-n316565#:~:text=Somalia’s%20President%20Hassan%20Sheikh%20Mohamud,in%20more%20than%2050%20years.>

46. Platform. S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process.

47. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (2023). District council formation through indirect election in Southwest State of Somalia: A means to democratization. Accessed,

<https://8v90f1.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Local-council-formation-in-Southwest-state-English.pdf>.

48. Ibid.

49. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/> p. 1

Only Cadaado and South Gaalkacyo had councils before 2020.<sup>50</sup> All other district councils were established after the 2020 election of Qoorqoor. Most districts in Galmudug, including several older districts and ten new districts, have no councilors at all. The districts without councilors include Hobyo, Xarardheere, Galinsoor, Afbarwaaqo, Wisil, Ceelguula, Gallinsoor and Bandiiradley in Mudug together with Ceelbuur, Ceeldheer, and Baxdo in Galgaduud.

Of 171 councilors in the state, only twenty-six are women, 15.2 percent of the total. In recent local elections, only three of twenty-three local district council seats in Cadaado were allocated for women.<sup>51</sup> In Balanbale district,<sup>52</sup> five of twenty-one seats went to women; six of thirty-three in Dhuusamareeb district;<sup>53</sup> three of twenty-three in Caabudwaaq district;<sup>54</sup> and one of twenty-one in Xeraale. In Guriceel district, three women were chosen among twenty-three councilors.



*This clan-oriented mindset may exclude certain social groups, particularly women who are seen as a risky choice to represent their clans. This is because the politicization of clan identity was perceived to be one of the barriers to women's participation*

The 2018 UN and World Bank report, *Pathways for Peace*, argued that making institutions more inclusive is the key to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.<sup>55</sup> However, in Somali society, the term 'inclusion' is primarily and historically linked to clan inclusion, notably represented by older men.<sup>56</sup> This clan-oriented mindset may exclude certain social groups, particularly women who are seen as a risky choice to represent their clans.<sup>57</sup> This is because the politicization of clan identity was perceived to be one of the barriers to women's participation<sup>58</sup> in clan-based politics. In the Somali culture, women are perceived as unreliable representatives due to their dual affiliation to the clans of their fathers and their husbands. However, the gender norms and expectations that delegitimize women do not necessarily seem to be static but fluid and can change over time.<sup>59</sup>

A new report showed that, due to cultural knowledge of the communities, properly and creatively organized indirect elections in the remote and rural areas in the Southwest State were more effective in including women and minorities than were constitutional directives.<sup>60</sup>

50. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>, pp. 23–25.

51. Mudug24. (August 9, 2022). Galmudug oo soo saartay liiska golaha deegaanka Cadaado (Akhriiso). Accessed, <https://mudug24.com/galmudug-oo-soo-saartay-liiska-golaha-deegaanka-cadaado-akhriiso/>.

52. SNTV. (October 7, 2022). Galmudug oo shaacisay liiska golaha deegaanka balanbale. Accessed, <https://sntv.so/2022/10/07/galmudug-oo-shaacisay-liiska-golaha-deegaanka-balanbale/>.

53. Mogadishu Times. (November 2, 2022). Liiska magacyada golaha deegaanka dhuusamareeb oo la shaaciyayey. Accessed, <https://mogtimes.com/articles/55161/Liiska-magacyada-Golaha-Deegaanka-Dhuusamareeb-oo-la-shaaciyay> and also, Radio Muqdisho TV (November 2, 2022). Doorashada golaha deegaanka Dhuusamareeb oo la soo gaba-gabeeyay. Accessed, <https://radiomuqdisho.so/doorashada-golaha-deegaanka-dhuusamareeb-oo-la-soo-gaba-gabeeyay/>.

54. Dalka TV. (October 30, 2022). Liiska cusub ee magacyada xubnaha Golaha deeganka degmada Caabudwaaq. Accessed, <https://www.facebook.com/DalkanewsTv/posts/liiska-cusub-ee-magacyada-xubnaha-golaha-deeganka-degmada-caabudwaaq/1819125311787226/>.

55. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: Federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics. (2017). Somali women's political participation and leadership – evidence and opportunity. Accessed, [https://iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/somali\\_women\\_s\\_political\\_participation\\_and\\_leadership\\_evidence\\_29\\_sept.pdf](https://iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/somali_women_s_political_participation_and_leadership_evidence_29_sept.pdf).

59. Ibid.

60. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (2023). District council formation through indirect election in Southwest State of Somalia: A means to democratization. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/district-council-formation-through-indirect-election-in-southwest-state-of-somalia-ameans-to-democratization/>.

Local stakeholders such as religious leaders, traditional clan elders, and other key community members also needed to be consulted, as they recognized the important contribution of women to the wellbeing of communities.<sup>61</sup> In contrast, in districts like Hudur where local culture and local consultation were ignored, no women were elected.<sup>62</sup> The study further explained that women's chances in the Southwest State local elections have been attributed partly to the participation of women delegates who constituted 20 percent of the delegates who elected local councilors in some places.

The low level of female representation in local governments also extends to the state level. There were just eight women among eighty-nine legislators in Galmudug (including the second deputy speaker of parliament)<sup>63</sup> that the Technical Committee of the Galmudug State Formation released on January 10, 2020. Among the cabinet members unveiled by the president of Galmudug on April 23, 2020, the Council of Ministers<sup>64</sup> consisted of twenty-three members of whom just two were women. Women believe they will gain more seats with one-person, one-vote elections. As a young female councilor, recently elected in Puntland's pilot election in Qardho, said:

*"I never thought that I would be elected because people used to go to a clan elder to write an approval letter and he could have refused my application because I am a woman. I was active in the civil society... so it [being a councilor] came easily to me. I was offered to be a candidate since I was active in civil society. I succeeded and was elected."<sup>65</sup>*

The Southwest study demonstrated that the indirect local elections were not imposed by the state or by the FGS. The elections were not held until all clans accepted the allotment of seats and were a bottom-up process rather than a top-down approach.<sup>66</sup> As a result, these elections were perceived to be possible and an alternative new model for the democratic political culture in the state<sup>67</sup> since the preparation for one-person, one-vote elections seemed to pay only lip service at this moment

Freely and fairly elected councilors may show some level of transparency and integrity that can be utilized as an effective mechanism of reconciliation and conflict prevention. A recent study by the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies found that the fairly conducted indirect elections of Hudur's mayor in the Southwest and direct elections in Puntland's Qardho, Ufeyn, and Eyl districts resulted in acceptance of the outcome by local communities.

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61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Hiiraan Online. (January 10, 2020). Liiska xildhibaanada barlamaanka Galmudug oo la shaaciyay. Accessed, [https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2020/jan/wararka\\_maanta10-163096.htm](https://www.hiiraan.com/news/2020/jan/wararka_maanta10-163096.htm).

64. Goobjoog. (April 24, 2020). Madaxweynaha Galmudug oo magacaabay Golihisa Wasiirada (Akhriiso Liiska: Xildhibaanada caan ah oo ka mida). Accessed, <https://goobjooge.net/madaxweynaha-galmudug-oo-magacaabay-golihiisa-wasiirada-akhriiso-liiska-xildhibaanada-caan-ah-oo-ka-mida/>.

65. Daljir Media. (January 12, 2023). Accessed, <https://twitter.com/radiodaljir/status/1613347211869409281>.

66. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (2023). District council formation through indirect election in Southwest State of Somalia: A means to democratization. Accessed, <https://8v90f1.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Local-council-formation-in-Southwest-state-English.pdf>.

67. Ibid.

The elected officials published their sources of revenue and how the money was spent. There is evidence that election transparency is a major preventative method against post-election violence. In contrast, misconducted, rigged and manipulated elections lead to mistrust of the outcome; they lack legitimacy and transparency, which leads to violence and contested results.<sup>68</sup>



*Some prominent Islamic scholars say that Islam does not prohibit women from partaking in political and public positions. They link such prohibitions to cultural norms rather than to Islamic values*

### Challenges facing women in gaining public service positions in Galmudug

Some prominent Islamic scholars say that Islam does not prohibit women from partaking in political and public positions. They link such prohibitions to cultural norms rather than to Islamic values. Other Islamic scholars, who have a strict interpretation of Islam, believe that women's participation in politics is irreconcilable with Islamic teachings. It is obvious that cultural norms, and to some extent, misconceptions of Islam, as well as financial constraints and social issues, constitute major challenges limiting Somali women's participation in politics and formal public life in general. A study by Saferworld<sup>69</sup> in 2022 found the following challenges facing women during the election process:

1. **Women are not clan elders:** Clan elders select candidates and therefore women's chances of being nominated are very limited. However, women from wealthy and prominent families have better chances to influence traditional clan elders than do women from marginalized and disadvantaged communities.
2. **Religious scrutiny:** Women's religious practices and cultural adherence are scrutinized publicly. This is compounded by the patriarchal culture, which disapproves of women's involvement in politics.
3. **Limited access to resources:** Women have limited access to resources, particularly to clan fundraising and donations that are crucial for election campaigns.
4. **Women are perceived as weak:** The patriarchal culture views women as a weaker choice to represent her clan. It is thought if an elder nominates a woman then the entire clan could be shamed for not having suitable men for the position.
5. **Women are perceived as having a dual identity:** A woman is perceived to belong to both her father's and her husband's clan. As a result, she is seen as an unreliable candidate for either clan.

The next federal election is scheduled for 2026, and the Somali National Consultative Council recently agreed to transition from the 4.5 formula to direct multiparty elections at all levels of government as there is growing public and international community disillusionment about the clan-based system.

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68. Ibid.

69. Saferworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>, pp. 23–25.



“starting with bottom-up local elections will be more cost-effective and easier than holding one-person, one-vote state and federal elections. District elections can then facilitate the national elections after any flaws are rectified and resolved

The government has also promised to include the large swaths of Somalia ruled by al-Shabaab in the universal vote.<sup>70</sup> However, a consensus of political agreement is needed first before holding any elections. In Galmudug, further studies are needed about the possibilities of organizing one-person, one-vote (1P1V) elections and about which of these two systems best suits the nascent state and could best bring social cohesion and stability.

Studies by the Peace Research Institute (PRIO) in 2023<sup>71</sup> argued that starting with bottom-up local elections will be more cost-effective and easier than holding one-person, one-vote state and federal elections. District elections can then facilitate the national elections after any flaws are rectified and resolved. Electoral issues at the state or federal levels could potentially undermine the entire election system and process. It is also true that if district level elections are unsuccessful, elections at the federal member state and federal government levels will also be unsuccessful.<sup>72</sup>

## 9. Reconciliation and peacebuilding

State-building after a prolonged violent conflict involves building relationships at all levels, restoring the trust within society, and providing people with greater hope for their future. It is also crucial to build society's trust in the government and its institutions through free and fair elections, dialogue, and engagement between leaders and their constituents as well as through providing services for citizens. Such positive relationships will give the authorities legitimacy and will contribute to stability.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, repairing damaged institutions, public infrastructure, or establishing new institutions responsive to social needs are a crucial part of the peace- and state-building process.<sup>74</sup>

“it is impossible to succeed in post-conflict state-building processes unless political settlement and social reconciliation within local communities are achieved

Almost all studies of peace and conflict indicate that it is impossible to succeed in post-conflict state-building processes unless political settlement and social reconciliation within local communities are achieved. In Galmudug, reconciliation between the political classes and also between clans that harbor grievances inherited from the prolonged violent conflict is necessary to build a viable state. In contrast to political reconciliation, Galmudug, since its formation, has experienced uneasy political processes. For instance, in 2023 President Ahmed Abdi Kariye (Qoorqoor) and Vice President Ali Dahir Eid engaged in a public dispute, issuing conflicting directives. The vice president dismissed Galmudug's interior minister, Abdi Mohamed Waayeel.

70. Caasimada. (March 24, 2023). DF oo sheegtay 'cidda hor-taagan' in dalka ay ka dhacdo doorasho 'qof iyo cod ah'. Accessed, <https://www.caasimada.net/df-oo-sheegtay-cidda-hortaagan-in-dalka-ay-ka-dhacdo-doorasho-qof-iyo-cod-ah/>.

71. Musa, A., Aden, H., Hosrt, S. (2023). Leveraging local elections to advance Somalia's transition to a multiparty democratic system. PRIO. Accessed, <https://www.prio.org/publications/13446>.

72. Ibid.

73. Banini, D. (May 11, 2023). West Africa has a small weapons crisis – Why some countries are better at dealing with it than others. Accessed, <https://theconversation.com/west-africa-has-a-small-weapons-crisis-why-some-countries-are-better-at-dealing-with-it-than-others-203085>.

74. Interpeace. (2008). Community based peace processes. Accessed, [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/2008\\_SomSC\\_Interpeace\\_CRD\\_Community\\_Based\\_Peace\\_Processes\\_EN.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/2008_SomSC_Interpeace_CRD_Community_Based_Peace_Processes_EN.pdf).

The president quickly reversed the dismissal.<sup>75</sup> Similarly a series of no-confidence motions against the former Galmudug president Ahmed Duale Gelle “Haaf,” his vice president Mohamed Hashi Abdi “Arrabey,” and the speaker of the parliament, Ali Gaal Asir were attempted by rival members of the parliament. The disagreement was linked to implementation of the power-sharing agreement reached on December 6, 2017.<sup>76</sup> Though Galmudug is stable and quiet at present, simmering tensions could increase with the elections at the end of 2024.<sup>77</sup>

There have been several reconciliation processes since the Galmudug state was formed in 2015. Some were organized by the FGS, others by the state or civil society together with local politicians. At the FGS level, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR)<sup>78</sup> organized a social reconciliation in Galmudug before the election of the incumbent president, Qoorqoor. The conference attracted 700 delegates representing all the eleven clans that established Galmudug.<sup>79</sup> The international community has also offered technical and financial support for conferences. The capacity of Galmudug itself to reconcile local conflicts has also improved. For example, the state reconciled the Lehelkase and Sacad clans, which had been fighting for thirty-five years. Similar local reconciliations could facilitate political stability.<sup>80</sup>

#### **Other reconciliation efforts have included the following:**

1. The Cayr sub-clan of Habargidir organized a reconciliation conference in Dhuusamareeb in January 2015. Eight sub-clans from Galgaduud and South Mudug attended. However, other Galmudug sub-clans, including Saleebaan, refused to come as Cadaado city—mainly inhabited by the Saleebaan—and Dhuusamareeb were competing to host the FGS reconciliation conference held for the purpose of forming Galmudug. At the end of that conference, the first president of Galmudug, Abdikarim Hussein Guleid, was elected.
2. A reconciliation conference between President Haaf and ASWJ was facilitated by IGAD and held in Nairobi and Djibouti.
3. In 2019, the FGS organized a hybrid conference in Dhuusamareeb that focused on social and political reconciliation in preparation for the election of President Xaaf’s successor. The FGS formed a twelve-member committee chaired by Professor Abdirahman Abdullahi Baadiyow. The committee invited 720 delegates representing all social groups from among the eleven Galmudug clans that formed the state. The main objective was to develop a shared understanding about the roadmap of conflict resolution.

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75. Horn Observer. (September 9, 2023). Power struggle between Galmudug president and deputy sparks crisis. Accessed, <https://hornobserver.com/articles/2444/Power-struggle-between-Galmudug-president-and-deputy-sparks-crisis>.

76. Reliefweb. (December 28, 2018). Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2018/1149). Accessed, <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/report-secretary-general-somalia-s20181149>.

77. International Crisis Group. (2024). Avoiding a new cycle of conflict Somalia’s Galmudug State. Accessed, Somalia’s <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/b193-avoiding-new-cycle-conflict-somalias-galmudug-state>.

78. Barise, Z. (September 2019). Hobyoo peace conference. Accessed, [http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE\\_revised\\_&\\_final.pdf](http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE_revised_&_final.pdf).

79. Interpeace. (2021). Galmudug reconciliation: Processes, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Accessed, [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug\\_Report.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug_Report.pdf).

80. Platform. S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process (unpublished).



*In a rare step in Somali politics, President Qoorqoor included leading figures from the opposition groups in his cabinet; local stakeholders said this gave Qoorqoor legitimacy in their eyes*

However, the process was overshadowed by a splinter between the FGS and ASWJ and opposition groups that accused the government of manipulating the process in favor of their own candidate. President Ahmed Abdi Kariye (Qoorqoor), who was supported by the FGS, was later elected as the third president of Galmudug.<sup>81</sup> In a rare step in Somali politics, President Qoorqoor included leading figures from the opposition groups in his cabinet; local stakeholders said this gave Qoorqoor legitimacy in their eyes. Qoorqoor, who has been described a pragmatic politician, improved his reputation within the political elites.<sup>82</sup>

4. Another important reconciliation conference was held in Hobyo in parallel with the Dhuusamareeb conference and was attended by Habargidir sub-clans, civil society groups, and politicians. Hobyo is an ancient coastal town populated mainly by Habargidir. Key conference objectives were to overcome differences and to reconcile and unify the largest clan in the state<sup>83</sup> while promoting peace and harmony with neighboring clans in the region and beyond. The conference continued for two months, concluding with the formation of a 67-member Council for Habargidir Leadership. It also endorsed the Dhuusamareeb reconciliation conference facilitated by the FGS.<sup>84</sup> The success of Hobyo was attributed to the fact that the Habargidir clan took ownership of the process rather than external actors. Women played a major role in fundraising for the conference.<sup>85</sup>
5. Another successful reconciliation was that between the Cayr and Mareexaan tribes. The authors of this paper obtained a copy of an agreement reached at the end of the conference, which was organized by the Interior Ministry of Galmudug and held in March 2023 in Galmudug. These two clans had been fighting for several years. At the end of the conference, they reached an agreement that included the following:
  - An immediate ceasefire starting March 11, 2023.
  - The Galmudug government should enforce the implementation of the agreement.
  - To avoid any further escalation and violence, each clan should stay in its territory.
  - If any person from these clans commits any crime or killing, he should be charged according to the Islamic law.
  - The Galmudug government should form a fact-finding committee to assess the level of damage caused by clan warfare.

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81. Interpeace. (2021). Galmudug reconciliation: Processes, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Accessed, [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug\\_Report.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug_Report.pdf), p. 18.

82. Platform. S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process (unpublished).

83. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/>.

84. Interpeace. (2008). Community based peace processes. Accessed, [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/2008\\_SomSC\\_Interpeace\\_CRD\\_Community\\_Based\\_Peace\\_Processes\\_EN.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/2008_SomSC_Interpeace_CRD_Community_Based_Peace_Processes_EN.pdf).

85. Barise, Z. (September 2019). Hobyo peace conference. Accessed, [http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE\\_revised\\_&\\_final.pdf](http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE_revised_&_final.pdf).

6. The Galmudug government supported by FGS resolved a prolonged conflict in the Xeraale-Hurshe community between two Dir sub-clans. This conflict was one of the most tragic in Galmudug and continued over three years, resulting in the deaths of seventy-nine people. The government allocated \$5,000 to each family who had lost members. Additionally, the government convinced rival communities to return to the owners all properties confiscated during the war.<sup>86</sup>

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women and youth groups were successful advocates for peace, community harmony, social integration, and humanitarian action. Despite this, women and youth are often side-lined in the decision-making processes

Studies conducted by the Berghof Foundation found that religious scholars, and to a less extent traditional clan elders are the primary individuals responsible for conflict resolution, reconciliation, and peace-making in Galmudug.<sup>87</sup> However, some community members argued that traditional clan elders can become involved negatively in violent conflicts with clans. The studies found that women and youth groups were successful advocates for peace, community harmony, social integration, and humanitarian action. Despite this, women and youth are often side-lined in the decision-making processes.<sup>88</sup> Berghof’s findings and other practical experience confirm that the more women actively participate in peacebuilding, the greater the probability of achieving peace because women include marginalized groups in the process. According to Michael Keating, the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Somalia, “Somalia will not have long lasting peace and deep reconciliation without women’s far-reaching contribution and recognition.”<sup>89</sup>

## 10. Security and conflict dynamics

Modern Galmudug has experienced bitter political rivalries and frequent clan warfare as multiple groups claimed domination over territory. Though some improvements have recently been observed over the last few years due to the reconciliation agreement of eleven sub-clans in Cadaado in 2015, the central regions of Somalia where Galmudug is located have experienced sporadic conflicts between clans due to the weakness of the governing authority.<sup>90</sup> Galmudug has had two presidents in four years and each has had a turbulent relationship with his vice president and with the speaker of parliament. Most of the sub-clans have also been engaged in active armed or political conflicts with one another.<sup>91</sup>

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86. Hiiraan Online. (October 23, 2019). Reconciliation process of Galmudug State: Success factors and lessons learned. Accessed, [https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2019/oct/165911/reconciliation\\_process\\_of\\_galmudug\\_state\\_success\\_factors\\_and\\_lessons\\_learned.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2019/oct/165911/reconciliation_process_of_galmudug_state_success_factors_and_lessons_learned.aspx).

87. Berghof. (2019). Conflict assessment, Galmudug State: An analysis of local perspectives. Accessed, [https://berghof-foundation.org/files/publications/2019\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Galmudug\\_EN.pdf](https://berghof-foundation.org/files/publications/2019_Report_Somalia_Galmudug_EN.pdf).

88. Ibid.

89. The United Nations. (September 13, 2018). Secretary-General’s Special Representative hails Somalia’s recent progress while cautioning against illusions about future challenges. Accessed, <https://press.un.org/en/2018/sc13503.doc.htm>.

90. Interpeace. (2021). Galmudug reconciliation: Processes, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Accessed [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug\\_Report.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug_Report.pdf).

91. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/>.



*The recapture of areas from al-Shabaab may bring new security challenges. Clan feuds suppressed by al-Shabaab may re-erupt as soon these areas are liberated*

While the overall security has improved slightly and steadily, and while Galmudug does not depend on AMISOM/ATMIS for the protection of government officials,<sup>92</sup> the state is still experiencing internal clan conflicts, and security and justice are in many ways administered through clan structures.<sup>93</sup> Arguably the heavily armed clans in Somalia are concentrated in Galmudug,<sup>94</sup> meaning the state has been, and is still, one of the major regions of confrontation in the country.<sup>95</sup> Meanwhile, conflict continues between the FGS and al-Shabaab, as the government forces captured two major cities, Xarardheere and Ceeldheer, in January 2023.<sup>96</sup> The recapture of areas from al-Shabaab may bring new security challenges. Clan feuds suppressed by al-Shabaab may re-erupt as soon these areas are liberated.

Another issue related to conflict is the status of the city of Gaalkacyo. Tension between the two sides of Gaalkacyo has precipitated violent conflicts and the scars of the war are still visible. While Gaalkacyo is still divided and has two different mayors, appointed by Galmudug and Puntland, the city has formed joint committees from both sides. These include a youth committee, a committee of the elderly (both men and women), security forces known as iskudhafka ciidamada nabadgelyada (integrated, joint security forces), a committee of businesses, and peace pioneers. Each committee is comprised of members from the Galmudug and Puntland sides of the city.<sup>97</sup> These committees were formed to advance reconciliation processes and social harmony in the city and beyond. Despite all these efforts in Gaalkacyo, the root causes of the conflict have not been addressed properly and tensions could reignite if the underlying issues are not resolved.<sup>98</sup> The root causes include unresolved land disputes, resource sharing, and unhealed negative perceptions among south and north Gaalkacyo that were triggered by the implementation of the federal system. Lack of genuine reconciliation from both administrations, less effective governance, and negative social media have further complicated the situation.<sup>99</sup>

The speaker of the Galmudug parliament said, “I was in Galmudug for three and a half years and there was no single month that we started with peace and the month ended peacefully.”<sup>100</sup>

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92. Barise, Z. (September 2019). Hobyoo peace conference. Accessed, [http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYOO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE\\_revised\\_&\\_final.pdf](http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYOO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE_revised_&_final.pdf).

93. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: Federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.safeworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>.

94. Interpeace. (2021). Galmudug reconciliation: Processes, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Accessed, [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug\\_Report.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug_Report.pdf).

95. Easo. (2021). Somali actors: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2060582/2021\\_09\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Security\\_situation.pdf](https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2060582/2021_09_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Security_situation.pdf).

96. International Crisis Group. (June 13, 2024). CrisisWatch Digest Somalia. Accessed, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/crisiswatch-digest-somalia>.

97. Omar, Y. (November 2, 2022). My reflections on Gaalkacyo city as an emerging peace hub. Accessed, [https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2022/nov/188518/my\\_reflections\\_on\\_gaalkacyo\\_city\\_as\\_an\\_emerging\\_peace\\_hub.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/op4/2022/nov/188518/my_reflections_on_gaalkacyo_city_as_an_emerging_peace_hub.aspx).

98. Interpeace. (2021). Galmudug reconciliation: Processes, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Accessed, [https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug\\_Report.pdf](https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Galmudug_Report.pdf), p.16.

99. Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (December 29, 2016). Gaalkacyo conflict: Drivers, contributors and potential solutions. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/gaalkacyo-conflict-drivers-contributors-and-potential-solutions/>.

100. Platform. S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process, p.22. (Unpublished).

## 11. Conflict drivers

Conflict drivers include land disputes, grazing, water, self-centered politicians, and the federal system. Territorial boundaries (particularly when clan tensions arise), land for pasture,<sup>101</sup> and animal raiding are all conflict drivers along with blood-money disputes and revenge killings due to ingrained grievances resulting from past incidents. Other contributors to violent conflict include poor governance and government institutions unable to enforce political rivalry, lack of education, drought, poverty, and unemployment. Unemployment, particularly among young men, makes them vulnerable to joining clan militias or al-Shabaab.<sup>102</sup>



*The move toward federalism has escalated preexisting clan conflicts over land, infrastructure, and resources in disputed areas. The formalization of political positions such as district commissioners and councilors brings the promise of resources and influence but also has increased competition for political offices in Galmudug*

Federalism has created new forms of clan conflict within Galmudug and in neighboring regions, particularly Puntland. The move toward federalism has escalated preexisting clan conflicts over land, infrastructure, and resources in disputed areas. The formalization of political positions such as district commissioners and councilors brings the promise of resources and influence but also has increased competition for political offices in Galmudug. This has led some political aspirants in pursuit of political positions to make competing claims to represent towns and other places, even at the district level.<sup>103</sup> One consequence of federalism is that smaller clans attempt to cleave out a constituency from an existing district to claim a political position. This claim may be rejected by bigger clans, which leads to violent conflict.<sup>104</sup> Politicians who create community divisions and animosity within clans are also causing conflict.<sup>105</sup>

A recent study on Galmudug argued that clans also fight over camels and women.<sup>106</sup> In Somalia, particularly in the countryside, women are revered and considered ‘inviolable.’<sup>107</sup> Therefore, if women from one clan are harmed by another, that could result in revenge and prolonged clan warfare.

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101. Berghof. (2019). Conflict assessment, Galmudug State: An analysis of local perspectives. Accessed [https://berghof-foundation.org/files/publications/2019\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Galmudug\\_EN.pdf](https://berghof-foundation.org/files/publications/2019_Report_Somalia_Galmudug_EN.pdf).

102. Ibid.

103. Ibid.

104. Easo. (2021). Somali actors: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021\\_07\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Actors.pdf](https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_07_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Actors.pdf)

105. Ibid.

106. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.safeworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>.

107. Easo. (2021). Somali targeted profiles: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021\\_09\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Targeted\\_profiles.pdf](https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_09_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Targeted_profiles.pdf), p. 84.

## 12. Internally displaced persons (IDPs)



UN Secretary General (3.4.2023)

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) says there are 3.8 million internally displaced persons across Somalia in 2023. “The number of people displaced by conflict and drought in Somalia has reached a record high,” stated UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on his Twitter account.

A March 2020 report from the IOM and Africa’s Voice said the states of Hirshabelle and Galmudug hosted at least 428,000 IDPs in 2019.<sup>108</sup> Another report showed 262,602 IDPs (246,089 from Galgaduud and 16,513 from Mudug) were displaced between July 2021 and November 2022.<sup>109</sup> The majority were from within Galmudug. In early 2021, the number of IDPs in Galmudug was estimated to be 96,000 and the majority were from the southern regions of Somalia.<sup>110</sup>

These IDPs are not seen as political stakeholders since they are not from the local clans, which means they can live peacefully in any area, but may not be recognized as citizens of the state.<sup>111</sup> Given the relationship between political identity and location, IDPs who move to an area where they do not have clan members or any historical clan link have limited chances to gain any political representation.

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108. Africa’s Voices and IOM, UN Migration. (2020). Common social accountability platform: Deploying the common accountability platform in Galmudug on durable solutions.

109. European Union Agency for Asylum. (2023). Somali: Security situation. Accessed, [https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/2023\\_02\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Security\\_Situation\\_EN.pdf](https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/2023_02_COI_Report_Somalia_Security_Situation_EN.pdf), pp. 144–151.

110. Easo. (2021). Somali actors: Country of origin information report. Accessed, [https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021\\_07\\_EASO\\_COI\\_Report\\_Somalia\\_Actors.pdf](https://coi.euaa.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/2021_07_EASO_COI_Report_Somalia_Actors.pdf).

111. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: Federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.safeworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>

Children born to those who have settled in an area cannot claim political rights if their clan identity does not align with the clan dynamics in that local area. The priority for many IDPs is to return home which may erode their energy for getting involved in local politics and also their sense of belonging in the community.<sup>112</sup> However, it has been reported that one-person one-vote elections can increase the chances of IDP members to be elected. This is because the IDPs can join political parties, vote, and become candidates. For instance, a former IDP, Muhsin Abdullahi Haji from southern Somalia, was elected as a councilor in Puntland's pilot elections in 2021.<sup>113</sup>

## 13. Economic factors

Improvement in public infrastructure such as ports, airports, and roads are vital for the process of state-building as it would allow Galmudug to collect revenues and provide services for citizens.

Unlike Puntland and Jubbaland, Galmudug does not have a port that generates revenue. Therefore, an important source of income has been small taxes levied on trucks transporting goods from Boosaaso port in Puntland to the central regions. Another source has been money from the FGS to support its institutions.<sup>114</sup>

A key objective of the Hobyo conference was to advance construction investment to build the Hobyo port. Since the trusteeship, all attempts to develop the port have failed.<sup>115</sup> Since Galmudug was formed in 2015, every president has launched a Hobyo port project, but without any concrete achievements. Similarly, numerous international investors including the Turks, Qataris, Chinese, and Emiratis have visited Hobyo, but there has been no tangible outcome. Unlike the neighboring Garacad port of Puntland that was established successfully by private businesspeople, investors from Galmudug have focused on Mogadishu rather than on their home region.<sup>116</sup>

However, the authors of this report have obtained a copy of a landmark agreement reached between the Galmudug Government and Hobyo Investment Company (HICO) on December 12th, 2023. According to the agreement, the government hosts the projects, allocating 60km<sup>2</sup> of land and any other support required. At the same time, the HICO will manage the project, bringing its experiences and expertise in port development alongside its financial power, investing 300 million USD in the port development. The port will contribute to Galmudug's economic growth and development, creating employment opportunities that will contribute to the peace and stability of Galmudug. The cabinet adopted the agreement, which the Galmudug Parliament passed on February 18th, 2024.<sup>117</sup>

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Unlike the neighboring Garacad port of Puntland that was established successfully by private businesspeople, investors from Galmudug have focused on Mogadishu rather than on their home region

112. Ibid. p. 25.

113. Hiiraan Online. (October 26, 2021). Kaah Party win big in Puntland's first 1PV local election. Accessed, [https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2021/Oct/184373/kaah\\_party\\_win\\_big\\_in\\_puntland\\_s\\_first\\_1pv\\_local\\_election.aspx](https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2021/Oct/184373/kaah_party_win_big_in_puntland_s_first_1pv_local_election.aspx).

114. Platform. S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process (unpublished), and also Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (September 19, 2019). The Galmudug crisis: A blueprint for sustainable settlement. Accessed, <https://heritageinstitute.org/the-galmudug-crisis-a-blueprint-for-sustainable-settlement/publications/policy-briefs/>.

115. Barise, Z. (September 2019). Hobyo peace conference. Accessed, [http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE\\_revised\\_&\\_final.pdf](http://www.aminarts.com/link/HOBYO%20PEACE%20CONFERENCE_revised_&_final.pdf).

116. Platform. S.D. (2023). Understanding political settlement dynamics in Galmudug state: A foundation for supporting meaningful and inclusive political process (unpublished).

117. Dowlad Goboleed Galmudug. (December 12th, 2023). Heshiiska dekedda Hobyo: Dowlad Goboleedka Galmudug iyo Shirkhada Maalgashigga Hobyo 'Hobyo Investment Company, HICO'. Also look at An official letter from Galmudug State Office of the President dated February 5th, 2024, and sent to Galmudug Parliament. You can also look at another official letter from the Office of the Speaker of the Parliament of Galmudug dated February 21st, 2024, that confirmed Galmudug Parliament's ratification of the agreement between the Galmudug government and HICO.



For now, airport taxes are the major source of revenue for Galmudug’s Ministry of Finance. The six functioning airports—located in Cadaado, Gaalkacyo, Caabudwaaq, Dhuusamareeb, Gurceel, and Hobyo—are managed by private companies contracted by the district authority. Checkpoints heading into major towns are another source of revenue.

At the district level, taxes are in theory collected from businesses and shops, but the extent to which this happens could not be verified. Development projects in districts are said to receive some funds from international NGOs and local businesses. One example is a Joint Program of Local Governance financed by the UN Development Programme, which focuses on building roads and highway lighting.<sup>118</sup>

## 14. Analysis

Federalism was adopted to address instability and an exclusionary political system inherited from the former military regime. The concept of Galmudug emerged in the late 2000s. Geographically, Galmudug consists of Galgaduud province and the south of Mudug province. Puntland initially argued that the formation of Galmudug contravened FGS’s provisional constitution, which says a federal member state should consist of at least two provinces. However, the FGS, FMS, national stakeholders, and the international community have accepted Galmudug as a full state.

Unlike the formation of Puntland, and to some extent Jubbaland, the formation of Galmudug was overwhelmingly shaped by the FGS. Power-sharing, clan-based politics represented by the eleven stake-holding clans, and reconciliation processes were crucial to the establishment. However, clan-based warfare broke out between the two sides of Gaalkacyo as the state was being formed. Financially, the state-formation process was funded by the international community. Some analysts argue that, as a result, genuine local reconciliation and ownership were very limited and too focused on urban areas.

It has been argued that the formation of Galmudug symbolized the less understood aspects of Somalia’s complicated federal system. However, with the exception of Puntland, Galmudug is the only FMS that operates in its capital, Dhuusamareeb. Security and unity have been strengthened by Qoorqoor’s administration, helped by the defeat of Ahlu Sunna Wal-Jamaaca (ASWJ). Because ASWJ is an ideologically driven organization with significant followers on the ground, it could reinvent itself and come back in a different form in the future. However, the movement recently vowed to support the government’s expected phase two operations against al-Shabaab. Phase one saw significant territories liberated from al-Shabaab.



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118. Safeworld. (June, 2020). Clans, consensus and contention: Federalism and inclusion in Galmudug. Accessed, <https://www.safeworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1257-clans-consensus-and-contention-inclusion-and-federalism-in-galmudug>, p. 31.

Yet, the complexity of clan-based politics, the militarization of the population that began during the Barre regime, and sporadic clan warfare in the rural areas make Galmudug fragile and vulnerable to renewed conflict. The main drivers of conflicts in Galmudug include land disputes, grazing, water points, revenge caused by past grievances, self-centered politicians who create community divisions, less developed governance, and the new federal system which has escalated preexisting clan conflicts.

The main internal actors shaping Galmudug's future include: the FGS; Galmudug state; the eleven clans that established Galmudug; and armed militias affiliated with clans. Though al-Shabaab is still a powerful actor, the group has been weakened by the national army, Galmudug forces, and the Macawisley clan militias, as well as by support from the wider society. Pirate syndicates as well as ASWJ were once among the main internal actors, but both are now defunct.

External actors include international NGOs, AMISOM/ATMIS and the unmandated Ethiopian security forces that are attempting to prevent the spread of al-Shabaab into their territories.

Galmudug has in the past experienced severe clan bloodshed and bitter political rivalries. Most armed militia clans across Somalia are believed to be in Galmudug. However, there have been signs of improvements in security since the election of Qoorqoor, especially for intra-inter-clan interactions. However, due to the fragility of governance, security, and justice are still administered through clans. Despite these security challenges, Galmudug is the only FMS in south-central Somalia that does not depend on AMISOM/ATMIS for the protection of government officials. ATMIS (Djiboutian peace keeping troops) are few in number and limited to specific areas like Dhuusamareeb airport.

Tension between the two sides of Gaalkacyo has, in the past, precipitated violent conflicts. Gaalkacyo is now peaceful and run by a joint committee from both states, so security has improved. However, the root causes of the conflict have not been addressed and, therefore, tensions could reignite. The ongoing liberation of areas ruled by al-Shabaab may also bring new security challenges. Clan feuds suppressed by al-Shabaab may re-erupt, meaning the stabilization programs for the liberated areas should include social healing, conflict resolution, and reconciliation.

Galmudug was founded on a clan power-sharing agreement and indirect elections. Many are calling for one-person, one-vote elections, which is in line with the National Consultative Council's decision to hold a universal suffrage election across the country starting with local government elections (LGEs). LGEs are a bottom-up approach, are cost-effective, and could facilitate universal suffrage for state and federal elections. LGEs, which started with the Qoorqoor administration, also promote community dialogue and consensus that result in community harmony and peaceful coexistence.

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The electoral process could be less corrupt if grassroots organizations, neighborhoods and respected community leaders were involved in the process of nominating respected and effective local councilors who will serve the community. However, reports show that women have largely been marginalized in Galmudug's indirect LGEs due to cultural norms, financial difficulties, and misconceptions about Islam.

Galmudug was once called the most violent federal member state. However, there are indicators that local reconciliation—including that of some clan conflicts that have lasted decades—has improved since Qoorqoor's rise to power. Civil society groups have organized critical reconciliation conferences, including the Hobyo conference that reconciled the Habargidir sub-clans. The success of the Hobyo conference was attributed to the local ownership. Women played a major role in fundraising for this conference, which left a positive impact on Galmudug's political stability and on state-building in general.

Traditional clan elders and religious scholars are influential community actors in resolving clan conflicts as are women who play an important yet less recognized role. When women participate in reconciliation and decision-making, they bring the voices of marginalized groups to the table along with a higher probability of achieving social harmony, acceptance, and stability. Despite these contributions, women are still sidelined in the decision-making processes.

Somalia has an estimated 3.8 million IDPs due to violent conflict and drought. The number of people displaced by the ongoing war against al-Shabaab in Galmudug is unknown, but is expected to be high. Recent reports show that Galmudug hosts 262,602 IDPs due to insecurity and drought. IDPs are not perceived as locals since they do not belong to the local clans. In Somalia, there is a strong correlation between clan-based political identity and location. As with other federal member states, IDP involvement in Galmudug politics, governance, and decision-making is very limited. Moreover, many IDPs are focused on returning to where they came from instead of getting involved in local politics through clan alliances.

Among Galmudug's very limited income sources are airports, checkpoints and general business activities, including trucks transporting goods from other states to Galmudug or within the state. Limited income affects government funding for services for citizens. Many unsuccessful attempts have been made to develop Hobyo port. Some of Somalia's wealthiest people originated in Galmudug but have shifted their money and energy to Mogadishu rather than investing at home. In a new positive development, Galmudug state and Hobyo Investment Company (HICO) have agreed to develop the port jointly. The government will provide land and legal support, and any other support while the HICO will manage, and invest in the port financially and technically. Therefore, unlike Puntland and Jubbaland, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle are heavily dependent on FGS support. District councils may receive some project-based funds from NGOs and local businesses.

## 15. Conclusion

This study found that Galmudug is becoming a coherent and politically stable state. Its formation was heavily influenced by the FGS. However, the participation of the eleven stake-holding clans was a defining factor that provided a social contract and shared understanding. Several reconciliation processes that preceded the formation of Galmudug lacked local ownership.

Federalism was intended to address the exclusionary political system inherited from an authoritarian military regime. However, some analysts anticipate conflict if the upcoming state elections are not handled properly. The study found that fewer than half the districts have commissioners or councilors and most were elected indirectly. Very few seats are allocated for women who face male-dominated cultural norms due to misconceptions about Islam and lack of resources.

Conflict is driven by land and grazing disputes, water points, dishonest politicians, revenge killings, animal raiding, ingrained grievances resulting from past incidents, an unfamiliar new federal system, and poor governance. Internal conflicts in Galmudug and other states as well as droughts have generated significant numbers of IDPs. While the IDPs are allowed to stay peacefully in Galmudug and in other states, they have no political representatives due to lack of clan affiliations in the host communities.

Finally, this study found that Galmudug is experiencing financial difficulties due to lack of income-generating avenues such as the Hobyo port.

## 16. Recommendations

- Genuine reconciliation is a precondition to successful state-building in post-conflict societies. Galmudug should strengthen the culture of reconciliation and dialogue within communities, and clans. For instance, Galmudug should assist women, youth, civil society organizations, and traditional elders in acquiring facilities, resources, and relevant training programs to enhance their peace capacity. We recommend that international organizations support Galmudug state in achieving this recommendation. For instance, in late 2023 and early February 2024, a HIPS team representing the Talo Wadaag Phase II program engaged and collaborated with the Mudug Women Association (MWA) in Gaalkacyo, Galmudug, to facilitate the role of women in reconciliation-based forums. HIPS representatives visited their teetering building and gained insider perspectives regarding these women's experiences on the ground in reconciling women affected by clan warfare. However, they desperately needed capacity building such as an enabling environment, training on conflict resolution, and mediation skills. The MWA and the like need support and empowerment.

- Policymaker women in the cabinet and Galmudug parliament should be empowered to develop policies enabling Galmudug women to improve their role in reconciliation and peacebuilding in their localities. Such policies can help MWA and other women's groups in Galmudug who are involved in reconciliation and peacebuilding.
- Many studies have demonstrated that the active participation of marginalized groups in reconciliation, negotiation, and conflict resolution increases the chances of reaching agreements. Therefore, women, youth, minorities, and internally displaced people should be included in the formal decision-making processes linked to reconciliation and conflict resolution initiatives.
- Gaalkacyo has been a source of tension and violence between Galmudug and Puntland. Recently, Gaalkacyo has enjoyed relative peace as it is run by a joint committee from Galmudug and Puntland. Galmudug should consolidate this joint-peace initiative by properly addressing the underlying issues that have ignited violent conflicts. Similarly, the success of Hobyó's Habargidir reconciliation conference was attributed to the local ownership in which funds came from different community groups including the diaspora. Galmudug should learn from such experiences and apply them to current community conflicts, with adjustments for the nature of the conflict and context.
- Large territories of Galmudug have been liberated from al-Shabaab and territories that are still under al-Shabaab are being reclaimed. Clan feuds that have been suppressed by al-Shabaab may re-erupt as soon these areas are recovered. Galmudug should prioritize stabilization programs addressing the immediate needs of liberated areas including social healing focused on grievances, conflict resolution, and reconciliation programs.
- Armed clan militias and the Macawisley could pose new security problems after the liberation of the territories currently occupied by al-Shabaab. The government of Galmudug should develop a strategic plan to handle any security threats.
- Galmudug is not dependent on AMISOM/ATMIS for security. We suggest that Galmudug begins relying fully on its own Somali security forces as does Puntland.

- Women have largely been marginalized in Galmudug's indirect local government elections due to cultural practices and financial difficulties. We urge Galmudug to enhance women's participation in public life including politics, governance, and state-building in general. Most Galmudug districts have only commissioners without local councilors. That said, local councils constitute a bottom-up approach where local citizens can elect and interact with their local authorities; exercise their rights and responsibilities in public life in general; and at the same time contribute to improving governance, state-building, reconciliation, and solving local problems. Therefore, we strongly recommend that the Galmudug government establish local councils, through direct elections, if possible; that action is expected to maximize the chances of election for women and members of marginalized groups.
- Sufficient resources properly utilized could contribute greatly to good governance and state-building. To become economically stable, Galmudug should diversify its income-generating avenues with special emphasis on establishing Hobyo port.

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