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# The impact of war on Somali men and its effects on the family, women and children

BY JUDITH GARDNER AND JUDY EL-BUSHRA



The family of Deerow Aden in Gadid camp in Baidoa, south central Somalia, 2015.

## Key points

- The vulnerabilities and capacities of Somali women and girls, boys and men are inextricably entwined.
- War and state collapse have expanded inequalities between Somali men and reduced their opportunities to fulfill their gendered roles and responsibilities.
- Interventions for women and children should consider the well-being of the family as a whole.
- A positive engagement with the issues confronting Somali men should be part of any attempt to address the needs of women and children.

## Introduction

In recent years Somalia has earned the ignominy of being ranked ‘one of the worst places in the world

to be a woman’,<sup>1</sup> the worst place on Earth to be a mother<sup>2</sup> and ‘one of the worst places in the world to be a child.’<sup>3</sup> Contributing factors cited include high female illiteracy, widespread Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), early and forced marriage, high levels of maternal and infant mortality, inadequate health services, high incidence of rape and other forms of Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV), poverty, malnutrition, displacement, armed conflict and social, economic and political gender inequality. No further justification is needed for why the situation of Somali women and children deserves national and international attention. But there has been little enquiry into the reality of Somali men’s lives following the collapse of the state in 1991, nor of possible linkages between men’s experiences and the situation of women and children.

Recent and on-going research by the Rift Valley Institute into the impact of war on Somali men,<sup>4</sup> on which this briefing is based, is beginning to fill this gap. It generates evidence that, although Somali

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society sets exacting standards for men, war and instability since 1991 have severely curtailed their opportunities to live up to these standards and that this has important consequences for women and children, as well as for men.

Asking a range of questions about men, similar to those that gender analysis asks about women, reveals new understandings of what conflict means for men. Its effect on masculine identities has implications for conflict, peace and the well-being of women, girls, men and boys. Two critical theories underpin the analysis in this briefing. Firstly, that gender is a relational concept—that masculine and feminine identities are created in relationship with each other. Secondly, that vulnerability in conflict settings is not confined to women and children. Lessons about male experiences of vulnerability in the Somali context may help national and international actors design more effective policies and interventions that will help children and women, as well as men.

The first part of this briefing gives a brief summary of research findings about the expectations and challenges faced by Somali men today. The next looks at consequences for family life, particularly for women and children. The concluding comments suggest some policy considerations.

## Ideals and norms of Somali manhood

Over two decades of war have fueled a dehumanizing view of Somali men as inherently violent and prone to extremism.<sup>5</sup> Somalia is a patriarchal society, but contrary to expectation, Somali manhood is not predicated on violence or the violent oppression of women. Exploration of the Somali concept of manhood reveals a core set of exacting ideals, fundamental to which are male responsibilities for family well-being and the kinship-based system of social organization, or clan. Key values of responsibility, self-discipline, courage, humanity and generosity emerge as common to all regions and age-groups. Rooted in a rural and agro-pastoral past, these ideals continue to be the essential criteria against which men across the country are measured and measure themselves. Though difficult to live up to, they are nevertheless reproduced from older to younger generations, by men and women, educated and illiterate, urban and rural dwellers. It is only by meeting these standards of behaviour, required

at different stages of the life cycle, that men may attain *raganimo*,<sup>6</sup> meaning manhood or the masculine ideal.

Attaining and maintaining manhood requires a man to master skills, cultivate qualities, and repeatedly prove himself throughout his lifetime. His standing as a man will be judged within the family and within the clan and in different social, economic and political contexts, including times of hunger, conflict, and peace-making. Somali manhood, if achieved, is not a milestone like fatherhood or adulthood. It is a dynamic concept—elusive, changing and fragile, dependent on social recognition, validation and verification. Throughout a man's lifetime, his manhood can be threatened, diminished, entirely lost and found again, or remain beyond reach. The Somali proverb, '*raganimo waa raadkaaga oo roob qariyey*,' conveys the lifelong challenge this entails. Translated, it means '*raganimo* is like your footprints which are wiped out by the rain'. In other words, a man has to keep making his mark, and cannot assume that what proved his manhood today will still hold true tomorrow.

### *Ideals of manhood at different stages of life*

Men and boys are described as the fence of the family—the protection between it and the outside world. A man's reputation, status and power depend on how well he is judged to fulfill his obligations within his family and clan, and on how far he can demonstrate mastery of the ideal knowledge, skills and qualities of a man. In doing this he contributes not only to his own status but also to the collective power of his lineage group.

With some sub-cultural differences, defined stages in a man's life include boyhood, youth, adulthood and elderhood. Some men ascend further to become senior or titled elders of their clan lineage. Expected roles and responsibilities vary from stage to stage. A boy is expected to learn his roles from his father so that he can replace him, ensuring the security and well-being of his mother and younger siblings. Young men—approximately aged 14 to 25 and above—should be useful and reliable, accepting the authority of older men and contributing their labour as required. Youth are perceived as headstrong and characteristically unwise. They are the clans' warriors (*waranle*), mobilized by their elders for any end if it is judged



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to be in the collective interests of the clan or lineage.

Transition to adulthood is marked by marriage and fatherhood, both considered man's primary purpose on Earth and essential milestones towards manhood and elder status. A man is ordained by God to be responsible for the family—its leader, manager and shield. His responsibilities also include the payment of *diya* (blood money) and *qaraan* (clan contributions) for family members.<sup>7</sup> Clansmen will judge a man by how well he supports his family and manages his marriage. Those who fall short risk being overlooked when their family needs clan support, such as for medical expenses, weddings and funeral costs. Non-payment of *diya* and *qaraan* can result in fines and social isolation, which also has implications for the family and not just the individual.

Interdependence and partnership between a man and his wife are a key dimension of the ideal family. The ideal husband is emotionally sensitive to his wife's needs, caring, kind and responsible. In some sub-cultures he should support his wife with the housework and assist her in childbirth. On the other hand, in the dominant culture 'a man should not stay at home...he should wake up early and go out'.<sup>8</sup>

As a father, a man is judged not just on his capacity to produce children but also his parenting skills and how well he brings up his children. He educates them on religion, ethics, culture and coexistence with neighbours. The father approves his daughter's marriage partner. He should retain the loyalty of his children through kindness, and bring up his sons to be well-mannered, educated and self-reliant.

By the time their sons are old enough to take on most of their labour for the family, males transition to elder status and are eligible to participate in clan meetings. As their family's representative in clan matters, an elder holds a greater level of responsibility than a young man, and his capacity is measured in terms of time and skills, and his ability to make a valuable contribution. As elders in Mogadishu explained, he 'will be expected to provide ideas and [improve the] quality of life. You are expected to provide labour and wisdom too.'

Participation in elders' meetings is an important signifier of elder status, and of one's *raganimo* or

manhood. A man who demonstrates *raganimo* is said to be, 'someone whose absence in meetings will be noticed'. The shame of not being such a man is clear from this proverb, cited by women in Dadaab refugee camp. 'Worst among men is the one who is not counted as present, one leaving the venue who is not stopped from doing so, and an absent person whose absence is not felt.'

The most respected senior or titled elders are those chosen by their clansmen to represent them as clan leaders, seen as indispensable assets when it comes to resolving clan matters. Their collective task is to deliberate, negotiate, build alliances, declare war and peace, and exercise authority based on interpretation of customary law (*xeer*). The requirements are demanding, and include knowledge of local traditions and history, of *xeer* and mastery of jurisprudence, proven mediation skills, powers of persuasion and oration, with a good memory for poetry and proverbs. An elder who has an extensive knowledge of people and places is likely to have a good standing among his peers.

#### *Women as stakeholders and collaborators in the attainment of manhood*

A man who enhances his value to his clansmen enhances the social and political capital of his family, increasing the degree of support and protection—financial assistance, legal intervention and clan-based security—it can expect from the clan. As wives, mothers and daughters, women are key stakeholders in the quest for *raganimo*. That men need the help of their womenfolk to ensure their place in the clan, and to excel overall, is a fact rarely acknowledged, but one recorded in stories and proverbs, such as the following. 'You will not catch up a man in a day if he has better transport, you will not exceed a man in a year if he has a better farm, you will never ever be the equal of a man if he has a better wife.'

Knowing that his manhood will be judged in large part by how well he manages his marriage, a wise man will consciously nurture a harmonious relationship with his wife. For their part, prior to clan meetings women who excel as wives will help prepare their men by ensuring that they are properly fed and well-dressed and will counsel them, sharing ideas and advice on the issues under consideration.

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## *Reality for Somali men since 1991*

The war and the collapse of the state have for many Somali men led to catastrophic levels of insecurity, violence, displacement, loss of family members and impoverishment. The majority of men lack the resources—or crucially, the security—to fulfill their gender specific expectations and responsibilities. At the family level the reality is that women and children step in as income providers, representing a shift in gender roles. Many men feel dispensable, with no meaningful role and no stake in the future.

Men interviewed in the study described a range of traumatic experiences resulting from war-related hostilities, state collapse and forced displacement. Loss of employment and failure to regain a position of commensurate status was a major contributor to distress. Many men had experience as combatants. Others mentioned drug addiction, separation from family, loss of assets, insecurity and the threat of revenge killings. In Dadaab refugee camp, problems related to encampment, restrictions on employment and—also affecting women and children—constraints on legal travel beyond Somali regions.

### *The changed nature of the state and its implications for men and masculinities*

Models of masculinity, and the range of options open for the realization these models, have been affected by war and also by changes to the state. In the absence of a functioning state, people fell back on traditional forms of clan organization and leadership, most successfully in Somaliland and Puntland.<sup>9</sup> In South Central Somalia (SCS), the collapse of the state unleashed a violent contest over control of resources, fought largely along clan lines.<sup>10</sup> Violent contest continues in these regions, with the added dimension of a reformist Islamist ideology and an insurgency led by al-Shabaab. In all regions, men and women, particularly those in their forties and above, struggle to come to terms with the loss of the state and its aftermath.

Before 1991, Siyaad Barre's government was the major employer. State employees gained not only income but also respect from their employment and—especially in the case of senior government figures—self-respect from being in a position of influence. The loss of jobs and positions after 1991 was a personal catastrophe for many men, and

some have not recovered. Security was relatively good, at least in the earlier years, and citizens were used to having a government which deterred wrong-doing.

In post-1991 Somalia, unemployment is widespread and security is volatile. How one fares as a man—and by extension a family—depends to a significant extent on how well one's clan is faring. Clanship circumscribes male experiences and opportunities and, by extension, family fortunes. For men with limited claim to the help of their clansmen—if they fail to accomplish the male roles expected of them, for example, if their father is unknown or has offended his clansmen for whatever reason, or if they live displaced and far from their own clansmen—opportunities and access to resources are limited and security diminished.

### *Male vulnerability*

Not all men are affected by these changes in the same way. The situation varies from region to region and with the position one's group has in that region. Displaced, minority and young men are particularly vulnerable. Broadly, however, in the aftermath of state collapse, male vulnerability has taken a number of forms.

*Insecurity:* Evidence from the study shows that men are at risk from gender-based violence just as women are, or in some respects more so. The study identified two situations where male security is particularly at risk:

- *Revenge killing:* Aano or revenge killing is a form of male on male gender based-violence and a war-related phenomenon that appears quite widespread but is under-reported.<sup>11</sup> The study found the threat of assassination is an everyday fear for many men, in some parts of the north and south,<sup>12</sup> limiting mobility and work opportunities. Women, who are not targeted, can move around more safely and hence have often taken on the role of income-earner for the household, becoming their husband's protector in a reversal of normal gender roles. One may assume that this in turn raises the vulnerability of the women concerned, including vulnerability to sexual assault.
- *Living outside one's clan territory:* Men are safest among their patrilineal relatives and *diya* group members, yet because families have been

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broken up and separated by the war, some men have had to seek sanctuary among their matrilineal relatives. Their accounts record how insecure a man is in this context. 'If you are not within your clan and enjoying the protection of the clan, you will constantly live in fear. You are powerless.' Women are similarly vulnerable living with their husband's or son-in-law's clan. Yet men appear to find it more difficult to fulfill gender roles in these circumstances, owing to the difficulty of ensuring personal security and opportunities to make a living.

*Life as a refugee male:* Many male refugees are far from their clan territories and the support of their *diya* group members. In addition, many of those most vulnerable to forced migration are from marginalized groups. Displacement, the enforced idleness of prolonged encampment and international interventions that overlook male vulnerabilities, result in feelings of virtual emasculation. 'None of us are responsible for anybody, not even our own self.' Dependency on International NGOs (INGOs) for food, shelter, children's schooling and health care undermines men's responsibility as decision-makers and providers for the family.

That the needs and vulnerabilities of men are ignored is a source of female frustration. 'We all want our men to become responsible but the truth is we are all under the protection of humanitarian organizations that have very little recognition for men.' Moreover, management policies sometimes appear to undermine men's roles even further—for instance, when housing is registered in the name of the wife rather than both husband and wife—contributing to tensions within the household.

*Mental stress:* Men of all ages and backgrounds appear vulnerable to mental breakdown. Along with addiction to *khat* (a mildly narcotic leaf), mental illness emerges as both cause and effect of male failure to fulfill family responsibilities, contributing to a vicious circle of increasing impoverishment. The evidence indicates that there are strong links between conflict-related trauma, unemployment or financial dependency on others, and family breakdown. When family members have to care for a mentally ill male adult or feed his *khat* addiction, this may contribute to domestic violence and family poverty.

## Consequences for the family

Somali society is in transition from a situation in which, the state underwrote the possibilities of men attaining ideals of manhood—through the public employment opportunities it provided—to one where the prevailing model of manhood is largely unachievable, and where there is little space for gender relations, roles and expectations to be reconsidered and renegotiated. The tensions generated thus contribute to stresses and vulnerabilities within families that have wide repercussions for society as a whole.

### *Consequences for male roles and responsibility within the family*

The basic certainties of Somali family life have undergone dramatic upheaval as a result of war and state collapse. A substantial number of men are absent fathers and husbands, or are present but idle, dependent on their wives and children. They contribute little or nothing to the household income and neglect their children in ways that, according to respondents, would have been rare before 1991. As a result, expected male responsibilities are either being taken on by women and older sons and daughters, or have been forsaken, with women often stepping in to generate family income.<sup>13</sup> This shift in gender roles is a significant change and a countrywide phenomenon, also found among refugees and the Kenya-based diaspora.

### *The impact of women's increased role as income-earners*

Women expressed mixed feelings about these changes. While they may deplore men's failures to provide for and protect them and their families, they also relish new opportunities. Women often refer to their male financial dependents as idle men. While many are happy to take on new roles, others are reaching breaking point, frustrated by their often *khat*-addicted adult male dependents and looking forward to the day when, they assume, men will resume their share of family responsibilities. For example, some women in Mogadishu, according to elders there, 'compel their husbands to take the gun and loot people'.

Outside the family, decision-making is still dominated by men, even when it is known that

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their financial contributions may be derived from their wives. And in all regions men still dominate the formal business sector, the various civil services of the regional administrations and the paid political posts, as well as police and defence forces. Among older men, the tendency since 1991 has been to depend on women when no job commensurate with their former status is available to them. A man who had held a government position would believe it would demean his manhood, and hence his clan, if he took on a menial job. But it matters not whether a woman who was formerly a teacher or doctor is now reduced to trading tomatoes or selling tea on the street to keep her family alive. As a former senior civil servant now living in Eastleigh, Nairobi said:

If you have education, you cannot go cooking pancakes in the street. Can you cook sambusa? I have been a Director General, how can I? A woman and a mother can do anything (because they do not embody the honour of the clan) – there is nothing she can feel ashamed of - her children are waiting (for food). That's why the women do these kind of jobs now. It's never been a man's role.<sup>14</sup>

The increased economic role played by women since the war has added to the burden of their responsibilities but has not led to any significant increase in their political power or status. On the contrary, women remain politically marginalized in all regions. Also, in families where women are the main provider, girls are more likely than boys to drop out of education to help their mothers. Thus, whilst having a greater economic role may be empowering some women and girls, this is not the case for all. Furthermore, the work many women undertake is menial and generates subsistence level income at very high cost for the security and well-being of children. Evidence shows that male and female children of working mothers who are absent from the house for long hours are vulnerable to sexual violence and predation.<sup>15</sup>

More research might help understand the impact a father's fallen status has on sons. Anecdotal evidence from Mogadishu suggests boys from families without an adult male breadwinner are more vulnerable to recruitment by extremist militant groups, but this remains to be verified.

### *Family resilience and a man's status among his clansmen*

Male disempowerment has direct implications for family resilience—their ability to manage change in the face of shocks or stresses without compromising their long-term prospects.<sup>16</sup> Consequences noted by women old and young include vulnerability to forms of gender-based exploitation and violence—such as sexual violence or early marriage—diminished household capacity in the face of poverty, and adult male financial dependency on women's and children's labour.

Families whose male heads are not active in the clan are likely to be overlooked when they need support, finding access to clan-based welfare and protection to be limited. Thus a man's ability or inability to fulfill his clan obligations has serious implications for his family, particularly when needs arise from events such as injury or death of a family member. This predicament can contribute to a downward spiral of family marginalization and poverty. To ensure against this, some women use their earnings, however meagre, to pay their husband's clan contributions and thus invest in keeping the family close to the clan. A woman in Mogadishu noted:

It is good to be active in the clan. I had seven children and my husband was not an active member in his clan. One of my sons stabbed another boy. I sought support from the clan and we were clearly told that they don't want to help as his father is not connected to the clan. Also, I had a daughter who was sick for a long time. Nobody helped us. They told us that it was up to us.<sup>17</sup>

### *Consequences for fatherhood and father-son relations*

Many young men are growing up in broken families, with absent or unemployed fathers, and in households where the mother is the main income provider. An elder in Mogadishu explained:

Men's responsibility for the family is dead now; men cannot sell tomato. For example, I had 10 children. Only three of them went to school. Out of these three only one managed to go to secondary school and reach university level. I could not pay his university fees. Men now are



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just trying to be alive and secure themselves from dangers.<sup>18</sup>

Poverty leads to parental pressure on youth of both sexes to find work or other sources of income. At its most benign, this pressure cuts short or prevents children's education, particularly for girls. At its most extreme it leads boys and young men to engage in dangerous and violent activities to meet family income needs. There are significant regional differences. Findings from Somaliland suggest the most likely danger from parental pressure is to the youth himself. For example, parents press young men to go on *tahriib* (migration), where they entrust their lives to human traffickers in a dangerous attempt to reach the West. In other regions, especially in SCS, parental pressure can all too easily have violent consequences, such as recruitment into armed groups and banditry.

A father is gatekeeper to his son's relationship with his clan, his role model and his source of cultural knowledge. The impacts of war and state collapse have affected many men's capacity to fulfil the basic norms of fatherhood. The implications are wide-ranging for all young people but particularly for male children. The most common father-son problems identified are absent fathers or fathers who, though present, do not engage with the family and play no role in their children's upbringing;<sup>19</sup> marital breakdown and re-marriage; *khat* addiction and mental and or physical disability that leaves men dependent on their wives or children; and fathers who have become marginal to their clansmen and thus become unable to assist their sons to acquire social, political or economic support. There are also boys and young men who do not know the identity of their fathers, which casts doubt on their clan identity and leaves them particularly vulnerable and disempowered.

Compounding the risks that may result from parental pressure and lack of legal, safe opportunities to earn money is a sense expressed by youth from SCS that, unless they bring in income, they are dispensable and have lost their intrinsic value to the family. In the words of a young man from Mogadishu, they are 'of no value to their families and they have become a problem ... since they have no jobs, no education, no opportunities and no future and the family has little influence over them'.<sup>20</sup> Periods of depression and despair punctuate every life story collected

from youth. However, young men's life stories also testify to their incredible abilities to overcome and adapt to the huge challenges they encounter.

### *Consequences for marital relationships*

Women's changing economic roles, while significant, should not necessarily be taken as indicating radical change in gender relations. For the most part, both men and women continue to consider men as the rightful head of the household. As a Mogadishu man rendered unable to work by the war put it, 'we managed as a family and shared family responsibilities. Though my wife was winning the bread for the family, I was still the father respected by the faithful wife and children.' However, in this case the man concerned had supported his wife's income-generation in whatever way he could. The value and importance to spouses of mutual support and companionship—typically overlooked by policy makers—were referred to in many life-stories and interviews.

Respondents reported no decline in the demand for marriage, by either men or women, but rates of divorce are reportedly very high and it appears marriage patterns are changing. Reportedly, a man can resuscitate his manhood if he marries a woman from the diaspora, or a woman who is influential within her clan. Such a woman can bring him financial security or kudos. Domestic disharmony arising from dependency on women is cited as a key factor driving men into multiple marriages or divorce and serial marriages. Two other trends are in evidence where men seek marriage partners who will support them financially. The most common is diaspora marriage, whereby through his clansmen and women—and with the help of social media sites—a man searches for a diaspora woman to marry. Whether or not she knows his intention is unclear. Less widespread is a form of marriage that roughly translates as a gigolo arrangement, whereby a young, healthy man marries an older woman to live as her sexual companion, assistant and financial dependent. Characteristically the woman is a working woman and has had children. She may be divorced or widowed, and, unlike diaspora marriages, she is aware of the calculation. Although this is an unconventional form of marriage within the Somali context, there appears to be no shame attached to it for either party.



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## Conclusions and policy considerations

If we are to devise effective and sustainable interventions for women and children, it is necessary to consider the impact they have on the well-being and resilience of the Somali family as a whole. However, the prevailing forms of engagement of humanitarian and development agencies routinely overlook men's vulnerabilities or give them low priority. In some cases, they pursue interventions that address female vulnerabilities but compound or worsen male vulnerabilities, thus deepening male humiliation and possibly undermining family resilience. Men interviewed in Dadaab refugee camps, for example, described being alienated from their families as a result of INGO interventions designed to empower and protect women and girls from gender-based violence. They spoke of the ease with which husbands could be arrested and threatened with eviction from the household for 'so much as raising their voices' at women.<sup>21</sup> Women also voiced frustration that the needs of men are overlooked: 'We all want our men to become responsible but the truth is we are all under the protection of humanitarian organisations that have very little recognition for men.' And as yet, there is insufficient knowledge of how the vulnerabilities and capacities of Somali women and girls, boys and men are inextricably entwined.<sup>22</sup>

Understanding these gendered relationships is vital if concern for the situation of Somali women and children is to be translated into appropriate policy and practice. Considering the Somali family unit—as opposed to just the individuals within it—has implications for interventions in governance, development programming and humanitarian response.

War and state collapse have expanded inequalities between Somali men and reduced male opportunities for fulfilling gendered roles and

responsibilities at family level. For men there is no space to discuss the implications, and few alternative trajectories for men to achieve manhood—which is not the case for women, for whom gender transformation is actively being canvassed by the international community.

The gap between what is socially and culturally expected of men and what individuals can actually deliver is huge and there are few forces organized to bridge it. This may be why reformist Islamist movements attract support. They appear to offer men an alternative discourse and ideology of masculinity and, in theory at least, a more inclusive governance option for men.

The current political economy provides incentives for the powerful to exploit male vulnerabilities where they exist, with an impact both on less powerful men and on their womenfolk. This male-on-male power relationship is a factor in Somalia's prolonged conflict, and the struggle for clan-supremacy that dominates state-building efforts.

Risks in the current situation are increasing tensions at family level, including between husbands and wives; increasing alienation and marginalization of men, especially the young and unemployed; increasing inter-generational mistrust; and increasing division and competition between clans for state and market resources.

Positive engagement in issues confronting Somali men is necessary if the structural and practical constraints on the lives and opportunities for women and children are to be effectively addressed and alleviated or removed. Possible approaches include widening the scope of policy to encompass the family; providing support for male carers of children; including male partners in discussions with women about matters affecting the family; and devising income generation opportunities for men and youths.

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## Notes

- 1 Government of the UK, 'Increasing Women's Political Participation: Key to Ending Violence against Women in Somalia', 12 December 2014, British Embassy Mogadishu news article, Accessed 12 August 2015. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/increasing-womens-political-participation-key-to-ending-violence-against-women-in-somalia>)
- 2 Save the Children, 'The Urban Disadvantage: State of the world's mothers 2015', Report, 2015.
- 3 UNICEF, 'Japanese Government's support to Somali children', 29 January 2015, UNICEF Somalia, Accessed 12 August 2015. ([http://www.unicef.org/somalia/reallives\\_16074.html](http://www.unicef.org/somalia/reallives_16074.html))
- 4 Rift Valley Institute, 'Impact of the War on Somali Men: An inception study', LOGICA report, 2015. ([http://www.logica-wb.org/PDFs/LOGICA\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_War\\_on\\_Somali\\_Men.pdf](http://www.logica-wb.org/PDFs/LOGICA_The_Impact_of_War_on_Somali_Men.pdf))
- 5 For how Muslim males have become demonized since the War on Terror, see for example, Glenn Greenwald, 'Newtown kids v Yemenis and Pakistanis: what explains the disparate reactions?', 19 December 2012, Guardian. (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/dec/19/newtown-drones-children-deaths>).
- 6 Use of the term *raganimo* varies across the regions and sub-cultures. Especially among northern Somali nomadic pastoralist society, *raganimo* refers to all aspects of being what translates as a 'real man'. In the north-east and in the south, and among non-pastoral cultures such as the Bantu and Reer Hamar, it is used differently. In Puntland it refers specifically to a man's physical virility and sexual prowess.
- 7 The *diya* group is the collective social institution that has the most day-to-day relevance for men for it is within this group that collective action takes place and collective accountability is realised. A single group may comprise several hundred families who are united through genealogy and marriage ties and who are obliged to protect one another and receive blood compensation (*diya*) for murder, or other injuries. Traditionally *diya* is paid in livestock. *Diya* payment acts as a deterrent against violence and reinforces collective responsibility.
- 8 Focus group discussion with women, Erigavo, December 2013.
- 9 The populations of these two regions established relative stability and governance partly through the efforts and agency of their traditional clan elders to successfully resolve inter-clan conflicts and bring about reconciliation. Subsequent conflicts have since arisen, most notably over governance of the Sool and Sanaag Regions.
- 10 For an analysis of the contest for resources in southern Somalia, see Kaptjiens, L., *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*, Pennsylvania: UPENN, 2013.
- 11 *Aano* (revenge killing) is a customary institution whereby instead of accepting *diya* (blood) payment as compensation for the loss of their male relative, a family can call for revenge. With revenge, the deceased's close male relatives are sanctioned to kill a man from the perpetrator's kinsmen, who is of equivalent age and status to the deceased. Like *diya* compensation, it is based on collective accountability. It should prevent casual killing because the collective consequences are so great. To call for *aano* was forbidden during the modern state-era but it has been reignited since 1991. See also, J. Gundel and Ahmed A. Omar Dharbaxo, 'The Predicament of the Oday: The role of traditional structures in security, rights, law and development in Somalia', Danish Refugee Council / Oxfam Novib, 2006.
- 12 In the south, militant groups, government, clan militia and foreign forces all carry out assassinations in addition to clan-related revenge killings.
- 13 APD's report, 'The Impact of the War on the Family' (2002), documents research findings from Somaliland. One elderly female respondent is reported saying that 'all women, whether they live in rural or urban are fighting for the survival of their families, a responsibility that used to be for men'.
- 14 Interviewed, Eastleigh, Nairobi, January 2014.
- 15 CISP / International Alert, 'Study of SGBV in three districts of Mogadishu', 2016. (Publication pending)
- 16 DFID, 'Defining Disaster Resilience', DFID Approach Paper, 2011.
- 17 Interviewed, Mogadishu March 2014.
- 18 Interviewed, Mogadishu, March 2014.
- 19 Nowadays, some men who are long-term dependents and, for whatever reason, play no role in their children's upbringing, are often described by their increasingly exasperated womenfolk as idle. It was reported that such men do not make the effort to educate their sons in cultural knowledge and traditions, formerly a key role of a father towards his male children.
- 20 Findings from research by Musse & Gardner, 'A Gender Profile of Somalia', EC Somalia, 2013, suggest it is not only boys who should feel dispensable. Respondents in Mogadishu report some families actively encourage early marriage of their girls so as to reduce demands on household income.
- 21 Male IDPs interviewed in Puntland also complained of a similar situation, brought about because their housing is registered in the woman's name as policy of the humanitarian agencies involved, rather than jointly in both partners' names. In this way, within the IDP settlement—and in Dadaab—domestic disputes can easily result in the physical break-up of the family. The sense of humiliation felt by an evicted husband is such that often he does not feel able to return to the household even if that is what family members want.
- 22 Judy El Bushra & Judith Gardner, 'Gender in Emergencies in the Horn of Africa', CARE Australia research report, 2016. (Publication pending)



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