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**A Minefield of Possibilities: The viability of Liberal  
Peace in Somaliland, with particular reference to  
Mine Action.**

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**PhD**

**University of Bradford**

**2015**

**A Minefield of Possibilities: The viability of Liberal  
Peace in Somaliland, with particular reference to  
Mine Action.**

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Doctor of Philosophy**

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**2015**

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A minefield of possibilities: The viability of Liberal Peace in Somaliland, with particular reference to Mine Action.

**Key Words:**

Somaliland, Liberal Peace, Mine Action, Peacebuilding, Mine Action Sector, Mines/UXOs, Horn of Africa

## **ABSTRACT**

The dominant liberal peacebuilding critiques tends to focus on ‘states’ and the failure of interventions in rebuilding them. Consequently, a standardised critique has emerged largely because the critics apply a broad brush across a diverse range of contexts, programmes, issues and activities as illustrated by the lack of scrutiny on mine action and emerging contexts such as Somaliland. The liberal peacebuilding critics critique the standardised ‘one size fits all approach’ employed by interveners, yet they take the same approach. I therefore argue for the need to broaden the critique to include other elements and contexts of peacebuilding.

I demonstrate that as an intervention mine action has intrinsic peacebuilding potential. However, the way mine action is implemented both globally and in Somaliland reflects the same dominant characteristics of the liberal peacebuilding critique i.e.; it is externally led; uses technical and standardised formulaic approaches; disregards local context thus failing to secure local ownership. Attributes that the critics argue have led to the failure and/or limited success of peacebuilding interventions. I therefore contend with the critics and demonstrate how these attributes have contributed to the challenges of implementing mine action activities thereby limiting mine actions ‘peace-ability’ potential in Somaliland. However, beyond the implementation modalities there are other factors that further

contribute to limiting this potential; these include the Sector Actors; the Somaliland context i.e. the historical and political context, and the perception of Somaliland people. Thus in conclusion I argue for a nuanced critique that acknowledges the challenging realities of implementing programmes in challenging post conflict environments.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To my Supervisor Professor Donna Pankhurst – I will remain forever indebted to not only your academic input but your support when I needed it most. Thanks for giving me the confidence to do this.

The process of researching, writing and completing this thesis has been blighted by challenges that nearly saw its premature end. To ignore the impact and the impetus that these challenges presented to me would be hypocritical. Such events spurred me on and energised me to bring this process to its beautiful conclusion. There are people whose actions; whose taunts; whose cynicism in my ability - contributed greatly to my determination. So to all those who identify with this – I remain forever grateful.

Thanks to the generosity of many especially my husband Frank Deall, without whose financial support this research would never have seen the light of day; my friends Jane & Lee Pryce, whose unending support cannot be under-estimated. Anastasia thank you too for the times you took the children so I could study. To Florence Juma for all the help with the interviews; All my friends who encouraged me; challenged me; gave me the space to just get on with it; those who enquired about the graduation; every phone call; every chat; every question, though irritating at times, challenged me to get on with it.

It was JRS that gave me the first opportunity to engage in various activities; the organisation through Bro Stephen Power SJ, gave me the space to find my path; this inevitably led me to the Landmines Campaign, and to my two greatest friends Dr. Walter Odhiambo and Mrs. Mereso Agina. You have remained steadfast in your friendship encouraging and supporting. Thank you.

I acknowledge the Danish Demining Group in Somaliland especially the colleagues that shared so generously during my presence in Somaliland; Pi & Thomas, Jess, Karen, Sud and the entire DDG Somaliland team. To all my interviewees who gave their time and offered their reflections – without whom – this research would not have been meaningful.

To all my fellow Research Colleagues – it has been a truly enriching encounter – Julia, Ronak, Pamela, Raja, Max, Nick, Kuda, Ama, Ulli and Laura (the list is endless.) Thanks especially to Michele Mozley who makes our life as Research Students that bit more easier!

# **DEDICATION**

**To Lewis and Lizzie:**

Your patience, encouragement and love during the long absences, followed by long nights and days of writing are indicative that I am the luckiest mum. You made it so much easier for me in so many ways than you will ever know. I can only now promise a healthier work-life balance in our post-PhD world.

**I DEDICATE THIS TO**

**MY LOVING MUM:**

**CHRISTINE WAITHERA THIONG'O**

I would have been lost without your demonstration of resilience in the face of adversity; your sense of duty, support, prayers, selflessness and encouragement throughout. I hope that one day I can be to my children half the parent that you are to me and my brothers.

**This one is for you Mum.**

And to all those single mums, shunned and judged by society.

**To all the girls growing up in the slums of Kangemi:**

**If I could do it – you too can.**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfP	Agenda for Peace
APD	Academy For Peace And Development
APM (APL)	Anti-Personnel Mines (Landmines)
ASA	Ammunition Storage Areas
ATM	Anti-Tank Mines
AXOs	Abandoned Explosive Ordnance
BAC	Battle Area Clearance
CCBRS	Comprehensive Community-Based Rehabilitation In Somaliland
CDC	Curriculum Development Committee
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DDR	Demilitarisation, Demobilisation and Re-integration
DFID	Department For International Development
GICHD	Geneva International Centre For Humanitarian Demining
ERW	Explosive Remnant of War
GIS	Geographical Information System
GLS	Global Landmine Survey
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
GoSL	Government of Somaliland
HI	Handicap International
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
HMCPC	Humanitarian Mine Clearance Pioneer Corps
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICBL	International Campaign To Ban Landmines
ICRC	International Committee Of The Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	International Management System for Mine Action
IPRT	Institute of Practical Research and Training
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
KCAL	Kenya Coalition of NGOs Against Landmines
LIS	Landmine Impact Surveys
MACC	Mine Action Coordination Centres
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MBT	Mine Ban Treaty
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards For Somalia
MRE	Mine Risk Education
MRR&R	Ministry Of Resettlement Rehabilitation And Reconstruction
MSF	<i>Medicins Sans Frontiers</i>
NDA	National Demining Agency
NDC	National Demobilisation Commission Of Somaliland

NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NMAA	National Mine Action Agency
NSAs	Non State Actors
OECD (DAC)	Organisation For Economic Co-Operation and Development (Development Assistance Committee)
PHR	Physicians For Human Rights
PMAC	Puntland Mine Action Centre
PRIO	International Peace Research Institute, Oslo
PSSM	Physical Security and Stockpile Management
RoLS	Rule of Law
SAC	Survey Action Centre
SALW	Small Arms And Light Weapons
SHA	Suspected Hazardous Areas
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SMAC	Somaliland Mine Action Centre
SNA	Somalia National Army
SNM	Somali National Movement
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSRC	Social Security Research Council
SPU	Special Protection Unit
SWG	Survey Working Group
TA	Technical Advisers
TAM	Technical Assessment Missions
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department For Safety And Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAF	United Task Force
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNOPS	UN Office for Project Services
UNOSOM	United Nations office for Somalia
UXOs	Unexploded Ordnance
VA	Victim Assistance
VVAF	Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation
WAD	Weapons and Ammunition Disposal
WHO	World Health Organization

# CHAPTER 1: MINE ACTION AND SOMALILAND; 'DANGER' AND 'INSECURITY' IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

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*'Humanitarian aid workers are no longer seen as 'respected and protected neutral healers'; instead they are increasingly becoming targets, hostages and victims 'of an anarchy they cannot control' (Cahill, 1999 p. 2)*

## INTRODUCTION

Felbaba-Brown (2014) advises that getting into and out of difficult (dangerous) areas of research can be greatly facilitated by working with or through local organizations such as NGOs, which can provide security advice and access to local assets. She therefore advises that 'before a researcher decides to work with or seek the support of any such organization, he or she needs to check out the institution for the same security, legal, and due-diligence issues' (p. 5). However, a Researcher who seeks to become embedded within the humanitarian aid complex must be cognisant of the above claims by Cahill (1999), especially if their research context is located in a place like Somaliland and involves researching an inherently dangerous issue such as landmines/mines. Therefore these thoughts remained at the back of my mind as I carried out this research and they came to shape the whole research process including the choice of research methods.

On my first day at the office with my host organization the Danish Demining Group (DDG), the following incident took place as recorded in my research diary:

Whilst in the office, I hear some 'gun shots', once, twice, three times... no one reacts – so I guess then it can't be what I think it is. A few minutes later I hear some screaming – I look out through the window and there's someone on the ground, wailing! It cannot be what am thinking it is – but still no movement from anyone in the office, the wailing goes on for a while and in my mind am thinking – 'could they have forgotten I am in the office and have gone into some secret hiding place? I decide to walk out of the office to see whether there is anyone else concerned in what was going on outside. Yes, there is one of the girls at the door who

quickly informs me that this is just a simulation exercise for the field security training and there is indeed nothing to worry about. Ahh, I had forgotten a mention by Jessica that she would be in a security training all day. For a moment I was scared. (Research Diary dated 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2010)

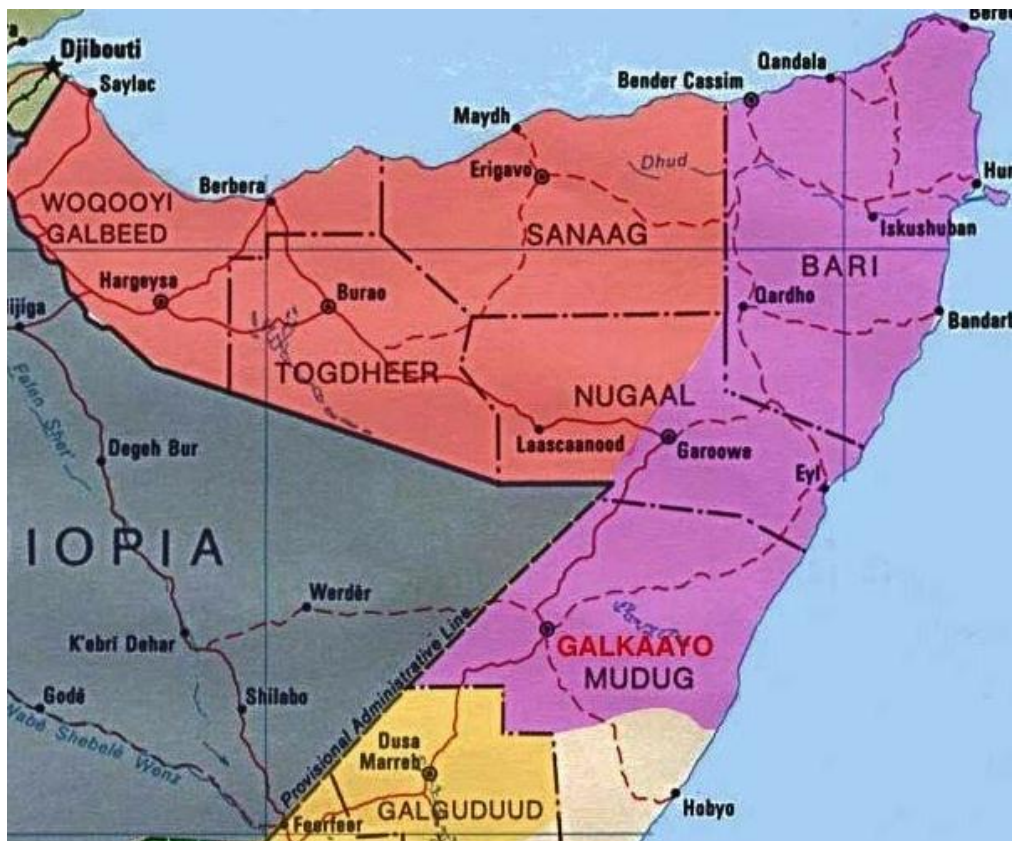
When the programme manager heard about this, she apologised profusely for not forewarning me that there was field-security training going on. Such exercises are designed to leave little room for ambiguity regarding the world they are conveying; the message is always clear, simple and repetitive about the insecurity that the participants face in the field. Jessica Buchanan was one of the participants at this particular training and was the Mine Risk Education Coordinator for DDG, during the course of my field work Jess was to become a good friend. We discussed her anxieties and hesitance in undertaking a field trip to Galkayo in Gal Mudug (See figure 1: Map showing the location of Galkaayo). At the end of the security training, she invited me to dinner to meet with those who were carrying out the training.

As I prepared for the second phase of data collection, I received news that nearly changed the course of this study; this was the kidnap on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2011 of Jessica Buchanan and Poul Hagen Thisted. They were returning from a field trip in Galkaayo, Mudug region of Puntland State of Somalia after conducting Mine Risk Education training. This event painted an image of a very insecure research context<sup>1</sup>; and although Somaliland was not the safest place in the world, it was actually fairly secure. I felt much safer walking the streets of Hargeisa, than I did in Nairobi. The kidnapping however contributes to contextualizing the global humanitarian and research context in which peace research is sometimes undertaken.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jessica and Poul were not taken from Somaliland, however, the fact that they both worked for the same organisation that was hosting me, and that they had been out carrying out training for Mine Risk Educators was what weighed a lot in my mind. If that could happen to those offering such a vital service, what would happen to a mere Researcher like me?

Figure 1: Map showing the location of Galkaayo in relation to Somaliland



Source:

Map available from <https://sites.google.com/site/somaliahamradio/somalia-map> accessed on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014

## GENESIS OF RESEARCH

My interest in researching on mine action comes from years of involvement in the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) both as an activist and as a researcher for the civil society initiative “The Landmine Monitor Initiative”; which monitors and reports on implementation of and compliance with the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty (MBT). As part of my mandate as a policy and information officer working for the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Eastern Africa Region, I was tasked to ensure the regional office participated in campaigns and initiatives that were supported by JRS Internationally. JRS, having had first-hand experience of the impact of landmines amongst refugee populations across the world, were among the first organisations to support the call for a ban. Because of our strategic advantage in the region and our access to refugees across the region, I was requested by the ICBL’s, Landmine Monitor Initiative to facilitate and collect data from refugees who had crossed borders

from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda (all situated in various refugee camps in Tanzania). Information and data were used to corroborate the data collected from in-country. Most of the time, these data were not available and therefore the narratives from refugees provided crucial information.

Thus, my interaction with the Mine Action Sector had primarily been through my involvement as an activist and a Landmine Monitor Researcher from 1999 to 2004. In 2003, I enrolled for an MA course in Peace Studies. Whilst on the programme, I was involved with various organisations providing assistance in research projects such as the *Global Survey on Explosive Remnants of War* by UNIDIR And (Landmine Action, 2003); and the project whose output was *Mine action after Diana : progress in the struggle against landmines* by (Maslen, 2004). These were undertaken whilst writing my MA dissertation on the impact of landmines on post conflict reconstruction with a focus on Afghanistan.

In 2004, whilst still working on my MA dissertation, I returned to Kenya to work with the Kenyan chapter of the ICBL, the Kenyan Coalition of NGOs against Landmines (KCAL). The KCAL worked closely with the Kenyan government where I coordinated and managed all the campaign events in in the preparation for the First Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty: Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World<sup>2</sup>. The conference coincided with my final year as Landmine Monitor researcher and the completion of my MA course in peace studies.

Having the academic experience and having worked on these research projects my interest and senses were heightened; hence during the Nairobi Summit I became increasingly aware of the divergent views that were emerging within the Sector; these were from those who were directly involved in mine clearance and those whose organizations were primarily focused on advocacy. Similarly, based on my experience carrying out research for the Landmine Monitor and assistance in research projects, I had increasingly observed and was aware of the contrast between what the Mine Action Sector was saying and the reality on the ground.

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<sup>2</sup> The conference was held at the United Nations offices in Nairobi and hosted by the Kenyan government. It was held on 29 November - 3 December 2004.

Thanks largely to the growing academic literature that was highly critical of the peacebuilding interventions that were taking place, I came to acknowledge how, as a practitioner, I had uncritically maintained a narrative on both the impact of landmines and, without hesitation, a foregone conclusion on how mine action contributed to post conflict peacebuilding. My encounter with the academic literature that was increasingly challenging approaches by humanitarian aid projects and interventions that were not conflict sensitive (Anderson, 1999); and I critiqued peacebuilding processes that rarely succeed in creating the necessary conditions for the emergence of a sustainable peace not guided by a genuine (rather than virtual) social contract, as would be expected in a liberal democratic society (Richmond, 2011).

Similarly, peacebuilding projects or intervention projects in general were seen as poorly conceived and executed, technocratic, or inappropriate, based on a weak understanding of local specificities. They were therefore seen as part of a neo-colonial agenda of western actors in the guise of peace and development. Hence, having observed the Sector on the ground, I became interested in the extent to which this critique was relevant to mine action and the implementation processes. Similarly, the divergent views that I encountered at the Review conference greatly contributed to my interest in further research hence the formulation of the following research questions:

- 1. To what extent is the critique of Liberal Peacebuilding reflected in mine action especially in its implementation and operationalization?**
  - a. Which of these critiques are supported by the implementation and operationalization of mine action in Somaliland?**
  - b. To what extent does the Somaliland context define the way in which mine action is implemented?**
- 2. How is mine action in Somaliland conceptualised and what factors dictate the way in which it is conceptualised?**

As a practitioner, I also believed that evaluative research can be an important and powerful tool in guiding the implementation and outcome of programs. I observed that the Sector was highly self-referential and therefore a critical examination of mine action implementations was largely unavailable.

My choice of questions was informed by my work as a landmine monitor researcher, my uncritical role as landmine campaigner and activist was challenged by my academic exposure. What was surprising was that the evidence of the role of mine action in peacebuilding was largely anecdotal and rhetorical at best. It soon also became evident that the role of the MA sector had not been critically examined. This however changed during the course of this research project with a number of PhD research outputs such as Chapman (2008), Bolton (2010), and Durham (2012).

Inevitably, I was guided by my subjective judgments and therefore interpretation of the findings at times might reflect my previous work, values and strengths. Personal, professional and academic interest influenced the formulation of the research project. It makes the research pertinent, not only to the peacebuilding academic world, but also hopefully to the Mine Action Sector.

## **RESEARCH CONTEXT**

### **Research Location; Somaliland**

Somaliland is situated in the North-Eastern tip of the Horn of Africa, and constitutes the North-Western regions of the former Republic of Somalia. It is bordered on the west by Djibouti, on the south by Ethiopia, by Somalia (Puntland) to the east and to the north is the Gulf of Aden, neighbouring Yemen and the Indian Ocean (see Figure 2: Map of Somalia, including the boundary of Somaliland and Puntland.).



**Figure 2: Map of Somalia, including the boundary of Somaliland and Puntland.**



**Source: Taken from (HOEHNE, 2015) Markus Virgil Hoehne (2015) *Between Somaliland and Puntland: Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions* Rift Valley Institute (RVI) Contested Borderlands Report. (p. 3) Available online on <http://www.riftvalley.net/publication/between-somaliland-and-puntland> accessed on 8th May 2015**

Somaliland<sup>3</sup> was known as British Somaliland until it achieved independence on June 26, 1960, becoming the first free Somali nation to join the United Nations. Its territory corresponds with that demarcated by the British during its time as a Protectorate. Both Somaliland and Somalia are mainly semi-desert and harsh semi-arid regions, with ecologies best suited for nomadic pastoralism along with varying levels of transhumant existence. Together they have one of the longest coastlines in Africa, 3,025 km (Pham, 2010). Somaliland's Ministry of Planning and Coordination estimated population at three million in 1997. Of this the nomadic people are 55% and urban and rural dwellers 45% (Ministry of Planning & Coordination, 2004). It is endowed with mainly grazing land and livestock, and a strategically placed port of Berbera (Azam, 2010)

Somaliland is not an internationally recognised State, and it endures blanket references of 'State failure', as applied to Somalia, whilst being acknowledged as a region of Somalia that is an 'Oasis of peace' (Fisher, 1999; Riemann and Gregg-Wallace, 2009), 'an oasis of security, reconciliation, and cooperation' (Ahmad, 2011) a 'pocket of stability' (Forti, 2011), or a 'pocket of peace' in the midst of chaos. This classification of Somaliland has a lot of bearing not only for research but also for the way the international community engages with it (see chapter 3). This framing of Somaliland within Somalia dictates the perceived security complexities associated with Somalia, and unfortunately also the perceived security challenges, the implications of which are not just relevant for program implementation but also for research and therefore the methods chosen for research and most importantly, it also has a bearing on how access is negotiated, as will be explained in detail below (see also chapter 7 under security challenges).

Somaliland has made great achievements in building a safe and secure environment; has a system of rule of law, and a political system which is seen to be democratic and is the result of innovative integration of traditional and modern sources of law and authority with a political structure that is based on a

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<sup>3</sup> The term "Somaliland" will be used interchangeably with "North West Somalia"; the rest of Somalia will be referred to as Somalia without further elaboration. Information about clan genealogies and boundaries are only indicative.

unique home-grown hybrid between a Western-type democracy (Adan Yusuf Abokor et al., 2006; Bradbury, 2008). However, Somaliland is also located within the reality of a growing threat from armed groups in Somalia, including killings of humanitarian aid workers. The Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (The Youth Movement) a militant wing of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts formed in 2004 and took over most of southern Somalia in the second half of 2006; it is a decentralized and violent Somali jihadist movement that aspires to create a fundamentalist Islamist emirate across the Horn of Africa. Its leaders, hailed from its forerunner Al-Ittihad Al-Islami (AIAI, or "Unity of Islam"), a militant Salafi group that peaked in the 1990s after the fall of the Siad Barre military regime (1969–1991) and the outbreak of civil war. The AIAI reportedly emerged from a band of Middle Eastern-educated Somali extremists that was partly funded and armed by al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden. It sought to establish an Islamist emirate in Somalia, and many of its fighters, including current Al-Shabab commanders, fled the country and fought in Afghanistan in the late 1990s after being pushed out by the Ethiopian army and its Somali supporters (Masters and Sergie, 2015) .

Hence, threat from such insurgent groups is relevant to Somaliland's stability. Such concerns also extend to jihadist infiltrators who might, according to reports by (ICG, 2005; McGregor, 2008) as a result of statelessness in the south, extend regional terror networks into Somaliland, threatening the foreign expatriate presence that has made Somaliland its base of operations (Jhazbhay, 2008 ). More specifically, Al Shabab has previously threatened Mine Action organisations in south central Somalia to cease operations in areas under their control. The accusation is labelled against United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) that it is paying the salaries of government police officers. Al Shabab accused the UN of attempting to disrupt peace and justice by bribing various community elders and inciting them to rebel against the Islamic administration. Furthermore, "they have been surveying and sign-posting some of the most vital and sensitive areas under the control of the Mujahideen," (Omar, 2009).

## **Mine Action**

Mine action as a concept aims at alleviating the impact of landmines and similar explosive remnants of war. According to the UN's International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), it is defined as "activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of landmines and ERW, including cluster munitions." It encompasses several dimensions, all of which must be taken into account in order to address the full range of problems posed by ERW contamination. There are five major "pillars" that support mine action; (a) advocacy, (b) mine risk education (MRE); (c) humanitarian demining, often referred to as "clearance", which includes all technical activities required during the clearance process (i.e. survey, mapping, marking, clearance); (d) victim assistance, which includes physical and psychological rehabilitation and reintegration; and (e) stockpile destruction.

Due to the nature and intensity of other activities this research pays less attention to mine awareness, victim assistance and advocacy work, although these are integral components of Mine Action. In Somaliland, there is less concentration by the Sector on other activities; except demining and a certain level of mine risk education.

## **RESEARCH TERMS**

The United Nations and the ICBL use the terminology Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) at a strategic level; both organisations also use the terminology "HMA" and "Mine Action" (together with the terminology "humanitarian demining") seemingly interchangeably, including in their key publication the Landmine Monitor. Similarly at the field levels the terms "mine action" and "mine clearance" are also used interchangeably (Filippino and GICHD., 2002).

## **Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs); Landmines, UXOs, AXOs**

Explosive Remnants of War has been described by Landmine Action (UK) as a broad term that includes all types of explosive weapons, including antipersonnel and anti-tank landmines, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) (Benini et al., 2002). The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) further defines UXO and ERWs as the unplanned consequence of the use of weapons systems with the exception of munitions dropped or planted with an anti-disturbance element deliberately

incorporated with the express intention of hampering clearance operation (Bryden et al., 2002).

There is no distinction for those people on the ground working in response to the contamination of mines and ERWs. Since the late 1980s, the words “mine” or “landmine” have been used to refer primarily to anti-personnel landmines — the weapon system banned from use by the Mine Ban Treaty—yet such systems are but one type of the increasingly varied range of weapons on which mine action focuses. There is a growing lexicon of terms, such as unexploded ordnance (UXO), ERW, abandoned explosive ordnance, explosive ordnance, cluster munition (and submunition), and improvised explosive device (IED). The distinction between landmines and other types of explosive devices usually does not apply to the daily work on the ground. Although they represent different types of threat, the problems posed and the impact on socio-economic activities of affected communities are analogous to those of landmines (DPKO, 2006 p. iv). Similarly within donor policies the inclusion of ERWs, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and cluster munitions, together with anti-personnel mines and anti-tank mines, reflects a broadening focus, which is an indication that attention is no longer directed to single item pursuits like landmines, but to a grouping of explosive devices that pose a threat to human security (Devlin, 2010 p. 8).

**Figure 3: Examples of the Different types of Mines**



Type-72



PFM-1



VS 50



PMD-6



BPD-SB 33



PMN

### Anti-tank mines



TM-57 Metallic Mine



TM-62 P2 Plastic Mine

**Source: GICHD, 2004 'A Guide to Mine Action', Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining**

### ***Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)***

Unexploded ordnance are explosive munitions that have been fired, thrown, dropped or launched but have failed to detonate as intended. UXO include

artillery and mortar shells, fuses, grenades, large and small bombs and bombies<sup>4</sup>, sub-munitions, rockets and missiles, among others (Moyes, 2004).

### ***Abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO)***

Abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) is explosive ordnance that has not been used during armed conflict and has been left behind and is no longer under control of the party that left it behind. It may or may not have been primed, fused, armed, or otherwise prepared for use (Landmine Monitor – online)<sup>5</sup>.

### **Minfields**

The International Mine Action Standards give a relatively short definition of a *minefield*: an area of ground containing mines deployed with or without a pattern. Minefields with unpredictable patterns - referred to as nuisance mine laying - are often more dangerous and much harder to clear than systematically laid minefields, especially in the absence of minefield maps. Such minefields were the most common type found in Somaliland (HALO Trust website).

### **Suspected Hazardous Areas**

This study will use the concept of hazardous areas or suspected hazardous areas (SHA), rather than the term or concept of a minefield. As a more generic term it considers different kinds of contamination, including inaccessible areas not in productive use due to the *perceived* or *actual* presence of mines, UXO or other explosive devices.

### **A mine affected area or community**

A community is referred to as mine affected if it contains one or several areas which are believed or verified to contain mines. Similarly, an area which is believed or verified to contain mines will be termed “*a mine affected area*”.

### **The Mine Action Sector**

The term Mine Action Sector (the Sector), will refer collectively to the various organizations active in all aspects of mine action. The Sector is not a

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<sup>4</sup> Bombies are bomblets, about the size of a tennis ball, ( mainly a term associated with Laos PDR); they are mainly a result of anti-personnel cluster bombs that were intended to explode on or shortly after impact but remaining ‘live’ in the ground after the end of the war. See <http://lao-foundation.org/learn-about-laos/unexploded-ordnance-landmines/> accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

<sup>5</sup> See the Monitor webpage <http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/LM/The-Issues/Explosive-Remnants-of-War> accessed on the 24th of November 2014

homogenous entity; rather, each organisation maintains and performs their specialties or preferences. Some of the agencies are involved in clearance operations on the ground and may or may not be involved in mine awareness or campaigning activities, and may even disagree with the campaign objectives. Similarly, other agencies may undertake campaigning as a specialty e.g., Mine Action Canada, Human Rights Watch. Others undertake mine awareness education and may have no involvement with, or expertise in, clearance operations. The Sector includes international organisations such as the various UN entities (UNMAS, UNDP, UNICEF etc.), these organisations are active in one or more components of mine action and may not necessarily work operationally on the ground.

### **SOMALILAND AND MINE ACTION: 'INSECURITY' 'DANGER' AND SAFETY- IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH**

As a post conflict environment, Somaliland evokes a perceived or real higher level of ambient and situational danger (Fast, 2007 p. 140). In explaining the dangers that researchers face during fieldwork Lee (1995), differentiates ambient from situational danger. He defines ambient danger as arising when the researcher is exposed to otherwise avoidable dangers by having to be in a dangerous setting to undertake research. Situational danger arises when the researcher's presence or actions evoke aggression, hostility, or violence from those within the setting (1995 pp. 3-4).

Many of the perceived 'dangers' and challenges in Somaliland are premised on the assumption that 'Somalia' is a chaotic, highly insecure and dangerous context that lacks any order. While that view has long had some validity in South Central Somalia, it is manifestly incorrect for Somaliland as will be demonstrated. However I do acknowledge that there is a significant level of danger associated with field research in Somaliland. However, this level of perception of insecurity and/or danger is heightened by the fact that the international community operates under *de jure* constraints of having to treat it as part of Somalia (see Chapter 3). The reality on the ground is quite different.

Acknowledgement of danger by researchers has been neglected and is mostly limited to shared anecdotes between researchers which are often left out of the writing process (Sluka, 1990). Goldstein (2014) has noted the infrequency with



which qualitative researchers have explicitly discussed safety which is surprising given how often they work in potentially dangerous settings. Bloor et al. (2008), authors of a commissioned inquiry into the risks to well-being of researchers in Qualitative Research, noted that while researchers frequently study subjects who are exposed to danger from violence, “it is difficult to understand why there is such an absence of reflection upon [the researchers] themselves as vulnerable beings in volatile situations” (p. 22). Previously, researchers such as Lee (1995), Nordstrom and Robben, (1995), Lee-Treweek and Linkogle (2000), Kovats-Bernat, (2002), and (Hobbs, 2006) have brought to the fore discussion of safety, danger and fear. Incidents such as that of American researcher Paula Lloyd who was doused with gasoline by a disputant and set afire during her field work in Afghanistan, emphasise the need for qualitative researchers to address the issue of safety and security as recently observed by the Social Security Research Council (SSRC) under the Drugs Security and Democracy programme and through an edited volume Arias (2014) of working papers on Research Security which have sought to address this deficit.

Similarly, feminist researchers such as Hume (2007), Lee (1997), Nilan (2002), Arendell (1997), and Sharp and Kremer (2006) highlight the growing awareness of possible dangers that are faced by female researchers. Gill and Maclean (2002) argue that female researchers are more highly scrutinized than male scholars making their gender status cognisant in the field.

The notion of insecurity, in post conflict environments in general is further perpetuated by a prevailing perception that violence in the field, especially against aid workers (with whom researchers are often embedded) is increasing globally. Research determines that this perception is based on findings based on a broader set of factors which worsen the climate in which aid workers operate; this includes the widespread availability of small arms and the growing number and scale of integrated missions, increasing the relative risk to humanitarian aid workers as a direct result of the ‘Global War on Terror’. In Somaliland in 2003, a number of incidents underscored this further when three humanitarian workers – two British teachers and an Italian, Dr Annalena

Tonelli<sup>6</sup>, were killed by groups engaged in operations targeting warlords and militia commanders who are purportedly supporting Western counterterrorism efforts in Somalia. They also engaged in a spate of murders of international aid workers (Le Sage, 2009). These groups were later linked to the 2008 bomb attacks that targeted the presidential palace, the Ethiopian consulate and the United Nations offices in Hargeisa. Twenty people died at Ethiopia's consulate in Hargeisa, while five were killed at the president's residence. Those killed by the car-bombs were the President's personal secretary and senior anti-terrorism official Ibrahim Hutu (McGregor, 2008). Two were killed and six injured at the UNDP compound, a UN staff member, a driver and a security adviser. Another two vehicles exploded in neighbouring Puntland on the same day.

Before these incidences Somaliland was considered relatively safe in comparison to other similar contexts such as Afghanistan and Somalia, and aid agencies travelled freely around the country. These killings came as a shock, and prompted changes in security policies, including tightening security procedures stipulated in the Minimum Operating Security Standards for Somalia (MOSS), not only for Somaliland. Other measures included a government advisory to foreigners not to travel outside Hargeisa after 8pm, whilst the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) imposed a curfew on travel to certain areas of Somaliland. These killings and attacks therefore further embedded the 'security' and 'danger' perceptions for research and humanitarian operations in general.

The notion of 'insecurity' and or perception of 'danger' for this research project was further reinforced by the fact that mine action research implies research sites that are 'contaminated' with mines and other unexploded devices. After the cessation of all hostilities, a serious residual threat to the local population was left and accidents were reported. Vast amounts of ammunition were also abandoned as various armies and rebels retreated, contributing significantly to the abandoned explosive ordnance AXO/UXO contamination. In 2001, one in every 652 returnees to Somaliland was a mine victim whilst 5,000 mine

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<sup>6</sup> Dr Anna Tonelli was the winner of the 2003 Nansen Award for her work for destitute Somalis. She was killed on 2 October 2003, on the grounds of the tuberculosis (TB) hospital she founded in Borama in northwestern Somaliland. See article on her work on [http://www.unicef.org/people/people\\_14935.html](http://www.unicef.org/people/people_14935.html) accessed on 23rd November 2014

causalities (3,500 fatalities and 1,500 amputations) had been recorded for the period between 1991 and 2001 (UNDP, 2001 p. 64). Landmine injury to humanitarian aid workers emerged in a study by (King, 2002) who, having analysed the deaths of aid workers between 1997 to 2001, established that landmines were one of the causes. Similarly, according to Refugees International, the death of 13 aid workers through landmine accidents on roads in Angola was indicative that even with all the information and education on safety given to aid workers, landmines continued to take their toll (Refugees International, 2003). Hence, Somaliland as a 'post conflict mine contaminated research site', and mine action as a research agenda, are imbued with the perception of 'danger' with far-reaching security implications. This is demonstrated by the reluctance of academic institutions to encourage field research in such contexts. Thus the opportunity to undertake research in Somaliland under the auspices of a mine action NGO was a great opportunity that presented itself to me.

The literature assumes and addresses issues of dangerous (post conflict/war) contexts as being challenging. However there is a dearth of literature on how 'security concerns' and narratives of 'danger' are perpetuated by agencies to limit access by researchers. For example Kovats-Bernat (2002) advises on "shifting social complexities unique to unstable field sites which should depend on a level of investigative flexibility on the part of the ethnographer, who cannot always be expected to work in safety and security" (p. 3). The adoption of strategies for research that are responsive to the spectrum of risks existent in dangerous fields facilitates the engagement of data that simply cannot be accessed without an immeasurable degree of risk. However there is little written on how the perceived 'security' and 'danger' is used to limit a researcher accessing data or the field or controlling the same. I argue that 'security', 'safety' and 'danger', offered by organisations and/or individuals (gate-keepers) in conflict and post conflict zones create opportunities for blocking research in areas that they would rather not be investigated by outsiders, however I find no evidence in the literature to support this<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> This observation has also been made by my colleague who underwent a similar experience while carrying out her fieldwork in South Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We have had numerous

## **NEGOTIATING ACCESS TO THE RESEARCH SITE**

Given the above context, access into Somaliland as a research site involved multiple negotiations on various levels and with various authorities. Accessibility is almost impossible without negotiating logistical support with a specialised humanitarian organisation, if not specifically a demining organisation. It also meant that beyond physical access into Somaliland further access to sites and participants had to be negotiated. The physical access sought by any researcher is merely an initial geographical step for qualitative research.

Having obtained physical access into Somaliland through UNDP Somalia, I negotiated support and further access through DDG who were to provide logistical support. I also learnt that DDG had scaled down their mine action activities and that the only organisation that was left actively undertaking mine action was HALO Trust. I then spent some time working with the Peace Caravan, a project that was being funded by UNDP, as I finished the internship period. This provided me with ample time to adjust to the context and to negotiate and make contacts informally; mainly through social gatherings and contact with expatriate staff in Hargeisa.

DDG was happy, through the Program Manager, to make calls to introduce me to the Sector. All those contacted responded very positively and meetings were organised without any problems, except for the key organisation vital for my research. As soon as the phone calls were made I was invited to their office where I met the Programmes Manager. The purpose of the meeting was not as I had expected, instead it was for the Manager to establish what my research was about; discuss my research question and who the targeted audience for my research would be. I responded as fully and honestly as I could. The meeting ended with a request by the Manager to email all this to him so that he could forward it and get clearance from his headquarters. I was also made to understand that 'he could not see any reason that my request could be denied' (Email communication with program manager).

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discussions and have been searching for any academic reflections precisely on that but have yet to come across any.

Until then, physical access into Somaliland had been the easiest part. The response from HALO Trust however, was a flat refusal of any involvement in the research. They were the only demining organisation still undertaking mine action programs; reasons cited included unavailability of time for staff to engage with the research, especially to accompany and incorporate my field visits to sites or even to the premises as a research site. Any suggestions that I made in an effort to fit into their own schedules were refused. One explanation was that the staff were otherwise busy and would be heading to Scotland for a meeting – to which I suggested that I reschedule my meetings to take place there. This was also deemed unacceptable. At this point, I was about to give up on Somaliland as a research site. After discussing it with various people, including the UNDP Programme manager, they suggested that this reluctance by the organisation actually provided a good reason to persist in trying to undertake the research. I hypothesise that the unease towards allowing deeper access than mere entrance to a research site may have resulted from the risk of unpacking and/or examining unfavourable truths and/or bringing criticism of the organisation.

This denial of access served as a both a challenge to investigate more and a means to refine my methodology further; it meant that whatever data were received went through a more critical analysis – raising the need for more validation and triangulation. It also meant that when out in the field I observed more and I challenged myself to look and understand beyond what was being said/ presented to me.

I left Somaliland and prepared to return after refining the research questions. At the time, I made contact with HALO Trust headquarters through the desk officer; through email correspondence he introduced me to the programme manager – fortunately the one I had previously dealt with had left. It was a new start.

The kidnap and demand for ransom for Jess and Poul happened just as I was preparing to return for the second part of my data collection. They were later rescued when President Obama ordered their release by the Seal 6 team. This event delayed my decision to return to Somaliland. When I eventually went,

Somaliland was a much calmer and more relaxed place than it had been when I had first visited<sup>8</sup>.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Methodology “refers to the choices we make about cases to study, methods of data gathering, forms of data analysis, etc. in planning and executing research study” (Silverman, 2013 p. 119).

A study that involves research in areas under the rubric of peace building lends itself to a research methodology that is mainly qualitative as it is seeking to understand people’s perspectives etc. Similarly, for a good understanding of the role of the Mine Action Sector, observation and interviews, methods within qualitative methodology presented the best option. The methods of data generation within a qualitative methodology provide for flexibility and sensitivity to the social context within which research is carried, rather than a rigidly standardised or structured approach that is removed from ‘real life’ or social context as in experimental methods in a quantitative study (Patton, 1990). One of the fundamental critiques of quantitative methodology is that it does not capture the real meaning of social behaviour, and although quantitative research gives a solid statistical account of particular issues involved in mine action, and is the methodology generally preferred by the Sector, a qualitative approach offers a greater depth to the issues involved. Gilbert (1993) argues that both qualitative and quantitative approaches have a key role to play in policy relevant research. Similarly, time and financial constraints during fieldwork meant that it was not feasible to carry out large-scale surveys as well as in depth interviews and observation. Similarly, the research did not intend to turn participants into ‘objects’ or ‘units’ as required by a quantitative approach.

The research stresses the importance of the context, and thus is cognizant of what Marshall and Rossman (1999) define as qualitative research; as exploratory or descriptive and one that stresses the importance of context setting and participants’ frames of reference.

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<sup>8</sup> With hindsight this is probably a result of the fact that I was more confident as a Researcher and was more at ease with the surrounding. Similarly the security requirements for example being accompanied by an SPU all the time had been relaxed and this could have contributed to my feeling much at ease than previously.

## **Research Strategy/Design**

Within a qualitative study, I used a case study approach as the chosen design. Yin (1993) defines the case study research design as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

A case study approach focuses on understanding dynamics within single settings. It is arguably the most popular method of social science research Burton (2000) offering the opportunity to cover a wide range of data collection methods, both qualitative and quantitative. A case study approach is an 'umbrella' for a number of research methods and does not exclude any data collection method allowing adaptation to circumstance (Bell, 1993). This approach has also been likened to an experiment, a history, or a simulation, though not linked to any particular type of evidence or method of data collection (Yin 2003). Case studies emphasise detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships.

## **Research Philosophy**

Case study research design lends itself to a constructivist paradigm through which participants tell their stories and are able to describe their view of reality. Thus this research is guided by a social constructivist research philosophy that views parts of society as existing but constructed and reconstructed through social interaction. The term social construction of reality is rooted in the work of Berger and Luckman (1965). They sought to redefine the ambiguity of sociology of knowledge and brought forth the debate on subjective and objective reality. Marx influenced Berger and Luckmans' anthropological views amongst others, whilst they drew on Durkheimian philosophy for their view of the nature. The work of Herbert Mead (1967) also greatly influenced their analysis of internalisation of social reality. They argue that what is 'known' is expressed socially, not just in social contexts but also in language. A constructivist paradigm today is often mistakenly associated with an approach to teaching and learning rather than a philosophy of knowledge creation. It refers to the philosophical belief that people construct their own understanding of reality. Constructivism contrasts realism, which holds that there is a truth out

there and that this reality can be known through a variety of means. Realists believe in an external world that is independent of subjectivity (Warrick, 2001). Similarly according to Bryman (2004) objectivism differs from constructivism since it implies that we confront an external social phenomenon that is independent and separate from us (p.16).

Social constructivists assume that there are many possible interpretations of the same data, all of which are potentially meaningful. I will therefore make no claim that my interpretation of events and activities is the only explanation available as constructions are not separate from those who make them; they "are not part of some 'objective' world that exists apart from their constructors," (Guba and Lincoln, 1989 p. 143). Similarly, I will 'examine the truth claims within the borders of social context in terms of the claims themselves, the claims makers and the claims making process' (Temple and Edwards, 2002 cf Gergen 1994).

### **Data Collection methods within a Case Study approach**

Different types of data were used in conjunction to allow for complementarity and, whenever possible, to increase the overall validity of the study. A case study design allows for a mixture of methods to be used; this allows for methodological triangulation to ensure reliability and validity. I enlisted the following methods:-

#### **a) Interviews**

Kvale (1983) defines qualitative interviewing as "an interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena" (1983 p. 174). It is a method employed by social scientists who seek to investigate varieties of human experience. They attempt to understand the world from the participants' points of view and to unfold the meaning of their lived world. Interviews give voice to these people, allowing them to present their life situations in their own words, and allow for a close personal interaction between the researchers and their participants (Kvale, 2006).

The use of interviews can, in some cases, translate into the use of information which is anecdotal. However, interviews are regarded as central to the work because they serve to provide an 'inside' and more detailed look into how the



interviewees felt about the presence of mines, what the community needed and what the capacities are. Interviews composed the largest portion of field data. Thus, interviewing is a strategy for exploring others' perspectives, obtaining "here and now constructions" and "reconstructions" of "persons, events, activities, organisations, feelings, motivations, claims, concerns, and other entities" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 p. 268) .

This research called for reconstruction of events by asking interviewees to think back over how a certain series of events unfolded in relation to a mine action, a very important aspect of the project especially considering the length of time that mine action has been going on in Somaliland. Similarly, issues around peacebuilding are not always amenable to observation, hence interviewing represented the only viable means of finding out. As a tool, therefore, interviewing was used within each context to allow for a gainful insight into history.

Interviewing is a method of using conversation with a specific purpose. In any social structures, conversations are seen as a meaningful way of human interaction. Berger and Luckmann (1967) stated that conversation is "the most important vehicle of reality-maintenance" (p. 152). New conversations suggest new realities; the way in which we carry out these conversations becomes important in the continued construction and reconstruction of reality. Such a process has a way of changing a society's collectively created reality that enables communication of social meanings.

Ascribing meaning to the emerging conversations therefore relies upon context, the social and linguistic construction of a perspectival reality where knowledge is validated through practice (Kvale, 1996 p. 42). Using a social constructionist view of the world, acknowledging that interpretation is a result of a collective and not an individual process, meaning is defined through my assumptions as the researcher, the socially constructed meanings in interviews and socially constructed meanings that may emerge.

Gilbert (1993) identifies two types of interviews; structured and unstructured. Patton (1990) classifies interviews into; informal conversation interview, the general interview and the standardised open ended interview. There are

different methods based on the demarcation of the way interviews are carried as Carment (1993) identifies. These are structured interview, semi-structured interview, group interview and unstructured or focused interview. I mainly used unstructured (open ended) interviews which involved asking informants open-ended questions, and probing wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful to the research project. The interviews entailed extensive and lengthy conversations; that did not follow a pre-established or standardised set of questions; instead, the list of issues addressed was continuously revised to follow up on new insights – or questions – that emerged throughout the data-collection process. Such a technique is described by Patton (1987) as a type of interview that researchers use to elicit information in order to achieve holistic understanding of the interviewee's point of view or situation. This technique led to the identification of key issues of concern or relevance. This method allowed 'control' over the line of questioning, seeking elaboration and clarification of points unlike a questionnaire or a very structured interview where the answers would have been set without allowing for any thoughts outside the choices provided.

Interviews were conducted in a range of surroundings: extremely hot and uncomfortable surroundings, comfortable offices, in restaurants and other public places. Sometimes voices were drowned out by background noise, making recording difficult. All interviewees except one were happy to have the interviews recorded, and each of the interviews was transcribed using high quality audio equipment at the end of each day. This was an onerous task as some participants spoke English with very heavy accents which meant that accurate transcription was a lengthy and arduous process. Basic transcription was done whilst in the field and refined upon return. The challenges in transcribing are acknowledged by Poland who notes that some of the issues that can interfere with the accuracy of transcribed data include capturing the words, use of quotations, omissions and mistaking words and phrases for others (Poland, 2002).

In total I undertook 45 interviews with people who represented a cross section of backgrounds: former miners; government officials; UN staff, local mine clearance employees, members of local NGOs involved in peacebuilding work

and members of research institutions in Hargeisa. Due to problems with access with HALO Trust, I interviewed people who had previously worked with HALO Trust and gathered any information about the organisation and how it operated. I was therefore constantly aware of some shortcomings of the interviews especially with those who had points to score with the organisation and therefore raise reliability concerns. This called for a lot of reflexivity and reflection on who was speaking and who were they speaking to, as well as the purpose of the interview and under what circumstances they were speaking me. Facts were double checked to ensure reliability.

Interviews with local NGOs provided me with an understanding of the perceptions of local people towards mine action and the Sector Actors. They also helped in clarifying what their understanding of peacebuilding was and what shaped the way peacebuilding was conceptualised in Somaliland; I acknowledge that this is not representative of the Somaliland population but, given the limitations, it was the only viable option. I had initially considered carrying out focus group interviews, but this idea was abandoned for various reasons. At the time of research, especially 2010, I was hosted by DDG and relied heavily on the goodwill of the office for logistics support as I had to adhere to strict security arrangements regarding expatriate workers including the requirements for armed guards. With no other means of transport, and being linked with DDG, I felt that the focus groups thus convened would mean the research would be compromised by the interviewees' desire for mimicking what they thought I would want to hear (the Landmine Impact Survey process suffered this bias as I was to discover later). This would have been influenced by my arrival in a branded DDG vehicle, and my reliance on the DDG staff to organise the focus groups for me. There were issues regarding language as well. I did not have the financial capability to hire someone to do simultaneous translations which would have been necessary as the local population generally does not speak English. It was also a very busy period for the staff at DDG and I did not want to inconvenience them more than necessary.

Carrying out the interviews was both a challenging venture and an enriching experience. The Somali language has a rich oral tradition with storytelling very much part of the culture. Anyone who has undertaken interviews about the

peacebuilding process will certainly appreciate the pride with which the process is spoken about. Thus, most of the Somali interviewees found great pleasure in describing the clan led peacebuilding process, perhaps unaware that all the previous interviewees started with the same narrative. It therefore took longer to get to the point and sometimes some important historical facts may have been missed as I would sometimes not be listening, as I patiently waited to get over the historical narrative into what I needed to get to<sup>9</sup>.

Before embarking on any interviews, information about me as the researcher and the research itself was provided together with a written 'consent form'; PART C: CONSENT FORM) provided for each respondent. In tandem with the ethical requirements, I also asked whether it was okay to use the recording device and in all except one instance participants were happy to be recorded and also to be cited.

I relied a lot on informal interviews which served a supplementary purpose and help to make sense of what one has been told. For example, I gathered quite a lot of detail on the frustration of working in Somaliland from mine action organisations during a field trip and also at an informal get together. As I waited in offices to meet the people, I was able to talk informally to the people working in the organisations who shared a lot of information that helped in understanding not only the context of Somaliland, but also some views of people who I might not otherwise have considered as interviewees.

### **b) Documentary Evidence**

Citing the work of Scot (1990) May (1993) points out that documents may be regarded as 'physically embodied texts, where the containment of the text is the primary purpose of the physical medium' (p.12). May (*op cit*) argues that this reflects a very broad spectrum of both perspectives and research sources. They are viewed as part of the practical contingencies of organisational life, as part of the wider social context, or by centrality of their authorship (May, 1993).

Apart from carrying out interviews, I collected documentary sources in Somaliland. While archival resources were especially useful for case study

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<sup>9</sup> This was not because I wasn't interested in the details (as these contributed to understanding the context). It was mainly because the same narrative was being retold over and over again.

construction as they are stable, broad and exact (Yin, 2003 p. 86) such an ideal-type situation of archival resources did not exist for either Somalia or Somaliland. Written material and (consistent) statistical data are hard to come by – partly because the respective authorities have insufficient resources for data collection and partly because the region was poorly administered for many years and devastated by repeated conflict (Balthasar, 2012). The data I gathered was from specific organisations and this enabled some additional and deeper insight mine action policies and programmes over time.

During some of the interviews, I was referred to documents that had been generated by practitioners out in the field. The documents included Institutional reports; this includes a wide variety of documents relating to specific activities conducted by individual institutions or organisations working in the mine action arena. Inevitably, and given its social context and identity, one may give a selective and biased understanding of a document, and may even deliberately chose and select particular documents. Even though this is a common criticism against researchers using any technique of data collection, I did not entirely rule it out. During my engagement in this field, as a Landmine Monitor researcher, I particularly interacted with Landmine and ERW survivors and was very sympathetic to their plight. With this in mind one can easily have biases towards a certain way of representing facts.

For the historical narrative, especially during the setting up of mine clearance by RIMFIRE, I benefitted enormously when I established contact with the person who was the UN Monitor for the clearance work at the time. From his archives I received a lot of reports and records on events that took place. Inevitably, authors of documents decide to record and leave out information informed by their social, political and economic environment. Historical documents, thus, are amenable to manipulation and selective influence. In undertaking documentary research, I was aware of these influences and did not assume that documents were simply neutral artifacts from the past.

While new technologies (e.g., the internet) offered possibilities for acquiring documents, critical reflexivity was required. Also some of the documents, especially by organisations that are currently working on the issues were biased and overemphasised certain areas in order to elicit funding from donors etc.

Similarly, using documents comes with the risk of being charged as being un-reflexive and uncritical, however this arises if one uses the documents without due consideration to the process and social context of their construction. Thus, where documents were used, there was a high degree of sophistication and scepticism in reading and interpretation.

### **c) Overt Observations**

Observation is defined as “a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place” (Kumar, 2005) and it could be used as a method of data collection. Observation involves watching, listening and recording (May, 1993).

Somaliland has a large presence of expatriates in the country and many aid agencies have offices in Hargeisa waiting around the Mansoor or the Ambassador hotels for meetings with the interviewees or to pass time between interviews provided good opportunities to talk to various people. Inevitably the local people thought that I was part of the aid community.

Important factors in conducting interviews and participant observation were proximity and chance. The sites of contact included social gatherings (there were a lot in Hargeisa); organisations residences in main centres; and, where pre-planning had been carried out, in offices and residences. In addition to interviews observations included instances such as attending social evenings at NGO residences; travelling with de-miners to field sites; accompanying NGO staff on lengthy road journeys to remote field sites.

Apart from the interviews, extra attention was paid to the surroundings especially during the visits to demining sites. These observations reinforced the statements made by the interviewees and offered a useful opening gambit to interviews.

In conclusion, when undertaking such a diverse area of research one needs to have a good knowledge base and most importantly endeavour to be free from preconceived ideas that may be derived from theory. One should also be adaptive and flexible as undertaking research in a real world means that things don't always go as planned; one takes newly encountered situations as opportunities rather than threats. Therefore different innovative methods were

utilised such as accessing key informants via Skype and Facebook. This meant that any clarification of the interviews was dealt with as they arose through Instant Messaging.

Similarly interview data was supported by further information from aid agency websites, unpublished agency documents, academic sources and archives in order to build understanding of agencies' histories, funding sources, political associations, and the broader context. For both the earlier and the later dataset, information was collated, compared, and compiled during the research process, enabling interviews to follow up emerging issues and themes.

### **Data Analysis and process**

For analysis I use a simplified model that has previously been used for health policy analysis by Walt and Gilson (1994). (see Figure 4: The Gilt and Wilson (1994) policy framework triangle; model for Health Policy Analysis.) This model incorporates the concepts of context, content, process and actors to illustrate how these interplay to influence the definition of the policy and challenges of implementation. The Gilt and Wilson policy analysis model is ideal for analysing the Sector as it allows for more than the limited focus on how the Sector, or if it were the case, the Mine Ban Treaty operates without neglecting other important dimensions that explain how the formation process and the actors all impact the Sector's governance and implementation structures and how they have emerged. The model also allows for this process to be analysed based on the context in which the policies are being formed. This is relevant within the mine action Sector where decisions taken at an international level seek to achieve an impact on the level of communities and individuals.

This analytical model incorporates the concepts of context, content, process and actors. This model has been used primarily to help policy analysts think more systematically about the multitude of factors (content, process, context and actors) affecting policy and the interrelations between these factors (Walt and Gilson 1994). They noted that health policy research focused largely on the content of policy, neglecting actors, context and processes. Their policy triangle framework is grounded in a political economy perspective, and considers how all four of these elements interact to shape policy-making. Walt & Gilson's framework was originally designed to analyse national policymaking

processes, however, I use it as a tool to analyse a Sector's formation and the emerging policy – as it is hypothesised that the same factors that shape the formation of the sector also influence policy formation and implementation at all levels. Utilising the framework further helps in conceptualising and organising these themes and guided the analysis.

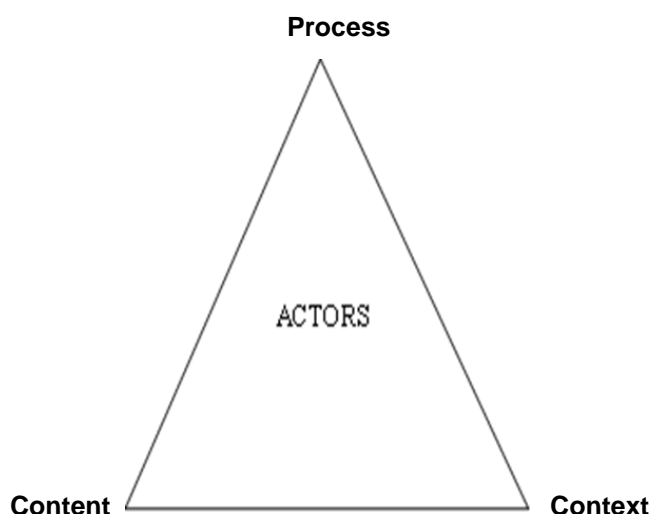
A study that looks just at the implementation of an intervention may focus on specific actors, such as humanitarian aid workers in isolation, ignoring how the whole intervention interacts with other factors such as the political context, the donor requirements and local context where the activity is being implemented. Such an approach tends to be reductionist and often causes the analysis to attribute all of the improvements or deteriorations in the conflict situation to one kind of organisation or actor though these developments usually result from the combined work of different local and external factors including the policy decisions that guide them.

Thus applying context analysis ensures a proper examination of the circumstances and the environment within which an organisation operates, with a particular focus on how context and organisational values, mission, and programming might interact.

The Mine Action Sector; mine action policy; mine action sector actors are a reflection of the same global political dynamics which dictated the process of formation of the Sector. Similarly the formation process defines the normative framework that governs the Sector.



**Figure 4: The Gilt and Wilson (1994) policy framework triangle; model for Health Policy Analysis.**



**Source: Walt and Gilson, (1994)**

This research will also use the ‘peace-ability’ methodology, whereby Mine Action achievements are conceptualised in terms of their role in increasing or decreasing probabilities for peace, rather than as precise cause and effect relationships. This is because “impact” is a concept that is inappropriate for the examination of peace-building for a number of reasons. The problems of attribution, time frames and the lack of the counterfactual mean that it is difficult to talk with precision about the contribution of Mine Action programmes on peace building or conflict fuelling processes. At best, I can only talk about the general direction of change and the *probabilities* that Mine Action interventions have had an impact on peace and conflict dynamics (Goodhand, 2002). The evaluative stance of those examining the role of an activity on peace-building best focuses on ‘improving’ performance rather than ‘proving’ impact (Hulme, 2000). In addition to the technical problems of assessing impact, there is the conceptual challenge of understanding and interpreting ‘peace’. Like gender, peacebuilding will be a lens through which I assess the outcomes of policies, activities and programmes of mine action organisations (Goodhand, 2002).

## **CONSTRAINTS, LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES**

People were interviewed on the record, with the majority agreeing to be quoted. The limitations of this methodology are that it relies on human memory to

retrace policy decisions when (accessible) documentation is not available; time constraints and the difficulty of travelling in Somaliland only allowed for one day of field trip.

### **‘Security’ Limitations**

Association with humanitarian aid agencies in Somaliland does not necessarily provide immunity, as groups such as Al Shabab are known to kidnap and target humanitarian aid workers. In research carried out by Fast (2007) on NGO insecurity in conflict zones, some respondents reported that aid workers were seen as ‘soft targets’ and therefore more vulnerable.

Hence due to security concerns and in adherence to the standard operating procedures that were in place for DDG expatriate workers, (during the first phase of the data collection) I could not leave the office without being accompanied by an armed guard commonly referred to as an SPU i.e. Special Protection Unit (SPU)<sup>10</sup>. Similarly I could not travel to other regions of Somaliland because at the time travel outside Hargeisa for expatriate staff required one not only to be accompanied by an SPU but also to hire a minimum of two 4x4 vehicles one for myself and one for the SPUs. Thus an urban bias of the fieldwork was mainly due to ‘security’ and safety constraints as well as limited finances. Despite the difficulties, good primary data was gathered in the field.

Research observation, especially mine clearance, therefore involved ‘safety’ issues and for ‘security’ reasons the need to be accompanied to the field meant that such visits were only possible through advance planning and negotiation that took people away from their busy routines.

Whilst in the field access to the demining team was limited and guarded. Even within the allowed parameters there were restrictions on where I could go and who I could interact with, an obvious cautious move by the HALO Trust. I read this as an effort to ‘manage’ and limit any exposure of unflattering or sensitive aspects in the ‘field’, or disrupt routine (Lee, 1995 p. 22).

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<sup>10</sup> Following the spate of killings and kidnap of expatriate staff, the Governments of Somaliland, with the encouragement and financial support from donors and the United Nations Country Team for Somalia, have established a Special Protection Unit (SPU) tasked with providing compound security and the escort security for the international community including humanitarian and development actors.

There is need to acknowledge that there were 'genuine' reasons for concerns for safety and therefore the organisations had a duty of care towards me; however the extent to which these concerns were used to limit access to sites and individuals for example deminers working in the field, should not be underestimated.

### **Access to official Documents**

Access to official documents from the Sector was difficult, beyond those available online. I found that the Sector was rather reluctant to share documents such as reports etc., beyond those that were available online. Unlike other organisations in the field, HALO Trust does not publicise their evaluation reports or end of year reports. This means that I relied heavily on reports that were held by previous programme managers in their personal computers. As an organisation HALO Trust is shrouded by secrecy and therefore coming across any of their publications was quite difficult. Various emails to the headquarters for reports were not responded to, neither were emails for clarifications even after an interview had been given by the programme manager. As for DDG, for example, a number of their evaluation reports and research outputs were accessible via the internet. Specific annual reports to donors were made available only by past programme managers.

Access to official documents from Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) was impossible as the director continually failed to show up for appointments. Similarly requests for documents from other officials were not sanctioned and therefore this research has relied on publicly available information.

### **Institutional memory loss**

Due to the high turnover of international staff, a significant part of the research relied on observation and contacts with those who had already left. With every departure of a Programme Manager part of the institutional memory went too. This is not limited to mine action organisations but also within the UNDP, UNMAS and other local organisations. I ended up tracking the individuals who worked within these organisations for reports and narratives of their time within the organisation.

Whenever I emailed former programme managers for clarification on specific key events in the life of the mine action programme the response received was always indicative of a lack of awareness of the same. It thus may appear that programme managers did not get an introduction to the programmes to learn the history so as to understand the context of the programmes they were taking on. Similarly upon their departure, any reports written during their time left with them. Most of the organisations had no physical archives for programme reports and these were only available where the respective people had stored them in their personal computers and some were willing to share them with me.

As a demonstration of staff turnover, between 2010 and 2012, HALO Trust had 3 programme managers; DDG had 2; the UN had one expat staff who I interviewed a second time but was in the process of winding up when I returned and none of those I met and interviewed in 2010 were still with the organisations in 2012. This meant that there was a lack of institutional memory within UN and international NGO agencies. Somaliland suffers from the loss of vital institutional memory due to constant changes of personnel. This was not always a negative for my research as it meant that new relationships were formed with others where previously access had been denied. The staff turnover though means that information on a lot of the programmes is not shared. In the era of technology where most of the documentation is electronically stored in individual computers, this resulted in a dearth of information.

### **Challenges of Language and transcribing**

Temple and Edwards (2002) argue that language is an important part of formulating and expressing beliefs and values and it should not be seen just a tool for presenting ideas or concepts. The experience of research participants is carried and accumulated within the language they speak. Cultural, social and political meanings cannot be conveyed through a process of translation as language is seen as a way of preparing and organising the experience of its speakers. The same words can mean different things in different languages and cultures. The way in which words are used also matter. Due to Somalia's different colonisation histories and powers, the Somali language has different and varied spellings as demonstrated by the spelling of Somalia's capital, which

is spelled *Mogadiscio* by the Italians, *Mogadishu* by the English, and *Muqdisho* by the Somalis; the name Ali, is spelled Cali; and Hashi, Xashi (*reflected in chapter 7 under Role and knowledge of the survey teams*). The Somali language borrows many elements from Arabic, and was transcribed into the Roman alphabet in 1972. A number of documents would use different names attributed to the diversity of the Somali language with alternations depending on whether the name is given in Somali, Arabic, English, or Italian (Saeed, 1999).

All my research participants spoke English; however, language was still a challenge due to the very deep Somali accents which took time to get used to. Somali accents and dialect are challenges that have been acknowledged and have been a subject of research such as (Conway, 2008; Hassan, 2011). Though all Somalis speak the same language, Saeed (1999) has identified three distinct dialects: Northern, Benadir and May. The standard is the Northern which is somewhat misleading in its name as it is spoken in northern (Somaliland), western and southern parts of Somalia. Saeed (ibid) attributes this dominance to widespread clan migrations. The Northern dialect which is common amongst Somaliland speakers tends to have glottal or pharyngeal sounds. Most of the Somali speakers have several phonemes which are consistently mispronounced. This was particularly challenging for the transcription work that followed. Some of these include for example the phonemes /p/ and /b/; for example, 'bin' and 'pin'; save and safe.

## **REFLECTING ON PROCESS**

Hammond (2011) and Donà (2011) have offered critical reflections to illustrate how method encompasses access to the field illustrating how researchers analytically order and shape them into ethnographic representations. The edited volume by Cramer et al. (2011) provides useful examples of *in situ* decisions of ethical and methodological challenges whilst research in being undertaken in violent contexts in Africa.

Thus, as noted earlier, the challenges of access and the perceived security challenges in Somaliland meant that at any time that I met with an interviewee, I carried out lengthy interviews (mainly because I was never sure of returning to the field) this means that the interviewees took up the role of 'key informant' and therefore the interviews became 'key informant interviews'. The advantage of

this, according to Marshall (1996), is the quality of data that can be obtained in a relatively short period of time. To obtain the same amount of information and insight from in-depth interviews with other members of a community can be prohibitively time-consuming and expensive as I had indicated (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The process provided a level of flexibility that allowed me to explore new ideas and issues that I had not anticipated whilst planning my study. The disadvantage is that the interviewees can be biased. However, I used other methods for triangulation. As a technique, key Informant interview is described as in-depth interviews with people selected for their first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest. The interviews are loosely structured, relying on a list of issues to be discussed. Key informant interviews resemble a conversation among acquaintances, allowing a free flow of ideas and information (Marshall, 1996).

## **THESIS STRUCTURE**

I have divided this thesis into nine chapters; the first chapter is an introduction and gives a background to terms and methodology that I used for this research; I reflect on the tools that I used both for data collection and for analysis. The chapter also gives some definition of key terms that I use throughout the thesis; research methodology and research instruments of data collection; which are mainly, interviews; overt observation and secondary data such as documents. I then look at the constraints and challenges that I encountered and reflect on how these oriented the research process including the outcome of the chosen methods of data collection.

In Chapter 2, I examine the conceptualization of peacebuilding and mine action analysing the processes that both have undergone; tracing these processes highlights the similarities and between mine action and peacebuilding. I highlight the dominant critiques of liberal peacebuilding that have emerged mainly those around the context of liberal peacebuilding, the approach; the ownership and/or legitimacy; the actors and the nature of peace. I then outline the limitations of the critiques. The last section of this chapter looks into mine action and how integrated it is within mine action also identifying the critiques and literature gaps within this literature.

In Chapter 3, I provide the contextualisation of the thesis by addressing the context and challenges that confronted Somaliland post her self-proclaimed independence; I demonstrate that outside the process of state building in Somalia and specifically Somaliland, there are other peacebuilding processes that are ongoing; and which have a liberal agenda. Through this chapter I outline the characteristics of Somaliland as demonstrating typical characteristics of a liberal peacebuilding context hence is relevant in providing a nuanced critique for liberal peacebuilding. Similarly, in Chapter 4 I outline how the global Mine Action Sector can provide a sectoral critique on the implementation of peacebuilding; I start by outlining the process of the Sector formation and the global context within which this process took place; therefore demonstrating the emerging governance structure, the actors and the policies that guide the Sector and implementation of mine action activities. This chapter provides the explanation as to how the Sector arrived at standardised approaches and template based implementation of programmes.

Chapter 5 and 6 provides the historical and political context within which mine action in Somaliland takes place within. By providing a historical context of mine clearance Chapter 5 specifically highlights the challenges that the Sector met in implementing a standardised approach. Mine clearance gave the international community a significant early entry point to contribute to post conflict peacebuilding in Somaliland however the chapter highlights the extent to which the approach of the Sector as external actors is characterised by the problematic assumption that a vacuum exists prior to the arrival of international staff" (Chesterman, 2004); thus local capacity is assumed to be missing and therefore is needed to be rebuilt. The chapter highlights the consequences of such an approach to the Sector. In Chapter 6, I examine the implications of political non recognition, highlighting how Somaliland's unique political non recognition status presents the Sector with a challenge when implementing programmes. These challenges highlight the need for knowledge and awareness — specifically in terms of how intervention activities, actors, and methods impact on, and are perceived in, the immediate local and national environment thus, calling for the need for interventions to be tailor-made to reflect such unique contextual aspects.

In Chapter 7, I specifically present the implementation of the Landmine Impact Survey and demonstrate further the importance of contextual knowledge. In this chapter I illustrate how the Sector's failure to take into account the different contextual factors inevitably challenges standardised approaches thereby sacrificing context specific approaches to universal templates with far reaching consequences to the Sector.

In Chapter 8 I apply the peace-ability approach to analyse the extent to which the endowments "peace capital" of mine action are accrued or undermined by Sector activities; the types of activities, at which time, and in which particular context, have had a positive or negative impact. I demonstrate in this chapter that the extent to which the Somaliland community conceptualises mine action as peacebuilding is informed by the Sector Actors; including their relationship with the communities; the Sector's identity and values and most importantly the Sector programmes.

Chapter 9 gives a summary of the major conclusions of the thesis and revisits the main research question in order to establish the extent to which the question has been answered.



## **CHAPTER 2: PEACEBUILDING AND MINE ACTION; THE DEBATES AND CRITIQUES**

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*The formation and implementation of mine action is a microcosm of peacebuilding. (A personal observation)*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the conceptual background in which the thesis is placed. In the chapter I provide a contextualisation of both peacebuilding and mine action. In the first section I contextualise the peacebuilding debates and identify the dominant liberal peacebuilding critiques; I trace the history of post conflict peacebuilding from the agenda for peace to the present form of understanding liberal peace as the dominant form of international peace interventions (Mac Ginty 2011). This form of peacebuilding has come under scrutiny from some critical scholars who question the values and policy assumptions underpinning the liberal peace, its methodology, hegemonic nature, and inherent limits and contradictions. I highlight the key dominant critiques that have emerged avoiding hypercritical narratives. In the second section I interrogate mine action within this academic literature and also within practice. I trace the evolution of the mine ban process and make the observation made by Harpviken and Isaksen (2004) and Kjellman et al (2003) who have highlighted that mine action is only marginally acknowledged as part of peacebuilding. In this chapter I set out to identify the reason behind this limitation and argue for the need to place the mine action sector and mine action as activities within the broader peacebuilding discourse. I interrogate mine action within peacebuilding and argue for the need to re-conceptualise mine action as part of peacebuilding within the integrated peacebuilding framework. I then look into the factors that limit the conceptualisation of mine action and, in so doing, identify both the emerging critiques and the gaps within the literature.

### **CONTEXTUALISING POST CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING**

Instead of the orderly 'new world order' that was anticipated with the collapse of the bipolar power blocs, there has been an eruption of conflict, which may have had little or no chance of escalating during the preceding period. Conflicts in

places like Africa, having been to a large extent influenced by the great power rivalries, acquired their own specific regional and national dynamics.

The flow of aid (especially military aid) from both blocs during the Cold War had been high and was mainly motivated by the desire to ensure continued support of client states. Strong centralised governments enforced their authority through large standing armies supported through the provision of primarily heavy, high maintenance military equipment provided for by their respective power blocs. The end of the Cold War led to a cessation of external help to these large armies but very little demobilisation. These armies remained, contributing to new areas of conflict and sustained factional irregular armed groups (Luckham et al., 2001). Whereas previously arms deals had involved state-to-state transfers, as conflicts or clashes were expected between regular armed forces of established states, this was replaced by a growth of commercial arms dealing and illegal arms transfer of small arms and light weapons as conflict consisted largely of ethnic and sectarian warfare within states (Klare, 1999). There was a dramatic implosion of states and the eruption of violent conflicts in places such as Liberia, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and Rwanda which, other than being considered complex emergencies, came to define the phenomenon of state collapse and failure. The wars had local and global influences through war economies and financing, use of modern information and arms technology with high levels of civilian suffering. This made the conflicts protracted or intractable, as international efforts to reduce the intensity and duration of internal warfare were undermined by the flow of firearms into these areas. These conflicts also became globalised in terms of their cause and effects (through their dependence on external resources) and eroded the capacity of governments to function, including maintaining the Weberian monopoly of violence.

Similarly the nature of international politics had evolved and changed; there was the realisation that the traditional notion of security, rooted in the protection of the state and relying on a balance of power for peace and stability, was insufficient in addressing the majority of challenges that people faced. These called for deepening concepts such as security, and thus the prominent state-centric and militaristic definitions were challenged (see Betts and Eagleton-

Pierce, 2005; Walker, 1997). This debate was attributed to Buzan (1983) who proposed the expansion of the notion of security horizontally to include aspects other than simply the political and military security of states. Krause and Williams (1997) attempted to extend this conceptualisation vertically to embrace society as well as the individual. Thus human security took the most dramatic step of making the individual the referent subject rather than the state in order to address conditions and actions affecting people's lives (Owen, 2004 p. 17). At the heart of these debates were non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who played an important role in highlighting humanitarian agendas and the connection between rights-based rule and stability. NGOs were at the forefront of helping establish international agendas by defining what issues were important through the formation of coalitions of interest around specific issues or goals. They helped to develop new norms by directly pressing governments and business leaders to change policies, and indirectly by altering public perceptions of what governments and firms should be doing (Nye, 2003). Of specific interest to this thesis is the International Campaign to Ban Landmines which led to new international treaty (the Mine Ban Treaty). Other campaigns that emerged from the international commitment to human security included the call to regulate small arms and light weapons, and the campaign to establish an international criminal court (Tschirgi, 2004).

In tandem with the debate on security, the UN Secretary General was also redefining peacebuilding through the report '*An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace-making and Peacekeeping*' (Boutros-Ghali, 1992) which proposed a strategy for resolving conflicts. This involved four components: preventive diplomacy – actions to prevent disputes from arising or escalating into conflicts; peace-making – actions aimed at bringing hostile parties to agreement through peaceful means – usually invoking Chapter VI of the UN charter; peacekeeping – the deployment of a UN presence, and post conflict peacebuilding – actions that identify and support structures that tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict. However, the peacebuilding record since the *Agenda for Peace*, has been mixed and there was recognition that the international response introduced then did not necessarily follow a neat, linear, chronological progression; and that in practise the various elements overlapped, interlinked and some mutually supported

others and even took place simultaneously (De Coning, 2012). Similarly such labels only related to programming, and thus did not have any relevance to the situation on the ground; they were an expression mainly of the need of donor administrations to give meaning to their programming efforts and to be able to activate different funding modalities. People within the society concerned obviously do not perceive the reality they experience in those terms. Even though this has been acknowledged, and it is commonly understood that such labels were only a guide to the administration of donor activities, they continue to impact on the actions and reality on the ground which will be demonstrated by the example of Somaliland.

Of relevance to this thesis is the fact that the *Agenda for Peace* coincided with the UN's mandate in Somalia, described by Makinda (1993) as ambitious, that saw the UN intervene in an intra-state conflict even when the state at that point did not present a military threat to its neighbours (Lemay-Hébert and Toupin, 2011; Makinda, 1993 p. 61). The act was driven by the basis for the UN's newfound moral imperative to save human lives (large scale deaths from direct conflict worsened by acute malnutrition) and restore human dignity; thus the '*Responsibility to Protect*', encapsulated the ideals of human security intervention during the 1990s. Somalia therefore became the "laboratory for a new form of engagement when the international community responded with a humanitarian and military intervention on an unprecedented scale" (Bradbury and Healy, 2010a p. 11).

Other examples included UN operations in Cambodia, Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Chad, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Kosovo, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Timor-Leste, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eastern Slavonia and Croatia. Similarly, just as the deepening of the security debate had given impetus to the landmine issue, the *Agenda for Peace* explicitly called for support for a ban as will be observed in the section under Mine action.

Thus, the post-Cold War period saw a post-Westphalian approach to conflict management and international security which had been legitimised by claims for human security. The approaches became interventionist in nature, raising the onus of the interveners to adopt multi-faceted and multidimensional approaches

which were reflected in approaches that required a wide range of social, economic and institutional needs. There was also the acknowledgment that due to the protracted nature of the conflicts, the time that was needed to achieve peace settlements was longer. Thus, in order for the peace to be maintained, these activities had to be undertaken concurrently. After the provision of humanitarian aid to a war's victims, mediation of peace accords and enforcement of ceasefires, international agencies gradually took on many more tasks in post-conflict arenas. Thus their roles were not restricted to just humanitarian aid, such as relief, but also encompassed addressing wider security issues such as disarmament, demobilisation, and security sector reform, political, human rights, civil and governance functions, collectively referred to as 'track two diplomacy' (Lund, 2003 p. 6; Miall et al., 1999).

The Brahimi Report made this interdependency explicit and official, in order to ensure that post-conflict security achieved broader peacebuilding (Lund, 2003). All these multi-dimensional concepts led to the consolidation of a template for post conflict peacebuilding. This model was firstly elaborated in 2004 in the Utstein Report and was referred to as the 'Peacebuilding Palette'. Körppen (2011) refers to it as a technical toolkit and 'Ikea-peacebuilding' that is based on the theory that if the right strategy is developed and appropriate tools applied, then significant change within a system can be achieved ( p. 77).

Thus the concept of peacebuilding and its resultant set of practices collectively founded the academic literature commonly known as the 'liberal peace interventions' or the liberal 'peacebuilding consensus' (Crocker et al., 2001; Miall et al., 1999). These practises include: the conviction that conflict management can be achieved through peacebuilding; the reform of institutions and governance; specifically identifying sovereignty as responsibility; highlighting of the interconnections between security and development and addressing issues of reconciliation to address societal divisions. They are closely linked to the agenda of liberal internationalism which, when viewed in conjunction with liberal parliamentary democracy and liberal market capitalism, equates to the ideals of the 'Liberal Peacebuilding model'; a model that has become a description of what was intended as the outcome of applying the standard operating procedures (Hirst, 2011). This set of practices includes both

short and long term interventions organised by both local and external actors. It was also fronted by western nations, who were criticised as promoting Liberal Peace (Heathershaw, 2008). Thus, other than implicitly claiming a formulaic universal template, the peace that the '*Agenda for Peace*' had proposed was state-centric at heart and considered sovereign states to be the main actors (Richmond, 2010a). Thus more frequently now, peacebuilding and analysis of conflict are characterised by a state-bias, and as a consequence peacebuilding is associated with state-building (Körppen, 2011).

Similarly, the mainstream academic discourses on practices of conflict management had overtly moved away from peace and reconciliation towards governance and state-building. The shift was attributed to the post September 11th era which brought in a new dimension of state security, conceptualisation of peace and its implementation. The focus on 'failed states' or 'states in situations of fragility' was brought to the fore, thus creating a strong interest in the debates on 'state building', which had become an over-arching concept. The analysis also associated peacebuilding with state building and conflated the two (Newman, 2009). This assumption is mainly propagated by the view that those states that are defined as 'failed' have become a source of international insecurity by becoming a haven for terrorism, drugs, arms and people traffickers etc. (Rotberg, 2002b). Places such as Somalia, a typical case of the most prolonged case of state failure, changed from being a "strategic threat" to global stability, to a threat to the international system of states (Helman and Ratner, 1992). This vision acquired a particularly acute dimension during the interventions of US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, which are both described as extreme cases of state collapse and failure. This has led to the term been described by Chesterman (2005) as a dismissive reference to the application of US military resources beyond traditional mandates.

In conclusion the conceptual basis for the conception of 'liberal peace' is 'human security' which emphasises the humanitarian responsibility to intervene in conflicts, particularly in situations of grave human rights abuse and threats to global security; post-conflict reconstruction through state building; and promotion of development (Duffield, 2005; Duffield, 2007; Pugh, 1998; Richmond, 2004a). The core ideas underlying the Liberal Peace approach

adopted by western governments, according to Richmond, remained democratisation, economic liberalisation, neoliberal development, human rights and the rule of law (Richmond, 2006a). Thus, following on from the *Agenda for Peace*, and the moral imperative to intervene in Somalia, 'Liberal Peace' became the dominant form of peace-making and peace-building favoured by leading states, international organisations and international financial institutions (Mac Ginty, 2010). This LP approach is based on the assumption that a liberally constructed state will be more peaceful and developed, and will have the capacity to reduce violence and prevent any relapse into chaos. As the number of interventions undertaken increased, in some instances they seemed to have been counterproductive, and by the end of the decade the 'liberal peace' model was increasingly called into question.

## **THE DOMINANT CRITIQUES OF LIBERAL PEACE**

At the centre of the Liberal Peace debate lies a complex dichotomy between "critical scholars" (Chandler, 2010; Chesterman, 2005; Duffield, 2007; Mac Ginty, 2010; Pugh, 2005; Richmond, 2005) and "problem solvers," (Newman, 2009; Paris and Sisk, 2009). Within this dichotomy, the "problem solvers" generally seem comfortable with the notion of Liberal peace but are critical that it could not be fully implemented in post conflict or war torn societies; instead they focus on performance issues. The "critical scholars" meanwhile are more inclined to question the values and policy assumptions underpinning the liberal peace, its methodology, hegemonic nature, and inherent limits and contradictions (Hameiri, 2011). These critics within the dichotomised approach are not a homogenous group; each of them comes from a different school of thought, and therefore the debates vary in focus both theoretically and empirically (Stamnes, 2010).

However, these critical debates are based on several broad standpoints; the main opposition to Liberal Peace by the critics is the way in which post conflict peacebuilding has now become associated with Anglo-Saxon market capitalism and elections, and the neo-liberal ideology of governance (Chandler 2006; Mac Ginty 2006; Richmond 2005).

This thesis recognises the substantial body of scholarly critiques of Liberal Peace, however I concur with those (e.g. Chandler, 2010; Sabaratnam, 2011a)

who have argued that the emerging debates have become increasingly distant from the concerns of the policy discourse and implementation and have become 'meta-critiques' of contemporary projects of conflict management. Such critiques have been accused by Paris<sup>11</sup> of being 'hyper-critical', pointing out that such criticism has gone past the point of justified questioning, and verges on unfounded scepticism and even cynicism (Paris, 2010 p. 338) also see (Begby and Burgess, 2009; Newman, 2009).

## **The Context**

The context within which peacebuilding is based is normally a post conflict environment, which peace-builders are accused of defining as traumatised, dysfunctional, irrational, and immature, therefore legitimising models and solutions defined by outsiders rather than local actors (see (Hughes and Pupavac, 2005) citing (Cahill, 2013); (Duffield, 2001; Paris, 2002) . Such an approach has been referred to as the "pathologisation" of fragile states and post conflict societies (Hughes and Pupavac, 2005). Rather than focusing exclusively on technical conflict management, peacebuilding is accused of having become a vehicle for exporting a particular vision of the State into non-Western environments (Paris, 2004; Paris and Sisk, 2009). Peacebuilding is therefore viewed as a form of neo-colonial or neo-imperial control of the global South by the North/West whereby outsiders seek to shape the structures of these weaker societies into their own prevailing notions of 'good' or 'civilised governance' in what Paris (2002) refers to as *mission civilisatrice*. According to Duffield, peacebuilding is thus an instrument of 'global liberal governance' for the self-preservation of an exclusive transnational network of governmental and non-governmental actors, hypocritically preserving their self-interests in the name of global peace, security and development (Duffield, 2002). Thus, peacebuilding is challenged as being a state building project in the post conflict context whose assumptions are that liberalisation creates stable and peaceful societies through the introduction of multiparty democracy that inevitably sees conflicts being channelled through party politics rather than violence; and eradication of poverty through trade and marketisation. The peacebuilders are

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<sup>11</sup> Paris Roland was one of the critics but in what appears to have been a drastic turn, challenged the other critics in an article aptly titled "Saving Liberal Peace" in which he challenged them to admit that there was nothing in the recent critical literature that provided 'a convincing rationale for abandoning liberal peacebuilding or replacing it with a non-liberal or 'post-liberal' alternative'. (Paris 2010 PAGE NO?)



accused of having limited knowledge of distinctive local conditions and variations across the societies hosting them (Autesserre, 2014; Donais, 2009; Paris, 2010; Sending, 2009b).

### **Standardised ‘One Size Fits All’ approach**

A common critique of liberal peacebuilding is that policy-makers consider conflict and post-conflict management to be a technical process and favour a standardised approach which uses a ‘one size fits all approach’ standardised template (Call and Cousens, 2007; Mac Ginty, 2008; Tschirgi, 2004). Mac Ginty (2008) observes the existence of “set templates” and a “formulaic path” in internationally sponsored peacebuilding (p. 144) whilst Newman (2009), notes that “a core problem of contemporary peacebuilding is its tendency to be formulaic (p. 42). Peacebuilding interveners are said to favour a checklist approach, with each situation requiring the use of a pre-existing toolkit<sup>12</sup> that includes: the deployment of peacekeepers; the disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration of combatants; the repatriation of refugees; the liberalisation of the economy; and the organisation of elections (ICG, 2004; Newman, 2009). Such an approach limits the ability of peacebuilding to adequately address the concerns and conditions of the host societies. This approach also diminishes diversity and reduces every context into a standard box even though every country differs. The approach is operated as if the challenges of peacebuilding are more or less the same in very different countries (Barnett, 2006). Call and Cousens (2007) argue that such programmes assume that international standards will always be applicable thus the preference of technical solutions over culturally specific approaches ( p. 14). These ‘institutional remedies’ according to Fanthorpe (2006) are preferred due to the relatively fast rotation of personnel and limited bureaucratic and financial resources. However, he argues that such approaches blind practitioners to the political imperatives that bind the rural poor to non-liberal modes of governance and therefore “leave hastily erected ‘democratic’ institutions vulnerable to political capture by the very forces the project seeks to thwart” (Fanthorpe, 2006 p. 45). Richmond (2006b) attributes the preference for standardised templates to the desire for measurable outputs, outcomes and impact which he argues leaves no room for

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<sup>12</sup> See Ottaway, M. (2003) Promoting Democracy after Conflict: The Difficult Choices. *International Studies Perspectives*, 4 (3), 314-322. on the creation and transformation of this toolkit.

context specific approaches. Körppen (2011) notes that within such standardised approaches, specific outcomes are defined in advance in 'log frames' and permit participation only within predefined liberal frameworks.

### **Ownership and or legitimacy**

The key failure by peacebuilders, according to the critics, is the way in which external actors formulate peacebuilding strategies and how they implement them in practice. Peacebuilding fails to secure and respect the elements of local ownership, thus they fail in their effort of building reforms that command legitimacy from the grassroots. This amounts to insufficient 'local ownership' over the strategic direction and daily activities of such operations. Such failure thus contributes to the lack of the sustainability important for an effective Liberal Peacebuilding agenda (Chandler, 2013; Paris and Sisk, 2009; Richmond, 2007; Sending, 2009b; Suhrke, 2002). Sending (2009a) asserts that peacebuilders are 'blind' when they fail to be sensitive to local context; they are 'arrogant' when they fail to secure local ownership for peacebuilding efforts. He further asserts that research suggests that this lack of attention to context and ownership goes a long way in accounting for the relative lack of success of peacebuilding efforts (p. 1).

Peacebuilders are expected to establish the principle of local ownership as the starting point of their approach to peacebuilding. Reich (2006) argues that local actors only serve as implementers whilst 'local ownership' only serves to "cover up a 'business as usual' approach" that legitimates rather than mitigates foreign control ( p. 4). As one of the key principles of peacebuilding, the strategies, approaches and interventions should be drawn from the local needs of the people, using resources and capacities that empower them to implement these strategies. With this notion, international donors and other players explicitly search for a greater degree of legitimacy and sustainability in their interventions. However, Chesterman (2005) argues that local ownership is often used "disingenuously - either to mask the assertion of potentially dictatorial powers by international actors or to carry a psychological rather than political meaning in the area of reconstruction". Ownership in this context, he further argues, 'is usually not intended to mean control and often does not even imply a direct input into political questions' ( p. 160).

## **The Actors**

Peacebuilding has been institutionalised in the work of the UN and international agencies, international financial institutions, NGOs, and the many actors engaged in conflict environments. Such activities, by virtue of their depth and breadth, require coordination. This is normally undertaken by either the dominant states or by the UN thus providing opportunities for political influence and resources (Stewart, 2008); they also suffer poor strategic coordination (Richmond, 2004b). With such a diverse group of actors, who have varying and sometimes competing agendas, problems are bound to contribute to the weakening of the peacebuilding processes. Post-conflict interventions may sometimes rest upon a problematic relationship between external and local actors, and in some cases reflect what Barnett & Finnemore (1999) have called institutional 'pathologies' of international organisations (Krause and Jütersonke, 2005).

The organisations and interveners such as the UN and World Bank are accused of harbouring political agendas rather than being neutral (Mac Ginty, 2011). Whilst they engage in apparently neutral strategic debates about managing the projects they still hold the purse strings and have control of the programs and disbursement processes (Körppen, 2011). Thus the roles and responsibilities of these external actors often determine or have significant influence on the final outcome of the peacebuilding process. Mac Ginty (2011), highlighting this, gives the example of the UNDP which operates on behalf of all UN members, yet as an organisation its agenda reflects western goals (p. 34).

Similarly, increasingly interventions have included military responses (Schnabel and Ehrhart, 2005). According to Pugh (2004), the 'received wisdom' thus is not value neutral but serves to protect an existing international order. Peacebuilding seeks to portray soldiers as 'humanitarian' actors, impartially pursuing peace. Thus according to Duffield (2007) humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding are increasingly becoming utilised as part of a grand strategy for securing Western interests especially in areas that Collinson et al (2010) refer to as "'islands of instability' because of their association with international terrorism, transnational crime and other real and existential threats" (Collinson et al. 2010, p.278). This image, according to the critics, has resulted in

unresolved tensions in relations between the military and non-military participants in these operations. This also means that those working alongside the military in such interventions appear to have abandoned their traditional and, in the eyes of critics such as Pugh (2004), vital political neutrality, thereby diluting their own long-term impact. The theory and practice of peace operations are not neutral, but instead reflect particular political values (Pugh, 2004). Thus according to critics such as (Duffield, Pugh) such a strategy represents the south as a source of plague (insecurity) that needs to be contained.

### **The nature of peace**

Liberal Peace is seen as ontologically incoherent and does not seem to hold a common understanding of the kind of peace it aims to achieve (Richmond, 2009). The critiques highlight the fact that the many activities of peacebuilding have not actually achieved the results that they seek in the countries in which they are carried out. Lund argues that despite efforts to seek legitimacy, the ambitions of peacebuilding have come about gradually in response to practical problems and events and that peacebuilding still constitutes a huge, hopeful experiment whose results are not clear. In cases depicted as having been successful, such as Cambodia and Tajikistan, the peace is described as no more than 'virtual peace' (Heathershaw, 2009; Richmond, 2011). Indeed, critics argue that the reverse has been achieved, failed peace agreements have led to more deaths than during the wars and intergroup antagonism remains high (Lund, 2003; Mac Ginty, 2007; Paris, 2004). According to Pugh (2005), market liberalisation increases the vulnerability of the population to poverty, as they are deprived a voice in economic reconstruction and the policies do not address their reliance on shadow economies. International presence is seen to have failed to address the more serious question of what would constitute a positive peace, and focuses on the creation of the hard shell of the state, instead of working on establishing a working society complete with a viable economy (Richmond, 2006b).

What has emerged from within these critical scholars is that they never outline an alternative set of principles and ideals for post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction and therefore they do not advocate a strict non-involvement of

interveners. However the debate can be best described as less about the validity of the liberal peace and more of how to conceive of it and implement it. The critics argue that Liberal Peacebuilding is based on the fact that human security guides the Liberal Peace thesis in conceptualising a framework for peacebuilding and maintenance of the global order. The conceptualisation and practice of human security has been criticised as lacking in political strategy (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy, 2007). This means that while concepts such as Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the European Union doctrine for Human Security (2004) place ethical responsibility on the international community to protect individuals where states have failed or are unwilling to protect them, they ignore the importance of political deconstruction of the politics of securitisation and militarised peacebuilding. Thus, peacebuilders are accused of embracing the hoary “Liberal Peace approach” uncritically and as a consequence they have often designed peacebuilding strategies that actually destabilised fragile transitional polities such as in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia, Burundi and Iraq (Doyle and Sambanis, 1999; Newman et al., 2009; Paris, 1997). Sending (2011) acknowledges that these critical debates have brought to the fore the importance of issues on context sensitivity, local ownership, bottom-up and hybrid forms of peacebuilding; however, there are limitations to these critiques as outlined in the next section.

Mac Ginty (2010; 2008) explores an alternative conception of peace-building through indigenous approaches to conflict resolution and localised responses to conflict (2008; 2010). He proposes a hybrid peacebuilding that acknowledges that the ‘local’ has agency and hence “ability to hybridise the Liberal Peace by enforcing some change on it” (Mac Ginty, 2011 p. 84). This hybrid approach has also been proposed by other authors (Boege et al., 2009; Pugh et al., 2008; Richmond, 2010b). Others such as, Boege et al (2009) propose “hybrid political orders” that combine governance strategies of governments and of indigenous communities (2009, p. 24). Richmond has explored the more elusive concept of ‘an everyday “post-Liberal Peace” and critical policies for peacebuilding’ and, together with Franks, they propose an emancipatory model that seeks local consent with full ownership of the peacebuilding process, while critical of external international impositions, conditionalities and dependencies expressed in the conservative and orthodox models, however, this model takes a bottom-

up approach. Even then they fault this by highlighting that the underlying fact is that Liberal Peace is externally driven with the intention of 'stabilising' states towards democracy and local participation (Richmond and Franks, 2007 p. 30)

Liberal peacebuilding's most trenchant critics offer little in the way of alternatives. However, some of them have begun to discuss alternative approaches to liberal peacebuilding. Having been one of the major critics of Liberal Peace building, Paris acknowledges that there is no realistic alternative to some form of Liberal Peace strategy, and that efforts should be geared towards improving its applied approaches rather than dismissing it entirely (Paris, 2012). This view is challenged by Cooper *et al* (2011) who observe that such a view fails to take cognizance of the common prescriptions of Liberal Peacebuilding, particularly in political economy. Instead they propose a welfare based approach, arguing that this will incorporate the wellbeing of the individual and community within the political economy of peacebuilding (p. 11).

In conclusion, the critics see international interventions as neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist (Bellamy and Williams, 2004; Chandler, 2013; Duffield, 2002), based on Western liberal norms that orient international interventions toward the implementation of a liberal agenda (Paris, 2002; Paris, 2004; Pugh, 2002; Pugh, 2005), an extension of the western hegemonic powers over developing nations; and unsuited to the realities of post-conflict environments, arguing for external actors to be more context-sensitive and supportive of local ownership (Pouligny, 2009); they call for 'bottom-up' and 'hybrid' forms of peacebuilding (Mac Ginty, 2011; Richmond, 2009; Schia and Karlsrud, 2013).

## **LIMITATION OF THE LIBERAL PEACE CRITIQUES**

Critics consider peacebuilding as a discourse of a singular Liberal Peace, disregarding the fact that peacebuilding is not a homogenous entity and that to understand one must explore the multiple discourses of the Liberal Peace by shifting the analytical focus to multiple peacebuildings (Heathershaw, 2008 p. 603). Similarly, their discourse is often dominated by a perspective which somewhat simplistically lumps all international actors together under the term 'peacebuilders', without acknowledging the substantial pluralism of mandates and modes of interaction with local authorities and populations. Hoffman (2009) calls for a rethink of the nature of peace itself, and argues that rather than

assuming that peace is a coherent project which can be readily transplanted from one society to another, there needs to be a recognition that the nature and meaning of peace should be heavily debated and constantly evolving. Similarly, the same must then be appreciated as to the nature of peacebuilding.

Critics engage in alternative conceptions of legitimacy that stress the need for political development to be grounded on the 'local', however they do not engage in how the 'local' conceptualises their idea of peacebuilding and often assume that 'local' is not liberal. Their critiques are not contextually specific. As de Coning (2013) has observed "no one seems to challenge the essential logic that for any peace process to be sustainable it has to make sense for, and serve the interests of the people directly involved" (p.2). However, there are different views about the real meaning of "local ownership", as it is a flexible and subjective concept. Donais (2009) defines the concept of "local ownership", as the extent to which domestic actors control both the design and implementation of political processes (p. 3). Accepting that the critique is that "ownership" never actually refers to full control over all project aspects locally however, (Reich, 2006) argues local ownership is not always a practical objective especially within international funding and working structures and she presents it as a vision to strive towards. This is because the working structures are the conditions that determine whether local ownership is realisable or not (p. 7). Thus, local ownership is a quality foreign donors have to 'nurture' and 'allow' (Krogstad, 2013 p. 10).

As this chapter has demonstrated, peacebuilding practise has generated a lot of critical discourse; however, even within this discourse the recipients of the practise remain passive and voiceless. This could perhaps be an indication as to why peacebuilding is seen to have failed, partly because the actors and recipients may have contrasting views of what the end result is; and the conceptualisation of the recipients is not taken into consideration. There is also a generalisation, and an underlying assumption, that because the peacebuilding arena is normally a post conflict environment, then 'local' leaders have no local legitimacy. Though in a number of cases this may ring true, the same cannot be said for every context, as will be demonstrated in the case of Somaliland, where the clan elders commanded high levels of legitimacy as agents of

peacebuilding and are therefore continually seen by the Somaliland people as the only ones with the authority to engage in nurturing their version of peace.

Another underlying and oft highlighted critique of ownership fails to acknowledge that there are several factors that may limit local ownership. Mateos (2011), for example, identifies three main “practical problems” (influenced by perceptions of reality) that explain why local ownership is more a rhetorical concept than a real one: a problem of lack of “local capacity” (especially where most of those educated have previously fled), a problem of the locals’ dependence on externals for resources, and a problem of mutual mistrust. Although locals are supposed to lead the different reforms, they strongly depend on external funding (Mateos, 2011). Though this may not be explicitly outlined in policy documents; in practise some donor funding practises make funding available through personal connections with programme heads where mutual trust is inferred so long as the organisation is headed by specific individuals.

Likewise the critics miss out on the fact that different societies, especially those which are highly segmented, may not necessarily have any one institution holding a monopoly over the legitimate use of power to rule, or for physical violence. Nevertheless, they exhibit tendencies that are very far from a Hobbesian situation of a *bellum omnium contra omnes* (i.e. a war of everybody against everybody else). These societies are not all chaotic, but include examples which are ‘orderly’ in a completely different way from the state order that is commonly perceived by the powerful countries of the world as the only valid order. Such societies, as has been evidenced for example within the Somalia communities, have their own institutions of violence control, conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Thus, those like Paris (2004) who locate the main weakness of contemporary peacebuilding in its neglect for strong institutions such the judiciary, executive and rule of law, base their evidence on their own perception as to what these institutions ought to be, rather than what the reality on the ground dictates. They advocate that state building must precede peacebuilding and even democratisation. Peacebuilding must first address human needs, produce physical safety and foster socio-economic stability before elections and democratic government can be instituted (ibid).



The peacebuilding critics fail to show what a practical alternative would look like. The empirical evidence is that these external transnational networks of governmental and non-governmental actors do make a crucial contribution at very delicate times of the post conflict environment. In situations where most of the populations have fled, there may be a lack of available capacity in the provision of vital services e.g. health care provision; mine clearance specialists; provision of basic education, amongst others. In such contexts these external actors and transnational networks are vital. On the same note, sometimes local capacity may have the resilience needed to address their immediate needs but may lack the proper resources and tools to undertake such tasks, as this thesis will illustrate with the case of Somaliland's efforts on mine clearance. The critics and the critiques only provide a partial view of international interventions, neglecting what Autesserre (2011) has noted as 'the concrete, daily practices of international action, the social and epistemological tensions among international actors, and the impact of public opinion and domestic considerations' which means that they overlook how interventions operate on the ground where most peacebuilding operations occur (2011 p. 5). Peacebuilding interventions have to contend with the reality and the practical challenges on the ground and these challenges are unique for every context. Similarly Opongo (2011) has argued that these liberal peace critiques tend to rely on anecdotal evidence without talking to the people on the ground to find out their own perceptions of the critiques being made (p. 369). He has argued that the critique has often been undertaken at a macro level while ignoring the interactive peacebuilding processes at the micro level and how these shape the discourse and practice of peacebuilding at the middle and top level structures of the society. My analysis will draw attention to the importance of context, both historical and political, in challenging the implementation of programmes. The critics also overlook how the context both at the global level (be it in funding etc. and therefore policy formulation) and local level for implementation may contribute to the failures or successes of interventions. Thus by focusing on actors alone in their critiques, the critics perpetuate the very problem of failure of acknowledging local context and other factors that exert control over peacebuilding processes. This will be illustrated by the role of mine action that has intrinsic value for peacebuilding but of which the context presents a particular challenge for implementation.

Therefore just as peacebuilding is conceptualised by both the external actors and the recipients themselves; the responses, the sequencing, and the activities ought to be uniquely shaped in order to make the right impact. Similarly the wide arrays of actors have divergent and sometimes conflicting interests, values, purposes, organisational forms and modalities of action that they bring into the context that they are working in. It is important to acknowledge that peacebuilding does not take place in a vacuum, and even when in reference to the local, it is important to engage in understanding how the 'local' conceptualises their idea of peacebuilding without necessarily assuming that 'local' is not liberal. Thus any critiques should be context specific; and they should consider peacebuilding as a discourse of a multiple peace, appreciating the fact that peacebuilding is not a homogenous entity and that to understand, one must explore the multiple discourses by shifting the analytical focus to multiple 'peacebuildings' (Heathershaw, 2008 p. 603).

## **INTERROGATING MINE ACTION WITHIN PEACEBUILDING**

The extent to which mine action supports peacebuilding has not been critically examined and the evidence remains anecdotal and rhetorical at best. This section will demonstrate how the peacebuilding literature, and the mine action Sector itself, pigeonholes mine action only within security thereby limiting the extent to which mine action can offer itself for scrutiny as an activity within peacebuilding, or even be conceptualised as such.

This section will aim to provide a coherent narrative that looks beyond the security gains for mine action. Similarly, the section will demonstrate the extent to which the contemporary debates on post conflict peacebuilding mirror mine action.

I locate the conceptualisation of mine action within peacebuilding through the Mine Ban Movement analyzing the way in which the campaign to ban landmines emerged and through the intrinsic values of mine action as an activity. I do not go into detail in looking at the benefits of mine action as these benefits are assumed through clearance; I analyse the other potential benefits for mine clearance that might not be obvious.

The following section on mapping the landmines campaign is important both in illustrating the normative framing of the Sector (as a humanitarian issue) and secondly it helps in unpacking and understanding the Sector that was a result of this process. Understanding the campaign and the process, helps in identifying the actors and the context the mine ban movement emerged from; I argue that these actors and context are instructive when looking at the process of mine action implementation as these factors continually define the Sector beyond the campaigning period. This section therefore forms the context for the next chapter.

## **Mine Action as Humanitarian agenda**

### **a) The Evolution of the Mine Ban process**

The intention of this section is provide the movement/campaign that achieved the mine ban treaty (MBT) as a process that culminated in establishing the Sector. I therefore refer to the 'mine ban process', throughout to describe the broad coalition of states, international organisations and non-governmental organisations that actively supported a total ban on anti-personnel mines as well as increased resources for mine clearance and victim assistance. It is also used to distinguish this broader and less formalised movement from the civil society based International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).

Just as the Post-Cold War era brought about a multiplicity of intrastate conflicts, it also brought forth the extensive use of weapons such as landmines that were used against civilian populations in places such as Somalia, Cambodia, Angola, and Mozambique. With the end of the Cold War, conflict in the developing world was no longer viewed simply through the lens of global competition. Attention to these conflicts in their own right resulted in increased recognition of the human toll exacted by light weapons, including landmines. Similarly this change of the international systems provided the development and entrenchment of norms of multilateralism that encouraged the coordinated international call to ban landmines. The nature of mine/UXO contamination meant that demining became pivotal in conflict and post conflict environments, if humanitarian assistance and post conflict reconstruction was to get underway in these countries.

The use of antipersonnel landmines grew more extensively during and after World War II, but the existing international legal institutions of states did not provide an institutional direct line for concerns about these weapons. Significantly, this task was left to NGOs, and concern with antipersonnel landmines initially grew out of work on humanitarian laws of conflict as carried out chiefly by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (Price, 1998).

Previously, in the early 1970s, bodies such as the ICRC, United Nations (UN) and some governments had been prompted by the Indochina Wars to call for a ban, but the absence of a strong international law frustrated this process. In the intervening period, the anti-personnel mine problem grew, with mines being laid at much faster rates than they could be cleared. Even with the existent humanitarian law, within which the use of mines and other forms of weapons such as cluster bombs were controlled, the Cold War exposed the inadequacies of the same, and the uncontrolled use of anti-personnel mines in internal conflicts was evident in the 80s and 90s (Cave, 2006). Its end enabled state policymakers to focus on less strategic weapons, such as landmines, and allowed many states to pursue unilateral military policies, sometimes in opposition to the major powers (Rutherford, 2000a).

The efforts of mine clearance started immediately after the end World War II to aid post-war reconstruction in Europe<sup>13</sup> and due to the work involving a large amount of manpower the victorious Allies enlisted the use of Prisoners of War<sup>14</sup> (Bolton, 2010; Lardner, 2005). However, the impact and problems caused by mines/UXOs to populations living in and near mined areas remained largely invisible to the international community. Over time those working in areas that had been arenas of armed conflicts could no longer ignore the ever growing numbers of injured civilians that emerged at hospitals and emergency clinics. NGOs such as Handicap International (HI) and ICRC field surgeons working in medical assistance programs noted the steady growth of amputees needing

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<sup>13</sup>In 1945 the French used 49,000 German POWs (prisoners of war), as well as French civilians and military personnel.

<sup>14</sup> The practise of using PoWs for clearance drew a lot of concern which prompted Article 52 of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 specifically prohibits the use of POWs for mine clearance activities unless they are "volunteers".

prostheses in places such as Cambodia<sup>15</sup>. ICRC also witnessed how huge areas of land and major roads were out-of-bounds, restricting livelihoods and preventing rehabilitation and refugee return; health facilities, schools, markets and water sources being too dangerous to access. This revulsion over the human suffering often affecting the poorest in the world's most impoverished and isolated states compelled these NGOs to engage their identities/interests as providers of humanitarian medical assistance, mine clearance services, and as organisations dedicated to documenting and advocating against human rights violations (Rutherford, 2011). Without further action, their response of providing surgical and medical emergency support proved inefficient, and the organisations soon realised that more was needed. Previously HI had begun a proactive approach to the crisis, and had been joined by the Mine Advisory Group (MAG), a British demining organisation founded by Rae McGrath (an ex-British Army Engineer, with 18 years of experience in the Army)<sup>16</sup> who had been working for several years in Afghanistan; Human Rights Watch (HRW), Medico International, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA) progressed to the formal initiation of an International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), an organisation founded by these groups of NGOs that had already started working together. The NGOs mobilised politically around the call for a global ban.

They also continued providing evidence that they had gathered in their work to demonstrate both the scale of landmine contamination in different parts of the world, and the way these were affecting civilians. Earlier the organisation Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation, led by a Jesuit Priest, had published reports on landmines in the council's widely circulated newsletter. The activities of these three organisations saw the beginnings of a concerted effort towards a campaign calling for a ban on landmines. These reports were improved and further presented in a series of influential reports. "*Landmines in Cambodia: The Coward's War*" (Asia Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, 1991) was

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<sup>15</sup> In its first decade of operations, HI fitted more than 15,000 amputees with prostheses; however, by the early 1990s the number of amputees had grown to over 30,000 and was getting worse in their other countries of operation.

<sup>16</sup> Rae McGrath founded the Mines Advisory Group in 1989, after seeing the impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) on civilians in Afghanistan, became an internationally acknowledged expert on the impact of landmines and cluster munitions on relief and humanitarian efforts; one of the co-founders of ICBL and presented the acceptance speech on behalf of the ICBL in Oslo.

the first of the reports. Rae McGrath collaborated with Human Rights Watch to produce the report "*Hidden Death; The Landmine Situation in Iraqi Kurdistan*" (Middle East Watch, 1992); this was followed by two reports written by Alex Vines at Human Rights Watch, on Angola in 1993 "*Landmines in Angola: An African Report*" (Human Rights Watch, 1993b), and one on Mozambique in 1994 (Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1994). (Physicians for Human Rights (U.S.), 1992) "*Hidden Enemies: Landmines in Northern Somalia*"; (Human Rights Watch, 1993b) "*Landmines in Angola*". In October of 1993, HRW and PHR then published the ground breaking "*Landmines: A Deadly Legacy*", (Human Rights Watch, 1993a) a complete book on the landmines issue that integrated the results of the earlier reports into a comprehensive picture of landmine production and use, and their terrible impact. Other relevant titles included a joint MAG UK and African Rights report entitled, "*Violent Deeds Live On; landmines in Somalia and Somaliland*" (Omaar et al., 1993) and (Roberts and Williams, 1995) Vietnam Veterans of America, *After the Guns Fall Silent* (1995).

The response by the NGOs was described as somewhat 'hesitant' at first, as these organisations were entering into an area they conventionally saw as the preserve of the military (IRIN, 2004a). These reports had several positive outcomes: they helped in the portrayal of landmines as "weapons of mass destruction in slow motion" including, significantly, getting the US State Department to describe landmines as "the most toxic and widespread pollution facing mankind"<sup>17</sup> (Petrova, 2010). The narratives that emerged from these accounts were of a "humanitarian crisis," and a "global epidemic of landmines," (Larrinaga and Sjolander, 1998). Similarly their impact had been described as a "humanitarian holocaust" of landmines (Gray, 1997).

The campaign that ensued capitalised on these narratives and hence captured the imagination, and harnessed the global moral outrage against landmines. The success of the NGOs in strategically framing the debates regarding their humanitarian impact and military ineffectiveness, brought about a shift in the perceptions of their military utility, argues (Petrova, 2010). Thus the vilification

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<sup>17</sup> Quoted by Senator Leahy in a speech to the Senate (Congressional Record, February 28, 1994) Bill, 103d CONGRESS 2d Session - S.2216 To state the sense of Congress on the production, possession, transfer, and use of antipersonnel landmines, to place a moratorium on United States production of antipersonnel landmines.

of landmines through the NGO narratives strategically managed to de-securitize the landmines issue. The reports, and the fact that those involved in the work were mainly NGOs, contributed immensely to efforts towards reframing the debate on landmines from security into humanitarian terms (Hubert, 2000; Matthew and Rutherford, 2003; Price, 1998; Rutherford, 2000a). This process contributed to the deepening of the security debate as has been noted by (Behringer, 2005; Paris, 2001) amongst others. The way in which landmines impact on civilians may have been previously seen as a security issue, but the manner in which this crisis was responded to lay beyond a traditional state-centric concept of security, and instead was directly embedded within the core of the new 'human security' paradigm (Harpviken and Skaešra, 2003 p. 815). Through key publications, landmines were portrayed as causing horrific suffering of innocent victims (most often women and children), and impediments to reconstruction efforts in war-torn societies.

The momentum of the ban movement grew, because a ban seemed a logical solution to what the campaign had managed to illustrate as an obvious humanitarian disaster. Price notes that "the most basic effect of civil society, then, had been the transnational dissemination of information about the scope of landmine use and its effects, thereby helping to define the use of antipersonnel landmines as not only a problem, but as a global crisis" (Price, 1998 p. 622).

Other factors that helped in facilitating the emergence of the global network of concerned supporters around the issue were the unprecedented role played by telecommunication through the internet and electronic media, including telecommunications, fax machines. A virtual community was created across disparate identities that utilised web sites and e-mail traffic proliferated to provide a wealth of instantaneously available information and spotlighting recalcitrants, whether they be governments or private industries that produced mines (DeChaine, 2005; Price, 1998).

Certain governments were sympathetic to the ambitions of NGOs for a strong treaty, and their receptiveness to a real partnership with NGOs facilitated the attainment of the goals (Short, 1999). These states were Canada, Norway, Belgium, Austria and South Africa among other small- to medium-sized

countries. Thus a broad-based campaign emerged comprising of a dynamic interaction of actors such as the NGOs, the ICRC, UN agencies, and 'sympathetic' states. It was these state officials who represented the core group of states supporting the comprehensive ban who ensured that the NGOs did not remain marginalised at the edges of the international conferences from which they were initially routinely excluded. The Canadian government in many respects served as a "patron" to NGOs. It made information about the political process open to NGOs and championed the participation of the ICBL leadership in diplomatic meetings. Short (1999) argues that the Canadian government's patronage of the Ottawa Process 'may have been constructed to express a liberal ideal' (p. 493).

The efficacy of a humanitarian framing of the anti-personnel mine problem and its potential solution was confirmed by empirical data on the effects of these mines and by dynamic contact between mine action practitioners with multilateral negotiators. NGOs provided statistics about the nature and extent of the landmine problem, especially its social and economic consequences; these were used to get states to recognise the severity of the landmine problem. The statistics were grim and were widely cited by the campaigners; some of the frequently cited estimates included that in 1994 'there were up to 110 million mines deployed in some sixty-four countries'; this was compared with how inexpensive it was to manufacture landmines they supposedly 'cost as little as three dollars apiece; whilst exponentially more costly in terms of time, money, and human life'. The rate of demining was also highlighted. By the mid-1990s the NGOs reckoned that only 100,000 landmines were being removed annually and they argued that, at that rate, it would take 1,100 years to clear those already on the ground (Bottigliero, 2000; DeChaine, 2005; Price, 1998). These statistics resonated with the media, the public, and policymakers and they were seen as so outrageous that the problem could no longer be ignored. In the event it has become apparent that many of the statistics generated by NGOs were inflated and, more significantly, regurgitated by the media and policymakers without proper fact-checking and research. I will argue that this was later to haunt the Sector that emerged.



The NGOs campaigned and set the agenda, adopting and rallying around the slogan that anti-personnel mines caused unnecessary suffering and maiming of soldiers and civilians and that they should be banned on humanitarian grounds (Stott et al., 2003). Chapman (2008 p. 113) argues that through the NGO's stigmatisation landmines were given agency, and became an asset in peacetime. The publicity generated was a rallying call for more intensive mine clearance resources through donor funding as the international community's contribution to addressing the landmine crisis.

Thus, the development and emergent of the Mine Action Sector mirrors the development of international peacebuilding in a number of ways. As with peacebuilding, and as noted earlier, the broadening of the security debate and impetus that NGOs had found in this new environment provided for a rallying call in support of a ban on landmines; the NGOs did this by providing evidence that they had gathered in their work to demonstrate both the scale of landmine contamination in different parts of the world, and the impact on civilians.

#### **b) The Actors**

Short (1999) argues that advocacy for a ban came from four different sets of actors: NGOs, the ICRC, the United Nations (UN), and individual governments; however, I observe that these actors were aided in the process by the expertise provided by the military, and I therefore consider military forces as a fifth set of actors. The ICBL and the ICRC were typical lead actors; each of them with a different legitimacy base and character. The media also played a key role in documenting the impact of the weapons around the world and providing vivid images of victims. Each of the actors made a significant contribution to the process. Government actors provided the platforms from which to discuss the issue, the ability to change and create law, and financial resources; NGOs and international organisations brought to the table knowledge, field experience and the ability to maintain a spotlight on the issue. Each of these sectors was not monolithic and tended to 'self-select'. This self-selection process became one of the calling-cards of the Ottawa Process, though it could also be considered a natural process of coalition building (Anderson, 2000; Rutherford, 2011).

Due to the challenges brought by mine/UXO contamination the Sector underwent a very rapid expansion that incorporated a variety of usually very

disparate organisations and actors; these included practitioners from fields as diverse as the military, medical, development, humanitarian bodies, security, and the UN, all converged under the Mine Action Sector. The refrain that landmines were “a humanitarian, not an arms control, issue” has been described as a perspective that reflects the composition and motivation of many of the organisations involved in the campaign (Murray et al., 2012 p. 483). The campaign was thus founded, led and dominated by a small coterie of well-connected Northern<sup>18</sup> humanitarian/development and human rights NGOs, staffed by Northern professionals who depended financially and politically on sections of Western<sup>19</sup> states. The six ICBL founders, which also comprised its Steering Committee until 1995-6 when several new NGOs were added (ICBL 1996a, p.5, 1996b), included three US (Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights) and three European NGOs (Handicap International (France & Belgium), Mines Advisory Group (UK) and Medico International (Germany)).

### **Mine Action as an Agenda for the UN**

Endorsement of the campaign by the UN was reflected in the 1992 *Agenda for Peace* (AfP) which highlighted that “Increasingly it is evident that peacebuilding after civil or international strife must address the serious problem of landmines, many tens of millions of which remained scattered in present or former combat zones” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992 paragh 58) thus explicitly supporting the call to address the challenges presented by their presence, framing it within a peacebuilding agenda. Just as the AfP had provided the normative change in peacebuilding, it became instrumental in further shaping the debate on landmines. Two years later in an article in *Foreign Affairs*, Boutros-Ghali further showed support for the movement when he suggested that if their effects were “better known, land mines would undoubtedly shock the conscience of mankind—the same public reaction that led to the banning of chemical and biological weapons” (Boutros-Ghali, 1994 p. 13). Subsequently, in his foreword to the proceedings of a 1995 symposium on landmines, “*Clearing the*

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<sup>18</sup> The terms ‘Northern’ and ‘Western’ are used interchangeably, although ‘Western’ more often refers to states and ‘Northern’ more often to NGOs.

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*Fields Solutions to the Global Landmines Crisis*” (Cahill, 1995 p. xiv) he called for the UN to build widespread support for an international agreement on a total ban on the production, stockpiling, transfer, and export of mines and their component. This clearly placed landmines within a humanitarian agenda endorsed by the UN. Similarly, UN Peacekeepers became increasingly vulnerable as the UN mandated peacekeeping missions in contexts that had extensive mine contamination such as Cambodia, Angola, Mozambique and Bosnia<sup>20</sup> increased. Thus an urgency of finding a solution to the landmines crisis (Hubert, 2000).

The conceptualisation of mine action as a sector or a distinct humanitarian discipline beyond merely the term can further be traced back to October 1988 in Afghanistan. The term mine action (the name) originated in Cambodia where, in the early 1990s, Canadian Army engineers suggested that the body set up to administer and coordinate mine-related activities in the country be named the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, with a view to stressing the dynamic nature of the enterprise (Horwood, 2000) Mine clearance had been largely a domain of the national militaries, or carried out in the context of peacekeeping operations<sup>21</sup>, but Afghanistan presented a different case, as there was no functioning Afghan army, and with the Soviet troops unwilling or unable to clear mines before their departure, the humanitarian community, led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) stepped in, and the concept of humanitarian mine action was born (Filippino, 2006). Thus the UN in Afghanistan had set off establishing the first ‘humanitarian mine action’ programme by supporting the creation of a number of national Afghan NGOs who were trained in mine clearance. Mine related activities became civilianised, with mainly NGOs and UNOCHA taking the lead role, but also engaging with military expertise (Harpviken, 2003 p. 812). The first of such mine clearance activities, with an objective of making land safe for civilians, took root and this became known as humanitarian mine clearance (Horwood, 2000).

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<sup>20</sup> Akachi, Y. and Atun, R. (2011) Effect of investment in malaria control on child mortality in sub-Saharan Africa in 2002-2008. *PLoS One*, 6, e21309. noted that in spite of efforts to train UN and NATO peacekeeping troops to avoid mines in Bosnia, they suffered more than 300 casualties from mine accidents alone (pp: 145).

<sup>21</sup> Past the peacekeeping period, the activities were exclusively carried out by state institutions such as military or health professionals but with the state as the overall authority Harpviken, K. B. and Isaksen, J. (2004) *Reclaiming the Fields of War: Mainstreaming Mine Action in Development*. Oslo & New york: United Nations Development Programme.

## **Mine Action as human security**

Harpviken and Skaešra (2003) argued that whilst the way landmines cause death, injury, and fear to civilians may have been previously seen as a straightforward security issue, the manner in which this crisis was responded to lay beyond a traditional state-centric concept of security, and instead was directly embedded within the core of the new 'human security' paradigm (Harpviken and Skaešra, 2003 p. 815). Cockell (2000), defines peacebuilding as a sustainable process having as its main purpose the prevention of internal threats to human security, which cause protracted violent conflict (Cockell, 2000). Thus within such a conceptualisation of peacebuilding, mine action underlines the close relationship between the concepts of human security and post conflict peacebuilding, addressing the overall objective on the need for people to be 'free from fear'.

As a post conflict peacebuilding issue, and an activity within humanitarian action, it thus fits within the approach to 'new' security issues. However, unlike other areas of peacebuilding mine action is not substantially discussed within the academic peacebuilding literature. Likewise, the prominent grey literature on peacebuilding or peace implementation makes reference to mine action only marginally (Call and Cousens, 2007; Cousens and Kumar, 2001; Kaldor, 2007; Reyhler and Paffenholz, 2000). However, Faulkner and Pettiford (1998) had argued that landmines presented a considerable threat to security and had called for newer, non-military definitions of security. They argued that a people-centered security was fundamentally compromised in the context of the most pernicious of weapons. Though they had not implicitly used the terms landmines and human security, they had advocated the use of a human security framework to address challenges presented by landmines. They highlighted that "de-mining and community coping strategies in living with mines can combine in leading to a genuine human-centered security" (Faulkner and Pettiford, 1998 p. 58).

Therefore like peacebuilding, the human security concept provides a framework and direction to apply international efforts (such as mine action) that seek to protect people caught up in the rapidly developing and incredibly complex threats and challenges (Ogata, 2004 p. 5). Mine action merges the

humanitarian, political and military roles, but amongst analysts such as Barry and Jefferys (2002) such an approach is still contested as they argue for the need to keep separate 'the mandates, missions and principles of formal military forces and humanitarian agencies'. They argue that the military has a core mandate to foster security and protect civilians by establishing and enforcing a safe and stable environment. Humanitarian agencies, by contrast, have a mandate to directly implement humanitarian aid programmes. It is essential that these two roles – impartial humanitarian assistance as a response to an urgent and inalienable right, and peace operations with their inevitably partial and political mandates – are kept separate (Barry and Jefferys, 2002 p. 2).

The description of the formation of the sector has demonstrated how the call for a ban was based on humanitarian rather than security or economic criteria and also extended beyond international humanitarian law to encompass norms relating to state legitimacy by drawing on the need for states undergoing various forms of transition to demonstrate good international conduct (Bryden, 2010).

### **Mine Action in support of post conflict reconstruction**

Beyond these intrinsic values of mine action's enabling potential for peacebuilding the specific activities which ought to follow to gain these benefits are not that obvious. They depend on a non-linearity of interaction of various elements within a system. Thus, it is not the quality of a single factor which reinforces a conflict or helps achieve sustainable peace, what counts is the manner in which the different factors interact and the kind of context that they occur in.

Therefore mine action as peacebuilding can also be explained when viewed from a systemic perspective, i.e. in the context of an integrated peacebuilding framework. In this context, mine action facilitates the construction of roads which may be regarded as an important element of a larger peacebuilding framework. It creates jobs including for ex-combatants also aiding DDR programmes. Jobs may stimulate local economies. If the roads improve livelihoods are improved through having access to markets. It may stimulate local contractor capacity; open up outlying areas previously marginalised because of their inaccessibility and assist in the extension of the authority of the state into those territories; and it may contribute to overall economic growth, all

of which are important aspects of an environment conducive to a successful peace process and preventing a relapse into conflict. Following the implementation of mine action activities, research has demonstrated that there is a perception of improvements in safety and security; perceived improvements in socio-economic wellbeing and improved security and economic and social development (Hammond, 2013)

As a sub-sector of the larger world of humanitarian aid; mine action supports the delivery of other elements of humanitarian aid, as a crucial element of this aid itself. For communities that are recovering from conflict, safety and security are always an overwhelming issue for humanitarian action, not just because of the atrocious killings and injuries suffered by humanitarian workers, but because of the cumulative effects of challenges of access to vulnerable communities. Therefore mine action not only supports the security of post conflict communities but that of humanitarian workers and other civilians in general. Similarly mine action is linked to longer term rehabilitation and development in several ways; through activities that ensure risk reduction in other sectors, e.g. access to water and food security, and are therefore connected to more complex reconstruction and development related issues; and through the primary aim of mine action in the creation of indigenous capacity in mine-affected communities.

Almost all humanitarian interventions are preceded by assessment missions to establish the planning and funding basis for projects. In cases where the areas are inaccessible because the access roads have not been declared passable, populations are often not even considered for assistance, remaining beyond the reach and sight of humanitarian interveners. The presence or even fear of mines has forced humanitarian and relief aid organisations to suspend relief operations during emergencies, a tragic consequence for civilians<sup>22</sup>. Due to

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<sup>22</sup> For example in 1993 ICRC had to suspend its operations in isolated villages of Tesanj and Maglaj in Bosnia where 140,000 villagers remained hungry and without access to provisions. Four months later, an attempt to deliver humanitarian aid was hampered when a convoy of 14 trucks had to turn back when the lead truck hit a mine which led to further delays of medical assistance and other humanitarian aid reaching this vulnerable population ICRC (2002) *Anti-vehicle mines: effects on humanitarian assistance and civilian populations* Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross.. In Angola, aid reached only 10 to 15% of the country largely as a result of logistic constraints (the poor state of airstrips and roads), the precarious security conditions, in the form of attacks on civilians and vehicles, and the presence of landmines. Humanitarian organisations had access to only 60% of the 272 locations where displaced people were concentrated and to approximately 73% of reported displaced populations Porto, J. G. and Clover, J.

such blockages, other means of accessing such populations were sought which end up increasing the cost of humanitarian assistance. The aid can be airlifted; for example in Angola OCHA reported that "more than 70 % of all humanitarian assistance was transported by air due to restricted surface routes" (ICRC, 2002). Thus, a humanitarian plight can be made worse increasing the vulnerability and human insecurity of the local population, while decreasing the capacity of external bodies to provide assistance (GICHD, 2004).

### **Mine Action as an 'entry point'**

Mine action may also serve as a foundation for conflict resolution. The problem of landmines, if and when acknowledged by all parties to the conflict, serves as a fruitful starting point for the development of joint solutions. At the inception stages interventions encourage various armed factions to buy into peace agreements forming the basis for disarmament and demobilisation of their fighters. Similarly, demining removes the physical barriers created by landmines and not only serves as a powerful confidence building measure, but also as a platform for further inter-communal collaborations.

Agreement to tackle explosive ordnance as a humanitarian problem provides a potentially neutral platform from which parties can agree to meaningful measures, and further engage. Moser-Puangsuwan (2009) looked at all the peace agreements and noted that indeed initiatives to address mine and UXO contamination have formed integral parts of peace agreements and ceasefires<sup>23</sup>. According to LeBrun and Damman (2009) the importance of addressing issues of contamination has become prominent, so that familiarity with key issues for

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(2003) The peace dividend in Angola: Strategic implications for Okavango basin cooperation. *Transboundary Rivers, Sovereignty and Development: Hydropolitical Drivers in the Okavango River Basin*. Pretoria & Geneva: AWIRU & Green Cross International..

<sup>23</sup> As for the cases of Nicaragua (1990), Cambodia (1991), El Salvador (1991), Mozambique (1992), Angola (1994), Croatia (1994), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995), Kosovo (1999), Democratic Republic of Congo (1999), Burundi (2000), Philippines (2001), Ethiopia/Eritrea (2000), Sudan (2004), Senegal (2004), Nepal (2006). Similarly in Guatemala, one of the agreements signed on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1994 was an Agreement of Resettlement of the Displaced Population due to the Armed Conflict. However, for the agreement to take effect, there was recognition of the necessity to address the problem of munitions contamination and this was highlighted and was included in the agreement<sup>23</sup> Pacheco, G. (2004) The Process of Demining and Destroying UXO in Guatemala. *Journal of Mine Action*, 8 (2).. A domestic approach was applied, and the Volunteer Fireman's Corps (CVB) were called to serve as a neutral actor to mine action and also as a liaison between government authorities. This was because the population was reluctant to trust the military and cooperate with it in providing information needed to conduct clearance to meet the needs of its particular post-conflict situation (Fiederlein 2005). More recent cases include Mali, Senegal and Niger where mine action projects have provided opportunities for former opponents from governments and rebel groups to cooperate to determine the extent of landmine contamination and clear the mines Moore, M. P. (2014) Demining a Road to Peace: The Continuing Role of Mine Action in Peacebuilding in Senegal. *Landmines in Africa; Until every step is safe*. online..

addressing explosive ordnance needs to become an integral element for those directly involved in peace negotiation and facilitation.

Research by Unruh (1997; 2001; 2002) has also demonstrated that the problem of landmines can significantly complicate a peace process especially depending on the speed and timing with which such problems occur. He argues that “should issues of re-integration, land access, land conflict, food insecurity, and environmental emerge at particularly delicate or sensitive points in the process (e.g., ending UN subsidies for ex-combatants, onset of UN or government programmes regarding land reform, arrival of commercial interests in an area, etc.), it can have a much greater impact than at other times” (Unruh et al., 2003 p. 857). Thus through mine action opportunities for fostering cooperation and dialogue, building confidence, establishing governance structures and building national capacities are opened up.

### **Facilitation of Demilitarisation, Demobilisation and Re-integration (DDR)**

In many post war contexts unemployment is high due to a highly depleted economy therefore providing employment opportunities to ex-combatants and the society in general may have the effect of improving security in volatile post conflict environments. According to a report by the ILO (2009) In countries such as Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Afghanistan and Bosnia demining has been used as “first-line response” in the initial stages of DDR, as it is a labour-intensive activity that can render quick results both for disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants (ILO, 2009 p. 61). In the Afghan context, Strand (2004) concluded that, by providing alternative employment to men who had largely been engaged in the anti-Soviet war of the 1980s, the mine action programme prevented their recruitment by armed groups in the 1990s. Thus mine action in this way plays a dual role of facilitating DDR by preventing the danger of former combatants using their skills as ‘violence entrepreneurs’ as is frequently mentioned in DDR discourse and also through promoting socio-economic benefits through the provision of employment.

Demining therefore contributes directly to these processes and has repeatedly proved to be vital to stabilising post-conflict situations through addressing the bigger concerns of the large number of ex-combatants that need to be included



in the recovery process. Mine action and specifically demining does this by contributing to reducing the likelihood of renewed violence, either because of relapse into war or outbreaks of banditry by relieving the pressure emanating from various sources such as insecurity; a weak economy; large numbers of returnees and IDPs that need reintegration into communities etc., thus effectively helping in facilitating post conflict society's transition from conflict to normalcy and development.

## **INTEGRATING MINE ACTION WITHIN A PEACEBUILDING PALETTE**

The international agenda on mine action places mine clearance and other activities as a part of the broader discourse of peacebuilding. Other than conflict sensitive programming that is now a requirement for any organisation working in a post conflict environment, the Mine Action Sector developed the *1999 Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes from a Development-Oriented Point of View* also known as the Bad Honnef Framework<sup>24</sup>. Using this framework Harpviken traces the framing of the Sector as a component within the larger peacebuilding. These guidelines stated the need for mine action programmes to be integrated within 'a national and local peacebuilding and development framework'. The document further suggested activities where mine action could support peacebuilding processes, including in socio-economic sectors. The guidelines recognised that working towards the rehabilitation of post war societies was not only complex but also required a comprehensive approach that ensured that the conditions which had led to war in the first place were not recreated. It therefore recognised that a few technical "inputs" were not sufficient suggesting concrete ways in which mine action might support peacebuilding, including promoting reconciliation (through the participation of diverse social groups), securing transparency (by involving civil institutions in all aspects) and helping to bring about awareness of collectively suffered injustice (through ban campaigns) (Harpviken and Skaešra, 2003).

An alternative method of exploring mine action's peacebuilding potential is through interrogating how the various pillars of mine action contribute to various

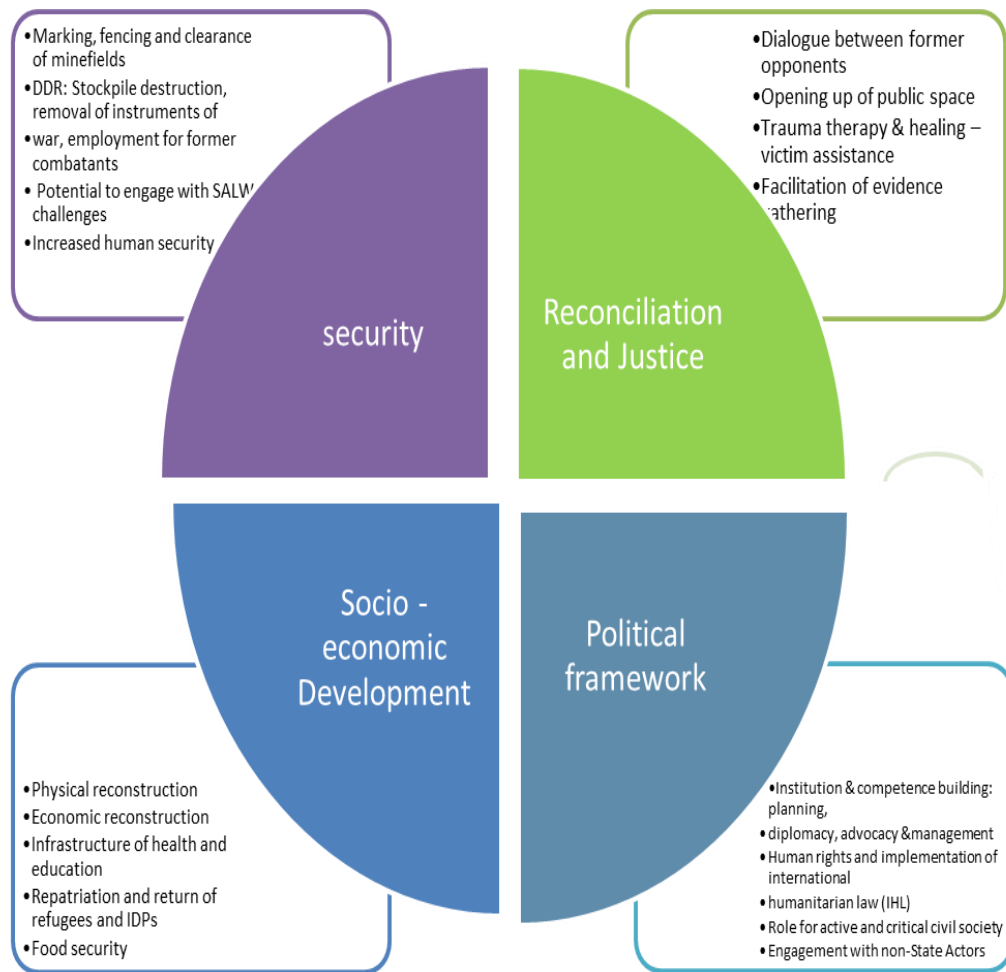
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<sup>24</sup> Named after the venue of the conference where the guidelines were drafted. Bad Honnef, Germany

sectors of peacebuilding; secondly, through assessing the way in which the various mine action organisations use their technical expertise and their capacities to operate in post conflict environments to address the bigger issues around human security through addressing the reduction of armed violence and promotion of public safety. I will limit this illustration to just the 'palette approach' and explore the second option through the case study of Somaliland.

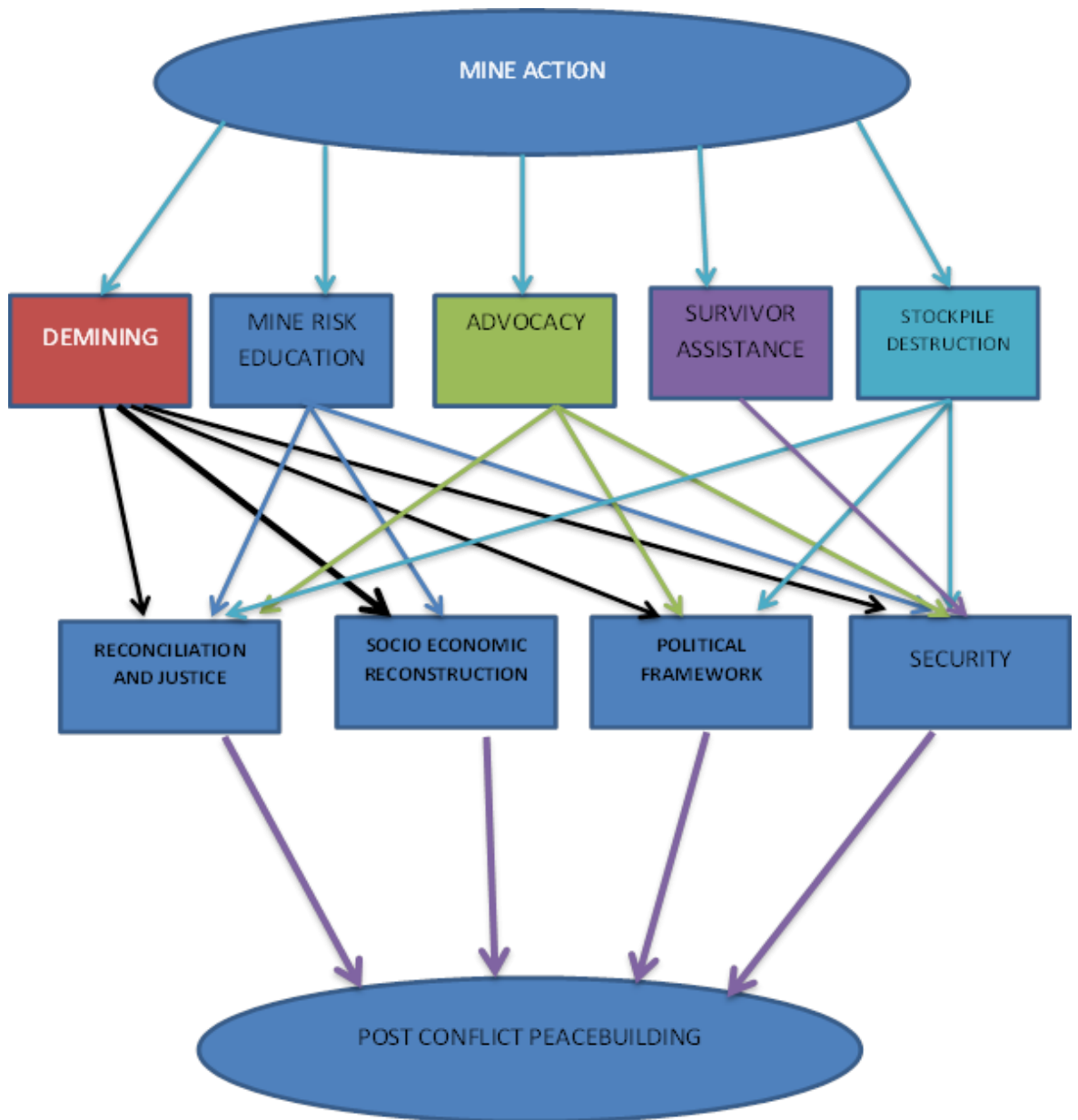
The palette approach has been used by the FaFo/Landmine Action Report (Jennings et al., 2008); although this report only looked at the rhetorical narrative of how each of the mine action pillars can contribute to the peacebuilding palette; the aim was to demonstrate how the various elements of humanitarian mine action have important, tangible, political, socio-economic and justice and rehabilitation ramifications, in addition to the more obvious security gains. They took the peacebuilding palette as illustrated by the Utstein Study as a starting point and expanded it in order to examine it from a humanitarian mine action point of view, they then developed a mine action Palette as illustrated:

**Figure 5: Adapted Mine Action Peacebuilding Palette**



**Source: Adapted from Jennings et al, (2008) 'Peacebuilding & Humanitarian Mine Action: Strategic Possibilities and Local Practicalities (p: 34)**

**Figure 6: Mine Action/Peacebuilding Web of Interrelatedness**



**Source: Own compilation**

## **EMERGING CRITIQUES AND LITERATURE GAPS**

The emerging critiques of mine action mirror those of post conflict peacebuilding; the initial programmes faced enormous challenges, with well-intentioned initiatives becoming regarded as ill-thought-out phenomena. Focusing too much on technicalities rather than the affected communities, and the failure to coordinate with and learn from the larger humanitarian assistance programmes were typical of the criticisms that befell these initial programmes. Just as with peacebuilding, Mansfield (2005) notes that the Sector fails to incorporate the lessons learned; for example he noted that though Afghanistan was seen as a successful programme with relatively good coordination and management its lessons were not applied to subsequent humanitarian challenges (2005 p. 210).

Eaton *et al*, (1997) noted the preoccupation with clearing minefields to the extent that other key activities were relegated. The issue of the removal of mines continues to dominate the Sector today; this is reflected in the on-going debate on the extent to which zero risk after clearance is achievable. Zero risk is attractive to the Sector primarily because it is the reason they exist and it can be argued that it is their moral obligation and accountability should someone be injured on 'cleared' land (Wolf, 2001). The emphasis on safety and technical expertise can promote unsafe behaviour as affected communities are left to develop indigenous solutions with no technical input in the event that the Sector is unable to provide this on time as is so often the case. Research suggests that local communities are less risk averse and they engage in activities which are considered high-risk fully aware of the possible danger from injury but driven by poverty and the need to access limited land resources (Bottomley, 2003; Moyes, 2004; Moyes and Tinning, 2005; Moyes and Vannachack, 2005). However, such strategies are often regarded by the Sector as reckless and rarely have efforts been made to build on local coping mechanisms or provide local communities with the skills, tools and knowledge required to minimise risk. Instead, as Chapman (2008) has argued, the rhetoric by the Sector concerning activities is that it is hazardous, high-risk and an inadequate practice with no set clearance standards. This means that the Sector does not accord agency to those locals who take such risks; instead approaches tend to almost criminalise these activities. Indeed as Chapman further asserts, the volumes of literature that are produced by the Sector in the bid to ensure safety procedures all seem

to have a specific target that excludes village deminers (see for example GICHD, 2006b; GICHD, 2007; GICHD, 2008a; GICHD, 2008b).

The volumes of Sector literature also demonstrate that in the absence of an engaged critical debate on mine action, a highly self-referential Sector has emerged; this is demonstrated by the growing 'practitioner' literature a plethora of often uncritical literature and narratives about the mine ban process. There is a significant parallel literature developed by practitioners on approaches, good practice and lessons learned in the field of mine action<sup>25</sup>. However, as Bryden (2010) noted, there is a dearth of literature on implementation and mine action research has not been drawn together with the consequence that meaningful findings on the effectiveness of the treaty have failed to emerge. I concur with his observation, and conclude that research has been limited on the Sector and the implementation of policies in the various contexts.

Whilst in practise the Sector was initially dominated by a technical focus, this was further reflected by the literature and research that emerged at the time focused mainly on the technical elements of mine action; i.e. clearance and clearance technologies (Bruschini et al., 1998; Buré and Pont, 2003; Gader et al., 2001; Harris, 2002; Hussein and Waller, 2000; Mather, 2002; Smith, 2003; Vistisen, 2006); indeed a Google Scholar search on landmine detection brings more than 13,600 entries<sup>26</sup>. Other themes that have dominated the literature on mine action and therefore framed our understanding of landmine use were the medical repercussions of mine accidents, framed within a public health

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<sup>25</sup> For example the Geneva Centre has a database on every aspect of mine action including and not limited to; issues on impact GICHD (2004) *Humanitarian Impact from Mines other than Anti-Personnel Mines*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, *ibid.*; re-evaluation of areas that the Sector needs to engage in Bryden, A., McAslan, A. and Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. (2002) *Mine action equipment : study of global operational needs*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining, Filippino, E. and GICHD. (2002) *Communication in mine awareness programmes*. Geneva: International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Rebelo, P. (2010) *Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. ; Assessment of other mine action programs including donor related programmes Bohle, V., Handulle, M. A., Lor, C., Paterson, T., Wardak, M. H. and Wood, A. (2011) *Evaluation of Dutch Support to Danish Demining Group (DDG) in Afghanistan, Somaliland and Sudan* Geneva: GICHD, GICHD (2005) *A Review of Ten Years Assistance to the Mine Action Programme in Mozambique*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Ted Paterson, Vera Bohle, Léonie Barnes, Mohamed Ahmed and Rebelo, P. ( 2008) *EC-Funded Mine Action in Africa: Volume 2 - Country Reports*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Demining.; manuals and guides for various aspects of mine action including planning GICHD (2007) *A Guide to Mine Action and Explosive Remnants of War*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, *ibid.*, GICHD (2008a) *A Guide to Road Clearance*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, GICHD (2014b) *Quick start guide to strategic planning in mine action*. Geneva: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining..

<sup>26</sup> As per 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2014

discourse particularly in relation to mine risk education and victim assistance (See for example Ascherio et al., 1995; Giannou, 1997; Malanczuk, 2000; Mannion and Chaloner, 2006; Mannion et al., 2006; Meade and Mirocha, 2000). The literature on the process towards the achievement of the Mine Ban Treaty also provided scholars with a great opportunity to illustrate how new norms were being generated with an emphasis on mapping the strategy and process that achieved the mine ban treaty (Anderson, 2000; Brem and Rutherford, 2001; Maresca and Maslen, 2000; Maslen, 2004; Mather, 2002; Matthew et al., 2004; Matthew and Rutherford, 2003; Rutherford, 2000a; Rutherford, 2000b; Thakur and Maley, 1999).

The actors that emerged to take the leadership role of the new sector included international agencies such as the various United Nations agencies; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other humanitarian organisations. Thus the context of mine action was undergirded by the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and universalism and the humanitarian imperative to save lives (Bolton, 2010; Horwood, 2003b). This brought about challenges to the extent that this neutrality limited the degree to which the Sector could fully address the core of peacebuilding. The Sector could only do this by addressing concrete problems (such as demining, marking minefields, helping survivors) rather than addressing the politics of the conflict directly; thus, essentially 'depoliticising' the politics of peacebuilding. However, with the emergence of critiques of humanitarianism and principles of neutrality and impartiality; it became clear that humanitarian actions must incorporate broader notions of human development and avoiding harm (Anderson, 1999; Duffield, 2001). Harpviken and Skaešra (2003) highlight the dilemma of the Sector in taking such an approach; in their view, it would risk defeating the purpose, as it was exactly the ability to 'depoliticise' the landmine problem that gave mine action its potential. They further argued that at the most basic level; an explicit peacebuilding engagement increases the risk to mine action personnel and organisations being seen as political actors and hence becoming targets. For example in Somalia where United Nations Somalia Mine Action Programme (UNSOMA) and anyone affiliated with them are targeted by the terrorist group Al Shabab. Their continued position of neutrality and impartiality has been assessed as a contributing factor in these incidents, which escalated

when UNSOMA refused to pay registration fees. Harpviken and Skaešra (2003) also illustrated how in mid-2003 this became a concern in Afghanistan, where it appeared as though attacks against mine action personnel were linked to the perception that mine action organisations worked closely with the US-led coalition forces. This is an issue raised by several observers such as (Olson, 2006; Shannon, 2009; Stoddard et al., 2009) especially in the context of the war on terror. Harpviken and Skaešra (2003) further acknowledged that neglecting the political impact of their interventions would be dangerous: to the locals, to mine action personnel and to the larger peacebuilding process of which mine action should ideally form an integral part.

Various studies have further demonstrated that access to, and control of, resources such as land and other natural resources remains one of the core issues driving the conflict (Alao, 2007; Le Billon, 2001). Whilst mine action is generally a very positive experience in conflict-affected contexts, taking unsafe land and returning it to productive use, through demining and land release<sup>27</sup> mine action actors directly interact with issues that are of great significance to the people in post conflict contexts. In places where there is insecurity of land tenure, mine action can create or exacerbate land-related disputes. For example, in Mozambique and South Sudan, mine action has resulted in volatile negative outcomes when investors, demobilised ex-combatants, returnees, and local communities attempt to access the same land (Unruh et al., 2003). In Angola, Bottomley (2005) called for the need to engage with the traditional leadership and entire communities prior to and beyond demining. This was because of the need to address issues related to the distribution of land following clearance (hence engaging with politics). They argued that the end users of the demined land needed to be clearly identified to reduce any conflicts emanating from the use. The mine clearance agencies also needed to follow up after clearance to ensure that the cultural mechanisms for land distribution were functioning. Thus beyond the obvious material aspects of clearing contaminated ground and rendering it good for renewal and re-use, humanitarian demining offers a broader value in emphasising and embodying fair decision making (in

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<sup>27</sup> Land Release is a term that has been used to describe some or all of the stages of the process by which land which has been suspected to contain mines can be reclassified as no longer hazardous, and formally made available for public use.



setting clearance priorities and ensuring those priorities relate transparently to immediate need) and in creating an operational bridge between affected communities and local military or governmental institutions, and between State and non-State actors (including former combatant factions). Shimoyachi Yuzawa (2013) research in Cambodia came to the same conclusion and emphasised that that land management was key to linking mine clearance to peacebuilding as it is closely associated with rebuilding life after conflict, which includes the return and resettlement of refugees and IDPs and access to vital resources and social services, such as farmland, water, health care, and education. Thus, mismanagement of mine-cleared land can lead to undermining peace at the local level when it becomes a source of tension and grievance.

Similarly, in Yemen a study by Pound et al (2006) showed how the use of the land after demining was not a rosy experience; the report noted that re-building of houses was not always a positive experience. It cited an account of one resident from Beer Naser (Lahij governorate) who lamented about the extent of intensive investment in construction of houses and business premises following demining. The residents found themselves in the centre of an urban centre and the fields vanished, transformed into construction sites. Similarly, land disputes erupted and cases of killing and shooting became a daily issue (Pound et al., 2006). Like humanitarian, development and relief aid, mine action is therefore never entirely apolitical. The role of aid has been a subject of importance within peace building, as it has been proven that it has the potential to prolong or shorten conflict (Anderson, 1999; Goodhand, 2002; Goodhand and Atkinson, 2001).

The Sector is part of the humanitarian aid spectrum where there is awareness that good intentions are no longer sufficient, yet research carried out in 2010 by GICHD found that mine action actors had generally not addressed issues such as land rights as part of their response to post-conflict recovery (GICHD, 2011). Such an approach disregards the acknowledgement that just as mines were placed to create a 'hostage' to resources and limit warring parties' abilities to fulfil their economic needs (Ascherio et al., 1995); a response that is informed by a political economy analysis should inherently inform programming. However, the Sector and the mine action academic literature avoids such an

analysis that addresses issues related with politics, power relations and inequalities. This is partly due to the perception that mines and other unexploded remnants of war are neutral, or that it is a technical area of engagement thus requiring a technical intervention. However, Bolton (2010) has engaged in providing the first of such academic scrutiny. His research focuses on the political economy of demining through a comparison of commercial and humanitarian demining organisations funded through foreign donor funding. He has argued that mine action is embedded in a political economy of conflict that pumps large amounts of money into conflict (like other humanitarian organisations). PRIO and UNDP produced a report that sought to explore linkages that existed between mine action and development. This report argued that both mine action and development stood to gain from greater synchronisation with each other (Harpviken and Isaksen, 2004).

Research that seeks to assess the contribution of mine action to peacebuilding has recently begun to emerge (GICHD, 2014a; Shimoyachi--Yuzawa, 2013). This built on the exploratory work that organisations such as Landmine Action had engaged in (Cave, 2003; Jennings et al., 2008). Research institutions such as the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), spearheaded more substantive work in this field but these initial publications did not tend to draw on empirical data, but were rather theoretical propositions of ways in which mine action could be seen to engage in peacebuilding. The works by (Harpviken et al., 2003; Harpviken and Roberts, 2004; Millard and Harpviken, 2000; Millard et al., 2002) are examples of this. Harpviken and Roberts, (2004) 'Preparing the Ground for Peace; Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding', was more substantive and was based on case studies from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Sudan. This focused on what they called the 'less tangible' impact of mine action in the political sphere of peacebuilding.

Therefore, there are gaps that remain within the mine action and peacebuilding literature. This is highlighted by the limited availability of academic research that clearly demonstrates ways in which certain sectors of the peacebuilding community inadvertently, through the way they implement their programmes, limit critical scrutiny of their field of operation; and also how this manifests itself in academia. The literature reviewed has also demonstrated that both fields of

study neglect 'on-the-ground' dynamics that limit or enhance the potential of the interventions. Instead the peacebuilding literature engages in hyper-critical debates as to whether interventions are a success or failure. Thus, this research will fill the gap in this existing literature. Similarly, by critically examining mine action, this thesis will contribute to critical debates by offering an empirical case study that examines the extent to which the dominant critiques remain relevant. This will not be judging the success or failure of mine action but presenting a context specific attribution to factors that may limit or enhance the peacebuilding potential.

## **CONCLUSION**

The intention of this chapter is not to overplay the way in which mine action interacts and is part of peacebuilding but to illustrate how framing an issue within certain parameters develops a knock on effect on shaping of the academic literature that emerges. It could be argued that the mine action sector might see the advantage of the lack of critical analysis from academia and thus carry on with business as usual; but the extent to which this is true is not the subject of this thesis. I argue that the critics of peacebuilding tend to base their critiques on democratisation in the context of heavily militarised peacebuilding interventions that cannot be generalised to all post-conflict settings. Sriram (2009) makes a similar assertion on the issue of transitional justice and liberal peace, in which she argues that the liberal peacebuilding literature often neglects this debate although the tools of transitional justice have been central to contemporary peacebuilding projects. She asserts that the critiques of liberal peacebuilding tended to focus on the two major pillars – marketisation and democratisation without considering some of the unexamined assumptions and potential unintended consequences that transitional justice shares with peacebuilding (p. 114).

The liberal model presents uniform answers (standardised 'one size fits all approach') to context specific problems; similarly, the critics also take this approach and sweep a broad brush across a very diverse range of programmes, issues and activities that are indeed peacebuilding, as illustrated by the mine action case study. The critics provide a narrow picture of reality that focuses mainly on western interveners and their local implementing partners with a

dominant narrative that tends to emphasises similarities between interveners. They base their critiques on systems, structures, and organisational values of international peacebuilding based on a single and simple interpretation of liberal peace thereby making a generalised conclusion on the failure of peacebuilding. Thus, I argue that they fail to examine diverse contextual, organisational, governmental and other phenomenal manifestations that specific activities and interveners might portray or encounter. This means that they inevitably miss out the salient challenges that peacebuilding interventions encounter limiting the full potential of such interventions (this is what I intend to demonstrate throughout this thesis).

Indeed Sabaratnam (2011b) has made a similar assertion that the mode of theorising and research is also limiting in terms of being critical theory, that engages and articulates alternative ways of thinking, and envisions dimensions of change; in short the 'formulaic, top down and ethnocentric nature of the liberal peace finds some parallels in the analytical framing of its critics' (op cit p. 247).

Similarly, this chapter has demonstrated that it is not just critics who fail to frame mine action within peacebuilding. Though conceptually mine action is rooted within peacebuilding, the way in which the Sector operates limits its potential to integrate within the wider humanitarian sector and therefore be seen as part of peacebuilding. This is a factor that I will illustrate further in subsequent chapters which look in detail at how mine action is operationalised both globally and in Somaliland.

Peacebuilding interventions should be multidimensional in essence and strive towards coherency with other sectoral and disciplinary approaches. They ideally should encompass a broad range of activities throughout the entire span of a conflict. It can be seen that peacebuilding has evolved from a strictly post-conflict undertaking, to a concept with a broader meaning and therefore broader activities. Tschirgi (2003) has highlighted that the term 'peacebuilding' has gradually expanded to refer to integrated approaches to address violent conflict at different phases of the conflict cycle (p.1). Acknowledging that there are factors that have limited mine action's conceptualisation as peacebuilding, I argue that as an activity and as a sector, mine action needs to be re-conceived

as part of peacebuilding. Through such a reconceptualisation, researchers can therefore engage in a more critical scrutiny on its role in post conflict contexts.

I will hence contribute to the existing critical peacebuilding literature and through the case study of Somaliland will further demonstrate that there is need for academic research to engage with other divergent case studies that do not necessarily render themselves naturally to scrutiny within the dominate references. Marginal cases such as Somaliland and mine action tend to be ignored by critical scholars within peacebuilding even though as will be demonstrated throughout the rest of the thesis, they offer insights and may give more credence to the dominate critiques.

## **CHAPTER 3: SOMALILAND: AN “OASIS OF PEACE”? PEACEBUILDING WITHIN A STATE**

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*"One of the main obstacles for Somaliland is lack of recognition, but my government will never give up trying to gain it," – President Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud Silanyo <sup>28</sup>*

### **INTRODUCTION**

To explain the post conflict context of Somaliland, it is important to look at the period before conflict as it is through Somalia's failure that we saw the re-birth of the Somaliland state as we know it today. Similarly some of the interventions that took place in Somalia have a great bearing on the way in which intervention is undertaken in Somaliland today. There are a number of factors that can be argued to have led to the collapse of the Somalia State; these include the colonial legacy and Somalia's own internal governance issues. I argue that though these dynamics were at play, the major contributory factors were external factors, some of which correspond to Somalia's strategic location, which rendered it susceptible to the global politics of the bipolar world at the time. These factors then play into the politics of the regional actors. Together these two factors contribute to a large extent to conflicts that eventually led to state failure; following the failure of the state, largely driven by the changes in global politics, various interventions took place in Somalia and these have not been successful to date; it is against this failure of the state that Somaliland has emerged; a polity that challenges the view that the Somali people are ungovernable (Samatar, 1993).

### **CONTEXTUALISING SOMALILAND**

Following independence from Britain, Somaliland was subsequently recognised by 35 states as well as being registered independent by the UN (ICG, 2006) . In what some authors have referred to as a 'hasty reunion', 5 days later, on the 1st of July 1960, Somaliland joined the Italian Trusteeship Territory of Somalia

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<sup>28</sup> President Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud Silanyo on 18 May 2011, when the country marked 20 years since declaring unilateral independence from the rest of Somalia. See IRIN SOMALIA: Healthcare, education gains as Somaliland marks 20th anniversary; dated 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 <http://www.irinnews.org/report/92769/somalia-healthcare-education-gains-as-somaliland-marks-20th-anniversary> accessed on 26th June 2012

to form the Republic of Somalia (Ahmed and Green, 1999); this left out those Somali people who found themselves in the French, Ethiopian, and Kenyan-British parts (Van Beurden, 1999). The Union was spurred by the notion and agenda for a Greater Somalia which obscured the underlying historical, political, and economic differences between the two regions (Lalos, 2011).

The union was not well thought out, and had no procedures that had been put in place to integrate the different colonial traditions. It quickly became obvious that the dual and disparate colonial heritages were a hindrance to the union (Bradbury, 2008 p. 32). Such duality included not just the differences in language (English and Italian), but also the administrative, educational and legal systems, police forces, taxes and currencies (Lewis, 2008; Omaar, 1994). The two territories were therefore separated institutionally, linguistically and historically. The legality of the union was also contested and an attempt to remedy this fundamental legal limbo was made immediately after independence. Pham (2010; 2012) opines that the legal validity of the merger became a subject of a number of international law scholars<sup>29</sup> who have questioned the legality of the act (p. 10).

The merger saw British Somaliland remaining more isolated with Mogadishu becoming the capital. Major posts in the new government and a majority of the seats in parliament went to Italian Somalia, and measures were hurriedly adopted aimed at reinforcing rapid integration. This served to alienate the former British protectorate, which remained underdeveloped with numerous problems inherited from the colonial administration (Ahmed and Green, 1999 p. 115). The failure of the State became the failure of the promise of democracy and Somalia became an authoritarian, Centralist State whose elite adopted a predatory character. This led to an armed coup in 1969 in which General Mohamed Siyyad Barre took over.

Independence did not bring with it jubilation, as corruption, chaotic electoral politics and state programmes that did not deliver to the public became the

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<sup>29</sup> Pham 2012 cites the works of Eugene Cotran, "Legal Problems Arising Out of the Formation of the Somali Republic," *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 12 ( July 1963): 1010–26; Anthony J. Carroll and B. Rajagopal, "The Case for an Independent Somaliland," *American University Journal of Law and Politics* 8 (1993): 653–62; and Michael Schoiswohl, *Status and (Human Rights) Obligations of Non-Recognized De Facto Regimes in International Law: The Case of "Somaliland"* (Leiden,ge Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 2004), 150–56 as some of the authors who have questioned the merger.

order of the day with administrative organs from each group taking up predatory characteristics. The Northern people were isolated with Mogadishu becoming the capital. Major posts in the new government and a majority of the seats in parliament went to the Southern region, and measures hurriedly adopted aimed at reinforcing rapid integration. This served to alienate the north, which remained underdeveloped with numerous problems inherited from the colonial administration (Ahmed and Green, 1999 p. 115). The failure of the State became the failure of the promise of democracy and Somalia became an authoritarian, Centralist State whose elite adopted a predatory character. This led to an armed coup in 1969 in which General Mohamed Siyaad Barre took over.

Initially the regime of Siyyad Barre enjoyed a high degree of legitimacy through, for example, the way in which they dealt with the drought of 1973-74; education and other social programmes and services expanded including the introduction of the Latin script for the Somali language making it into a written language for the first time<sup>30</sup>. The regime also put effort into improving the literacy of the populace by introducing mass literacy campaigns in urban and rural areas and this proved hugely popular (Lewis, 2008). The regime's military also enjoyed international support as will be demonstrated later in the chapter. However, this was short lived and soon Barre's initial steps towards modernisation were clouded by his declaration that the clan system was backward and an impediment to progress. Barre then introduced and imposed policies that favoured certain clans and sub clans; these were deeply resented, with protests against this repression being harshly suppressed. This suppression was later to provide reason for mobilisation of resistance against his regime in the lead up to the outbreak of the conflict in 1988. Thus, the Somali civil war that resulted was seen as the product of political, social and economic repression under Barre, which eventually culminated in the toppling of his regime in 1991 (WSP International, 2005).

However, this was short lived and soon Barre's initial steps towards modernization were clouded by his declaration that the traditional clan system was backward and an impediment to progress. Barre then introduced and

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<sup>30</sup> Previously Somalis had written in either Arabic or European languages.



imposed policies that favoured certain clans and sub clans; these were deeply resented, with protests against this repression being harshly suppressed. This suppression was to later provide reason for mobilization to resistance against his regime in the lead up to the outbreak of the conflict in 1988. Thus, the Somali civil war that resulted, was seen as the product of political social and economic repression under Barre and eventually culminated to the toppling of his regime in 1991 (WSP International, 2005).

### **Somalia's State Failure**

The total failure of the Somali State has given rise to the rubric that has continually held since state collapse that Somalis are too anarchic to form a strong central state. Somalia had emerged as the state most likely to form a coherent nation, based on the fact that the majority shared a common language, religion, ethnicity and other characteristics (Clapham, 2012; Steve and Walls, 2009).

Somalia has been unstable ever since the fall of the Barre regime Menkhaus (2008 p. 5) describes it as the most dangerous place in the world for humanitarian workers, and also as a completely collapsed state (2004, p. 149). Rotberg (2002b) has defined it as the model of a collapsed state: a geographical expression only, with borders but with no effective way to exert authority within those borders' whilst Menkhaus (ibid) defines it as a failure amongst failed states. There has been some debate as to whether the fall of Siyyad Barre was indeed the beginning of Somalia's statelessness. Some commentators have argued that pre-colonial Somalia existed as a 'Stateless State'<sup>31</sup> ruled by scattered tribal sheikdoms and a wide dispersion of power among clans and sub clans (Battera, 2004; Kaplan, 2008; Lewis, 1961; Mohamoud, 2006). Rotberg (2003), in his categorisation of failed and collapsed states, argues that by the onset of civil war in 1991 the Somali state had long since failed. The civil war destroyed what was left, and Somalia collapsed onto itself (Rotberg, 2003). Within academic circles, the dominant rhetoric post-Cold War was that of imminent danger of African states becoming a threat to human

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<sup>31</sup> A political organisation where no formal centralised policy exist but which maintains social order and stability through moral, material and social sanctions.

and global security due to criminalisation, globalisation, privatisation and endemic violence (Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009).

The fall of Siyyad Barre and the consequent anarchy coincided with these emerging debates of which Somalia became a prime example. Since then academic literature has been replete with references to Somalia as an example of the world's most emblematic failed state (Lyons and Samatar, 1995; Marangio, 2012; Menkhaus, 2003a; Menkhaus, 2009; Menkhaus, 2004b; Milliken and Krause, 2002; Rotberg, 2002a; Sanei, 2014).

One of the factors that contributed to the failure of the state was the continued state repression and the wanton destruction of the principal towns of Hargeisa and Burao. The continual repression of the Somaliland clans especially the Isaaq clan (which makes up 80 percent of Somaliland) led to the consolidation of opposition amongst the Isaaq and mobilised the diasporic intellectual community based in London and the Gulf into forming the Somali National Movement (SNM). This formation of the SNM led to “extreme and systematic repression at the hands of Siyyad Barre” including summary arrests, extrajudicial executions, confiscation of private properties by the government which targeted the Isaaq community as they were seen as sympathetic to the SNM (Bradbury, 2008; WSP International, 2005).

The politics of the region cohered and Ethiopia's enmity towards Somalia enabled the SNM to set up headquarters in Addis Ababa in 1981<sup>32</sup>, where the Ethiopian regime allowed it to train and arm its cadre of fighters (Bradbury, 1997). The SNM dedicated their cause to the overthrow of the Siyyad Barre regime.

The government responded by destroying Hargeisa, killing more than 50,000 people (Gundel, 2002: pp 257). The government bombarded the region with artillery and aircraft reducing the towns in the North to rubble and leaving thousands of unexploded ordnance. This also forced the displacement of roughly half a million refugees across the border into Ethiopia. Isaaq dwellings were systematically destroyed, while their settlements and water points were

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<sup>32</sup> In other publications e.g. Bradbury, M. and Healy, S. (Eds.) (2010b) *Whose Peace is it anyway; Connecting Somali and International Peacemaking*. London: Conciliation Resources. Cites 1982 as the year that SNM was formed.

extensively mined (ICG, 2003). The conflict devastated and virtually emptied the city of Hargeisa; people of all social groups fled to rural areas, to neighbouring Ethiopia and Djibouti, and further afield to the Middle East, Europe and North America (Africa Watch 1990).

#### **a) Geostrategic politics and the Cold War**

Other than being the sub-region that is the most conflict-ridden and unstable of Africa, the Horn of Africa stands out as the region most hit by geo-strategic driven politics. The region, and especially Somalia, is situated at the bottom of the Red Sea, on the Gulf of Aden, across from Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Somaliland is located in a region that as a whole remains critical to the stability of the oil bearing region which the US defines as most vital to its interests (Elmi, 2010). In addition, the Bal el Mandeb and the Red Sea are the main shipping routes for goods from the Middle East and the Far East to Europe and the Americas (Sörenson, 2008 p. 8). An important aspect of understanding the dynamics at play within the regions is through the politics created by the geostrategic position of Somalia and Somaliland in the region. According to a study by the WSP, during the scramble for Africa, the British-shaped Somaliland border was mainly based on strategic importance. The colonial powers ultimately arrived at Somaliland's present shape – a territory determined not by geography or demographics, but rather by the arbitrary logic of international and regional politics (WSP International, 2005).

Thus at the time of Cold War, the Horn of Africa attracted a lot of attention within global politics as the superpowers scrambled for strategic advantage<sup>33</sup>. This was the context within which the politics of Siyyad Barre were executed. The period saw the elevation of military assistance as the prime instrument for achieving these ends (Khapoya and Agyeman-Duah, 1985; Makinda, 1993; Mantzikos, 2010; Schwab, 1978). Military build-up through military aid became Siyaad Barre's means of maintaining his hold on power, thus transforming Somalia into what Gundel describes as an archetypal "Cold War client state", receiving most of its aid from the Soviet Union and the "Eastern Bloc" during the

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<sup>33</sup> This was also due to the Horn of Africa's proximity to the oil rich Middle East and its significance as regards the worldwide defence strategy of both superpowers which placed it in the position of being caught up in the strategic military and political policies of both the Soviet Union and the United States (see Schwab, P. (1978) Cold War on the Horn of Africa. *African Affairs*, 77 (306), 6-20.

1970s, while the US took over this role during the 1980s (2002 p. 258). The effect of this was a bloated civil service, corruption and an extensive military build-up that resulted in Somalia having one of the largest standing armies in Africa in the mid-1970s, meaning that 40% to 50% of its annual budget was spent on defence and security; heavily encouraged by external donors who underwrote nearly all of the human development activities and services (Marchal et al., 2000 online).

The legacy of the Cold War generally led to the globalisation and regionalisation of conflicts in Africa, and an eventual militarisation of the societies. Africa, and especially Somalia, became what Zartman calls a 'global competitor for armament' (Zartman, 1989pp 124). The result meant that with the failure of a central government, the countries remained richly endowed with armaments. Somalia became a testament to this, and as (Omaar et al., 1993) noted, the products of virtually every arms manufacturer in the world were found in the garages and warehouses of Somali militias and on the streets.

Therefore the impact of the end of the Cold War was a virtual military disengagement of the continent and a void where the international community had no experience in coping with crisis. It also marked the falling<sup>34</sup> of Somalia's strategic value, bringing to the fore human rights abuses that had previously been ignored or downplayed. Menkhaus and Ortmayer (2000) lament that 'the strategic priorities were joined by bureaucratic incrementalism in both the U.S. government and other donors, which worked against any policy change calling for linkage of aid to political reforms and reconciliation' (p. 218). Through courting the West, Siyyad Barre's regime had been left with a dangerous legacy that included a massive amount of weaponry that contributed to the violent warfare that followed.

Siyyad Barre's regime had previously relied on manipulation of the clan system for its political survival thus causing an atmosphere of inter-clan mistrust and hostility to take root; the Somali people thus inherited a deep distrust of any central government having suffered from massive abuse of power, repression

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<sup>34</sup> This fall in strategic importance was only temporary as this has now changed with the recent upsurge in piracy on the high seas. This is indicative of Somalia's importance in a globalised world economy Elmi, A. A. (2010) Understanding the Somalia Conflagration. Identity. *Political Islam and Peacebuilding*, New York.

and corruption, including the amassing of foreign aid donations by individuals (Marchal et al., 2000). The collapse of the state happened simultaneously with the fall of Barre's regime and the installation of the Mengistu Haile Mariam regime in Ethiopia and thus triggered an enormous outpouring of weaponry and ammunition into public hands, so that the entire Horn of Africa was awash with inexpensive weaponry (Menkhaus and Ortmayer *op cit*).

This strategic importance of Somalia's location has in the past attracted outside interest, leading to international interventions often resulting in dire consequences for the stability, security and development of the whole region. Indeed the geo-strategic analysis has not only recently become part of the narrative of the region, but as early as the seventies the region had been dubbed the 'strategic magnet in the seventies' by J. Bowyer Bell. Then, he had highlighted the Horn's geographic significance and had accurately forecast on the changing Soviet and American perception of the region's strategic value (Payton, 1980). Indeed it is to this strategic position that the longevity of the civil war is attributed to.

Today, the Horn of Africa hosts a complex nexus of challenges that lead to warfare and humanitarian catastrophe, has large 'ungoverned spaces'<sup>35</sup> with weak and or failed states and hence is a target for illicit transnational networks, particularly terrorist and criminal groups (Eizenstat et al., 2004). This means that post 9/11 the region has become an important battle ground in the framework of the so-called war on terror, driven principally by factors related to the collapse of the Somali state; the emergence of terrorist groups; and escalation of piracy off the Somali coast (Bereketeab, 2013; Smith, 2010).

Of interest, and a factor that has escaped academic analysis and one that could explain the continuing complexity of Somalia's conflict, is the resource factor especially in relation to the possible availability of oil and natural gas. According to an article by Maria Kielmas geologists have speculated about the possibility of oil in Somalia for a long time (See Barnes, 1976 for example);

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<sup>35</sup> Menkhaus, K. (2007) Terrorist activities in ungoverned spaces: evidence and observations from the Horn of Africa. In: *Brenthurst Foundation's 'Southern Africa and International Terrorism' workshop. Tswalu, South Africa*. pp. 25-27.(2007) defines "Ungoverned spaces" as a term meant to connote a general condition of weak to non-existent state authority in a defined geographic area (p:2). According to the 'Report of the Commission on Weak States and US National Security', illicit transnational networks, particularly terrorist and criminal groups, target weak and failed states for their activities,"

however, she argues that it took the US military intervention to bring this possibility to popular attention (Kielmas, 1991). A regional hydrocarbon study for countries bordering the Red Sea, funded by the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme, indicated the oil potential of the North of Somalia (present day Somaliland) Just prior to the collapse of the Somali State in December of 1990<sup>36</sup> (Elmi, 2010; Kielmas, 1991; Mubarak, 1997; Slind et al., 1998). The region is reported to be geologically analogous, in parts, to southern Yemen, on the other side of the Gulf of Aden, and almost the entire area was under licence to companies by the time hostilities with the central government broke out in 1988<sup>37</sup>.

### **b) Regional dynamics**

Another factor that contributed to state failure is the political dynamics of the region. Most of the countries are ethnically and economically linked and thus unstable; neighbouring states including Somalia encourage proxy wars compounding the problems and prolonging regional instability and conflict within the region. A key reason for the persistence of conflict, for example in Sudan, and a characteristic of conflicts in the Horn of Africa is what Cliffe (1999) calls the doctrine of 'mutual intervention' or the practice of governmental or other forces supporting opposition groups in neighbouring states. The states of the region all act as enablers and multipliers of conflict to the detriment of their neighbours (Cliffe, 1999 p. 89). This regional dynamic is sufficiently powerful to act as a cause of conflict in its own right, especially where problems of governance abound. Neighbours prey relentlessly upon each other's internal difficulties, ready to seize on any glimmer of 'grievance', and actively seek out

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<sup>36</sup> Several concessions, nearly two-thirds of Somalia, were allocated to the American oil giants Conoco, Amoco, Chevron and Phillips and at least three key wells were scheduled to be drilled in the final years before Siyyad Barre was overthrown and the nation plunged into chaos in January, 1991. Similarly according to Soma Oil, every potential hydrocarbon basin across East Africa is the subject of intensive interest and Somalia is at present the last remaining frontier on the region's energy map. Industry experts consider it to have huge prospective resources, both onshore and offshore. Soma Oil and Gas Exploration Company is based in the UK and its executive director is the former leader of the Conservative Party in Britain, Lord Michael Howard has been Chairman of Soma Oil and Gas since May 2013. According to its website, Soma Oil & Gas will be the first exploration company in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to commence activity across Somalia in consultation with the Federal Government, starting with seismic surveying to establish the full extent of the country's oil and gas potential.

<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the geography of the region especially Somaliland, at the mouth of the Red Sea, favours oil exports. Even the deepest part of the country is only a few hundred kilometres from a coastline that sits along one of the world's busiest shipping routes. The Horn of Africa region has recently seen some major oil and gas discoveries in the world in recent years. According to Deloitte & Touché, Touche, D. (2013) The Deloitte Guide to Oil and Gas in East Africa 'Where potential lies'. Dar es Salaam. advisory, onshore oil discoveries in Uganda have been followed by discoveries in Kenya with world-class discoveries of gas in Tanzania and Mozambique

opportunities to fuel and amplify conflict. Healy demonstrates this by giving the example of Ethiopia's support for Southern Sudanese rebels, matched by Sudan's support for Eritrea's independence war; Somali support for rebels in the Ogaden<sup>38</sup> region of Ethiopia, and to a lesser extent the Eritrean and Oromo rebellions, matched by Ethiopia's support for Somali rebel groups (Healy, 2008). Both Ethiopia and Eritrea compete in giving support and sanctuary to rival groups in neighbouring states.

The conflicts within the region are linked, directly or indirectly. For example, the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea led both governments to increase their military support to rival proxies in Somalia, thus igniting new rounds of deadly conflict, spreading instability to northern Kenya, re-legitimising warlords and destroying hopes for internal peace efforts. At the same time, Ethiopia and Eritrea have reduced their support for the Sudanese opposition, thus strengthening the hand of the Khartoum regime and reducing the likelihood of progressive change in Sudan. In addition, Sudan supports insurgent groups in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda; Somali militias have launched cross-border attacks into Ethiopia and supported Ethiopian oppositionists, while Ethiopian troops have launched assaults into Somalia to create a protective buffer zone; and Uganda has supported the main rebel groups in Sudan. With each new act of violence, with each cross-border arms transfer, the regional dimensions of these conflicts deepen (Prendergast, 1999).

## **SOMALIA'S FAILURE: THE POLARITY OF THE LIBERAL PEACEBUILDING PROCESSES**

### **Multiple External Interventions in Somalia**

The civil war erupted at a time of profound change in the international order, as global institutions, with the US at their helm, shaped up to managing an era of 'new wars' and 'failing states'. According to Bradbury and Healy (2010b), Somalia became the 'laboratory for a new form of engagement when the international community responded with a humanitarian and military intervention on an unprecedented scale' (p. 11). This was the advent of the ideals of the

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<sup>38</sup> The Ogaden is a region of Ethiopia, traditionally coveted by Somalis as grazing land for their livestock.

liberal peace agenda as laid out by the *Agenda for Peace* in 1992, thus coinciding with the failure of the Somali State.

The international community embarked on the implementation of a liberal agenda in Somalia with the sole purpose of the re-creation of the Somali state. The process so far has produced dismal results, and has involved the UN with US leadership in (United Nations Operations in Somalia) UNOSOM I (April 1992 - March 1993)<sup>39</sup> Unified Task Force (UNITAF) (5 December 1992 – 4 May 1993)<sup>40</sup> and UNOSOM II (March 1993 - March 1995)<sup>41</sup>. These missions saw conflict prevailing leading to violent attacks on UN soldiers, leading the Security Council into unanimously adopting UNITAF, which was given an unprecedented mandate and very liberal rules of engagement that allowed the U.S. to use all necessary means to create a secure environment. In March 1993, the Security Council submitted recommendations for a transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II on recommending that UNOSOM II forces be given the power to create a safe environment, and help the Somali people rebuild their country by uniting politically and socially. Despite the legitimacy conferred on these actions by successive UN Security Council Resolutions, the interventions resulted in failure. Further interventions have included those in 2007 and 2008 by the African Union, spearheaded by Ethiopia and implicitly backed by the US. Other attempts have been made by Somalia's neighbours; Djibouti facilitated the creation of a Transitional National Government; Kenya also facilitated a considerable lengthy process in 2004, and this saw the formation of the Transitional Federal Government. In 2009, Djibouti gave it another go and this saw the appointment of a president within the Transitional Federal Governance. These interventions by both neighbouring and other states were mainly driven by geo-political, security and economic interests as concern to end Somalia's

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<sup>39</sup> UNOSOM I was established to monitor the ceasefire in Mogadishu and escort deliveries of humanitarian supplies to distribution centres in the city. The mission's mandate and strength were later enlarged to enable it to protect humanitarian convoys and distribution centres throughout Somalia. It later worked with the Unified Task Force in the effort to establish a safe environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance

<sup>40</sup> UNITAF was a US-led, United Nations-sanctioned multinational force with the mandate to protect the delivery of food and other humanitarian aid.

<sup>41</sup> UNOSOM II was established in March 1993 to take appropriate action, including enforcement measures, to establish throughout Somalia a secure environment for humanitarian assistance. To that end, UNOSOM II was to complete, through disarmament and reconciliation, the task begun by the Unified Task Force for the restoration of peace, stability, law and order. UNOSOM II was withdrawn in early March 1995



political turmoil. Indeed Leonard and Samantar (2011) have argued that these external national agendas are being imposed on a set of Somali polities that have a very weak ability to define and defend their own interests.

The key failures for these interventions have been the support of the unrealistic presumption that a central state is key to restoring peace. The United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and all other states that have been involved have continually had as their goal the restoration of a functioning central government, on the assumption that effective national governance is a prerequisite for both political and economic recovery. Instead political factions have multiplied at every international peace conference since 1991 creating a recurrent dilemma of how to determine legitimate and authoritative representation. Efforts in tackling these issues have varied over time in terms of actors and actions, and have privileged different priorities such as security conditions, piracy and Islamic fundamentalism.

While the project for a Greater Somalia failed politically, trade between the Somali inhabited territories flourished and was promoted through the free flow of goods and services and information. The destruction of the state only marginally impacted them as the Somali state had previously undermined pastoral mobility (Little, 2003 p. 169).

What has emerged from Somalia is the fact that even without achieving the ideal Weberian empirical state, and despite the war, famine, and the presence of the shadow economy, amazingly, Somalia's economic life continues to thrive. That an economy can remain resilient despite the absence of a national bank, social services, public utilities, and public hospitals may seem contrary to logical conventional definition of total state collapse. Somalia has managed to develop multi-million dollar enterprises, created efficient money transfer systems and established some of the cheapest and most extensive telecommunication networks in Africa. Similarly, Somalia has continually demonstrated that a population can survive, despite the absence of a functioning government and public administration, by creating and reactivating 'informal systems of adaptation, security and governance in response to the prolonged absence of a central government' (Menkhaus, 2006 p. 74)

With the departure of UNOSOM, Menkhaus and Pendergast (1997) observed that there were centrifugal forces in contemporary Somalia—political, economic, and social that outweighed centralising ones and cautioned against ‘obsessing over the re-creation of a centralised authority’. They argued that this would greatly exacerbate the conflict, as different competing groups would position themselves in readiness for the potential spoils of a new aid-dependent state (Menkhaus and Pendergast, 1997). They further argued that the best approach would be to support those emerging authorities that were performing some of the most essential functions of governance within their communities as they were viewed as legitimate authorities in their neighbourhoods or villages, of which they are an integral part. However because the entire international system is constructed around states there is a relentless quest for state-building to such an extent that these international systems cannot handle systems that do not conform to the arbitrary statelessness of such territories. It has been argued that such arbitrariness characterises the diagnoses of state failure within Western foreign policymaking. This, in turn, has implications for practices of intervention (Duffield, 2002; Ottaway, 2002)

Similarly there is the fear that the absence of a state may cause genuine problems for adjacent countries, e.g. in the form of crime. The interventions have therefore been unsuccessful, and some of them may in fact have exacerbated the plight of the Somali population. Thus as Menkhaus (2010a) has observed ‘with each failed peace process, and or intervention, the Somali crisis has become more intractable and difficult to resolve as distrust grows, grievances mount, coping mechanisms become entrenched and the percentage of the Somali population that has a living memory of a functioning central government shrinks’ (Menkhaus, 2010a p. 17) see also (Clapham, 2012).

Due to the catastrophic failure of the previous interventions, the UN’s involvement has remained rather low-key, focusing mainly on humanitarian issues in which the organisation’s various subsidiaries and agencies have been the main actors, e.g. the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the WFP, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

(OCHA), and others. Insecurity caused disruption to a lot of agencies' work and sometimes led to the strengthening of security arrangements for aid workers thus limiting the levels of engagement of international organisations on the ground<sup>42</sup>. Security conditions thus prevented international staff from International NGOs, including the UN subcontracted local ones, from being located inside the country. In cases where the agencies continued working, they required relocation of offices and withdrawal of international staff. Many operations became cross-border, where aid was managed remotely from Nairobi. This included the Somali Red Crescent society, the only functioning Somali national humanitarian body that had its central base in Nairobi (Wiles et al., 2004); a phenomenon that still persists.

## **Multiple efforts of Somaliland's locally led process**

### **a) Reconciliation and State rebuilding**

Following the defeat of their enemy Siyyad Barre, external interventions continually engaged in the revival of a central government in Somalia without any success. In the meantime the northern clans commenced an internally driven process towards reconciliation as a means to state building. It was largely based on the indigenous system of conflict resolution and started from the grassroots level and progressed to district and regional levels culminating in the Grand Boorama<sup>43</sup> conference held between January and May 1993. Thus out of the ashes of the North-South violence, the North West emerged as a de facto state, and reverted to being the Republic of Somaliland. This process was faced with numerous challenges including re-eruption of violence in 1994-96 to a point where the level of inter-clan conflict and anarchy had rapidly escalated to the levels that had prevailed in South Somalia. It was thus urgent that the grievances that existed be addressed and the responsibility fell on the ready pool of conflict resolution mechanisms and the reconciliation base that was available through the traditional clan elders. The Gadabursi clan, having been marginalised and isolated from the hierarchy of the SNM leadership, hosted the conference. The basis of the peace conferences '*Shirka Walaalaynta Bee/aha*

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<sup>42</sup> The UN had adopted a security phase IV following tragic security incidents, in which the Head of the UNDP office in Mogadishu was killed in July 2008 suicide bombings that followed in October in Hargeisa and Bossaso in which the UNDP office was targeted, killing two UN employees and injuring six.

<sup>43</sup> Boorama is the capital in the predominantly Gadabursi Awdal region.

*Waqooyi* (meaning 'The Brotherhood Conference of the Northern clans'), was to address grievances and mistrust, and also to restore the confidence between clans especially those that had fought on opposing sides during the civil war. The conferences achieved what one observer has described as the 'SNM's conciliatory policy of peaceful coexistence between all the clans' (Drysdale, 1993). The clans made significant concessions and agreed on burying the past and working on a future that involved the restoration of peace.

During the months of deliberations, outstanding issues between clans were discussed and debated in a manner that was open and inclusive. The clan elders (Guurti) together with hundreds of delegates and observers from across Somaliland, agreed on a peace charter that outlined the following; a transfer of power from the SNM interim government to a (*'beel'*) community based system; election of a civilian president (Maxamed Xaaji Ibrahim Cigal) and a vice president (Cabdirahman aw Cali) and adoption of a National charter and a peace charter<sup>44</sup>. Walls (2009) argues that even though the Borama conference did not end the cycle of conflict, it laid the foundation for the sustained stability that prevails today. It is considered one of the most successful of Somaliland's reconciliation meetings. The conference was supported by a combination of external clan based facilitation and logistical support from low-key and minimal support from the non-Somali sources such as air transport for delegates provided by UNDP, NGOs, faith based organisations e.g. the Mennonites, Community Aid Abroad and some embassies (Norwegian, French and US) (APD and Interpeace, 2008 p. 50).

The Academy for Peace and Development in Hargeisa, in collaboration with Inter-peace, documented the process that brought peace and stability and they cite no less than thirty-eight clan-based peace and reconciliation conferences and meetings between 1990 and 1997 (APD and Interpeace, 2008 pp: 13; Ibrahim and Terlinden, 2010). This process of reconciliation went hand in hand with the state-building process where grass roots peace negotiations served as the basis of constructing the State. According to Debiel et al. (2009), "under circumstances where the state gained a foothold, it increasingly became a

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<sup>44</sup> Adoption of a National Charter and a Peace Charter, intended to serve as the basis for efforts towards peace-building and state-building, during a further transitional period of two years

central “arena” of governance with formal rules of the game gaining importance” ( p. 41).

There are various factors<sup>45</sup> that can be attributed to the success of the reconciliation process that was seen as locally owned and materially supported by the communities and the diaspora Somalilanders; involving voluntary participation from each clan with a broad based consultation process; agreement was consensual meaning that resolutions were inclusive (Ibrahim and Terlinden, 2010).

The way in which Somaliland emerged from the ruins of Somalia is explained in various theories; Spears (2003) credits Somaliland’s northern orientation and her proximity to the Gulf states, the trading patterns it consequently embraced, and its colonial history as having distinguished Somaliland from the south. Forti (2011) acknowledges flexibility in the way in which the colonial administration supported secular law, Sharia law, and traditional Somali law as having enabled the northern Somali pastoralists to use their own methods to resolve challenges and conflicts. By incorporating local clan chiefs into the formal institutions, Fortis’ view is that this served to strengthen the traditional cultural practices and structures that Somaliland was to rely on following the disintegration of the state. Though slightly differing with Forti, Prunier (1998) has a similar view in which he attributes Britain’s ‘benign neglect’ of Somaliland as having contributed to the peace-making system remaining largely intact<sup>46</sup>. He likens Somaliland to Southern Sudan, where the colonial masters’ only interest was keeping other colonial powers out of the region (Prunier, 1998; Prunier, 2010). Carroll and Rajagopal (1993) and Prunier (op cit) assert that Britain’s main interest in Somaliland was driven by the need to safeguard meat supplies to Aden and to ensure the safety of the trade routes. Jhazbhay (2008 ), drawing from the work of Marchal, comes to a similar conclusion “the strong possibility that Somaliland’s current stability is a function of its comparative conservatism due to British colonial policies that did not encourage assimilationist modernity”.

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<sup>45</sup> See APPENDIX 1: Factors that can be attributed to the success of the Somaliland reconciliation process

<sup>46</sup> To demonstrate the extent to which Somaliland was left to govern herself by the colonial master, Pham (2012) cites Iona Lewis’s account on arrival in Somaliland in 1955 “the entire Protectorate establishment consisted of less than 200 senior officials, of whom 25 were locally recruited Somalis”. Pham, J. P. ( 2012) The Somaliland Exception: Lessons on Postconflict State Building from the Part of the Former Somalia that Works. *Marine Corps University Journal* 3(1), 1-33. pp 5

Hence, he further asserts “in a sense, southern Somalia’s instability is a function of an urbanising modernity that fragmented the southern Somali social formation under the former Italian rule” (p. 175). He however points out the views of Reno (2002), who sees no correlation between the colonial experiences of Somalia in shaping contemporary identity and political organisation but argues that they were important for their significant influence on shaping social categories and social distribution of resources.

Thus upon independence in 1960, despite Somaliland having been economically underdeveloped, her native political institutions had remained un-tampered with (Prunier, 1998 p. 225; Prunier, 2010). This meant that with the disintegration and failure of Somalia’s central government, the leaders of SNM (though having been formed to fight the Somali government) met together with traditional elders in Burao to declare the dissolution of the 1960 Union and the restoration of the North West region as a sovereign state of Somaliland. In the meantime there was a total collapse of the central government in the rest of Somalia.

Today, Somaliland has developed a hybrid system of government that incorporates an elected president and lower house of parliament with an upper house that consists of traditional clan elders known as the *guurti*<sup>47</sup>. The robust role of clan elders in managing conflict, applying customary law, and negotiating political disputes is widely viewed as a key ingredient in Somaliland’s success (Menkhaus, 2006a).

Many of the factors that drove armed conflict in Somalia have played a role in managing, ending, or preventing conflict in Somaliland. De Waal emphasises that it was the interaction of clan, class and the nature of State power that has continued to make the Somali conflict so intractable in the south, whilst in Somaliland the capitalisation of the same structures has made it possible for solutions to be found (ibid). For instance, clannism and clan cleavages are a source of conflict—used to divide Somalis, fuel endemic clashes over resources

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<sup>47</sup> Walls and Kibble (2010 pp 5) describe a *guurti*, as any individual or group who assumes a mediatory role. They argue that this term has more recently been institutionalised and, many would argue, politicised in the Somaliland context through its application to the upper house of the Parliament. The etymology of the term refers to the necessary wisdom of any person or group responsible for mediating disputes and can be applied to individuals or groups at various levels (op cit, pg 8)

and power, used to mobilise militia, and make broad-based reconciliation very difficult to achieve (Kaplan, 2008). It is vital to acknowledge the importance of the clan as the locus for physical security and military mobilisation.

### **b) Responding to militarisation**

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) (1982) defines militarisation as "a steady growth in the military potential usually accompanied by an increasing role for military institutions both in national affairs, including the economic, social and political spheres, and in international affairs" (1982 p. 393). According to Kenneth Bush, the militarisation of the Somali society did not just refer to the size of its military and the influx of the weapons into the streets, but also to the tendency to which intergroup relations and conflict were defined in narrow military terms in Somalia (Bush, 1998).

After the collapse of the State, the culture of militarisation that had begun under Barre's regime became rampant; guns and military force no longer remained the domain of the ruling elite. Rather, the complete breakdown of authority and the collapse of the Somali army led to the proliferation of militias and weapons. There is a robust association between arms availability and persistent insecurity in the Horn of Africa region and especially in Somalia. This availability contributed to the militarisation of its communities and the prolongation of many on-going internal conflicts. A combination of political manipulation with extreme poverty, deteriorating livelihoods, and environmental degradation contributed to people's willingness to take up arms. Makinda (1993) argues that the availability of armaments in large quantities resulted in changing the magnitude of the war, its direction and intensity ( p. 57).

External influences, reinforced by a ready supply of weapons, have contributed to the polarisation and escalation of violent conflict inside Somalia. Virtually all armed conflicts had been fought with small arms which were easy to procure largely because of the collapse of Africa's largest Cold War armies (Somalia and Ethiopia) which triggered a huge flow of weapons. The arms included semi-automatic guns, RPGs, mortars and landmines, but also heavy weapons including battlewagons (modified pick-up trucks with a mounted gun) and occasionally an anti-aircraft gun. Landmines were an important weapon of choice in 1989-92, but since have only been in sporadic use, For a snapshot of

preferred types of weapons and ammunition flowing into Somalia in recent years, see the detailed appendix of United Nations, "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1587 (2005)," (New York: United Nations, October 5, 2005). Today, a long standing UN arms embargo to Somalia has not promoted a cessation of arms flow. In 2005, a UN report of the Monitoring report on Somalia reported "a sustained and dramatic upswing" of small arms and ammunition into the country on a daily basis by land, air and sea (UN Security Council, October 5, 2005 p. 6).

The presence of thousands of armed youths presented a threat to the basic security of the residents of Somaliland thus addressing these was of great importance. This was recognised by the elders during the reconciliation process with the need for demobilisation being integral to the successive phases that coincided with the process of national peacebuilding. The conciliation conferences had the DDR issue as part enshrined and was included within the peace charter. The Borama conference created a climate for absorption of the militia into one of three territorial security forces: the army, police, and custodial corps (Bradbury, 2008; Jama, 2003). This meant that the national army and police was a very large demobilisation project, guaranteeing a modest salary to about 16,000 militiamen (Menkhaus, 2004a). The equivalent of 60% of Somaliland's resources was allocated to the Somaliland security sector alone. Such an ambitious demobilisation process was huge and it was to prove expensive to maintain such an excessive security force.

The process was not an easy one, as there were instances where those who initially demobilised and returned to civilian life later joined the many irregular militias that mushroomed and who sought to earn a living from banditry and extortion (WSP International, 2005 p. 61). Another reason was the presence of a lot of former government soldiers and militias, who were stranded together with their families in the SNM held territories, fearful of reprisals and afraid of returning to the South Central region of Somalia which was still experiencing conflict. Their presence meant that there were not just the SNM former soldiers to disarm but also former government soldiers, and the non –Isaaq clan militias.

The initial disarmament process failed as the idea of uniting the militias under a single command starting from the Western region of Somaliland was perceived



as a hostile scheme by those from the Eastern region, this meant that they re-grouped and inter-clan fighting erupted. This conflict went on until 1992 when the elders negotiated a ceasefire (Adar, 2000). The attempts in effect triggered violent clashes between two sub clans the Habr Yonis (supporting the government) and the Habr Jeclo (opposing the government)(Ibrahim and Terlinden, 2008).

### **c) Responding to other challenges with external assistance**

Thus, following her unilateral declaration of independence, the Somaliland state inherited a number of challenges that required addressing. It is important to note that challenges were not just related to those that Somaliland had inherited from both the legacy of the Cold War and the civil war that followed but they also had their own internal problems, as mentioned earlier., These were marked by episodes of large-scale violence post 1991's unilateral declaration of independence (Bradbury, 2008 p. 115).

The reconstruction, especially of infrastructure, was and still is heavily dependent on external support. With the help of donors, the United Nations and international NGOs, the government was able to restore rudimentary education and health care services throughout much of Somaliland.

The war had not only devastated the physical and economic base of the country, but also human and institutional; government and civic structures (Bradbury, 1997). The post conflict reconstruction needs for Somaliland were therefore numerous, given the level and scale of physical destruction; the duration of the conflict; the number of refugees and internally displaced people; and the extent to which government institutions had collapsed. Therefore rebuilding included, to a greater or lesser extent, reconciliation and establishment of peace and security; physical reconstruction of houses and infrastructure; demobilisation and re-integration of former combatants; the re-establishment of systems of social services and governance; attendance to traumatised people; and the repatriation and reintegration of refugees.

Therefore the post conflict peace building needs that confronted Somaliland included a militarised society, and therefore the need for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes and also the need to address the

grievances that the communities harboured, thus programmes on reconciliation and nation healing. The physical landscape was littered with landmines and other Unexploded Ordnance. These not only hindered the return and reintegration of the community when conflict had ended, but also encroached on fertile land and grazing fields resources that were pertinent to post conflict recovery.

I suggest that though the state building and reconciliation process is largely owned by the Somaliland community, different actors were and continue to be involved in other post conflict reconstruction processes, including NGOs and the UN.

### ***Return and Reintegration of refugees and IDPs***

The patterns and impact of displacement of the Somalia people was and remains complex and multifaceted, as is the response to the challenges raised. Following the declaration of independence, large numbers of refugees left the camps in Ethiopia and Djibouti and went back to what was left of the homes and possessions they had fled. However whilst the war had come to an end, large scale war broke out in the south causing more displacement. The southern Somalis fled into neighbouring countries and further afield, whilst others settled in the newly created Republic of Somaliland. Thus post war Somaliland was addressing different groups of refugees and IDPs who represented different challenges.

Return of those initially displaced, though a good indicator of relative stability of host location, may also create pressure politically and economically for a fragile post conflict community that is trying to return to normality (Lindley, 2010). Immediately after the declaration of Independence, a lot of refugees and IDPs returned to Somaliland, with most repatriations being 'spontaneous' and 'self-organised', as opposed to being organised by bodies such as the UNHCR. They were also returning to ruins; with scarcely a house that had been left intact, indeed Omaar notes that Hargeisa had become known as "a roofless town" (Omaar, 2010 p. 16)

Somaliland lacked international commitment from the donor community and therefore suffered from a poor representation by UN agencies and other

humanitarian organisations at the time. This meant that there was minimal support for refugee reintegration programmes and also that there had been a lack of coordinated humanitarian response to the refugees whilst in the camps. Facing an already difficult situation, refugees had returned to a devastated Somaliland without basic food and non-food items, and without even minimal cash grants (Frushone, 2001 p. 17). They relied on social networks, mobility and diversified investments to overcome the endemic insecurity that the whole region in the Horn was experiencing at the time. These were social networks that they had mobilised both at the time of flight with the vast majority of refugees settling in their clan areas across the border; and upon return relied upon charity from relatives (Ambroso, 2002 p. 28).

Other factors that challenged the return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs were the length of time spent in refuge; these were those who had initially fled into refugee camps in Ethiopia for supporting the SNM. They had had huge grievances and their encampment had resulted to the containerisation of these grievances. This containerisation had nurtured grievances and had become explosive providing them with common experiences<sup>48</sup> of life in refuge and their common cause. On the other hand, refugee flows have the ability to regionalise conflict through the stimulation of illegal trade in weapons and other contraband (Lyons and Samatar, 1995). Such protracted presence of refugees in camps has been linked to increased insecurity both to the host states and the region in general due to the refugee camps becoming militarised.<sup>49</sup> The refugee camps were used as bases for guerrilla, insurgent or terrorist activities. Armed groups hide behind the humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and use these camps as an opportunity to recruit among the disaffected displaced populations. This happened in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, where the UNHCR and the government did nothing to stop the SNM from establishing relationship with the refugees. Instead the refugee camps provided a ready pool for recruitment and also acted as supply centres for the military (Bradbury, 2008) Indeed it has been argued that the SNM shaped the refugees into a

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<sup>48</sup> They lived the common experiences of hardship and survival in a harsh, crowded and inhospitable environment. There was inadequate food and clean water, and poor sanitation caused frequent outbreaks of malaria, jaundice, meningitis, dysentery and measles, which contributed to the death of many refugees.

<sup>49</sup> Refugee militarisation is described by Lischer 2001:4 as refugee camps and populations that are characterised by storage and trafficking of arms, the presence of active and ex-combatants, recruitment, military training and the use of refugee camps as military bases.

political community and this experience greatly influenced their decision to secede from Somalia (Bradbury citing Brons 2001 pp. 204-7).

Similarly the length of time also created a dependency syndrome. The refugees had become dependent on the rations and hand-outs as part of the camp life. Such dependency was also perpetuated by reliance on remittances from relatives in the diaspora. Rations were distributed based on individuals; this promoted individualistic patterns of behaviour weakening the interdependence amongst families. This interdependence had continually been observed and was evident in the settlement patterns of refugees. They had moved to areas inhabited by their kin as a way of ensuring protection and assistance especially before the arrival of relief aid. The life in the camp had also encouraged sedentarisation, which had an impact upon return as most of them preferred urban settings to rural areas, something that brought about changes to the economy and social relations and put pressure on urban infrastructure. The length of time had therefore greatly contributed to a shift in social and cultural norms including the clear divisions of labour (WSP International, 2005 p. 279).

The challenge of addressing the issue of displacement was and still is further complicated by definitional ambiguities which add to the challenges of responding to an already marginalised entity. The UN Guiding Principles on internal displacement defines IDPs as those "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and *who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border*" (OCHA, 2003). By definition, a refugee has to have crossed an international border. Since Somaliland's independence is unrecognised internationally, UN agencies and NGOs do not classify those people from Southern Somalia as refugees and therefore the UN and other refugee agencies do not provide financial and material support. However, by classifying them as IDPs, these agencies would technically expect Somaliland to offer them support yet the government is not given any support either as a federal body or state to address this. Similarly, the government considers them as refugees in the view that these people have crossed an 'international border'.

Today there are several levels of displacement in Somaliland. Firstly those clans from south and central Somalia who fall under the conventional category of displaced persons. These are displaced communities that fled their home territories due to civil conflict and severe drought conditions, or both, and have found themselves in northern towns throughout northwest and northeast Somalia. At another, more complex level, there are the "returnees", those clans and sub-clans that over the last decade have been displaced or made refugees two or three times and are only now returning to their ethnic home towns and villages. Finally there are those returnees who are returning from the Somali Region in Ethiopia where they resided as refugees during the civil conflicts of 1988 and 1994. These refugees and returnees receive better protection than the IDPs, because there is an agency that is clearly mandated to look after refugees' protection and assistance needs, and some authorities such as in Somaliland have recognised the right of returnees (UNCU/UN-OCHA, 2002 p. 4).

#### ***Demilitarisation, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes***

Since 1999, programmes such as Rule of Law, Small Arms, Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration and mine action have come under the UNDP Somalia Somali Civil Protection Programme.

With support from UNDP and with advice from a team of ex-combatants from Zimbabwe, a National Demobilisation Commission of Somaliland (NDC) was formed in 1993. President Egal ensured that the demobilisation effort was led by representatives of all clans as it was imperative that the effort be seen not as imposed by the state or a mono-clan structure. This policy was also reflected in the principles of; voluntarily and universality i.e. open to all groups; centrally coordinated; locally implemented and representing all military forces (Bryden and Brickhill, 2010).

This effort failed on two counts; there was public pressure to get the militia out of urban areas and into camps (this move was discouraged by the Zimbabwean advisors). The encampment process went ahead and 5,500 armed militias were put in a camp near Mandhera. Here they underwent six months re-orientation and adult literacy courses. However due to a shortage of funds, and with the realisation by the militias that there would be nothing for them in return,

half of them deserted. According to a report by Oxfam published in 1994, the organisation noted that with insufficient shelter, food, water or medical facilities for the militia, the situation was potentially explosive, and attributes the sudden rush of militia to the camp to anxiety over missing the benefits of retraining and employment within the security forces (Bradbury, 1994). This episode became an important lesson to Somaliland; that donors, including the United Nations office for Somalia (UNOSOM) could not be relied on for funding. The important lesson meant that NDC became more self-reliant. Earlier President Egal had expelled the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces <sup>50</sup> (UNISOM II) from Somaliland, in what Jowhar (2005) considers as having been a positive action, as the interference of such a well-resourced external body in the internal relationships of the social forces of the emerging state would have prevented self-organisation. It was suggested, however, that UNOSOM's unresponsive nature was due to the fact that they were denied the opportunity to exert control over the process and continued to insist on the need to send uniformed and protected (armed) advisers to Somaliland if they were going to support the process (Bradbury, op cit). Omaar (2010) argues that it was UNOSOM's support for the judicial system (part of its mandate) that led directly to its expulsion when it refused to recognise Somaliland's jurisdiction over the east Sool and Sanaag (p. 31).

With the presence of relative peace came prosperity and an inflow of remittances from the diaspora which meant a growth and interest in real estate, where land became an important resource. This also saw disputes and conflict over land increasing, with such conflicts involving the use of small arms. This reawakened the need to address the issue of misuse and control of small arms, an issue that previously was of low priority and had been incorporated as part of a broader interest in demobilisation. Hence, UNDP started a project that sought to promote demobilisation through capacity building of the Somaliland government. However despite the introduction of a community-based and "knowledge-based" approach to demobilisation – one which placed emphasis on drawing on local knowledge as a foundation for demobilisation strategy and

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<sup>50</sup> On 18 August 1994, President Egal ordered UNOSOM to close its office in Hargeisa and evacuate its staff. When the Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, announced the closure of the Hargeisa office to the security council of the UN in New York he mentioned insecurity as a reason (Omaar 2010 p. 31)

which linked demobilisation to broader peace-building efforts – the SCPP failed to produce results due to what DFID termed as “serious management and efficiency problems”. This was all part of the general crisis UNDP-Somalia was facing at the time (Menkhaus citing Douma, 2001p. 9).

Another DDR project included one that was carried out by the German owned international cooperation enterprise Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)<sup>51</sup> and funded by the European Union. GTZ’s core DDR activity was a pilot project to de-commission and re-integrate redundant Somaliland police and army soldiers by providing training for civilian occupations and provision of a lump-sum payment to each individual demobilised. The project also included a survey of ex-combatants and a comprehensive survey of all Somaliland security personnel. However, in March 2004 there was a tragic ambush of a GTZ vehicle which resulted in the death of one Kenyan project officer and the wounding of a German project officer, resulting in the termination of all GTZ activities in Somaliland (Menkhaus, 2006a).

The gains of the DDR programme in Somaliland can be described as having achieved a modest level of success; through the actions of communities and with assistance from the business community, the government was able to remove unofficial checkpoints from the main roads which brought banditry under control (Bradbury, 2008 p. 113). The business community played an active role in demobilising by providing rations to demobilised militia members and to a new government army and police force (Bulhan, 2004). The community also intervened when fighting broke out over the main port of Berbera and, with the threat to the livestock export business, the businessmen intervened and became an active voice for peace (Bradbury, 2008 p. 112).

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<sup>51</sup> Now known as Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH or GIZ in short.

## **SOMALILAND'S REMAINING PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGES**

### **International Non-Recognition: A failed State; 'A Pocket of Peace' or a 'State'?**

Somaliland has made a lot of progress; many of her refugees and internally displaced people have returned home, mines/UXOs have been cleared, integration of clan militias into mainstream police and military forces has taken place; a multi-party political system and successive competitive elections have been established. However, irrespective of the notable progress achieved in building peace, security and constitutional democracy including that Somaliland is a de-facto independent state, it is still regarded by all other governments as part of Somalia. Largely nurtured by international isolation Somaliland's rigorous political development can be defined as having been largely an internal affair. However Ethiopia has maintained close relations with Somaliland since its re-emergence in 1991 and remains the only country that has a consulate in Hargeisa and treats Somaliland more or less as an independent state. Unfortunately, according to Herbst (2004), the rest of the world insists on clinging to the fiction that Somalia has a government that rules over a united territory. Herbst (2004) laments Somaliland's non-recognition as a demonstration of the imperfections of the international politics of recognition. He wonders why Somaliland isn't recognised as a sovereign entity if the defining characteristic of a state is order (Herbst, 2004).

Politically, Somaliland's system has continually edged towards constitutional democracy, highlighted by a constitutional referendum in May 2001 which endorsed a new constitution and reaffirmed its status as an independent state (Arman, 2012; Bradbury, 2008; Hoyle, 2000; Lalos, 2011; Shin, 2003). In 2002, 2003, 2005, 2010 and 2012, local government, presidential and parliamentary elections were held, in a reasonably free and fair manner (Adan Yusuf Abokor et al., 2006; Walls and Kibble, 2010a).

The fact that Somaliland is not an internationally recognised State, means that it endures blanket references of 'state failure' whilst being acknowledged as a region of Somalia that is an 'Oasis of peace' (Fisher, 1999; Riemann and Gregg-Wallace, 2009), a 'pocket of stability' (Forti, 2011), 'an oasis of security, reconciliation, and cooperation' (Ahmad, 2011) or a 'pocket of peace' in the



midst of chaos. Thus because of its 'political/formal' classification as part of Somalia, which means that economic development and trade and progress are generally handicapped, as foreign investors are reluctant to become involved in a territory supposedly located within a "failed state" and war-zone. Somaliland cannot enter into bilateral agreements with donors as they shy away from the implication that such a provision of assistance may be seen as diplomatic recognition. An ICG report citing the African Union notes that the lack of recognition, "ties the hands of the authorities and people of Somaliland as they cannot effectively and sustainably transact with the outside [world] to pursue the reconstruction and development goals" (ICG, 2006 p. 12). This lack of recognition therefore places real constraints on her capacity to function like a state, both domestically and internationally.

The political rhetoric and images of insecurity associated with the term "Failed States" are often images of violence and complete anarchy that Somalia has become. The rise of Islamic fundamentalists and the spill over of the same clearly illustrate that Somalia is not only a threat to her neighbours in Africa but to international peace and security. The range of diverse forcible and non-forcible interventions by multiple actors and agencies, the United Nations; the AU and other regional governments are underpinned by the principles, values and practice of liberal peacebuilding and its commitment to democratisation, marketisation and public institution building.

For those authors who challenge the labelling of Somalia as a 'failed state', Harper (2012) argues that this is a convenient label for actors especially the US who have used it to justify interventions of whatever form towards Somalia. She argues that Somalia generally does not fit into any paradigm of 'statehood' but it does not fit the failed state per se (p.108). Murphy (2009) acknowledges that Somalia is a failed state but he argues that this does not mean it is a failed society. Central government has collapsed but other forms of authority remain. Some forms are local, restricted to individual towns and villages; some are clan or sub-clan related within which context elders are often able to exercise their authority using traditional means; some are focused on political figures who exercise authority. The critical point of this analysis of Somalia is that, in the absence of a central state, the result has not been widespread chaos. Instead,

endogenous rules and mechanisms that allow individuals to “get things done” have developed and created widespread co-operation. This, Murphy argues, is even more evident when compared to the widespread conflict that resulted when interventions failed to create a central state.

This argument by Murphy (2009) and Harper (2012) conveniently places Somaliland as part of Somalia hence the reference by Murphy to ‘some form of authority using traditional means’. Hence one can argue that the role of Somaliland in the Somalia narrative supports the call for reconceptualising Somalia and therefore challenging the dominant discourses. However, the reverse does not happen for Somaliland; even when Somalia is removed or added into the analysis, it does not project Somaliland into the academic peacebuilding discourse that critically engages in scrutinising how peacebuilding interventions are implemented. Thus, the critical peacebuilding scholars disregard it as a context that can either support or discredit their critiques. This therefore supports my argument that state centric approaches are at the heart of most peacebuilding critiques.

On the other hand, the very notion of including Somaliland within Somalia and then defining it as a failed state exemplifies the failure of the ‘failed state’ discourse. This is a reflection of underlying beliefs based on a ‘problematic’ African culture and religion which lacks not only historical justification but also has resulted in misconceived and short sighted intervention policies. The case of Somaliland helps to illuminate that under more conducive conditions and in the absence of external political agendas Somalis are able to restore peace, drawing on these same traditions, negotiations and compromises (Moe, 2011). Somaliland has, in its turn, disproven the assertion that Somalis are too anarchic to form a strong, central state (Walls and Kibble, 2010a).

The key challenge for Somaliland is that it must seek separation within the framework of Somalia, which according to Clapham and colleagues ‘is unwilling to agree to a divorce *a la* Sudan, the United Arab Republic, or Czechoslovakia’ (Clapham et al., 2011). Similarly the African Union (AU) is an important factor. Support for recognition from the AU is not forthcoming as their policy of adherence to colonial boundaries is clear and the international community still recognises Somalia as a state, thus secession of Somaliland would violate the

territorial integrity of the state of Somalia. However, Chang (2012) cautions the US State Department against recognising Somaliland arguing that this would raise political tensions within Somalia, as many within Somalia who feel that the country should not be fragmented would react violently at the prospect of what he calls a “balkanisation” process (p. 152).

International recognition is not supported by all in Somaliland, however, and some cite the impromptu secession declared by Somaliland as not falling within United Nations Resolutions 1541 (XV) and 2649 (XXV) of the General Assembly which govern and arbitrate issues of secession (Roble, 2007). Roble further argues that Somaliland is not geographically, culturally, ethnically nor historically different from the rest of Somalia (ibid p. 3).

### **Economic implications of non-recognition**

Economically, the implications for non-recognition are the lack of a body that can provide services for business transactions involving partners based in non-recognised entities and jurisdictions. Conventional international venues for adjudicating commercial disputes such as the American Association of Arbiters, the International Chamber of Commerce, the London Court of International Arbitration, and the World Bank’s International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes are inaccessible to the Somaliland businesses (Reno, 2002 p. 29). Similarly the preferred standard of framework for hearing international business disputes remains the Anglo-Saxon common law which is non-existent in Somaliland (ibid). Somaliland cannot be part of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), neither can it belong to Interpol (world’s largest international police organization) or the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Another economic implication is that non recognition continues to hamper oil exploration (Bryden, 2003) meaning that Somaliland has to rely upon exploration agreements from those willing to take the risk of doing business. Thus Chinese firms have played a dominant role in such agreements as their government provides business support for them, helping them fill these niches that international commercial law renders out of bounds for most other firms according to Reno (2002). This means that as recognition is delayed, Somaliland risks dealing with rogue firms against the cost of litigation if ever

recognition was achieved and such contracts were abandoned. Thus, according to Reno, who cites an observation by an official, this has created a difficult contradiction for Somaliland, for so long as western oil exploration firms are more competitive, Chinese authorities have a vested interest in frustrating Somaliland's bid for international recognition, lest Chinese firms lose their protected niche (Reno, 2002). Thus, the pursuit for international recognition has with good reason become a sort of national obsession (Bryden, 2003). On another level, there appears to be a level of economical recognition by the EU, the United Kingdom, China, Ethiopia and to a certain extent Turkey who have established significant economic relations with the region (Chang, 2012). Similarly, Somaliland has negotiated economic and trade relations with the United Arab Emirates, the Coca Cola Corporation and Western Union who have all invested in Somaliland.

Somaliland's private sector has sustained growth, this has been catalysed by low levels of regulation and a comparatively small government bureaucracy. A number of government services, such as vehicle licensing, are delivered through local businesses. Similarly private entities have further moved in to provide basic infrastructure and institutions. Electricity and telephones have been offered to towns that never benefited from those services in the prior regime where government regulated the economy (pre-1991) (Nenova, 2004).

When it comes to international duties of statehood however, Somaliland has been expected to shoulder some responsibilities, for example, the care of refugees (including those from Somalia and Ethiopia) whilst there is acknowledgement that Somaliland is safe and several European countries, including the UK, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, have denied asylum to Somalilanders and repatriated them on the grounds that their homeland is safe and secure (ICG, 2006 p. 12).

### **Limitations of non-recognition on reconstruction and development programmes**

The UN has continually placed and treated Somaliland as Somalia, leaving the country largely to the sphere of NGOs and other agencies while the UN directs its attention to explicitly humanitarian rather than longer term development assistance (Hogg, 1996). This policy of considering projects for Somaliland

under Somalia means that such projects are underfunded and poorly coordinated due to the perceived security challenges (this aspect is considered in depth elsewhere in this thesis). Meanwhile Somalia continues to be a mass producer of refugees and internally displaced persons; where lawlessness prevails and violent inter-clan and sub-clan warfare continues unabated coupled with pervasive food insecurity (Frushone, 2001).

Therefore most international engagement with Somaliland is hampered by the fact that key donors and potential bilateral partners bind their relationships with Somaliland to the framework of their engagement with the radically different context prevailing in south/central Somalia (Albin-Lackey, 2009). Where donors such as DFID are engaged, they provide institutional support but cannot do this directly with the government but through a partnership with the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Unfortunately, even then, the UN works under the rubric of 'North west Somalia' when implementing such programmes on behalf of donors. DFID funding is limited to capacity-building for ministries and local administrations. DFID also funded Somaliland's democratic presidential elections in 2003, as well as the parliamentary and local elections in 2005 (Othieno, 2003).

The Government of Somaliland considers development aid to be donor-driven, bureaucratic, poorly coordinated and unpredictable doing little to support the emergence of a Somaliland state that is able to implement its own development agenda (DFID Somalia and Danida, 2011). According to their report on aid effectiveness the Government of Somaliland (GoSL) cites 'lack of sectoral aid implementation coordination; lack of involvement GoSL in fund raising; aid target shortage, and the irrelevant sectoral allocation' are some of the major causes of facing Reconstruction and development Program (RDP) (Ministry Planning & Development, 2010 p. 7). Further the government cites the preference by donors to follow a direct implementation funding model, where they channel aid through the international implementing institutions without the involvement of the Somaliland government which undermines efforts towards aid coordination; resulting in inappropriate prioritisation, and increase of delivery costs; also transparency and accountability discrepancies exist (ibid p.7).

## **Political fragility and border conflicts**

Somaliland faces enormous challenges including but not limited to Governance and its institutions as these are primarily based on improving inter-clan harmony and mutual trust. Clan character continually permeates politics with many cabinet members owing their posts more to the need for perceived clan equilibrium in government than to their qualifications or political relevance. In every Presidential appointment a clan balance is the overriding factor. Similarly seat allocations in both houses of parliament are also proportionally assigned to the clans (Othieno, 2003).

Other underlying issues for the conflict centred on unresolved issues of power sharing, historical divisions within the SNM, and resource competition. Control over the port of Berbera and its revenues ignited violence in 1992; control over the Hargeisa airport and its revenues created the spark in 1994 (Lalos, 2011 p. 794 footnote 53).

Today, the struggle for control for these regions is claimed by both Puntland<sup>52</sup> and Somaliland, despite the Harti clans having signed the 1991 declaration of independence and the 1993 reaffirmation in Boorama in 1993. There is constant redefinition of relations with either Somaliland or Puntland, with some Dulbahante-inhabited areas sometimes identifying and coming under the control of Somaliland and sometimes with Puntland. Clapham and others (2011) argue that the constant redefining of these relations makes the clans prone to internal conflicts along sub-clan or sub-sub-clan lines (Clapham et al., 2011). This is also a demonstration of the fluidity in clan identity which Lewis has argued is situational, and shifts according to the issue at hand (Lewis, 1994; Menkhaus, 2010b citing ).

Similarly, the contested border regions of Sool and Sanaag remain a challenge to Somaliland's stability. Puntland lays claim to most of Sool and Sanaag regions, a claim that Somaliland rejects. Unlike Somaliland, Puntland opts for

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<sup>52</sup> Puntland was established in 1998. According to its constitution it is a part of the Somali state and works for the rebuilding of a unitary Somali government Its government in Garowe is based on an alliance of different Daarood/Harti clans. Apart from this genealogical identity the Somali national identity is adhered to. Markus V. Höhne on <http://www.eth.mpg.de/cms/en/people/d/mhoehne/project.html>

an autonomous federal state and opposes the independence of Somaliland<sup>53</sup>. Though the struggle is largely about administration, the people themselves do not have a uniform position and are divided in their loyalties, with members of the clans' political and traditional elites scattered between Somaliland, Puntland and Mogadishu. This creates disunity in their political aspirations and, according to an ICG report, the issue is seen as a deep fault line in the politics of Somalia more generally, and one would argue, in Somaliland, that is likely to worsen if a conflict were to breakout.

Arman (2012) aptly uses a minefield to describe the clan politics and identities that shape Somaliland. He argues that due to their ever-evolving and contentious struggle to reshape the region 'they are minefields with the potential to blow at up any time'; tensions in areas such as Buhoodle lay latent waiting to explode at the slightest provocation. In 2002 and 2004 conflict erupted from incompatible positions regarding the self-understanding and the political future of both de facto-states and their populations. This threatens the achievement gained by Somaliland thus far.

### **The Presence of Terrorist Groups and their Global Threat**

The on-going instability in Somalia and the presence of radical Islamist groups with cross-border tentacles remains the principal source of threats of destabilisation in Somaliland. There is a growing strong buoyancy of Islamist groups such as Al Shabab based in the Eastern part of the country and said to receive support in form of arms, finances and training from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, Afghanistan, Kuwait Iran and Sudan (Adam, 2010 p. 130; Forberg and Terlinden, 1999; Marquardt and Shinn, 2009). Such groups can be described as political Islam because they express overt political objectives organised around the identity and principals of Islam.

In 2003 came a number of killings of foreigners such as Annalena Tonelli, an Italian nurse killed at a hospital in Boroma on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2003; followed on the 21<sup>st</sup> by the killing of Richard and Enid Eyeington, teachers at SOS School in Sheikh; In April 2004, a GTZ (German NGO) vehicle was attacked on

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<sup>53</sup> Puntland's claim to most of the two regions, is primarily based on clan ties. About half of the residents of Sanaag and a higher proportion in Sool have sympathies with Puntland see Shinn, D. (2002) Somaliland: The Little Country that Could. *Africa Notes* Number 9. Available from [http://www.somalilandlaw.com/AmbShin\\_on\\_Somaliland.pdf](http://www.somalilandlaw.com/AmbShin_on_Somaliland.pdf) .

the road between Hargeisa and Berbera, killing a Kenyan woman and injuring a German project manager. As noted in Chapter 1: Research Location; Somaliland on page 6, the 2008, Al-Shabaab were linked to a series of coordinated bomb attacks that targeted the presidential palace, the Ethiopian consulate and the United Nations offices in Hargeisa (McGregor, 2008). The bombings illustrated the risk that conflict in Somalia can spill over into Somaliland, even though Somaliland has not attacked targets in Somalia or otherwise provoked hostilities. The suspected motivations is an attempt to undermine Somaliland's emerging status as a peaceful stable place and to discourage any country into recognising it as an independent state..

Hence, threat of insurgent groups like Al-Ittihaad and Al-Shabaab is very relevant to Somaliland and the regional stability. Specifically, Al Shabab has previously warned mine action organisations in south central Somalia to cease operations in areas under their control. The accusation labelled against UNMAS is that it is paying the salaries of government police officers. The group accused the UN of attempting to disrupt peace and justice by bribing various community elders and inciting them to rebel against the Islamic administration; they area also accused of surveying and sign-posting some of the most vital and sensitive areas under the control of the Mujahideen (Omar, 2009).

## **CONCLUSION**

I set out to illustrate the context and challenges that confronted Somaliland post her self-proclaimed independence. The chapter demonstrates that the challenges emanated from both external and internal factors. Following the disintegration of the Somali state, the responses of interveners in Somalia and the Somaliland people not only demonstrate two completely different outcomes but also help in unpacking some of the narratives and discourses that have emerged on issues around state failure and liberal peacebuilding.

The international peacebuilding efforts in Somalia have failed to recreate a central state which in turn provides the critics with a good example of the failure of the liberal peace project; this failure is more accurately limited to south Central Somalia, however, when Somaliland is included within Somalia, and in which case the critique only holds to a certain extent. This chapter shows that a state centric approach dominates the narrative of the liberal peace critics who



equate the lack of a central state in Somalia as an indication of the failure of the liberal peace project.

The lack of recognition by the international community makes Somaliland ineligible for foreign aid persists, yet the reconstruction has endured, supported largely by the international community in various forms and by the Somaliland people themselves. The disengagement by the international community remained mainly within the realms of state building. However, as the case of Mine action will illustrate other aspects of post conflict recovery processes largely involved external interventions, through the UN, and NGOs. However those activities and interventions have not been subjected to any critical scrutiny by the peacebuilding scholars. This I argue is because of Somaliland's unrecognised status which means that it is lumped together with Somalia the 'failed State'. More importantly, I argue that these peacebuilding interventions have escaped scrutiny because the process of creation of the ideal democratic state as the end goal in state-building and development projects is the most scrutinised Liberal Peace agenda. Thus the critics of liberal peace is that by being state-centric in approach they fail to acknowledge 'the pockets of peace', that exist within the unit of a state or within an emerging polity like Somaliland. The tendency by the critics to offer generalised critiques across diverse contexts is evident in the way that they limit their focus to the failure of democratisation and state building through focusing on states that have received large militarised interventions such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia. As such they omit 'emerging' 'unrecognised' 'de facto' states; and they fail to scrutinise other sectors that would offer more credence to their critiques. It is also indicative of the extent to which the critics tend to use a 'standard one size fits all' themselves in their critique of liberal peace.

I therefore argue that outside the process of state building in Somalia and specifically Somaliland, there are other peacebuilding processes that are ongoing; and which have a liberal agenda; and which could contribute to offering more nuanced examples of the limitations of liberal peacebuilding. Applying the critiques to Somaliland does this; and the thesis goes further by taking a specific intervention, mine action, as the unit of analysis. Thus, this thesis will contribute to the deepening of the literature on critical liberal

peacebuilding by offering a critical analysis beyond a state and beyond a highly militarised and huge external intervention.

Somaliland therefore portrays the typical characteristics of a liberal peacebuilding context; normally a post conflict environment, which peacebuilders are accused of defining as traumatised, dysfunctional, irrational, and immature, therefore legitimising models and solutions defined by outsiders rather than local actors. It is also strategically located; has possibilities for natural resources such as oil; and has a presence of terrorist groups and thus is within a region that presents security challenges viewed through the lens of the global war on terror.

## **CHAPTER 4: GLOBAL MINE ACTION SECTOR; PROGRAMME AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES**

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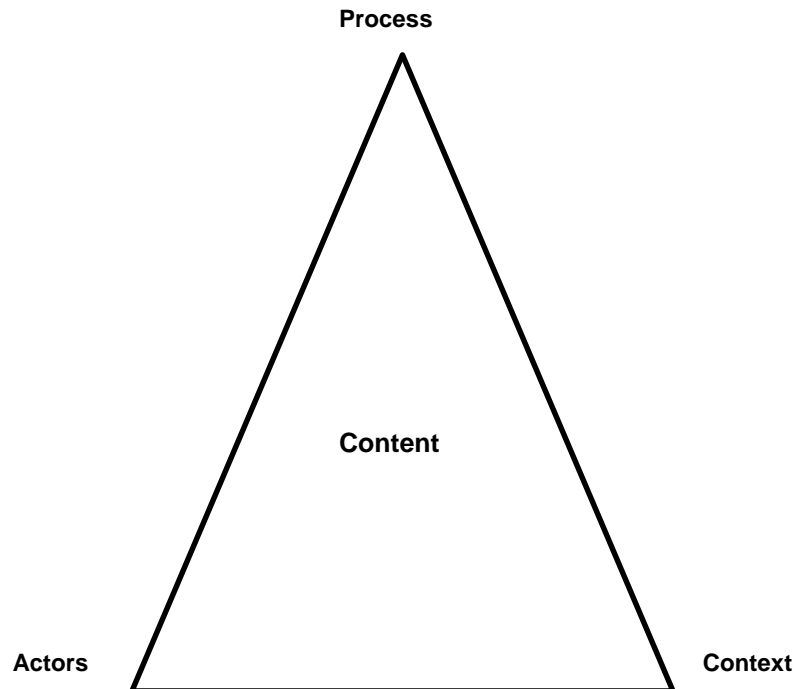
*The Mine Action Sector has become a hostage of its own success. (A personal observation).*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In CHAPTER 2: PEACEBUILDING AND MINE ACTION; THE DEBATES AND CRITIQUES, from page 39, I demonstrated the extent to which the discourse on landmines, their impact, and hence the framing of the response needed to address the contamination, has been influenced by the broader global political and security discourses and processes of globalisation (see for example, Bolton, 2010). Beyond mine action being a microcosm of peacebuilding, the way it is implemented reflects the same dominant characteristics i.e.; it is standardised; technical and externally led. However, I argue that this is the result of factors that have coalesced and shaped the Sector both from outside and within. In this chapter I will demonstrate how this has happened. A critical analysis of the Sector will illustrate how the interplay of the processes of Sector formation and contexts influence the definition of policy problems and hence choice of policy instruments. I will do this by illustrating that the way the sector manifests itself is in response to the same global political dynamics which dictate the way in which the sector is formed; the process of formation of the Sector is also reflected in the actors who emerge and the normative framework that governs it. Similarly, the global context within which this process occurred also shaped the policies that emerged and the manner in which they were implemented. This is because the process of formation of the Sector was populated by various disparate actors who then formed a networked governance structure that is global, multi-layered and multi-actor (Duffield & Waddell, 2006). This concept of networked governance means that policies adopted reflect the interplay of all these actors; processes and contexts. To demonstrate this, I will adapt a simplified model of the (Walt and Gilson, 1994) “Policy Analysis Triangle” that

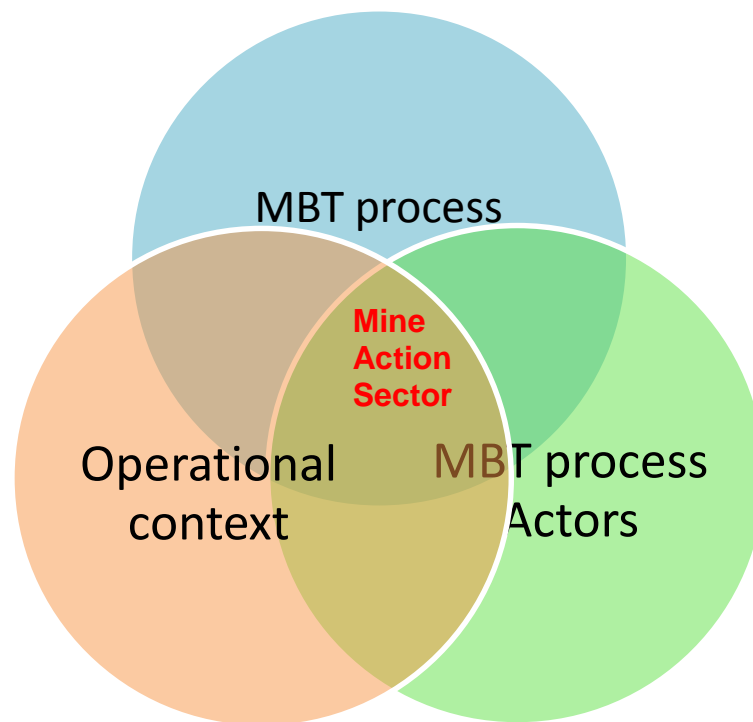
has been used for health policy analysis (see Figure 7: An Adapted Policy Analysis Triangle)

**Figure 7: An Adapted Policy Analysis Triangle**



Various studies have engaged in analysing Mine Ban Treaty implementation (Bryden, 2010; Thakur and Maley, 1999; Van Der Linden, 2007) without necessarily engaging with the Sector itself. To illustrate that actors, processes and context all interacted to shape the mine action sector itself rather than the policy - in this case the Mine Ban Treaty. I adopt Walt and Gilson's original framework but modify it using a basic Venn diagram to illustrate the overlapping or interconnected relationships. I replace 'actors' with 'content' in the middle of the triangle (see figure 7 above and 8; A Mine Action Sector analysis diagram.

**Figure 8: A Mine Action Sector Analysis diagram**



***Adapted from the Walt and Gilson (1993) Policy Analysis Triangle***

The purpose of this chapter is therefore twofold; to illustrate how actors have shaped the formation of the Sector and secondly contextualise how these policies have emerged. This will demonstrate the justification behind the need to implement these policies; this will further illustrate the origins of standardised approaches to mine action implementation which is modelled around a checklist approach. The dominant critique of liberal peacebuilding interventions is that peacebuilding interventions favour a standardised template-like approach, the way mine action is implemented by the Sector tends to support this critique. However, I argue that such an approach is not necessarily a deliberate attempt but is the result of several processes and factors that dictate such implementation modalities. These include responding to donor requirements and adherence to treaty obligations and humanitarian norms that guide the Sector and the post conflict context that it operates in.

## **THE PROCESS OF THE MINE ACTION SECTOR FORMATION**

The Ottawa Process<sup>54</sup> was a decisive factor in formation of the Sector; the central contribution of actors especially the mine action experts, the states and all the other key players remained influential in shaping the way in which the sector was to emerge. I argue that the Sector that emerged reflects the same factors that coalesced to bring about the Mine Ban Treaty. The Sector is the result of an interaction of the actors that had been part of the Mine Ban Process and the formation of the Sector was shaped by a global context that was different from the one which the MBT emerged from. Similarly, beyond the campaigning period and formation of the Sector, the dominant actors remained actively engaged in the governance (at global level) and implementation of policies of the Sector at the local level. My observation therefore is that the context within which any activity takes place is of great importance and I will illustrate this through the Somaliland context.

## **COMPOSITION OF THE KEY ACTORS AND THEIR ROLES**

NGOs, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, played a huge role in transforming the landmine-use issue from a strictly political military problem to a humanitarian one. The organisations themselves were mainly involved in humanitarian relief work; this is reflected by the dominant NGOs who steered the mine ban movement, i.e. the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, Medico International, Mines Advisory Group (UK), Handicap International (France), Human Rights Watch (USA), and Physicians for Human Rights (USA). HRW and ICRC (human rights); HI, PHR and Medico International were involved in medical and public health issues whilst VVAF dealt with the consequences of war in a social and development sense and MAG was a demining organisation. Similarly, the involvement and the work of the ICRC and the role of the UN further ingrained mine action within the realms of humanitarianism and the Sector within the broader humanitarian sector. Indeed the role of the UN in mine action had begun when the office of Coordination of

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<sup>54</sup> The Ottawa Process refers to the period between October 1996 when Minister Axworthy invited other countries participating in a landmines conference in Canada to return to his country to sign a ban treaty and December 1997 when the Ottawa Convention opened for signatures. The term was a term coined by diplomats to describe the events between the planning period/process. The mine ban process had begun in Oslo and therefore the entire process is also referred to as the Oslo Process.

Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA) assumed the role for mine clearance.

Initially, the term 'Humanitarian Mine Action' was used to refer to the clearance of landmines and UXO in relief or emergency scenarios. Humanitarian Mine Action encompasses other elements, and is usually defined by the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) as:-

*"...not just about demining; it is also about people and societies, and how they are affected by landmine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) contamination"* (IMAS, 2001: Online).

Mine action encompasses several dimensions, all of which must be taken into account in order to address the full range of problems posed by ERW contamination. As defined in the IMAS, five major "pillars" support mine action; these are: (a) advocacy, (b) mine risk education (MRE); (c) humanitarian demining, often referred to as "clearance", which includes all technical activities required during the clearance process (i.e. survey, mapping, marking, clearance); (d) victim assistance, which includes physical and psychological rehabilitation and reintegration; and (e) stockpile destruction. Mine action's main objective is therefore to reduce the risk from landmines and ERW to a level where people can live safely; in which economic, social and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine and ERW contamination, and in which victims' needs can be addressed.

The ICRC was one of the key actors on which the entire campaign relied as far as the process of reframing Anti-Personnel Landmines was concerned. The landmines issue having been 'humanitarianised' by the mine ban process, the emerging Sector and its responses became imbued within the same humanitarian principles that guide humanitarian organisations such as the ICRC and United Nations. Whereas the ICRC has been seen as a specimen of traditional humanitarianism, the ICBL during the mine ban process emerged as an example of the so-called "new humanitarianism" i.e. "principled", "human-rights based" and politically sensitive. This concept of new humanitarianism is seen to mark a break from the past and a rejection of the traditional principles that guided humanitarianism with the new humanitarians rejecting the political

naivety of the past, able to assess the long-term political impact of relief and prepared to see humanitarian aid used as a tool to achieve human rights and political goals (Fox, 2001). However, I argue that the evidence suggests that operationally the Sector is still guided more by traditional humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality although the various actors may vary considerably in terms of operational approach and methodology.

The Sector is further underpinned by humanitarian objectives to make land safe for civilians; this has resulted in strong coherence around mine clearance based on the emphasis of risk elimination; this has therefore reinforced the Sectors' technical approach with a lot of expertise and effort being enlisted in achieving this; thus each task is treated as a total mined area requiring 100% clearance. This humanitarian objective is further reinforced by the need to adhere to the international mine ban treaty and international standards that guide the Sector. Thus quality is prioritised over cost, speed and breadth (Bolton, 2010). To achieve this, the sector has therefore relied on high levels of technical expertise and technologies that are rarely available within post conflict contexts; and hence the Sector's interaction with military expertise. This has resulted in dominance of military input; a technical approach and a Sector that is quite rigid in its operations. The nature of the operations also dictates a relatively high interaction with national and/or foreign military personnel which has its history with the Mine Ban process where the NGOs required knowledge of the issues posed by landmines in order to create awareness in the international community. The campaign and the entire processes therefore relied on retired and active military personnel to provide the ban movement with the technical expertise and knowledge required to make their arguments and call for a ban. For example the ICRC commissioned an analysis of the *"Military Use and Effectiveness of Anti-personnel Mines"* to assess the actual use and effectiveness of landmines in 26 conflicts since and including the World War II. Previously, the UN had hired Paddy Blagden, a retired British Army Brigadier, to develop a strategic plan to ensure a coherent UN approach to the mine issue, in which he was assisted by a military historian. The study was later presented to senior military experts from nine countries convened by the ICRC in which they questioned the military value of mines, and argued that their limited utility was far outweighed by the appalling humanitarian consequences. The conclusions of the (Blagden,



1996) report *'Anti-personnel Landmines; Friends or Foe?',* is described by (Maslen, 1996) as having formed the basis of broader discussions including other military experts from Africa and it was on the basis of these findings that the consultations concluded that a ban on landmines needed to be pursued by governments and the international community as a matter of urgency (WHO, 2010).

Chapman (2010) and Bryden (2005) have demonstrated how the dominant core of the international NGOS that emerged mainly engaged in mine action e.g. the Hazardous Area Life-Support Organisation (HALO Trust) was founded in 1988 by a decorated former British officer named Colin Mitchell, and set up in Afghanistan (Bryden, 2005). It is worth noting that HALO Trust's role in the campaign was minimal but they remain a dominant actor within the Sector. The following year, 1989, another former British soldier, Rae McGrath, set up the Mines Advisory Group (MAG), (Filippino, 2006). MAG (UK) and McGrath were active in the Mine Ban process as co-founders of the International campaign. MAG remains a key actor within the Sector and went on to conduct the first survey of the impact of landmines in Afghanistan<sup>55</sup>. Although small in number, these operational NGOs have played a significant role in the development of technical and operational mine clearance.

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<sup>55</sup> MAG (online). Available from: [www.mag.org.uk](http://www.mag.org.uk) (accessed: 20 July 2013)

**Table 1: List of ICBL founding organisations and Coordinating Committee**

<b>ICBL founding Members</b>	<b>Area of Expertise</b>	<b>Home State</b>
Handicap International	Physical Rehabilitation	France
Human Rights Watch	Human Rights	USA
Medico International	Physical Rehabilitation	Germany
Mines Advisory Group	Mine Clearance	UK
Physicians for Human Rights	Medical support and human rights	USA
Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation	Physical rehabilitation	USA

**Source: Own compilation**

## **THE OPERATIONAL AND FUNDING CONTEXT**

For the purpose of this argument I want to define the context as the global funding environment that the Sector emerged into. Specifically the mine ban process occurred with the context of ‘new policy agenda’, a time that had seen a fundamental shift in the role of NGOs as they emerged as active players in efforts to mitigate and end conflicts through engaging in development and human rights advocacy. This approach and philosophy was based on the neo-liberal economists’ belief that “markets and private initiative are ... the most efficient mechanisms for achieving economic growth and providing most services to most people”(Edwards and Hulme, 1995 p. 188). Thus bilateral and multilateral donor agencies pursued this agenda as it was believed to give them renewed prominence in poverty alleviation, social welfare, and within this

paradigm, they also came to be seen as part of an emerging “civil society” (Edwards and Hulme, 1996 citing Robison 1993). This period therefore saw for the first time activities such as mine action being funded by the World Bank. The timing of these supportive moves by different international organisations is significant and should be seen within the wider global context which led to new attention being given to NGOs and large quantities of aid resources being allocated to their efforts at building capacity.

The success of the Mine Ban process was also significant; the treaty was signed by 122 states when it opened for signing on 3 December 1997 in Ottawa, Canada making the Mine Ban Treaty<sup>56</sup> one of the most successful multilateral arms treaties (Snow et al., 2008). This initial success resulted in more funding, for example at the signing conference in Ottawa some \$500 million was pledged by governments for mine-related work (Björk, 2012; David, 1999). According to Snow et al. (2010), citing the Landmine Monitor, funding from key donors for mine action programmes rose from \$22 million in 1993 to \$100 million in 1997 and \$169 million in 1998. Similarly, Goose highlights the observation made by Canada that 10 new donor countries and 98 new mine action programmes in 25 countries emerged within the first year after the treaty being signed ( see also Gething et al., 2011 p. 41). The amount of funding available for mine action is quite high in comparison to other humanitarian challenges. For example in 2005 malaria was reported to kill over one million people per year, according to WHO, however the amount spent per year is between US\$ 400-500M<sup>57</sup>, whilst mines/UXOs kill about 20,000 per year yet on average over US\$167 million went into mine action between 1989 to 2012 . This is a factor that can undoubtedly account for the multiplicity of actors that became involved in mine action. This could partly be explained by the high levels of funding made available to NGOs by donors.

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<sup>56</sup> The Ottawa Convention, Ottawa Treaty or the Mine Ban convention, Mine Ban Treaty are the short titles that are common however the treaty is formally known as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (18 September 1997).

<sup>57</sup> The annual funding in 2012 was reported to have increased 3-fold over the preceding five year period. See article Pigott, D., Atun, R., Moyes, C., Hay, S. and Gething, P. (2012) Funding for malaria control 2006-2010: A comprehensive global assessment. *Malaria Journal*, 11 (1), 246.

Within the new policy agenda, what constituted an NGO quickly became bound up with these external donor agendas, and the opportunities these presented to local activists and entrepreneurs; and become the focus of criticism from many including liberal peace critics. For example, the ICBL received roughly one third of its funding from the Open Society Institute, one third from governments (particularly Canada, Norway, and Sweden) and one third from other NGOs and international organisations (IOs) such as UNICEF (Murray et al., 2012). According to Anderson this presented a disturbing trend of the growing dependence of the international NGOs campaign on sympathetic states such as Canada (Anderson, 2000 footnote no 59; p. 100). He argued that this was a case of NGOs working as grantees and subcontractors for states from which they received funding.

Thus, in tandem with the NGO explosion, the Mine Ban Process was taking place, and hence this is one factor that led to an increase in numbers of organisations that took up mine action related activities; joining the ICBL and other international organisations taking up landmine issues. Another factor was the success of the mine ban process itself, this resulted in mine action becoming politically attractive, and drew large numbers of diffuse actors. The United Nations Mine Action community today comprises 14 UN agencies. Such a high number of organisations being part of the mine ban process can be seen as a response to the donor-driven nature, and the 'spending spree' that was launched by donors and which gave birth to literally thousands of NGOs in a matter of two or three years (Edwards and Hulme, 1995, 1996; Bratton, 1989; Fowler, 1991 (GIBL, 1999).

This "new policy agenda" is the context within which the Sector has emerged and had further implications on how it shaped its policy and programming and its performance and therefore explains its place within the wider humanitarian peacebuilding arena. The global context defined and shaped the Sector and indirectly contributed to the multiplicity of actors now involved in various activities of mine action.

The transition from the Mine Ban Process to an established Humanitarian Mine Action Sector did not bring about significant changes in sector funding. The same relatively small number of 'sympathetic' states which had supported the

mine ban process such as Canada, Norway, and Sweden continued to be the key donors whilst other governments such as the United Kingdom, the United States and other actors such as the EU, corporate donations, and public donations also emerged as key sources of funding.

The Sector was and remains highly donor dependent resulting in constant pressure to please potential donors with tangible and visible results. Donor dependence also resulted in the Sector re-orienting its accountability upward therefore focusing more on reporting of quantitative outputs, in tandem with Edwards and Hulme's observation of NGOs (1996, p. 962). Therefore mine clearance attracted the largest share of the funding and political attention, with significantly less effort or justification for other mine action pillars; i.e., stockpile destruction, mine-risk education, victim assistance and advocacy. Similarly the 'acceptance of increasing amounts of donor funds', resulted in complex requirements for the Sector hence very bureaucratic processes were put in place as will be illustrated (Zaidi, 1999).

Another factor that can be gleaned from the dependence on donor funding is the dominant role of northern/western organisations both during the Mine Ban process and within the emerging Sector. The campaign's financial basis was heavily dependent on Northern governments, International organisations funded by Northern governments, and private foundations based in the west. These organisations had various advantages over their southern counterparts; they were from societies whose political systems were supportive of the notion of civil societies and hence had a better and less confined space to raise the issues. These provided countries affected by mines with a voice as they were located in the north with easy access to funding and therefore they also assumed the leadership of the ICBL and the ban movement. This seems to support the notion that civil society implies liberal democracies and therefore they may be limited to these political systems as Pearce (2005) has argued; Operationally the agenda was imposed from the Western "Centre", and a majority of non-governmental actors in mine-affected areas (the "Periphery") were excluded from equal participation. The NGOs themselves were not globally representative and a survey at the Ottawa Treaty Signing NGO Forum found that only 20% of the NGOs were non-European or non-North American

(Eisele et al., 2012 p. 128). However, the periphery carried the primary responsibility for their mine-affected land and impacted population (Bryden, 2005).

Richmond has argued that such dominance of states and their institutions is represented as neutral, objective and benevolent for the most part; however, he further argues that behind these NGO agency or institutionally fronted interventions lies the financial and ideological presence of liberal states and the process is driven in particular by neo liberal approaches (Richmond, 2009 p. 59). Operationally, where mine action takes place it is implemented mainly by external organisations and experts making it mainly an externally driven intervention further supporting the liberal peace critiques that, where liberal peace is imposed externally in conflict or post conflict zones, such interventions tend to be neo-colonial or at best trusteeship forms of peace (Richmond pp 56); The claim of mine action as a form of a liberal internationalism is supported by Anderson, a Sector insider seeing the mine ban movement as having been a genuine example of 'liberal internationalism' (Anderson, 2000).

In conclusion therefore, the actors that emerged to form the new Mine Action Sector were established humanitarian organisations, however, mine action continued to be seen as an isolated sector within the broader domain that is humanitarian aid (Skåra, 2003). Skåra attributes the isolation to a number of issues including mine action's technical focus; a critique that is shared by others, including those within the sector itself (See for example Juergensen, 2007; Moyes and Tinning, 2005). The view that the crisis was man-made with civilian populations being the victims of the situation thus meant that the problem was defined as an ethical responsibility of the international community. Landmines were also defined by their impact rather than as a problem in their own right, and never in terms of how they affected individual communities making mine action delivery oriented, with minimal engagement of the local communities in addressing the problem. There is no doubt that mine action is a complex activity, uniting demanding technical challenges with complex socio-economic contexts, so the expertise needed is specialised and thus the Sector has continually relied upon ex-military personnel for expertise. This is what lay

behind the Sector adopting rigid military-like structures. Similarly, the governance process is led by what Bryden (2010) refers to as 'western diplomats and lobbyists' who tend to over-emphasise bureaucracy at the expense of practical work to solve the global landmine problem.

The Sector is governed at the strategic level by the steering committee of the ICBL, the ICRC, the UN and the 'sympathetic' states who retained an influential role in the governance and implementation of the Sector. These organisations are also involved in implementation at international level. Policy, programme and strategy are the most prevalent forms of coordination and involve major agencies, such as those operating under the aegis of the UN, international NGOs, foreign ministries and donors. Other actors who later joined the governance of the Sector and who were not part of the mine ban process include the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and Geneva Call; and various other governments who joined the band wagon. A full list is given in the table below.

<b>Table 2: Key Mine Action Governance Actors and Roles</b>	
<b>Mine Action Actors and role at International Level</b>	
<b>Actors</b>	<b>Role</b>
United Nations Department of Peacekeeping (UNDPKO)	Department responsible for UNMAS; integrates mine action into peacekeeping, USG for Peacekeeping chairs Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)
United Nations Mine Action Service	Overall policy coordination within and beyond UN system; provides mine action assistance in humanitarian emergencies; oversees international mine action standards (IMAS); coordinates planning for transfer to national authorities
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Supports development of national and local mine action capacity, promotes coordination between mine action and wider development community at country level
UNOPS	Service provider in design/implementation of mine action programmes
UNICEF	Supports development and implementation of mine risk education projects in cooperation with UN and other partners
UNDDA	Supports UNSG in relation to APMBC and CCW; promotes dissemination of annual State reports under the treaties
OCHA	Lead agency for information sharing on humanitarian impact of landmines and resource mobilisation
UNHCR	Addresses special needs of refugees in mine action
OSAGI	Advances gender equality and empowerment of women in mine action
OHCHR	Advances human rights aspects of mine action
World Bank	Resource mobilisation and agenda setting on landmines as an impediment to development
WFP/WHO/FAO	Linkages between mine action and respective mandates in food, health and agriculture



Donor states	Funding/in-kind support for mine action
ICRC	Promotes development and implementation of International Humanitarian Law, victim assistance and mine risk education
Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	Operational assistance in mine action, research, development of International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), support for APMBC process
International Campaign to Ban Landmines	Monitoring and advocacy for APMBC, research and production of Landmine Monitor
Commercial companies	Various, local and international, involved in range of mine action activities, but primarily clearance.
Organisation of American States	Military to military training in clearance/stockpile destruction; some other mine action activities
European Union	Funding largely through the European Commission, commitment to research and development
<b>State level</b>	
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Government	Develop, articulate and implement mine action policies and programmes in accountable, transparent and cost-effective manner. Draft and implement necessary domestic legislation.
Parliament	Ensure compliance with legal obligations, scrutiny of budgets, projects etc.
Judiciary	Prosecution of offenders under national law
Military	Mine clearance, stockpile destruction
Police	Ensure respect for land ownership following clearance
Border guards	Prevent weapons trafficking including landmines
<b>PRIVATE ACTORS</b>	
Local authorities	In some countries, engaged in selection of sites for clearance
Communities	Managing the risks from mines or UXO on a daily basis
Red Cross & Red	National and local level mine risk education and support

Crescent Societies	for victim assistance
Media	Provide spotlight/pressure on government decision-making, focus on issues such as corruption. Key mine risk education role.
Civil Society	Advocacy role, assistance to victims, mine risk education

**Source: Adopted from Bryden (2005 p. 163)**

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF MINE ACTION PROGRAMMES**

Implementation has become increasingly systematic since the Mine Ban Treaty came into effect. The UN international mine-action policy promotes the use of modern technologies to map and measure the extent of the global landmine crisis (Mather, 2002). Mine-affected countries are encouraged to conduct national surveys, known as level one surveys, to measure the extent of their landmine problems. The results are stored in a standardised data management system (the Information Management System for Mine Action), which was developed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

Similarly, to ensure safety and improve efficiency in mine action, International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) provide guidance, establish principles and, in some cases, define international requirements and specifications for mine action implementation. They provide a framework for the development of national mine action standards (NMAS), which ought to reflect specific local realities and circumstances in a given country. Thus, over and above the legal norms, the Sector is guided by these standards which define the responsibilities and obligations of the Sector. Those working in the Sector within national mine action authorities, the donor community, mine action non-governmental organisations and commercial demining contractors, and even the mine action field workers use these guides for the proper and appropriate application of the standards in the conduct of their humanitarian work (Smith, 2001).

Most UN mine action programmes are developed under the auspices of either the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for long-term capacity building programmes, and are frequently

executed with the support of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the lead agency for mine risk education, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) leads on victim assistance.

Theoretically, the UN envisages three different operational scenarios; (a) those constituting a humanitarian intervention when the national authorities are unable or unwilling to address the problem and a mission is established by a Security Council resolution, - this is led by UNMAS with centralised management in New York. In such instances the establishment of mine action is within a peace-keeping mission in consultation with other entities<sup>58</sup>; (b) where there is contamination and UNDP or UNICEF is present, it is within their mandate to assist the national authorities within that country to address the immediate as well as the longer-term need. This is UNDP or UNICEF led and normally operates through country-level management with a small headquarters team; (c) the need for a rapid short term intervention, this is usually led by UNMAS within an emergency situation. The assumption here is that all contexts will fit neatly within the three scenarios. Not all situations are that clear cut as will be demonstrated by the Somaliland context. Similarly for such an approach to work well, it requires a high-level of communication and effective information and coordination between the field and headquarters, in particular during the transition from a United Nations-managed to a United Nations-supported programme. Unfortunately this is rarely the case.

Of particular critical significance when developing and structuring mine action programmes is the state of the country at the time of implementation – in other words; where the country falls on the 'emergency – development continuum;' whether the country is considered to be in a state of complex emergency or whether it is in a redevelopment initiation phase is a very significant factor. The Sector envisages a context that evolves over time from conflict to stabilisation, reconstruction and longer-term development, and therefore anticipates that mine action priorities and the allocation of resources will evolve (GICHD, 2008b).

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<sup>58</sup> In 2004, UNMAS' participation in the preparations for the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) led to the first ever humanitarian mine action mandate designed to serve the general population. Previous to this mandate, mine action in peacekeeping missions had been limited to the protection of mission personnel.

Harpviken et al (2001) have argued that defining the context usually masks the intentions of the operations that are put in place. For example when situations are defined as emergency, he argues that this serves as an excuse for launching short-sighted operations, even though consideration of the broader and more long-term implications of an intervention is no less important in an emergency situation. Similarly for an organisational perspective, downplaying the context results from staff rotation, limited financial resources and therefore the tendency is towards standardisation and the generation and use of templates. As a result, similarities are sought out and emphasised at the expense of context awareness. For mine action an emergency situation always requires a long term response as the most affected contaminated areas are addressed within the short time frame whilst the enduring problems warrant a long-term sustainable response.

In a typical mine action programme, the United Nations supports the development of national mine action structures at three levels; (1) through a mine action regulatory and policy institution at the inter-ministerial level; (2) A coordination body that supervises the various mine action operations in consultation with key stakeholders; (3) Operating organisations of nongovernmental, commercial, civil defence, police or military nature.

### **Planning and prioritisation tools**

In the immediate aftermath of conflict, when a mine action programme is set up, it is expected that the programme needs to know the extent and the nature of threat. Unfortunately, mine action generally occurs in post conflict emergency environments where getting reliable data is challenging. To save life and alleviate suffering regardless of the intrinsic value of the land or its substitutability has been – in respect of the humanitarian imperative of Mine action – the primary driving factor for task prioritisation during the emergency period., Beyond that comes the need to collect data to enable prioritisation and strategic planning to face the complexity of balancing the objectives of saving lives, maximising output and economic effect, and maintaining or justifying future funding (Van Der Linden, 2003).

A key requirement for proper planning and implementation of mine action is solid information in the form of data, such data is meaningless if it is not

collected and stored in a manageable format. Thus, the first step in information management is generally data collection as a poor data management system will amount to poor quality data. The Sector utilises two tools, Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) which serves as the source of data, whilst the data is managed by a data management tool known as the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) (Benini et al., 2003).

These are the dominant tools that the Sector has promoted, and although others are continuously being developed, I will limit my analysis to these two. These tools, especially the surveys, are cost intensive, whilst the data management tool is a complex process whose users continually need training; their utility remains doubtful as various contexts including Somaliland will illustrate.

### **Landmine Impact Surveys (LIS)**

The Sector suffered from endemic lack of comprehensive data therefore key demining organisations identified the need to put in place a more systematic and comprehensive method for the collection of information. Indeed Horwood (2000), writing in commemoration of a decade of mine action describes the lack of centralised information at that juncture as ‘both surprising and serious’ (2000 p. 28). However, efforts had begun in earnest to address this immediately after the signing of the MBT, back in 1998 when 11 mine action organisations formed a Survey Working Group (SWG) with the aim of developing a Global Landmine Survey (GLS) (Gasser, 2011). Attached to the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA) one of the founding organisations, the SWG also established the Survey Action Centre (SAC) to execute the surveys. By the year 2000, the SWG grew to its membership of 21<sup>59</sup> international NGOs and UN agencies and continues to provide the general oversight for the Landmine Impact Survey.

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<sup>59</sup>The organisations that now form the SWG include; Association for Aid and Relief (Japan), Canadian International Demining Corps (Canada), Cranfield Mine Action (UK), Danish Demining Group (Denmark), Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (Switzerland), Geospatial International (Canada), Halo Trust (UK), Handicap International (France and Belgium), INTERSOS (Italy), Landmine Survivors Network (USA), Mines Advisory Group (UK), Mine Clearance Planning Agency (Afghanistan), Medico International (Germany), Norwegian People’s Aid (Norway), Swedish Rescue Services Agency (Sweden), Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (USA), United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, United Nations Mine Action Service and United Nations Office for Project Services

Through the surveys, the execution of the GLS aimed at strengthening the information baseline in the selected affected countries. The GLS offers a powerful mechanism for surveying all affected communities in a systematic manner conforming to social-science survey norms which include a rapid participatory appraisal technique, with focus group interviews conducted at the community level, to ensure a degree of ownership and legitimacy (Harpviken and Isaksen, 2004).

The LIS is supposed to provide reliable data including collated victim data that should enable national authorities to develop national plans focusing on regions and areas of greatest impact while giving implementers baseline impact data that provide success indicators for mine action programmes (GICHD, 2006a p. 12). With such efforts in data collection, the initiative helps in the institutionalisation of data collection with an aim of improving the overall management of mine-action programmes worldwide (ibid).

All LIS therefore follows a standard methodology, recording their data in a standard database designed for this purpose (International Management System for Mine Action –IMSMA) and are monitored by a UN Quality Assurance Monitor whose reports provide the basis upon which the UN determines whether or not to “certify” the survey process (Filipino 2006 pp: 14). This methodology is the basis for all impact surveys, regardless of whether a survey was conducted under the direct auspices of the Survey Action Centre (the SWG secretariat) or by other parties familiar with the impact concept and the SWG protocols (ibid)

The process starts with collection of the Opinion of Experts in the affected country where suspected positives i.e. known communities that are mine /UXO impacted communities are listed. Such a process may eliminate communities within the country where there has been no conflict and therefore no known contamination (Gaser 2011). The premise of this methodology is that ‘local people have a very well developed understanding of their environment, that they are continually innovating and adapting, and that the outsider will best understand local reality with and through the insiders’ (GICHD, 2006a p. 9). Like any other tools these have their strengths and weaknesses as I will demonstrate in CHAPTER 7: SOMALILAND’S CONTEXT AND SECTOR

PROCESSES: IMPLICATIONS . One of the advantages of the LIS is the extent to which it helps to divert attention from a purely quantitative measurement of mine/UXO threat to one that has at its core the community as the referent subject by qualitatively assessing the measures the impact of the threat on the that communities bear. This brought about a paradigm shift from the overly technical approach to mine action. Furthermore, the intention was that the data would potentially allow donors to apportion funds rationally to places of greatest human need as defined by impact on communities. However, although location of resources such as wells, roads etc. affect the impact of scoring, the LIS still places significant importance on the number of mine and UXO victims recorded in a community over the preceding two years thus the qualitative advantage is watered down.

The first ever LIS was carried out in 1999 for Yemen, the fieldwork and data collection took a year and was completed in July 2000 (Kidd, 2000). The survey was conducted by the Afghan-based Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA) on behalf of the Yemen National Demining Committee (NDC) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). It was hailed as having initiated the debate about what the surveys needed to address in future and whether or not minefields or affected communities were to be the focus. The conclusion was that community-impact was important. According to Filippino (2006) the Yemen LIS helped with prodding this consensus making it sink roots quicker than would otherwise have occurred (Filippino, 2006 p. 13).

Over time, the *modus operandi* that governs the LIS process progressed in an effort to guide the survey so that the outcomes represent the initial goals as set out by the Survey Working Group (SWG); a process approved by the SWG and that now dictates the conduct of the LIS. The LIS attempts to make a major contribution by focusing scarce resources on the places of most need (Eaton, 2003 p. 916). It categorises the impact on communities into three basic levels: high impact, medium and low impact. However, the prioritisation on which communities will be addressed first remains the onus of the national authorities thus a national strategic plan on how mine action is addressed is a key output of the LIS.

After several years of the LIS being undertaken, the Survey Action Centre contracted SCANTEAM to carry out an evaluation of the Global Landmine Survey (GLS) process in 2003. The objective of the review was to identify lessons learned regarding the survey and to recommend ways in which the survey results could be made more useful; and also to identify ways in which the process could be modified (Yarmoshuk, 2005 p. 239). The findings included the point that LIS was a "stand alone" event and externally driven by donors and as a process it was described as poorly integrated within national tools and tasks (Scanteam and DEMEX, 2003 p. 2)

Similarly, the accuracy of the LIS remains contested; however, the overall aim is not better data but better planning and priority setting. The information from an LIS addresses several of these issues, but it has its limitations. In Mozambique the LIS was supposed to have provided the most comprehensive overview of mine contamination; however, this was not achieved due to lack of confidence in the quality of data which led to a lack of credibility and utility of the LIS as a planning tool (Filippino, 2006). The scepticism by some mine clearing agencies in Mozambique and also by SAC can be interpreted as a ploy for rebellion against the choice of operator by the donor. The operator in the case of Mozambique is reported not to have received support and cooperation from the Mine Action Sector.

Other issues that challenge the accuracy of the LIS include methodology; for example several issues were raised with the Mozambique LIS; the methodology used was seen to be flawed because impact survey protocols required that they be conducted as a census, not on the basis of a sample of communities; however the operator argued that the LIS was designed to be carried out as a sample given the size of the country. The Scanteam evaluation upheld the position of the operator appreciating that CIDC had adapted the methodology of the survey to address the conditions that existed within Mozambique, but concludes that "these adaptations did not change the fundamental methodological approach" of impact surveys (Scanteam and DEMEX, 2003 p. 200).

Cost of the LIS is another factor; the average LIS takes over one and a half years and costs over \$2 million USD (SAC website). Gasser observes that due



to the fact that surveys are conducted as defined by international protocols, the process accounts for what he has calculated and comes to a fairly constant fixed cost of more than US\$900,000 per country (Gasser, 2011 pp: 62-63).

Maslen (2004) cites an observation by a Sector insider, who equates the LIS exercise to 'building a Ferrari for people who ride bicycles'. Similarly, regarding a follow-up on a national LIS was reportedly rated as 'shit' by an expert who was involved in the design and implementation of the LIS (ibid p. 33). The analogy of cars was also used to describe the Angola LIS which Filipino (2006) reported as being described by an observer with detailed knowledge of Angola and mine action as akin to putting a Rolls Royce engine into a Fiat 500. The general failure of the process in Angola was the lack of technical skills yet the SAC did not make provision for training ( p. 44).

Maslen (2004) also describes the surveys as an indirect product of the unwillingness by donor states to give funding without the Sector undertaking baseline surveys that would guide their support and enable them to assess progress made in clearance. Thus in countries where donors have interest, LIS have been undertaken at their request; for example because Canada was providing a considerable amount of funding for mine action in Mozambique<sup>60</sup> and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was not confident that the resources were being prioritised well, they proposed a LIS. CIDA further dictated that CIDA only employ a Canadian company for the Survey thus opening a bidding process in Canada whereby the Canadian International Demining Corps (CIDC) which recruited an implementing partner, Paul F Wilkinson and Associates, a company that had no previous experience in the mine action sector. The evaluation report points out that such a process of determining which countries should be surveyed, and prioritising among them, should ideally have followed more planned procedures with the more heavily mine-affected countries coming first. However, the report acknowledges that the reality on the ground is that several factors intervene making such prioritisation more ad hoc (Scanteam and Demex, ibid).

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<sup>60</sup> In 2003 and 2004, a corruption scandal erupted over funds from 'adopt a minefield', involving the head of an international demining agency, the Deputy Director of IND and a UNDP official, all of whom were dismissed. This was followed by press reports of abuse of funds by the incumbent IND director and his predecessor.

**Table 3: Cost of Landmine Impact Survey's by year**

Country	Year of LIS	Cost US\$	Suspected Positives Before Visits	Post-LIS Actually Impacted	notes
Senegal	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	
Kosovo	2000	111,000	No Data	No Data	
Yemen	2000	1,645,000	1,294	592	
Chad	2001	1,842,000	1,361	249	
Mozambique	2001	2,272,000	2,057	791	
Thailand	2001	1,656,000	1,491	530	
Cambodia	2002	1,360,000	13,908	2,776	No sampling
Azerbaijan	2003	1,236,000	610	480	
Bosnia & Herzegovina	2003	2,006,730	2,939	1,366	
Lebanon	2003	1,500,000	1,065 306		
Eritrea	2004	2,291,992	352	132	
Ethiopia	2004	4,029,672	3,281	1,492	
Afghanistan	2005	3,004,494	4,655	2,365	
Armenia	2005	669,800	99	60	
Iraq	2006	No Data	12,010	2,117	No sampling
Mauritania	2006	No Data	No Data	No Data	
Angola	2007	6,778,163	4,384	1,988	
Somalia (all three phases)	2007	1,906,900	496	482	
Sudan	2009	No Data	Not aggregated	296	

**Source: Compiled from Various Landmine Impact Survey reports available on <http://www.sac-na.org/>**

For an exercise that is so costly, the utility of the LIS is therefore called into question as it does not give accurate technical information at a given location and normally a technical survey is required, a lesson that cost Mozambique handsomely as this was not carried out and clearance contracts were awarded for clearance of roads and only 6 mines uncovered. It is the usual pre-cursor to clearance, with the primary aim being to collect sufficient information to enable the clearance requirement to be accurately defined, including the area(s) to be cleared, the depth of clearance, local soil conditions and vegetation characteristics.

In Thailand, the LIS as a resource has largely been under-utilised due to the fact that the survey is only available in English and the NGOs working in the Mine Action Sector have no access to the survey data due to UNMAS having no budget for distribution (Maslen 2004). The LIS identified more than 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> of mine suspected land. Subsequently re-surveying was undertaken, and the overall size of suspected areas was reduced to approximately 530 km<sup>2</sup> greatly reducing the time and cost it would have taken for the whole 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> to be cleared. One expert notes that in spite of a fairly successful land cancellation process that Thailand has adopted in order to safely reduce the erroneous figures from the LIS, the legacy still lingers on, and clearance resources have been used to indiscriminately clear suspected-hazardous areas as well land already declared as not contaminated. This, they argue, means that the real lifespans of the minefields are prolonged and as a result accidents can occur (Bach, 2011). It also effectively means that Thailand cannot meet its obligations towards the MBT on clearance. There is an obvious risk of respondents inflating the impact of mines when researchers come in and announce their interest in the landmine issue. Thus, the limitation of the LIS data is acknowledged by Bach amongst others who argues that 'exaggerated assessment of the area contaminated by mines, highlight weaknesses not of implementation but of the impact survey process. An impact survey, by definition, is only as good as the knowledge of the people it taps for information'(Bach, 2011).

The LIS thus only provides a tool for ranking communities by severity of mine impact that can aid and/or inform the allocation of resources and even then, when the data is questionable, that function is sometimes not achieved. An LIS

is also not a clear indicator of an existing minefield but just a record of all known Suspected Hazard Areas (SHAs), as identified by the communities under threat and therefore excluded from community use. Reliance on such information has its own drawbacks as such information can be erroneous, yet such information remains the basis on which UNMAS determines the size and scope of the mine action component of the mission, its Results Based Budget (RBB) objectives and indicators and its budgetary requirements (UNMAS, 2012b p. 6).

After an LIS, there is usually therefore a need for a Technical Survey follow-up for operational planning; development of IMSMA as the comprehensive database for mine-action programme management; updating of national impact scores to reflect results of actions undertaken; community involvement in operational planning and priority setting; and measurement of the progress and impact of mine-action programmes nationally and globally (Downs, 2006).

Other methods and other survey methods have been suggested also based on the use of a standardised survey. Such an approach was introduced by AMAC, this was adapted to meet the needs of individual mine-affected countries, basic modules of the survey were used to cover household information and issues about community structure, whilst specialised modules were custom-made to address specific requirements for particular contexts, for example, the aspects of war-related migration (Millard and Harpviken, 2001). Such an approach is probably more suited to the disparate contexts in which mine action is carried out.

### **Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA)**

In order to be able to coordinate and manage operational activities, the Sector needed a standardised information management system. Hence, requirements for a data management system were collected and developed into an information management system which was released in 1999 in Kosovo having been field tested in Somaliland in late 1998 (Mulliner, 2000). This was developed by the Technical University of Zurich in Switzerland and became the basis of tool for a standardised mine action information management system.

Aptly named, Information Management System for Mine Action, (IMSMA) combines a Geographical Information System (GIS) with a relational database.

The GICHD started developing IMSMA in the late 1990s with the goal of providing the mine action community with one comprehensive IM package. IMSMA is now in use in over 65 countries. So far IMSMA has undergone several updates since its first release in 1999. With every new version and modification responsibility is added on to the mine action programmes as training has to be incorporated; similarly, for the IMSMA providers, it means redesigning the training manuals<sup>61</sup> (Martinez and Eriksson, 2011). All this no doubt has a cost implication. It is distributed free of charge by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), however the national programmes wishing to run the database cover for the cost of the necessary hardware (Ahmed, 2006). According to GICHD, the aim of the tool is to help make mine action safer, faster, more effective and efficient by allowing mine-action practitioners to enter pertinent data, and access, edit and manage that mine information efficiently and quickly. The value added of IMSMA lies in its ability to meet this target and therefore assist in better planning, monitoring and recording of mine action activities.

In order for the IMSMA system to run effectively, there are some bare minima that need to be met, including a facility to safely store the computers, power supplies and permission to use the system. Also required is availability of funding and technical competence within the organisation for the system to work. Ahmed (2006) underlines the importance of not just competent staff, but those with a familiarity with the contents of the database including the meanings and concepts associated with the data stored i.e., computer savvy and with the benefit of the knowledge of mine action technical issues in order for them to appreciate the needs of operations.

The quest for quality and standardised data has not received the same amount of attention as other areas in the sector due to the fact that poor or inadequate data has no direct impact on security or safety of those working. However, it has been pointed out that poor quality data collection, analysis and dissemination can cause an increase in costs through the additional allocation of resources to deal with the consequences of data-management problems.

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<sup>61</sup> The IMSMA user manual is a three hundred plus page document.

Such allocations result in non-conformance quality costs argues Harutyunyan (2011). This is illustrated quite clearly in the case of Somaliland.

With the need for standardisation comes a desire for integrating data from different sources and sectors which has a genuine chance of generating valuable new insights for policy and decision support, an observation that has been made by Barlow (2003). However, Benini and colleagues argue that sometimes the costs involved might be high and the added value may not be certain and may just increase the complexity of the tool and not raise efficiency especially in instances where the externally involved do not understand the landmine issue (Benini et al., 2003 p. 291).

Thus the most important aspect of any data system or tool is that the data generated is widely available to a great number of people; therefore, transparency should guide its dissemination. What is still unclear is how the IMSMA is actually utilised beyond the specific authority that possesses it. There is no established chain of communication from the community level to coordination level. Similarly, if such information is not made available, then other stakeholders including researchers and even other operators cannot make practical requests to those in possession of the database making the existence of a database redundant.

Other than the rhetoric on the need for making mine action safer etc., the Sectors' need for a good data management tool was partly driven by the need for collaboration in a highly donor competitive environment that was witnessing a plateauing in donor funding (ICBL, 2002). Today IMSMA is currently in use in more than 80 % of mine action programmes around the world and is the United Nations' preferred information management system for mine action. APPENDIX 3: IMSMA Theoretical Overview shows a diagram illustrating the theoretical overview of how the IMSMA tool is utilised. Though illustrating a flawless process, the process and the tool in general is not without challenges when it comes to utilisation in the field as will be demonstrated in CHAPTER 7: SOMALILAND'S CONTEXT AND SECTOR PROCESSES: IMPLICATIONS .

## **Coordination: Efforts towards National ownership and capacity building**

According to the report of the Secretary-General on Assistance in Mine Clearance, coordination and complementarity, both in the field and at headquarters, could only be achieved if national ownership, sustainability and capacity building were ingrained into the programmes especially in countries that had long term needs (UNGA, 1998). The Sector through the UN therefore follows the principle that ultimately addressing the problem of landmines and explosive remnants of war rests with the state under whose jurisdiction the contamination exists. Therefore support to mine affected states to fulfil their responsibilities and reinforce national ownership is based on demand driven approaches, and by identifying, mobilising and providing specific expertise. According to (Kjellman, 2008) the task of mine action policy in theory is one that should foster ownership under whatever circumstances prevail in any given country, rooted in a sound assessment of social and political realities. As such local capacity building is a central goal with an aim of handing responsibility for mine action back as soon as possible to the legitimate national authorities.

The need for a body to coordinate and regulate day-to-day mine action activities in a country became apparent fairly quickly in the evolution of the Sector. Thus the establishment of National Mine Action Agency (NMAA) and its implementing partner, the Mine Action Coordination Centres (MACC) became the means by which the UN could coordinate and also enhance ownership and capacity as the government or recognised authority, wherever possible, technically have ownership (Mansfield, 2002; Mansfield, 2005). The NMAA is an over-arching organisation, set up to ensure that all relevant Government ministries are able to state their requirements for mine action, and to set national priorities. It is also required to state the national strategy, and formulate long-term plans for clearance, including the financial structure necessary to carry them out. The MACC, as the NMAA's operating partner, carries out day-to-day control of all mine action. It ensures that all mine action is within national priorities, allocates clearance and MRE tasks to NGOs and commercial companies, and is responsible for Quality Assurance on the cleared sites, and subsequent acceptance of the cleared land on behalf of the NMAA. In practice, these organisations rarely start with the necessary skills to undertake their work; they

have to be developed, a process usually referred to as institutional capacity building. In most cases the United Nations undertakes this capacity building. Initially technical advisers (TAs) are seconded from donor country militaries (often as in-kind donations) or are employed under direct UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) contracts to provide advice and technical assistance. TAs contracted to UNOPS or other international donor agencies are generally referred to as civilian TAs; a misnomer as those TAs assigned at the start-up of MACs are generally serving or retired military officers who adapt their military training for the benefit of humanitarian mine clearance and generally work in close collaboration with national counterparts, transferring skills and know-how as in most instances post-conflict societies lack the human resources (Elliot, 2000 p. 19).

It is generally recognised that creating an effective capability at this level can be difficult and there are challenges as will be demonstrated in the case of Somaliland. In part, those failures of MACs can be blamed on a lack of international interest and support leaving them under-resourced and lacking encouragement and motivation.

Another focus of capacity building is the technical mine clearance work as this is seen as an important element of providing both a disciplined environment and jobs with standing in often difficult areas recovering from conflict. However, operationally there appears to be less explicit attention on a) what a National Mine Action Authority should do over the longer term, around the technical and managerial aspects of Mine Action and b) on how the NMAA needs to link to the wider economic development planning within a country. This is particularly important when a country is not necessarily interested, willing or able to take on genuine ownership.

Conway, in an article written on the eve of the Review of the Mine Ban treaty, noted that the Sector has a great deal of descriptive/historical information reporting quantifiable "outputs" achieved (e.g., national plans completed, standards established, the IMSMA operationalised, etc.), but has very little to show on the capacity-development outcomes of the sector's work, whether directly or indirectly. He also noted that the vitality of the institutions and



systems established to help modernise and enhance national capacity to realise its ownership and leadership responsibilities have failed (Conway, 2004).

The contexts within which mine action takes place are often post conflict environments where the capacity of the State to assume mine action is frequently compromised and or reduced. This is due to several factors; while the Mine Ban Treaty mandates that states assume responsibility for mine action, there is more often than not an inability to do so at the level of national government, rendering national ownership difficult at best.

Mine action is an externally managed activity mainly dominated by international organisations and therefore as with other externally supported peacebuilding efforts, suffers from the 'Samaritan's Dilemma'. As Maslen (op cit) notes, 'the generosity of donors can make it less likely that the recipients exert the necessary efforts to help themselves' (Maslen, 2004 p. 103). There is evidence of over-reliance by governments on international programming and the distribution of aid and expertise that have caused countries hosting mine action actors to have little interest in initiating or supporting mine action operations themselves. This is because they realise the saliency of the landmine issue internationally and, thus, they know that outside resources will likely be forthcoming with or without their interest (Spearin, 2001).

National ownership of mine action is thus often confronted with a type of Catch-22. Similarly the over dominance of external actors in the Sector is a challenge from the perspective of national ownership, as it raises a number of challenges in terms of the extent to which responsibility for mine action can be transferred to national authorities and institutions, and how policy can be designed and implemented to facilitate national ownership. Research has demonstrated that organisations can lose (a part of) their empowering effects due to heavy donor dependence (De Feyter, 2011). In the case of the Mine Action Sector this dependence on foreign aid means that donors tend to drive the actual activities on the ground, depriving national mine action authorities of oversight and coordination. Similarly these donors often lack the capacity or willingness to support long term projects, slow careful work and gradual (often non-quantifiable) results which characterise successful local institutional development. Thus, the extent to which the programmes get transferred from

the International organisations to local authorities and national governments remains slow and unsatisfactory. It has been noted especially that in almost every case where mine action programmes were originally established as directly managed programmes under the UNDP or another international entity, the process of transitioning them to national ownership has either been painfully strung out or failed altogether. In countries where mine action is of relatively low profile nationally, then national authorities may not be keen to get involved.

The way in which the Mine Action Sector operates has resulted into a desire to exclude (or not to actively seek) active government involvement in mine governance processes. In addition, concerns over patronage and corruption on the part of government officials and weak or non-existent government capacity have been cited as reasons for this non-involvement. Lack of engagement by national governments in mine action is partly because there are other issues perceived to be more important.

## **CONCLUSION**

Cousens and Kumar (2001) have argued that underpinning the criticism of liberal peacebuilding is a recognition that peacebuilding activities, imposed or otherwise, are largely imported to post conflict societies by the 'international community' of international and regional organisations, bilateral donors and international NGOS. Such activities have resulted in a set of peacebuilding activities that reflect Western forms of governance and institutions. In tracing the formation of the Sector, and the actors that have emerged, the same conclusion and therefore criticism is evident within the Sector and in their undertaking of mine action related activities. When understood in this broader sense Cooper (2011) has argued that the role of the UN as an early actor in the realm of mine action was hardly an objectionable programme and argues that the emergence of the landmines agenda was related to a hegemonic construction of security and military technology that emerged in the post-Cold War era and thus was not unproblematic.

Most of the programmes are formulated by external actors especially the UN, GICHD, reflecting the preferences of international organisations and donors (mainly western donors) that they offer technical expertise and also engage with international NGOs who are predominately western. Similarly, like

peacebuilding interventions, the preference for standardised templates is driven by the desire for mine action to have measurable outputs, outcomes and impact leaving no room for context specific approaches. This will be aptly demonstrated by the implementation of the LIS in Somaliland.

Thus the Mine Action Sector has become a hostage to its own 'success'. The data that the Sector has collected indicates that the number of injuries and deaths from landmines is decreasing (See APPENDIX 6: NUMBER OF MINE/UXO CASUALTIES PER YEAR (2000-2011) thus a positive contribution of the efforts. Similarly, the mine ban process effectively led to a focus on actual landmines from an almost exclusively military and technical outlook. The urgency of addressing the issue was stressed, albeit based on an exaggerated number of mines on the ground, which highlighted not just the humanitarian imperative to address the problem but also the need to put in place legal instruments and resources to support military / technical approaches to their removal.

Similarly the success of the treaty resulted in the multiplicity of disparate actors; complicating coordination and raising concerns for the need to ensure safety which in turn called for the articulation of standards to guide operations. The change in policies and panic-like urgency amongst the donors to address this seemingly insurmountable problem led to the development of tools and standards which have become a formal bureaucracy that dictates how the Sector is governed. The Sector has thus professionalised through the development of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and the design of planning tools such as the LIS and the IMSMA. While improving the quality of the technical side of mine action, the move to standardisation has had a tendency to make mine action intervention inflexible in responding to the needs of people living in mine affected communities. This has taken place within a global context that has defined that process, leading to the Sector being externally driven and isolated within the wider humanitarian sector.

Those who see the development of the IMAS as serving to protect the public against malpractice see the process as a move towards professionalisation of the Sector, for example the GICHD. However, others maintain that the purpose that the standards serve is 'to *dictate the terms and conditions that must be met*

*in order for an operation to continue to enjoy the benefits of that monopoly in a given country environment (as any number of codes of practice serve to ensure minimum standards in other professional contexts.)'* (Moyes and Tinning, 2005 p. 2). The IMAS cover a wide range of topics including maps and symbols, use of demining dogs etc., therefore the language used is difficult and complex as it is based on the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). The need for a simpler and easier to use version (including training) has been suggested by Sector insiders as noted by Maslen (2003, pp: 44). Likewise the standards are stringent and unrealistic and are seen as counterproductive, for example, 99.6% achievement of clearance may divert funds away from other risk reducing activities where more deaths and injuries could be avoided at lower costs (Marsh, 2006 online). There is evidence that donor policies are now marked by pragmatism whether in mine action or in humanitarianism in general (Devlin, 2010; Devlin and Naidoo, 2010; GICHD, 2011; GICHD, 2012; Naidoo, 2013). Such pragmatism has contributed to changes that have crept into donor policy languages as evidenced in a survey of donor countries carried out in May-June 2010 by the GICHD. The survey report indicates preference for a results-based approach instead of proposals that have a narrow focus of just getting mines out of the ground. Aid effectiveness is the force behind the criteria in which the donor preferred project proposals are those that have a broader focus aimed at minimising the toll of new victims and giving priority to impact of mines on lives and livelihoods (Devlin, 2010).

Part of the Sector's aim of improving operational effectiveness and safety, meant it established recognisable and measurable degrees of uniformity hence the requirement for quality data and the need for LIS which as the evidence demonstrates have not achieved much for the Sector. Their utility is questioned even within the Sector itself. The need for consistency and commonality and 'standardisation' means that the Sector follows a 'template like' format when establishing and undertaking mine action activities. A management infrastructure is established which includes a quality management system; a mines information system (MIS) which includes data collection and management; institutional arrangements providing an enabling framework for undertaking mine awareness and risk reduction education; minefield surveys and marking; training of key management staff and de-miners in all aspects of

mine action and support (usually undertaken by experts); mine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal; and victim assistance and the socio-economic reintegration of victims. Efforts to implement this across different contexts result in inefficiency, lack of coherence and coordination.

Similarly, the Sector now faces the realisation that meeting the obligations spelt out by the MBT treaty such as ownership, capacity building, and mine free status is challenged by the urgency of time, depletion of resources and the Sector's own stringent standards. Similarly the Sector lacks self-criticism and has been slow in engaging in a pragmatic change that focuses beyond technical progress or the super systems that it has created and which misses the "softer" side of the process. This is because technical advancements, networks and systems all need to be maintained and nurtured (at the minimum) and are thus dependent on nontechnical capabilities (relations, learning, coordination, etc. (Harpviken and Roberts, 2004; Harpviken and Skaešra, 2003; Jennings and Ruge, 2003; Jennings et al., 2008; Maslen, 2004).

Jennings et al. (2008) lament the disconnection between the principles of humanitarian mine action and the practise. They argue that, in principle, the problem of mine/UXO contamination comes about through a combination of an 'external' threat (threat from the mines/UXO themselves) and the internal vulnerabilities of individuals, communities and societies normally living in poverty and having to continue eking a living and generating a livelihood in the face of this threat (2008 p. 15). For example having to use land that is contaminated, or tampering with ordnances for the scrap metal trade etc. Whilst in practise the sector focuses on the external elements of efficiency, effectiveness, accountability mechanisms, and the need to reduce the external threat, they are blind to other social, economic or political outcomes (from cleared land) which are not considered as important or are not considered at all and which can be either positive or negative (see for example Unruh et al., 2011).

As the case of Somaliland will illustrate, many challenges occur when the Sector attempts to apply standard solutions to different contexts. I argue that this process has resulted in mine action being implemented in a stylised standard approach that tends to be based on a standardised template. I argue

that this process is more a response to the funding and global factors that dictate the need for standardisation and professionalisation in order to compete and fulfil donor requirements.

Having illustrated how the Sector arrived at standardised approaches and template based implementation of programmes, the next chapter contextualises mine action in Somaliland, looking at the historical context that the formalised Mine Action Sector encountered.

## **CHAPTER 5: SOMALILAND CONTEXT: THE OPERATION OF THE STANDARDISED APPROACH TO MINE ACTION**

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*The Somaliland mine clearance programme was 'plagued with logistic and 'Somali' domestic problems. (RIMFIRE report; dated 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1992)*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mine action in Somaliland as an event, or an issue, should not be looked at without placing it in its context. I have argued that the global context within which Global mine action occurred defines the policies that emerged and the manner in which they were implemented. Similarly, mine clearance programmes in Somaliland took place immediately after the cessation of conflict. During this time, the Sector was in its infancy and was still under formation as an organised humanitarian sector. The first section of this chapter therefore covers the period between 1991-1994 when mine clearance took place and was led and implemented as an immediate response to the contamination that had taken place; I highlight the challenges that the programmes faced. The Second section then looks into the entry of a formalised sector and the challenges of implementing mine action programmes.

Bendaña (2012 ) reflecting on UNDP's engagement in Somalia (under his tenure 2008-2012) observed that unless there was appreciation of how the context influences the programmes, it would not be possible to capture how the programme impacts on the context. Similarly unless the analyses were right, understanding an intervention's success or failure was going to be difficult as well. Understanding whether it was the intervention's design, or the strategy, the management, the nature of the work itself, or factors beyond the programme's capacity to influence, was important. He observed that were these factors considered, many mistakes could have been avoided with proper investigation of how existing social structures carried out governance and conflict resolution, as opposed to the promotion of a politically correct donor-driven Western procedural Rule of Law state building template (p. 3). Dr Alejandro Bendaña was the Programme Manager for the Rule of Law and

Security, from 2008 to 2012, under which mine action was a part within UNDP Somalia.

## **THE CONTEXT OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION**

The war and humanitarian disaster that occurred in Somalia coincided with the increased availability of funds in the early 1990s which in turn permitted rapid expansion of humanitarian activities in Somalia and elsewhere. Humanitarian and relief aid thus became a common feature in the landscape of Somalia; in the wake of the Ogaden refugee crisis, a number of International aid agencies rushed to help. Unfortunately operations in Somalia overlooked the links that existed between the dynamics of the complex political emergency and the interventions that ensued. Such an understanding was necessary in developing an effective aid strategy for the relief operations that followed (Cliffe and Luckham, 1999; Cliffe and Luckham, 2000). Due to the famine, the human imperative to help the victims of the conflict became the primary focus of most of the International NGOs.

Wiles et al. (2004) further argues that the response to the crisis saw a multitude of agencies with contrasting mandates, structures, procedures, operations and capacities operating in Somalia. This complicated the coordination of the intervention in an already complex disaster as these interventions were not clearly defined in terms of relief and rehabilitation, nor was the relationship between them. Through increased government and UN agencies transfers and public donations, many of the NGOs were in the theatre primarily 'to curry favour' with the media, in an effort to mobilise name recognition and funds (Ahmed and Green, 1999 p. 122). The high profile media coverage of the crisis also created other problems, which undoubtedly affected the quality and delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The involvement of aid agencies in Somalia was further complicated by acute security problems. These complicated the work as the intervention had to cope with the looting of relief supplies and even burglaries where those who received the aid were effectively taxed by the warlords. With the worsening of the security situation, some agencies looked to the warlords for help in the distribution of humanitarian relief; others hired them as armed guards for protection whilst some other agencies simply left. These security arrangements



helped in promoting clannism through legitimising some clan factions and leaders whilst marginalising others (Gundel, 2002). It also helped in supporting a violent political structure. The dependence on the warlords concentrated political and economic power in the hands of unscrupulous armed individuals (Dobbins et al., 2003). Furthermore, engaging with the war lords meant that the agencies lost their neutrality whilst trying to add legitimacy to their work. The impact of this was that the agencies indirectly became involved in the conflict, thus feeding and perpetuating it. The UN humanitarian operation encouraged a war economy by paying large amounts of money to the militia, thereby sabotaging future efforts towards disarmament (Kenning, 2011). The UN, the donors and the NGOs failure to address the conflict itself meant that the whole initiative became caught up with the conflict itself (Gundel, 2002).

As security degenerated, many international agencies withdrew from Somalia, prompting an increase of local NGOs in order to fill the void. Those who did not pull out completely subcontracted to local NGOs, which was seen by commentators such as Gundel as not only having had the ability to undermine local sovereignty but also having encouraged what he terms as 'patronisation and disempowerment' (2002). The rise of many local NGOs was also encouraged through a US\$3 million fund set up by the World Bank, and training offered by USAID for local NGOs who were encouraged to implement projects in basic social services (Abdillahi, 1997).

With the failure of military interventions in the country, the UN agencies, the donors and the International NGOs deliberated and came up with an approach called the 'peace dividend', mainly based on agencies having joint approaches rather than separate agency initiatives. Hence strengthening local NGOs became a focus for a number of international NGOs in 1994. This approach prompted the establishment of the Somali Aid Coordination Body (SACB). This was in line with the idea that international assistance for rehabilitation should be grounded in local initiatives, and relevant for peacebuilding. A code of conduct was applied in 1995, which stipulated conditionality of international aid to Somalia to this effect. The peace-dividend strategy required, for a start, a sustained commitment by both donors and humanitarian agencies, which, unfortunately, was not demonstrated. This made the Somalis deeply sceptical about the new co-ordinating body, seeing SACB as nothing but a political instrument of the donors. Such an approach is based on the need to empower local structures and organisations; which in turn should be closely connected to sustainability, and the creation of collective power to combat and overcome common problems. Due to lack of staff to take care of their projects, International NGOs subcontracted local ones. This was precipitated partly by fluctuating security conditions that meant fewer International staff were able to work in the field. Insecurity caused disruption to a lot of agencies' work and sometimes led to the strengthening of security arrangements for aid workers limiting the levels of engagement of international organisations on the ground. In cases where the agencies continued working, they required relocation of offices and withdrawal of international staff. Many operations became cross-border, where aid primarily was managed remotely from Nairobi. This included the Somali Red Crescent society, the only functioning Somali national humanitarian body that had its central base in Nairobi (Wiles et al., 2004). To date, this phenomenon still persists to some degree.

This was the backdrop against which humanitarian and relief aid in Somaliland unfolded. During the entire crisis, the concentration of humanitarian aid had been in and around Mogadishu which limited the operation's impact and drew people from rural areas to urban centres where relief camps had been established causing further displacement for populations that had escaped forceful displacement (Ahmed and Green, 1999; Kirsty Bisset et al., 2010).

## **POST WAR MINES/UXO CONTEXT**

Mine/UXO contamination in Somaliland mainly stemmed from various periods of warfare with majority of the minefields being laid during the Ogaden war 1977 – 1978 and the Somalia civil war in 1988-1991. The post war contamination context included contamination from both anti-personnel landmines and anti-tank (AT) which were laid mainly by the Somalia National Army (SNA) and were both anti-personnel (AP). During the Ogaden war, after an initially successful pre-emptive strike, the Somali National Army (SNA) was beaten back by a superior Ethiopian force that had the backing and benefit of training and weapons from The Soviets.

During this time, mines were also used for the protection of refugee camps for the benefit of Ethiopians living inside Somaliland, and also along strategic roads and tracks likely to be used by an invading force. They were laid defensively, predominantly along the Ethiopian border to hinder infiltration by the rebel groups, especially the Somali National Movement (SNM), who had their operating bases mainly in Ethiopia (Omaar et al., 1993). As the conflicts intensified, the armies resorted to using mines for counter insurgency purposes. Faced with inaccessible terrain and with attacks coming from within Somalia, the Somalia and Soviet troops responded to attacks with the random use of scattered mines (RIMFIRE final report 1993). During in the post Ogaden period, the SNM laid mines along the borders to protect their own bases (Physicians for Human Rights (U.S.), 1992 p. 15). Additional minefields were laid during clan skirmishes in 1992-1994, and it is also believed that some additional minefields were laid during conflict over border disputes between Somaliland and Puntland between 1994 and 1995.

Similarly, following the cessation of all hostilities, the country had vast amounts of ammunition which were abandoned as armies and rebels retreated, contributing significantly to the abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO)/UXO contamination. These large quantities of Abandoned Unexploded Ordnances (AXOs) such as missiles, were abandoned by withdrawing Soviet forces in 1977, and have presented a particular danger (Landmine Action, 2003). ERW are found in former military camps as well as in battlefield areas (Eric, 2003). For example, the North Kudbur area on the northern outskirts of Hargeisa, an area

favoured by the warring groups, because its natural trenches and cliffs were used for their offensive and defensive tactics, was left littered with UXOs. Other areas include a defunct marine camp on the outskirts of Berbera, which was a battle area and was left with a high level of UXOs within wreckages of vehicles and construction material. This area was also littered with scrap metal and other detritus that became a magnet for scavenging locals after scrap metals. The country further has all manner of Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs), including ground launched munitions, mortars, hand grenades and small arms ammunition, which litter the Somalian landscape (including Somaliland). The 1988 government bombing of Hargeisa left resultant contamination, which was found in all areas. In other areas where fighting took place, large amounts of unexploded and partially exploded battlefield ordnance were left, including hand grenades, mortar shells, anti-tank rockets, large artillery shells, heat seeking missiles, air dropped ordnance and surface to air missiles.

Another factor that contributed to the extensive contamination was the presence of a number of Ammunition Storage Areas (ASA) which constitutes a major risk in a post-conflict scenario. Thus the mine/UXO contamination problem in Somaliland was compounded by the presence of such extensive former battle areas, which sometimes have abandoned and/or damaged stockpiles of ammunition and explosives. Generally, due to inadequate and/or inappropriate munitions storage, explosive events in ammunition storage facilities take place frequently (Greene et al., 2005). Such events result in ERWs being dispersed and scattered over large areas around the storage facilities. Such places included areas in Darawayne, a former military base originally constructed by the Russians, with four Soviet-built ammunition bunkers. The Somali National Army occupied it before it was captured by the SNM. It is located 30 km North East of the capital city of Hargeisa, in the Galbeed region of Somaliland. The base was protected by a fenced mine belt consisting of minimum metal Pakistani P4 Anti-Personnel (AP) mines. In the mid-1990s, as a result of a fire, three of the bunkers exploded showering ammunition over a wide area and burying large quantities under rubble and steel. Unlike UXOs which normally affects one or more individuals, an uncontrolled or accidental explosive event within such an area has a far reaching impact on the whole community; it will

also result in the scattering of UXO over the surrounding areas, denying the use of that land to the local community.

Similarly RIMFIRE in reported finding 350 anti-tank mines outside a corrugated tin shed on the main road between Hargeisa and Berbera. Inside the shed were approximately 25000 detonators and crystallising explosives, cracked trip flares and other explosive devices. The hut was home to six refugees who were smoking and cooking inside. There were also huge stockpiles of missiles (SAMs) at both Hargeisa and Berbera airfields. At Berbera in January of 1994, there were still 250 SAM missiles some of which had begun to leak their volatile liquid fuels. At Hargeisa there were armed anti-aircraft missiles and 1000 lb bombs scattered around the airfield, many in an advanced state of decay (RIMFIRE Final Report, January 1993)

According to a GICHD study, the risk emanates from the danger posed by ammunition and explosives, the deterioration of the ammunition or the conditions under which it is being stored, and the security of the site (GICHD, 2002; See also; Greene et al., 2005). In Burao, Togdheer region, degraded and dangerous munitions held by the military existed in huge numbers, presenting a substantial threat to this major city.

### **Post War Response; the role of Humanitarian Mine Clearance Pioneer Corps and RIMFIRE (1991-1994)**

As the reconstruction process progressed in Somaliland, chaos continued to reign in the rest of Somalia coupled by the presence of the intervention led by the US. As the civil war continued, famine threatened the lives of many, forcing a humanitarian intervention in 1992. This was plagued by lethargy, lack of coordination and outright incompetence. By the end of November 1992, the US president ordered 30,000 combat troops into Somalia to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian relief. UNOSOM I was formed with a mandate to monitor the March 3rd ceasefire, protect UN workers, and safely escort humanitarian aid supplies. However conflict prevailed, leading to violent attacks on UN soldiers, which led the Security Council into unanimously adopting the United Task Force (UNITAF), which was given an unprecedented mandate and liberal rules of engagement that allowed the U.S. to use all necessary means to create a secure environment. Before much progress could be made, the Security

Council submitted recommendations for a transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II on March 3, 1993, recommending that UNOSOM II forces be given the power to create a safe environment, and help the Somali people rebuild their country by uniting politically and socially.

Whilst UNOSOM II was trying to bring some semblance of order to Somalia, Somaliland was going through its own reconciliation process as, noted in Chapter 3 mine clearance was one of the main programmes that had been agreed upon during reconciliation process. The elders were unanimous in their agreement during the peace process that mine clearance was a necessity (WSP International, 2005). Mine clearance was a prerequisite for any reconstruction and/or humanitarian work that needed to be undertaken. Thus, the first coordinated mine clearance immediately after the war in 1991, was performed by a group of 60 former SNM volunteers many who had served as combat engineers (probably laying mines) during the war and formed the Somaliland Humanitarian Pioneer Corps. It was typical of this period that serving or ex-military personnel carried out most of the clearance work (Horwood, 2000). They worked formally under the Somaliland Ministry of Defence on a voluntary basis with basic equipment that had been salvaged from the national army. Their work was inadequate compared to the need, and 40% of the initial group lost their lives or were injured (Omaar et al., 1993 pp. 54-55). One of the Pioneers interviewed contends that demining at this time was done in a haphazard way, and led to a high level of casualties amongst the deminers, mainly due to the lack of proper equipment, but also because of the way in which the mines had been laid (Abdikadir Jirde<sup>62</sup>; Interviewed on 24th November 2010 in Hargeisa).

Given the humanitarian impact the mines had, the EEC delegation in Nairobi requested RIMFIRE International Limited, a commercial organisation that claimed *speciality in humanitarian mine clearance and post conflict population*

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<sup>62</sup> Abdikadir Jirde was one of the Pioneers who then became the Deputy Director of NDA from 1995-1997. At the time, he participated at the Bad Honnef conference in Germany. From 1997 to 2005 he was the vice chairman of the House of Representatives. At the time of the interview he had been a member of House of Representatives since 2005 as the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly; He was also a University of Bradford Peace Studies Alumni.

*resettlement requirements*,<sup>63</sup> to conduct a survey of mines and munitions remaining in Somaliland, the report was to be submitted through *Medicins Sans Frontiers* (MSF) Holland<sup>64</sup>. The report concluded that international expertise was needed in order to supplement and extend the work of the Pioneers.

Therefore in 1991, in an unprecedented move, a commercial company was awarded a contract for a 'humanitarian mine clearance programme' in Somaliland. Through a funding proposal from MSF and UNHCR, RIMFIRE International Limited put forward a proposal to train and equip a Humanitarian Mine Clearance Pioneer Corps<sup>65</sup>. RIMFIRE was mandated to select and train 19<sup>66</sup> highly qualified and experienced explosives clearance operatives to train a much larger number of local staff. This approach was favoured for a number of reasons; (a) it was going to be far more cost effective than employing large teams of expatriates; (b) engaging local staff will have a positive impact in the economic reconstruction of the country meaning that donor aid will be doubly effective; (c) a pool of local expertise would be created<sup>67</sup>; (d) The provision of these services would provide otherwise scarce employment opportunities and help in restoring morale and self-confidence (RIMFIRE Final Report 1994). The scope of the proposed training and equipment was limited by funds available, but it was nevertheless decided that the training programme would be adequate to achieve the initial objectives of the project. The training took the form of a five week programme during which students underwent four one week sessions designed to acquaint them with the basic skills required. Additionally they were issued with equipment to enable them to carry out the work so that at the end of their training there would exist, in Somaliland, a Humanitarian Mine Clearance Pioneer corps of 139 men. This would include six Clearance Sections of 20 men together with a command and control element (RIMFIRE Report dated January 1993).

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<sup>63</sup> Omaar's report indicates that RIMFIRE was a private security firm initially and that Somaliland was its first venture into mine clearance. However a report seen by the Researcher written by RIMFIRE indicates that they were a commercial company specialised in humanitarian mine clearance.

<sup>64</sup> The report indicates that the request was as a result of injuries sustained from land mines by German nursing sisters

<sup>65</sup> During this period there were only two Humanitarian mine clearance organisations worldwide (HALO Trust and Mine Action Group UK)

<sup>66</sup> RIMFIRE reports indicate that these were graduates of the Defence Explosives Ordnance Disposal School ( DEODS ), Chattenden, Kent, UK who all had at least 10 years of experience in their trade. However further reports indicate that the some of the Pioneers had more experience and expertise than some of these Expats. See Omaar et al.

<sup>67</sup> In today's speak this would have been referred to as 'capacity building; and local ownership'.

It is important to note that the limited funding, including availability of expertise, was set against the background of the more than 30,000 US soldiers deployed in the rest of Somalia, and that such a force would have certainly have represented an immense potential capacity for mine clearance, within Somalia and Somaliland (Omaar et al., 1993 p. 52).

### **Efforts on data collection**

In the absence of a proper survey, RIMFIRE relied on rudimentary sources of data. Within the constraints imposed by the prevailing security situation, and for the purposes of better planning and implementation of the programme, RIMFIRE designed a simple data collection tool in a questionnaire format, designed to be understood by anybody who would be going into the field. These questionnaires<sup>68</sup> were to be completed by those out in the field as a form of mine survey for the HMCPC without special training. The data thus collected represented a rudimentary indication, for planning purposes, of the impact of landmine contamination at the time.

Information was collected from:- (a) records and observations of the officer corps of the HMCPC who had fought on one side or the other during the civil war, and had invariably laid some of the mines; (b) visual sighting of mines and munitions around Hargeisa and outlying villages; (c) monitoring of accidents to personnel and livestock; (d) information given by NGOs and others such as water works employees, school staff, orphanage staff etc., who had either seen mines and munitions, or required a clean bill of health in a particular area of field operations; (e) old military installations and ammunitions bunkers.

### **Challenges faced by RIMFIRE mine clearance efforts**

Mine action in Somaliland went through the same challenges as the programme's first attempts in Afghanistan. The programme was well-intentioned but ill-thought-out, revealing challenges that would befall many clearance efforts around the world in the years to come. In particular, RIMFIRE faced various challenges including contractual challenges, politicisation of the project and funding issues. These challenges are examined more broadly below;

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<sup>68</sup> See APPENDIX 4: Sample of RIMFIRE Data Collection Tool



### **a) Politicisation of mine clearance**

The politicised context within which the programme occurred cannot be overstated. The challenges were numerous and the issues were complex, and it is fair to say that any other humanitarian programme at this time would have struggled. Any humanitarian actions conducted at this time, either by the military or otherwise, were bound to be seen as political decisions. Whichever role RIMFIRE would have taken meant identifying with either the victims or belligerents. The context within which RIMFIRE operated was characteristic of the international relief efforts of the decade. Such efforts suffered poor coordination, and lacked the benefit of overall planning, amongst other issues (MacCormack, 2007).

Mainly driven by the immense danger the mines/UXO presented to aid workers and the local populace, the programme ignored basic essential requirements for an effective programme. There was a lack of comprehensive strategy for dealing with a complex humanitarian emergency of such magnitude. The programme started without a proper survey and clearance plan, meaning that the programme became vulnerable to the clan politics that prevailed at the time. The programme also failed to take steps towards setting up structures that would eliminate political vested interests. As RIMFIRE was a commercial company, the donors failed to offer the necessary humanitarian guidance that would perhaps have guided the project better.

In the absence of a comprehensive solution to the conflict, there was always a risk that the parties would return to armed clashes, and continue using landmines. There were high political tensions between parties, which frequently led to halts in the operations during the initiation period. The mines were of huge political significance, both in terms of use, and in their clearance, and this was demonstrated by the engagement of a Director of Mine Clearance during the period. In particular, the Director of Mine Clearance at the time, Mr Abdullahi Bihi, assumed enormous personal powers and had a huge vested political interest. He continually used RIMFIRE's resources to advance the then president's political programme. During the civil war that ensued, Pioneers from his own clan and from the President's clan were promoted, whilst others were dismissed or unpaid. This practice of hiring exacerbated inter-clan conflict;

priorities for demining were driven by clans, rather than by areas that truly needed it. The destruction of mines was also done selectively with those stocks from other clans being prioritised. There was also failure to follow safety procedures when the landmines were disposed.

The deminers were technically employees of the Ministry of Defence, and under the control of the Director of Mine Clearance; hence, they were part of the security forces of the government. During the political tensions, RIMFIRE, through the Director, provided logistical support to the government's security operations<sup>69</sup>. Some of the deminers were also seconded to guard the Director's house and other senior figures (Omaar et al., 1993 p. 64). Some of the deminers with RIMFIRE also took part in re-laying mines themselves. Omaar et al confirmed that the Pioneers laid mines on behalf of the government during a conflict in the Berbera area in 1992, where 40 deminers under the leadership of the Director of Mine Clearance were reported to have assisted one of the armed groups to lay landmines on the approaches to Berbera town (1993 p. 65).

Similarly, most local Somali communities associated the presence of demining with opportunities for employment and procurement of contracts, which were seen as more important than the removal of landmines. This led to problems with hiring and subcontracting. Menkhaus notes that 'in some instances the lucrative business that demining contracts generated resulted in Somali communities actually planting new landmines in order to create new demining opportunities' (Menkhaus, 2006a p. 9). The warring clans also viewed mine clearance assets and the cleared mines as their own resources that could advance their cause, thus looting of vehicles and other assets such as radios, vehicle antennas, ballistic jackets and helmets belonging to RIMFIRE became a common occurrence and this sometimes led to injuries. Similarly, the mines once cleared were seen as the property of the individual clans and they therefore laid claim to the same. Twenty six Pioneers were wounded by gunshots during hijackings and ambushes during the operation. The hijacking and looting was also attributed to disgruntled Pioneers especially one which ended up with the fatal shooting of the driver as he had resisted. Abdikadir

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<sup>69</sup> They allowed the use of their batteries, fuel, hired vehicles and radios etc.

Jirde referred to the looting and ambushes of this calibre as **clan capture**<sup>70</sup>. He noted;

*What happened is that it was **clan capture** of RIMFIRE. People who were doing the demining were hired by RIMFIRE and they would say they were coming from a certain clan. When hostilities broke out, they joined their clans. With their expertise, with the stock of landmines they had, with the explosives, with the trenches and everything. They created havoc in certain regions in the country (Abdikadir Jirde).*

The problem with looting forced RIMFIRE to stop operating its own fleet and resort to hiring locally owned vehicles in support of the operations which brought with it other dynamics, including sometimes those supplying the vehicles refusing to hire them out and/or charging exorbitant prices. The problem also meant that some of the vital equipment could not be carried around easily because of the risk of capture. This no doubt had an impact on operations.

The RIMFIRE programme operated without the benefit of the knowledge of predatory political economies that characterise many of today's conflicts and complex emergencies. Therefore the risk of aid diversion was particularly high. However, the programme quickly learnt that they possessed assets quite beneficial to the clans. There was an attempt at some reflection, even though rudimentary, which can be deciphered from the various reports filed by RIMFIRE. The reports indicate that there was a certain level of appreciation of the context within which RIMFIRE was working, and their feeble efforts to mitigate the impact, for example, the movement of their demining assets from Djibouti to Hargeisa was planned to take place during Ramadan when 'everyone is calm and on extra rations of khat and too tired to attempt a hold up'. Also to mitigate the problem with access to areas where demining needed to be undertaken, complex arrangements and agreements had to be drawn up with

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<sup>70</sup> Rather than what is referred to in the mainstream as elite capture. A phenomenon where resources transferred for the benefit of the masses are usurped by a few, usually politically and/or economically powerful groups, at the expense of the less economically and/or politically influential groups. See Dutta, D. (2009) Elite Capture and Corruption: Concepts and Definitions. Bibliography - with an overview of the suggested literature. Available from [http://www.ruralgov-ncaer.org/images/product/doc/3\\_1345011280\\_EliteCaptureandCorruption1.pdf](http://www.ruralgov-ncaer.org/images/product/doc/3_1345011280_EliteCaptureandCorruption1.pdf)

the clan elders around equal clan distribution of tasks and jobs. This did sometimes lead to increased cost, but it allowed work to proceed.

Similarly in a report by the Monitor dated 1 November 1993, RIMFIRE was reported to have declined a request from the government to clear what had been a former Russian airfield near Daraweyna. RIMFIRE had declined on the grounds that this was not a humanitarian requirement and it was suspected that at the time, they (the government) wanted to pressure NGOs to use that airfield as they were not getting any share of the fees charged at Hargeisa airport. In yet another report RIMFIRE underlined the requirement that the 'mine clearance programme must be seen as humanitarian, technical and neutral', in order to achieve this, RIMFIRE argued the need for Sections of the HMCPC be recruited from across the country. Similarly, the report spelt out that decisions regarding deployment should be taken by international staff in consultation with the Government (RIMFIRE Report dated January 1994).<sup>71</sup>

In particular in areas donors had raised concerns as they (RIMFIRE) had compared the Somaliland project with a similar programme in Afghanistan that had fallen into difficulties due to rebel forces who were selling cleared mines for re-laying. The donors had raised concerns that the project should not be seen to be connected to the military, as this would have been construed as giving military aid to the North. Ironically, even though this had been raised as a concern at the beginning of the project, the project went ahead, implemented through the Ministry of Defence, and ended up having a similar impact.

Political challenges therefore had adverse impacts on mine action during conflict. The generally sensitive, difficult and uncertain situations were specifically singled out. Political tensions between the different clans frequently led to halts in the operations during the initiation period when the Pioneers set up clearance in Somaliland. In the absence of a comprehensive solution to the conflict, there was always a risk that the parties would return to armed clashes and continue using landmines. The political use of the mine issue was a real problem at the beginning as demonstrated by the engagement of the Mine Director during the time.

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<sup>71</sup> Annual Report on the Maintenance and Supervision of the Humanitarian Mine Clearance Pioneer Corps in Northern Somalia 1993 filed in London, January 1994.

Mine action remained a highly political activity due to the fact that, like humanitarian aid, it involved engaging with political authorities in the conflict affected country. Post clearance in various contexts the highly political nature of land claims after conflict means that mine action remains intricately connected to politics. The clearance organisations often desire to remain neutral and this hinders them from acknowledging the complexity that is conflict politics in this context. This is evident especially in contexts where land and property rights remain contentious after the cessation of conflict (Unruh, 2012).

The context within which the Somaliland mine clearance programme was set had a history replete with politicisation of aid (be it bilateral, relief or otherwise). Thus mine action and specifically mine clearance was doubly disadvantaged in as far as the politicisation was concerned.

The initial mine clearance programme in Somaliland suffered a number of misfortunes; politicisation however was one of the major drawbacks that challenged mine clearance programmes. According to reports by RIMFIRE dated 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1992, they were '*plagued with logistic and 'Somali' domestic problems*'. This can be interpreted in various ways, however, through reading other independent reports, it soon becomes clear what the '*Somali' domestic problems* may have meant. Problems included the allocation of mined Government buildings for RIMFIRE to use as control centres, only to be taken from them as soon as they had been cleared, cleaned and repainted.

#### **b) Contractual challenges**

As mentioned elsewhere, RIMFIRE International Limited was a commercial organisation that claimed *speciality in humanitarian mine clearance and post conflict population resettlement requirements*. However, RIMFIRE had been until then a private security firm with very little knowledge of mine clearance. Somaliland was its first venture into mine clearance (Omaar et al., 1993). A report by Physicians for Human Rights indicates that the organisation was first organised in May 1990 (Physicians for Human Rights (U.S.), 1992).

The terms of the RIMFIRE contract were not clearly spelt out. They were contracted to provide technical expertise to the Somaliland government, who

had the Pioneers running the programme. This meant that they, RIMFIRE, had limited control or sanctions over the employees.

Due to technicalities with the contract, the issue of salaries became a thorny one from the beginning. As the Pioneers were employed by the government, RIMFIRE thought it best to delegate salary payment to the government. However on several occasions the salaries were not paid. This caused a backlash with RIMFIRE, who were sympathetic with the Pioneers who were oblivious to the subtleties of their employment status. Though the salary payments were a 'tedious and frustrating job' according to reports filed by RIMFIRE, they took on the responsibility (Rimfire Annual Report, 1993).

In January 1994, UNOSOM took over the responsibility of demining in Somalia, including Somaliland. UNOSOM requested RIMFIRE to continue work, while they (UNOSOM) developed their future strategies. During this time the Pioneers went on strike demanding a salary increment. With advice from the government, UNOSOM held out. This led to a situation in which 13 RIMFIRE contractors were held hostage by the Pioneers thereby forcing UNOSOM to agree to their demands, an incident that was reported widely by international media (AP Reporter, 1994). The Pioneers ended up with a pay increase, and a 3 month salary, even though they had not worked for the 3 months. Following this wage dispute RIMFIRE withdrew on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February as it had become unsafe for them to continue; however, it was reported that the local authorities and United Nations representatives were not satisfied with RIMFIRE's hence their withdrawal (The Indian Ocean Newsletter 26 Feb. 1994, pp: 4; Interview with Abdikadir Jirde).

There are a number of factors that compounded the salary process and were extremely difficult to explain to the Pioneers; a fluctuating exchange rate meant that at the time the Pioneers were engaged, the promised salaries suffered a 50% decrease, a concept that was difficult to relay. This resulted in a deep deterioration in the purchasing value of pay offered to the Pioneers. RIMFIRE agreed to increase their payments, but they did not have that amount of money in the country and therefore couldn't make the payment immediately. Before the issue could be resolved, the Pioneers had caused considerable insecurity, leading to a major strike from the 6<sup>th</sup> of June till the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1993 (Rimfire

Annual Report, 1993 : Annex M). The strike ended up with the loss of equipment and revealed the deterioration of the relationship between RIMFIRE and the Pioneers. During this strike the expatriate staff did not leave their compound fearing for their safety (Omaar et al., 1993). The lack of intervention by donors on what the mandate of the organisation was vis-à-vis the government, meant that a lot of misunderstandings occurred, which caused a lot of tension with the local communities.

The expatriates also lacked cultural sensitivity, which led to further conflict with the communities. Waldron and Hasci (1995) identified such insensitivity in Somalia as a major problem that permeated the expatriate policy formation and administration of aid. They argued that 'outsiders were usually ignorant of Somali culture and the realities of Somali life' (p. 16).

### **Post war mine clearance achievements**

Though these early demining efforts were fraught with challenges, they enabled the re-population of the city of Hargeisa, the clearance of Hargeisa Airport, and many outlying villages and towns were also cleared. The Ogaden war of 1977-1978 had provoked a massive refugee movement, displacing thousands of people in Somalia. The UNHCR reported that by 1981, refugees constituted perhaps as much as 40 per cent of the population of Somalia (UNHCR, 2005). Mine clearance contributed to the return of a high number of them and the repopulation of Hargeisa.

Demining contributed to the elimination of the weapons of war, and reduced perceptions of insecurity. The employment of former soldiers in the demining sector supported the demobilisation process and contributed to reducing the potential for violence. This is usually followed by the long-term process of reintegration that includes the reform of the security sector to meet post-war security challenges and to create an enabling environment for sustainable peace and development. The clearance and destruction of mines/UXOs is possibly the most well-known and well-supported form of practical disarmament.

Landmines and UXOs posed multidimensional problems in many post-conflict countries, other than the loss of life, disability, psychological problems and a continuous state of fear and insecurity between and among affected

communities. In 2001, one in every 652 returnees had become a mine victim whilst 5,000 mine casualties (3,500 fatalities and 1,500 amputations) were recorded for the period between 1991 and 2001 (UNDP, 2001 p. 64). Similarly, the social and economic well-being of communities is impacted in various ways. For example, they deny populations access to agricultural land; destroy livestock; reduce ability to generate income; restrict children's access to schools; prohibit repair and use of irrigation systems; and inhibit national reconstruction and development strategies. Most significantly the impact was felt from blockages. This can either be blocking of access for humanitarian organisations trying to deliver crucial aid to populations in need or these populations being blocked from accessing alternative sources of livelihood e.g. fertile land, wells etc. thereby trapping them in poverty and denying them external assistance.

The Role of RIMFIRE in reducing the threat has been acknowledged:

*When we went in in the early 90s, the whole security, the operational situation was very difficult. Even as late as 1999 it was bad so there is no doubt that RIMFIRE worked on an incredibly difficult situation. Security was a lot worse than when we were there. And I think and I believe now, and I've said that I take my hat off to those guys. I think they did a great job. Because in absolute terms they cleared a lot of stuff and the NGO subsequently spent a lot of time completing the clearance of several of those big mine fields down near the border that RIMFIRE weren't able to complete because of insecurity problems and all the rest of it. And yes they missed mines undoubtedly and I saw mines that went off but the thing is they reduced the risk in those areas to a point where for sure there were still mines left (Nick Bateman<sup>72</sup>; Ex DDG and HALO Trust Programme Manager Interviewed in Nairobi on 13th of September 2012).*

Though they were highly criticised, prior to 1991, no humanitarian mine clearance organisation existed, so the expertise for carrying out humanitarian

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<sup>72</sup> Nick Bateman previously worked for HALO Trust as Technical advisor from September 1994 and then as Programme Manager from 1999 to 2000; he then joined DDG in 2003 to 2008 where he worked as the Somaliland Programme Manager and also as Acting DDG Regional Director for the Horn & East of Africa regional office in Nairobi.



demining in the complex emergency did not exist. It was noted by the then Monitor, and advisor to the project, that the co-author of the report that highly criticised the role of RIMFIRE in Somaliland was the co-founder of Mine Advisory Group (UK), a demining organisation that had been set up around the same time. With MAG's experience in Afghanistan, it would have been expected that the critics would have appreciated the context of mine clearance but they didn't, the sincerity of the authors was therefore questionable.

In two years work in Somaliland, with 440 deminers, RIMFIRE sustained only two deaths from a single mine incident. The rest of their casualties resulted from gunshot wounds during attempted kidnapping and looting. During the same operation period after the Kuwait conflict there were 85 serious mine casualties in less than 10 months, whilst in Afghanistan the UNOCA lost 16 deminers whilst clearing 68 sq km of land (ICRC, 1992). This was the achievement of RIMFIRE in two years in Somaliland.

Upon RIMFIRE's exit, the UN Monitor compiled a comprehensive report on every aspect of work undertaken during the period. These reports, which were made available to me, address every aspect of challenges encountered (in detail) and include comprehensive advice on the way forward for mine clearance in Somalia in general and in Somaliland in particular. These reports would have formed a very good basis for the UN, and the Sector in general, as a point of reference for the implementation of future programmes; they were provided to UNOSOM and to donors with copies being held by the Monitor's consulting company. The UN Monitor confirmed that he was never approached by anyone for advice or information that could have guided the work that followed (Email correspondences with J. Craib)

Thus, RIMFIRE began by clearing large areas of minefields especially around Hargeisa and the surrounding villages, the airport and several former military camps, water tanks, refugee camps and some roads. This operation was widely criticised by human rights groups (see Omaar et al., 1993) at the time. However, it has been acknowledged that the work undoubtedly resulted in significant reduction of the threat of mines and UXO around Hargeisa and in other parts of the region (Lardner, 2008).

When the security situation improved, various international Humanitarian mine action NGOs, through funding from various donors, started mine action programmes in Somaliland.

## **FROM MINE CLEARANCE BY RIMFIRE TO A UN LED MINE ACTION SECTOR**

With the exit of RIMFIRE, no serious mine action programmes were carried out till 1998, when humanitarian mine clearance organisations started being operational. However, in the intervening period, internal clan based conflict broke out, and between 1994 and 1995 there was hardly any attempt at demining. There were no new programmes initiated, and indeed, according to Landmine Monitor, and as noted elsewhere, this period saw the laying of new mines in the central city of Burao. It was not until 1998/9 that the UNDP funded a three month demining project with Mine Tech of Zimbabwe, and Greenfields consultants. Initially contracted to do a feasibility study with a group of previously trained Somali deminers, Mine Tech cleared 73,000 sq meters in Burao and also cleared a 1.5km road in the town of Sheikh (Landmine Monitor, 1999).

In 1998, Mine Tech, a commercial demining organisation from Zimbabwe, was contracted on a \$202,000 funding by the UNDP for three months to carry out mine clearance in the city of Burao. Mine Tech was founded in 1992 and used demobilised Zimbabwean soldiers for mine clearance under the direction of Col Lionel Dyck, a former army officer, who is reported to have commanded an elite Zimbabwean paratrooper unit which operated in Mozambique against the Renamo (Landmine Monitor, 1999 p. 58). These Zimbabwean soldiers were the same advisors who in 1993 had under the command of Jeremy Brickhill their commander had come to advice Somaliland on demilitarisation.

1999 saw the arrival of international mine clearance organisations such as the HALO Trust, Santa Barbara, Mine Tech and the DDG in Somaliland increasing the number of actors involved in mine action. The increase resulted in a call by the UN Secretary-General in his October 1999 annual report, for improved co-ordination and institutional support for the demining organisations that were involved in Somaliland (UNGA, 1999). Thus, UNDP having been previously

implementing direct clearance tasks in places such as Burao shifted its focus to capacity building through setting up a National Mine Action Coordination. This saw the establishment of the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) in February 2000 which they directed but was implemented through the UNOPS.

### **The Role of the UN in establishing a national programme**

According to UN standard practise engagement in post conflict contexts involves the former warring parties asking the international community to provide assistance in the form of peacekeeping or within broader peacebuilding missions; however the case of Somaliland was different as it was not a recognised state (Paterson and Filippino, 2006). Similarly, within mine action programmes, UN involvement generally takes place either within the humanitarian context under the overall authority of a Humanitarian Coordinator, or as part of a development programme under a UN Resident Coordinator; within a peacekeeping operation it takes place under a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). None of these instances relate to the Somaliland context.

According to the Sector's own guide on global mine action implementation strategy, the process of programme implementation starts with the establishment of a National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) which is responsible for the regulation, management and coordination of mine action in a mine-affected country (UNMAS, 2012b). This NMAA is tasked with ensuring that the national and local conditions enable the effective management of mine action programmes. It is therefore ultimately responsible for all phases of a mine action programmes within its national boundaries, including surveys and assessments that might be undertaken. In particular, the NMAA seeks to establish and maintain a system and procedures for the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of information on the mine and UXO threat and its on-going impact (Morete, 2003). The establishment of a NMAA is also one of the strategic ways that the UN seeks to reinforce national ownership and build capacity of a mine affected country so that mine action functions may eventually be transferred to national actors and enhance their capacity to fulfil mine action responsibilities (UNMAS Strategy).

However, for the case of Somaliland, upon formation of a government, a body to address the issue of landmines was put in place. The National Demining Agency (NDA) had been formed under the Ministry of Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (MRR&R) in 1996. The office of the Vice-President headed an inter-ministerial Steering Committee; as an active government body, the NDA issued a policy paper on landmines in 1998 in which it proposed policies that were approved by the President's Cabinet on 26 October 1998. Similarly on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 1999, the Somaliland House of Representatives passed an amended version of the NDA policy in which in Article 1 it declared that "the State shall undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel mines it owns or possesses, or that are under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible" (Landmine Monitor, 1999 citing the government paper). This was important given the historical claims by clans to cleared and stockpiled mines and other UXOs.

From the onset, the UN encountered a formal structure that could have been adapted as an NMAA but was not. Rather than improve on what was already in existence the UN embarked on a process of establishing the Somaliland Mine Action Centre in 1997, a year after NDA had been in operation. Having disregarded the existing official structure that was in place, the UN went on to establish a parallel organisation and imposed it on the National Mine Action structure that the government had put in place. According to the implementation process, a MACC normally plays the role of an implementing partner for the NMAA and is only put in place once a NMAA is in place. From its inception the NDA had nominally coordinated mine clearance (Landmine Monitor, 2003). Thus the process of creating SMACC was problematic because it was seen both by the government and other stakeholders as a deliberate act of disregard to existing institutions. According to the NDA's first Director, the decision can be explained purely in terms of the need for the UN to serve its own interest. *'There were no good reasons for the need to create a parallel institution by the UN to carry out the same tasks'*, he argues.

This position was elaborated further by the first National Director who recalled being approached (presumably to head SMAC) and challenging the offer to set

up a the organisation by asking for the existing organisation to be improved instead; he said

*I remember the first time I heard that UNDP was setting up a mine action organisation, I was the NDA Director. A South African guy who was working from Nairobi and came here for this mine action thing, he approached me and said 'I want to establish an office' and I challenged him to think about it. He asked me why he had to think about it and they were already here to establish a mine action office. He told me, we are making an office of Somaliland mine action which will be under UNDP. I challenged him and he replied that he is doing the actual mine action, and that I should go and support them. I replied that I was also doing mine action. His reply was 'well Mohammed, think about it and come back to me in a few days'. He then approached a friend of mine asking him to convince me to support that office. I asked my friend why should we? If he is genuine, this office is doing the same thing so he should come and support me but not make another office. So my friend replied that if I refuse I would not get capacity because the UN has the funds. He explained that it was up to us to go to the UNDP, as the international community is the one that has the funds you will not get the funds and neither will you get the support as NDA' (Mohammed Ali Ismael- Former NDA Director (1996-99); DDG (1999 -2005); interviewed in Hargeisa on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010)*

According to Nick Bateman, *'The UN came in and created SMAC for convenience. The NDA just died because they had no resources and everything went to SMAC'*; According to Ahmed Essa<sup>73</sup>, the issue was purely a turf war and he acknowledges the fact that NDA never received any support;

*NDA has always been marginalised by SMAC by UNDP focusing on SMAC, it's a turf war. UNDP have always had this, they have had a money pit that they used to capacitate SMAC and not help NDA at all.*

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<sup>73</sup> Ahmed Essa is the Director Institute of Practical Research and Training; he was also the founder of Somaliland Campaign to Ban Landmines; and the Landmine Monitor Researcher for the region. He ceased campaigning and any work involving landmines as he felt that mines were no longer a threat or a priority in Somaliland. He now concentrates his efforts wholly on education especially the training of medical students. A service that he insists is needed in Somaliland.

(Ahmed Essa; Landmine Campaign Activist and Researcher; interviewed on 26th September 2012).

A Senior UN official referred to the process as '*a political thing, more than anything else*'. He spoke of the need to disassociate from NDA due to the political history of the NDA and its' relation to the military;

*As we know the history of the NDA has been that is was part of the army and then part of the military defence and now part of the Ministry of Interior. The NDA has been one of these posts that government promote to give good positions out with not much effort to these positions.* (Graeme Draemu Abernethy – Programme Coordinator, United Nations Somalia Mine Action (UNSOMA), UNOPS office, interviewed in Nairobi on 15th December 2010)

During an informal chat with a Senior UNDP official, especially after I had been frustrated by the absence of a vibrant mine action sector and was contemplating abandoning Somaliland as a location for my study, the UNDP official specifically highlighted the need for more critical research especially on 'the role of the international community in insisting on establishing a parallel institutions whilst the government of Somaliland had had an operational capacity for the same',

*This, he argued 'did not only bring about confusion and frustration within mine action during a very crucial time, but it left some of us disillusioned by what we saw as disregard and disrespect of local structures'* (Senior UNDP RoLs Programme official)

It has been generally acknowledged that neither organisation has been effective, though SMAC did begin to become effective around 2008; whilst other than the policy paper, the NDA had not had any capacity to undertake any other assigned activities (ICBL 2009). This was primarily due to the lengthy period marred by political in-fighting. SMAC has suffered mainly from its lack of an overall coherent and coordinated approach. However, the ineffectiveness was a direct result of the presence of these two coordinating bodies without clear segregation of responsibilities and mandate, which meant that mine action coordination suffered from repeated friction between the government of Somaliland and UNDP. The relationship between SMAC and NDA having never

clearly been defined suffered from claims of overlapping responsibilities and this became a major source of friction. In the wake of these repeated disagreements the UNDP failed to renew SMAC's contract after it expired on 28 February 2002 (Landmine Monitor, 2002). This was to have quite an impact on mine action programmes and the implementation of other policies as will be illustrated in the next chapter.

### **Redressing the challenge of the SMAC/NDA impasse**

In 2002, as a response to the challenges that the sector found itself in, and in adherence to the Global mine action strategy, representatives from national authorities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and civil society organisations led by UNDP met to develop a strategic plan. During the workshop it was agreed that the government, through SMAC, needed assistance with the prioritisation of activities as a matter of urgency. This was also a requirement of the Global Mine Action Strategy, which stipulates that a national strategic plan is needed in order to define where a mine action programme is going, how it intends to get there, and the measure of success. Such a strategy encompasses an entire national mine action programme whilst individual organisations, working within the programme, normally have their own action plans, which should be consistent with the overall national strategic plan.

Thus, following this meeting, UNDP mobilised resources for a comprehensive Landmine Impact Survey for Somalia in general. The aim of the survey was to assess and analyse the socio-economic impact of the mine/UXO contamination on a village-by-village basis. This information would, in turn, be utilised to update the mine action priorities. The view was that there would be centralised control over data collection and management activities and this would inevitably ease the transfer of responsibilities to the local Somaliland authorities (Landmine Monitor, 2001 online).

Unfortunately, the impasse between UNDP and the government (SMAC and NDA) lasted throughout the period of the first phase of the LIS. This impasse was finally addressed and SMAC participated in the second phase of the LIS and in 2004 a National Mine Action Policy was proposed and adopted. The policy fully mandated both the government's bodies, and clarified their relationship with the Sector agencies and other stakeholders. SMAC was

defined as the coordinating body for mine action and quality management, while the NDA was to be the body responsible for demining and other activities such as Mine Risk Education (DDG Annual Report 2004). Similarly, a National Mine Action Policy was adopted by Parliament and this clarified the respective bodies' relationships with the mine clearance agencies and other stakeholders.

SMAC also received Institutional support from DFID through UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) (MASG, 2005 pp: 15). The emerging structure proposed included the Mine Action Commission (and underneath it the Mine Action Centre) under the President's Office. Its objectives were coordination, planning and quality assurance of mine actions operations, maintenance of records and databases, accreditation and licensing of mine action organisations. Technically SMAC was to work under the direction of the vice-president who is supposed to also chair the Somaliland Mine Action Committee (the national authority) that comprises of eight ministers<sup>74</sup>. However enquiries on how or when the last meeting took place reveals that this has never happened. The same is reported in a DDG evaluation report (Lardner, 2008). The idea was to give the Commission broader access across the ministries if handled by the Vice President; meaning that both the NDA and SMAC would report directly to the Vice President (*Interview with Senior UN official, Hargeisa, 2010*).

In the short-term the strategy meant continued UN support to strengthen the capacities of SMAC and the police EOD teams. By the end of 2009 it was envisioned that the Somaliland government would take on greater financial responsibility. The strategy also called for UNDP to support the construction of an EOD Police Command and Training Centre, and expand SMAC's survey capacity (Landmine Monitor, 2008).

Before 2009, the plan was reviewed and extended to 2010 (Landmine Monitor, 2008). This became the medium-term strategy (2010–2012) with the aim of ensuring that a resource mobilisation plan was developed and implemented to ensure SMAC could operate independently. The strategy also was to ensure

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<sup>74</sup> Lardner (2008 pp 7) citing the draft National Policy states that these might include the Ministries of Rehabilitation, Repatriation and Re-integration (MRRR), Planning, Health and Labour, Education, Information, Interior and Foreign Affairs.



that residual medium-priority areas of contamination identified by the LIS were dealt with. Within the medium-term strategy, other elements of mine action such as victim assistance, advocacy and stockpile destruction strategy were to be developed and implemented.

Under long-term plans (beyond 2012), SMAC was to be in a position to coordinate and undertake all mine action activities without the need for international supervision (Human Security Unit, 2009 p. 298). The strategic plan rarely addressed in detail other elements of mine action such as mine risk education and or victim assistance. Similarly whilst other countries such as South Sudan's strategic plans drew on policies such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) the Somaliland one incorporates themes of capacity-building and the rule of law found in the Somalia Reconstruction and Development Programme 2008–2012 (Landmine Monitor, 2008).

Whilst the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) is Somaliland's coordination body, the visibility of the strategic plan was limited to the written documents and, during the study period, NDA was not functional whilst SMAC's ability to coordinate was hampered by various factors including intermittent funding from UNDP and lack of capacity as will be illustrated in the next chapter.

In the immediate post conflict period in some contexts there is a lack of government institutions that they could work with; specifically, due to the fact that Somaliland is not recognised, the UN had to invite local NGOs as partners. However though this was the practise, the UN did encounter a vacuum vis à vis mine action but instead chose to create SMAC to fulfil this role even with the presence of the NDA. This approach of working through NGOs partly conformed to Boutros-Ghali's quest for the search for new ways of intervening as had been outlined by the Agenda for Peace (Boutros-Ghali, 1995). It was informed by the realisation that the NGO communities can and did play a vital role in peacebuilding (Richmond, 2001). This could have been what informed the mine action Sector's policy of setting up National Mine Action Centres.

The aid history had also shaped the relationship between the international and the local NGOs which was skewed and took the shape of donor-recipient relationship. Similarly the context within which these processes had taken

place had been based on a legacy of distrust in government from the international communities. This therefore resulted in a desire to exclude (or not to actively seek) active government involvement in mine governance processes. In addition, concerns over patronage and corruption on the part of government officials and weak or non-existent government capacity were, and still are, cited as reasons for this non-involvement.

This is illustrated further by the role of the UN in its provision of coordination for mine action. The issue of non-recognition further complicates the matter.

## **OTHER MINE ACTION ACTORS IN SOMALILAND & THEIR ROLES**

Mine action in Somaliland is implemented by a multi-actor, multilevel process and therefore the governance of the national mine action programme is informed by the actions of all these actors at various levels; these actors include to a very small extent the civil society; the state; the UN and international NGOs. The UN provides strategic leadership as is standard with other programmes. In its basic notion, mine action governance in Somaliland refers to the structures and processes whereby the Sector (primarily the UN) – tries to steer the process from a centralised position.

The following actors implement mine action on various levels in Somaliland;

**Table 4: Mine Action organisations in Somaliland**

<b>United Nations</b>	
<b>UNMAS</b>	Overall policy coordination within and beyond UN system; provides mine action assistance in humanitarian emergencies; oversees international mine action standards (IMAS); coordinates planning for transfer to national authorities
<b>UNDP</b>	Supports development of national and local mine action capacity, promotes coordination between mine action and

	wider development community at country level
<b>UNOPS</b>	Service provider in design/implementation of mine action programmes
<b>UNICEF</b>	Supports development and implementation of mine risk education projects in cooperation with UN and other partners
<b>International NGOs</b>	
HALO Trust	Demining
Danish Demining Group	Demining (until 2004); Armed Violence Reduction and Mine Risk Education
Handicap International	Mine Risk Education and Rehabilitation
<b>Government bodies</b>	
SMAC	Mine Action Coordination, Quality Assurance
NDA	Demining Authority
Police EOD capacity	EOD clearance, stockpile destruction
<b>Organisations that have ceased operations</b>	
Santa Barbara Foundation	Mine Clearance (1999-2000)
MineTech of Zimbabwe	A commercial demining company
RIMFIRE UK	Demining Company (between 1991-1993)

*Source: Own compilation from fieldwork sources and also various Landmine Monitor Reports; I have omitted various organisations listed by the Landmine Monitor as working on Mine Action in Somaliland as on the are not visible on the ground and I could not establish contact. Other than the UN, the other organisations which have dominated the Sector in Somaliland conform to the global composition i.e. mainly northern/western based organisations.*

## **CONCLUSION**

Mine clearance gave the international community a significant early entry point to contribute to post conflict peacebuilding in Somaliland. It should also have provided good lessons to inform programmes that followed. As mine clearance was a very labour intensive and specialised undertaking, the Pioneers provided a ready pool of trained workers that could have been selectively utilised. RIMFIRE collected and collated data that could have provided a good starting point in the fulfilment of data collection that is key to mine action programmes. Similarly, the experience and detailed reports would probably have provided good information for contextual analysis for the Sector upon its arrival in Somaliland. This means that crucial key lessons were not learned and opportunities were missed.

The role of RIMFIRE and mine clearance in general has helped in illuminating the intrinsic nature of Mine Action's role and potential for peacebuilding through highlighting the post war clearance achievement. However, I will argue in the next chapters that this intrinsic value depends on a non-linearity of interaction of various other elements within a system; patterns of interaction and the dynamic of relationships within the system's actors rather than on individual characteristics of a single activity.

Further, through this chapter I have outlined the process in which the UN engaged in when setting up the mine action programme. I have outlined some of the fundamental failings that the UN made in the process of setting up the coordination centre for mine action. In its approach to setting up the mine action programme, the UN made assumptions and ignored the resilience and institutions that existed within the society. These assumptions are based on what the external actors assume of post-conflict societies; and hence their approach is characterised by the problematic assumption that "a vacuum exists prior to the arrival of international staff" (Chesterman 2004 p. 5); local capacity is assumed to be missing and therefore is needed to be rebuilt; that war had created a *tabula rasa* where post conflict contexts needed rebuilding.

Thus the Sector upon its engagement with Somaliland made some key mistakes that critics accuse peacebuilders of; they ignored the context (both political and historical) and disregarded the capacity that existed at the time including a rich source of data that they could have utilised.

I illustrate how the Mine Action sector is inherently guided by the need to apply a standardised set of protocols (such as establishment of NMAA, LIS, IMSMA) to most mine contaminated countries irrespective of context, within a rhetoric that these standards are only a guide and that national context should guide their application, however in reality this appears far from the truth especially in Somaliland's context.

When the Sector was implementing the programmes, the failure of the humanitarian intervention and the role that aid had played in Somalia was still very much an issue. However, sector failed to learn from that and disregarded the politicised context within which they were implementing the programme. These should have provided the Sector with a clear entry point on how not to implement programmes. However, beyond the challenges of having standardised processes of implementing programmes, the sector also ignored both the larger humanitarian lessons of implementing aid in Somalia and that of the predecessors RIMFIRE. According to the UN inspector at the time; none of the organisations ever asked to talk to them or for the records which they had kept.

The role of the UN in setting up SMAC edifies a well-founded concern and critique that NGOs are external actors usually in pursuit of external objectives. The UN and international aid agencies in Somaliland have demonstrated a preference for implementing relief, rehabilitation and development interventions through local partners. Similarly, these actors, especially in the case of Somalia, became entities which are not just artificial but are also unsustainable and this normally results in dissolution as soon as external aid is withdrawn (Menkhaus, 2006b).

The implementation of the programme was imposed without local 'buy-in', which according to Cooper, Turner and Pugh (2011) contributes to failure. Similarly, setting up a coordination centre was based on a template that dictated the actions that the UN should take once on the ground. Such an approach disregarded the existing capacity within the country and in the Somaliland context contributed to tensions for most part of the cycle of mine action. This chapter has highlighted the tensions of these standardised approaches, and therefore the long term implications for the programme especially the role of

SMAC in coordinating the Sector. SMAC's coordinating role is limited and it appears to be a coordinating body just on paper. Other than what has been cited as poor political will and the lack of a legal basis for the SMAC and NDA which resulted to intermittent (UNDP) funding other factors have contributed to its limitation in achieving its main objective which was to establish and maintain a sustainable National Mine Action capacity in Somaliland by September 2003. The UN is seen to take a very patronising attitude in regards to SMAC, they are viewed as unable to stand on their own feet, and raise their own funds; they don't know what they are doing. Whichever UN body that happens to be taking the lead role in Somaliland (either UNOPS or UNDP or UNMAS) has failed even think of allowing SMAC to be an independent, self-sustaining, domestic entity. It thought of them as outgrowths of the UN. Such an approach to managing SMAC has translated to consistent lack of capacity which is not just limited to funding.

However, I argue that the coordinating role of the UN and therefore SMAC is complicated by other contextual factors such as the state of political non-recognition of Somaliland. The next chapter addresses the extent to which the context of non-recognition challenges the role of the UN in coordination as this dictates the framing of context and the therefore the programmatic implications.

## **CHAPTER 6: POLITICAL NON-RECOGNITION: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF MINE ACTION ACTORS & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES**

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*“The challenge is there is no actual distinction between Somali and Somaliland. Most of the programmes/projects are designed in Nairobi and predominantly in the minds of humanitarian issues in South Central” Ahmed Adan<sup>75</sup>.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter further addresses how the Somaliland political context of non-recognition challenges mine action implementation. Goodhand (2006) in his study of NGO’s capacities for peacebuilding has argued that NGO action is limited not only by structural constraints but also that the context of a conflict zone must also be taken into account when assessing interventions on the process of peacebuilding. The importance of context holds true for the case study of Somaliland as this chapter will demonstrate. Somaliland’s political non recognition dictates and defines the framing of the context and therefore challenges the implementation of mine action by the Sector, especially by the UN. Thus, this context framing further dictates the programmatic and security perceptions that are assumed. These include challenges to SMAC’s role including the UN’s remote management of the programme; lack of clarity on the lead UN agency at any given times. Similarly according to various evaluation reports, Mine Action has not been seen as a priority by the UN or by the government of Somaliland meaning limited interest.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF NON RECOGNITION ON SECTOR COORDINATION**

Governance of mine action by the UN in Somaliland is subject to the same operational context that the UN operates in i.e. the *de jure* constraints of having the obligation to treat Somalia as one country; however for operations and donor programming purposes, there are three government counterparts in

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<sup>75</sup> Ahmed Adan is the Head of Policy and Programme Action Aid International Somaliland (AAIS)

Somalia: Puntland, Somaliland and South Central (Bendaña, 2012 ). This means that Mine Action within the UN for Somaliland comes under the umbrella of the UN Somalia Mine Action Programme (UNSOMA). However the three jurisdictions have different mine/UXO contamination patterns and profiles including operating environments. Thus the approach to mine action is that activities are divided conveniently according to their respective political zones of Somaliland, Puntland, and south-central Somalia. In each of the zones the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) implements activities in line with the priorities and strategies of the respective authorities responsible for mine action (UNMAS, 2013). In south central Somalia UNMAS takes the lead and incorporates UNICEF, UNHCR and UNDP. UNMAS works with Somali National Mine Action Agency (SNMAA) as the national body in south central whilst in Somaliland UNMAS supports the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) and in Puntland, the Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC). According to the UN MASG newsletter these three entities were to be coordinated under the UNDP Somalia Mine Action Coordination Centre SOMACC in lieu of a National Structure for the entire country (MASG, 2007).

### **Defining the lead UN Agency**

The ability for SMAC to coordinate is hindered by an incoherent UN governance structure. During the lifetime of Mine Action, the role of the various UN entities is unclear. Interviews with other mine action players reveal the same conundrum. In an off the cuff discussion with one mine action senior manager, there was reference to the fact they never quite knew which UN agency they were dealing with and business cards from the UN Mine action did not reveal whether they were UNMAS or UNDP with UNOPS being the service provider.

In June 2005 the UN Interagency Coordinating Group endorsed the role of UNDP as the lead UN agency for mine Action capacity development through their policy document entitled “Mine Action and Effective Coordination-the United Nations Inter-Agency Policy”, which concentrated on establishing the Somaliland Mine Action Centre, arranged for training courses and tried to put quality control systems in place. In 2009 there was yet another Interagency Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) which included representatives of UNMAS and UNDP in which a decision was reached that UNMAS conduct mine



action in South-Central (SC) Somalia, and UNDP continue in Puntland and Somaliland (MASG, 2009 p. 16).

The extent to which these decisions are communicated or discussed with those on the ground remains unclear, as this research encountered unclear and incoherent responses in trying to understand the lead UN body at any given time. This was both from UN Officials and from other stakeholders within the Mine Action Sector in Somaliland. According to Mark Belford<sup>76</sup> in 2010:

*UNOPS took over the management of Mine Action in Somaliland since May 2010 after taking over from UNDP who had been managing from probably 10 years before'. (Mark Belford; UNSOMA Capacity Development Officer; Interviewed in Hargeisa on 8th December 2010)*

SMAC as the implementing partner on the ground would have been the best placed to offer clarity but a senior official gave this response;

*UNDP started SMAC but UNOPS was doing the facilitation, implementing with funding was coming from UNDP. In 2009, UNMAS took over south central because UNDP could not be able to go there so the UNOPS team that was implementing the programme for UNDP moved with UNMAS. UNDP said they would implement directly for themselves for Somaliland and Puntland. In June 2009, we became fully with UNDP" (SMAC Official, Interviewed in Hargeisa on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010)*

According to a Senior UN official:

*UNOPS is involved in mine action and is predominantly as immediate response. It is the precursor to UNDP to conducting national capacity development. In conflict and post conflict portions in the country, UNOPS are normally the first people to be called mine action, UXO clearance or mine clearance. So, we work in areas like indicated in Sudan roads, post conflict and UNDP that belong to national capacity development. We do a lot of work ourselves in terms of coordination.*

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<sup>76</sup> Mark Belford is the only official who was still in his role during this research period. However, he was leaving for a different posting the same week I arrived in Hargeisa for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of data collection.

*UNDP would establish a national body that would fulfil those functions. If you supply that principle to Somalia, UNOPS was working in Somalia a number of years ago, the programme was handed over to UNDP to start basic development and then UNDP decided for whatever reason to hand back over to UNOPS for management (Senior UN Official)*

Yet another UN official explanation was:

*In Somaliland in particular, the environment was more of development and reconstruction. So UNDP was focused on engaging the Somaliland government to help them build capacity to manage the explosive items in long term. So it involved helping them build internal capacity which involved setting up SMAC to manage information so they would know what was where and so on. They were sort of coordinating what was going on in the country. This was mainly to help the government make plans for development and so on. UNDP then decided that Somaliland wasn't going to be a strategic area of mine action that's when UNMAS decided to continue with the same strategies that UNDP had started because we didn't want to see all the efforts wasted (UNMAS Senior Official, Interviewed in Nairobi on 15th October 2012)*

Interviews with the UN staff did not help in defining who was who other than that the UN was working under the UNSOMA umbrella. This same confusion was highlighted in interviews with other actors within the Sector. HALO Trust indicated that for a long time they had been trying to establish who the UN lead was. The business cards I got from the UN did not clarify this either. The result was not only confusion in Mine Action management, but also in the Sector and SMAC's understanding of the roles of each UN organisation.

This is not peculiar to Somaliland, as the role of the UN has historically been challenged with a lack of clarity, and also what seemingly appears as a system that lacks overall knowledge of responsibility for specific tasks.

When such neat categorisations meet reality, then this becomes a challenge for implementation of programmes. For mine action specifically, the framing dictates the lead UN agency; hence in contexts where there is mines/UXOs contamination and where UNDP is present, it is within their mandate to assist

the national authorities within that country to address the immediate as well as longer-term need. This is undertaken within UNDP's overall goal of assisting national and local authorities to plan, coordinate and implement national mine action programmes. Likewise if a Security Council Resolution mandates the establishment of mine action within a peace-keeping mission, then UNMAS will manage such a programme in consultation with other entities<sup>77</sup>.

The context of Somaliland challenges this clear demarcation in various ways; the government is non-recognised, meaning that it is not a 'national government' in the politically neutral UN system; thus the UN had no Peacekeeping mission that established a Security Council Resolution with a mandate for establishing a mine action programme. The evidence from the interviews carried out presents a blurred and distorted image on the role of the UN especially as to which UN agency was the lead agency at any given time. The result was not only confusion in Mine Action management, and coordination but also in the sector's and the communities' understanding of the various roles of each UN organisation.

The clear demarcation based on this conflict is acknowledged in an evaluation report which notes that:

*The Rule of Law (ROLS) programme under which mine action was part, was designed for a post conflict environment and yet according to the evaluation report, it was required to deliver during a time of continuing conflict, particularly in South Central where there has been a marked decline in the influence of traditional leaders' (Molloy, 2008).*

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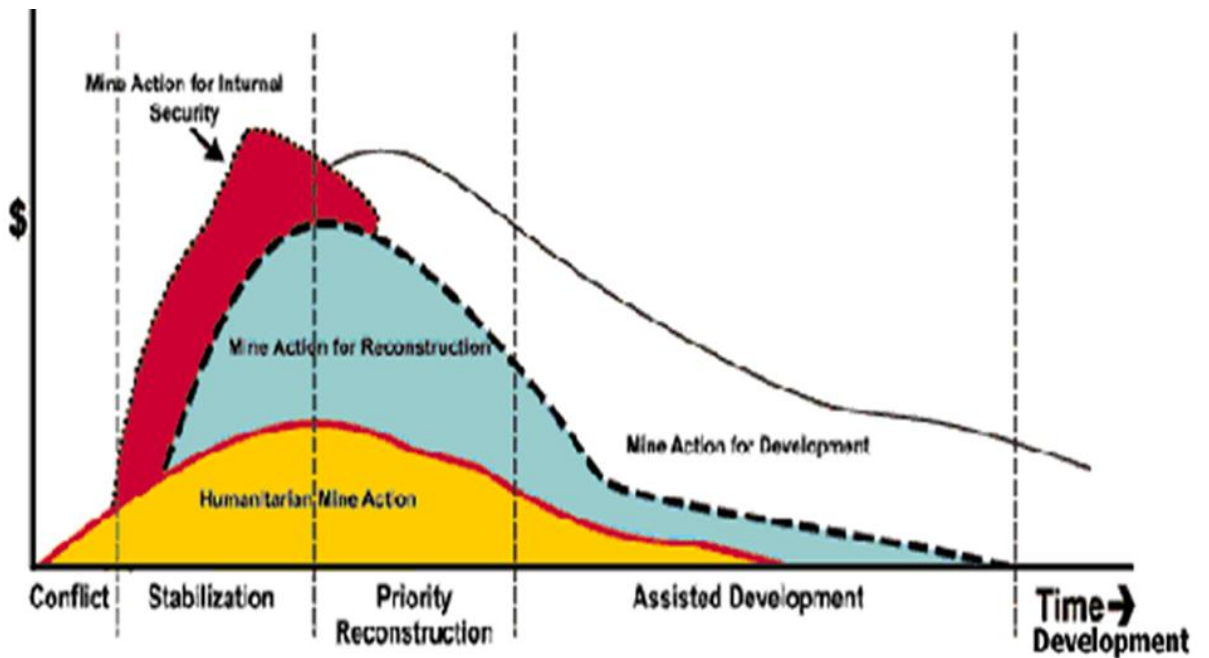
<sup>77</sup> In 2004, UNMAS' participation in the preparations for the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) led to the first ever humanitarian mine action mandate designed to serve the general population. Previous to this mandate, mine action in peacekeeping missions had been limited to the protection of mission personnel.

Evidently there were ripple effect as a result of the problems of establishing a National Mine Action Authority; the ability of SMAC to effectively manage and coordinate mine action was greatly hampered. According to DDG's MRE Advisor, there is no coordination at all, 'as far as being on the ground, HALO does their thing, DDG we do our thing' (Jessica Buchanan). The UN acknowledges that they, through SMAC play a limited role in coordination:

*I don't think we do coordination at the moment. I think this is probably a key concern in that the technique is not in place and is not as robust as it needs to be. I think a lot of the agencies, HALO, DDG and HI, look at what is required where they are working and SMAC knows that these are the priorities that have been given and therefore they decide that these are going to be our working priorities. So it is probably in reverse, wrong, so to speak. You would want to think that in the near term, SMAC will be able to implement a work scheme based on priorities for each region and then give it back to the organisations in terms of a priority list clearance for each handling each year (Graeme Draemu Abernethy).*

In the past the UN has also been bogged down by unwillingness of certain elements within the UN to be coordinated or to work within an agreed chain of command (Eaton et al., 1997). These challenges appear to persist in various contexts. The view of those interviewed was that the UN's role is characterised by slow mobilisation of resources and a reactive approach, which are totally inappropriate to the context. Budgetary allocations for SMAC are still under the mandate of the UN and not under the direct management of the SMAC which is tasked with coordinating all Mine Action activities in Somaliland thus compounding the problems.

**Figure 9: Stages of Mine Action Programme**



*Source: Figure taken from (Paterson and Filippino, 2006) 'The Road to Mine Action and Development: The Life-Cycle Perspective of Mine Action' available online <http://www.jmu.edu/cisr/journal/9.2/feature/paterson/paterson.shtml>*

### **Context framing; 'post conflict; relief or development?'**

Due to non-recognition the Sector faces challenges as to how to frame the context; whether they are in conflict, post-conflict or even development. This is important for the Sector as Mine Action is implemented in an outmoded linear 'relief –development continuum' that guides aid policy. For programme implementation, such occurrences add to the challenges of security implications inferred while considering projects implementation in Somaliland under Somalia. Programmes are underfunded and poorly coordinated due to perceived security challenges.

The process by which people develop a particular conceptualisation or reorient their thinking about an issue is best understood through frames theory (Chong and Druckman, 2007). Frames help us to interpret the world around us and represent that world to others. They help us organise complex phenomena into coherent, understandable categories. When contexts are labelled as post conflict, then meaning is given to some of the aspects that are observed within that context; and similarly framing helps to exclude or discount other aspects because they appear irrelevant or counter-intuitive. Frames therefore help define the way in which any organisation intervening in Somaliland will define the context. Such a process of framing the context challenges operations arising from lack of clarity resulting from ambiguity in Somaliland brought about by non-recognition. Although it is a recognised fact that conflicts do not follow this linear path and vary across sectors and countries, there seem to be idealised phases which define what/who and how aid is provided within a frame of reference for setting priorities. Inevitably this brings confusion to the way the Sector is coordinated because the UN works within this theoretical linear path of conflict ---> post conflict --->peace ---->development (see Figure 9: Stages of Mine Action Programme).

The UN's mine action intervention is hence theoretically guided by an assumption based on this linear process of contexts moving from conflict and war into peace and normality, therefore tailoring its responses based on the concept of the 'relief-development continuum' rather than the reality of the affected communities. The continuum of interventions is based on the idealised phases of conflict, whilst the intervention model is based on the 'natural disaster' relief models of the 1980s where the role of relief assistance was to sustain people through short periods of stress until the crisis was over. This would then be followed by rehabilitation into normality or the process of development and reconstruction (Bradbury et al., 1996; Macrae, 1995). Such a separation of relief and development activities is seen to reflect the institutional organisation of the aid system, rather than the realities of affected communities, as an application of criteria which confine relief interventions to basic survival is ineffective and counter-productive.

The ambiguity of the Somaliland context challenges any framing within this idealised conflict process and continuum linear assumptions as it does not fit the way post conflict societies are conceptualised for example (Zeeuw and Kumar, 2006) definition of post conflict societies; i.e. those where cessation of conflict is followed by the International Communities' recognition of the government as legitimate.

Likewise, the end of the Somaliland conflict is also difficult to define as, more often than not, it is a time when violence is prone to re-erupt in some parts and not others<sup>78</sup>. Therefore the term post conflict that has generally been used for Somaliland's case is a misnomer as the first two years following unilateral declaration of independence involved the non-Isaaq groups engaging in conflict and war with the Issaq dominated SNM so the early period was characterised by persistent warfare (Bereketeab, 2012; Höhne, 2006; Renders and Terlinden, 2010).

### **Programmatic Responses**

This means that the linear sequence model that is preferred by the UN and other international organisations and donors in response to conflicts and crises is problematic in practice because the peacebuilding and aid community cannot move into a developmental phase.

Similarly, according to dominant conflict narratives, while post conflict implicitly signifies the end of violence and return to a peaceful normal situation; Somaliland has continually presented a blend of conflict, post-conflict, humanitarian and development characteristics. Thus, as (Crisp, 1999) has argued, framing of contexts as 'post-conflict' conceals distinct ideological agendas such as the international community's unwillingness to ensure that reductions in relief are replaced by a corresponding transfer of development resources. This is because, embedded within this approach to categorisation, are discrete subdivisions of activities and actors into the different phases with the classification of such activities remaining arbitrary.

The process, even where the state is recognised, is problematic anyway as from the perspective of affected communities, a conflict situation is not split into

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<sup>78</sup> Inter-clan clashes did occur including two serious wars in 1994 and 1996 (Gundel 2006)

different 'phases'; it is part of an on-going cycle of tackling post conflict challenges, with recurring problems contributing to both complex emergencies, where natural disasters such as drought, localised violence, risks and other uncertainties related to long periods of armed conflict make one-off approaches based on uniqueness fatuous. Thus, the relief development continuum that is assumed is mostly conceptual rather than a reality.

Dealing with Somaliland either within the Somalia rubric, or as post conflict, means that it is seen as requiring humanitarian aid and relief rather than development aid. This is reflected by the myriad of humanitarian aid agencies that dot the Somaliland landscape and as observed by the following quote;

*Sometimes we see these small cars that are in the town, donated by UNHCR or something like that and for a country that has been destroyed by so many years of civil war then a donation of a car or digging of a well is almost nothing. These international organisations, mostly most of them work with the UN (UNHCR, UNICEF or UNDP) and so on, but most of them are here because of that lack of political recognition. Yes, they are contributing to an extent to the development of the country and at least they employ some people, who are bread winners and they are feeding empty mouths. We need assistance from the international community to go into bilateral relations in order to maintain the peace and stability of our country, we need economic advancement. The international community needs to stop looking into relief or post relief assistance. What we need now is development through bilateral funding which unfortunately we cannot get. We are beyond relief; we need to talk of poverty eradication. (Boube Yusuf Duale<sup>79</sup>; Programmes Coordinator, Academy for Peace and Development; interviewed in Hargeisa on 22nd October 2010)*

It was also reflected at a meeting that I attended in 2010, where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested most of the NGOs present to identify the areas they

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<sup>79</sup> At the time 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2010, Boube Yusuf Duale was the Programmes Coordinator of the Academy for Peace and Development. He later became the Somaliland Information Minister but his tenancy as a Minister was short lived. Media reports suggest that his efforts to streamline and fight corruption in the ministry did not find favour with the Presidency and was he therefore dismissed. He appears to have served no less than 6 months at the ministry. He left office in May 2012.



were working within; the exercise reflected the lack of organisations that were addressing issues around infrastructure i.e. development related activities, rather the majority were addressing the usual humanitarian and relief programmes.

This way of framing and sequencing phases of conflicts presumes a neat transition, and that crises are temporary. For example, one aid worker in Somaliland insisted that Somaliland is neither in conflict, post conflict or in development phase but is in emergency phase:

*Yes it is an emergency because of the drought. But now we are looking at it in terms of the development aspect as we try to largely integrate sustainability development kind of approach. At the same time we have a huge part of our programme which is still emergency response especially in droughts (World Vision International Aid worker; Interviewed on 4th of October 2012 in Hargeisa).*

The use of such terms is a result of preconceived notions that are implicit in defining contexts and is semantic in nature for example the prefix 'post' implies that the conflict has ended and the situation is returning to normal, hence the term indicates a supposed unidirectional dynamic from a period of war to a period of peace.

However, in programmatic terms the way in which a context is categorised is not just an issue of semantics, whether defined as a humanitarian crisis or a post-conflict, peacebuilding and/or development impacts directly on the posture that agencies assume vis-a`-vis the government and the other forces at play.

The same is true for the assumptions, patent or latent, that are made about how the security situation might evolve. This neither benefits any programmes nor the operationalisation of any activities on the ground because the reality does not conform. This dilemma was encapsulated by the following response by a Senior SMAC Official:

*Last year (2009) I had a discussion with the World Food Programme, we did not have funding for Mine Risk Education, and so I asked then how about setting up a programme 'Food for Work' because Mine Risk Education is really needed in Somaliland. People are still being injured*

*and killed. The response I got was No, because Somalia is in a humanitarian phase, or like emergency phase, the same phase as Somaliland because it's a region of Somalia. Again non-recognition hampers the development of Somaliland because of the fact that it is seen as part of Somalia and not independent. (Hibaq Mujahid Abdikadir Kosar - Mine Education Officer SMAC, Interviewed on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010 in Hargeisa).*

## **IMPLICATIONS OF SECURITY ON PROGRAMME DELIVERY**

The way the country is viewed – as a humanitarian emergency or as a recovery context – affects the way security is approached, including the assumptions made regarding the context. For example contexts such as South Sudan are seen as post conflict, and therefore the emphasis is on development, jobs advertised in that particular context fall under the ‘recovery and development’ banner (Guerra et al., 2010). This may have implications for applicants that the context is safe, with the consequence that many aid workers arrive mentally unprepared for the actual conditions. In contrast, framing Somaliland within Somalia dictates the perceived security complexities associated with Somalia, and unfortunately defines the perceived security challenges.

Somaliland does enjoy relative peace and stability following what has been referred to as ‘a gamble by President Egal’s government’ to heavily invest in creating a secure environment through the investment of over 50-70% of the total national expenditure (Bradbury, 2008; SCPD, in Jhazbhay, 2008). Immediate post war programmes included the successful absorption of militiamen into the Somaliland army without any external assistance for the demobilisation or security sector reform programmes. The result of this was as described by (Menkhaus, 2004a) as ‘better levels of public order and security in northern Somalia than almost anywhere in the Horn of Africa’ (p. 160). Thus, Somaliland’s level of security has remained relatively high thanks to the robust application of customary law and blood compensation, administered by clan elders. In cases of crimes such as killings, elders will encourage investigative work and negotiate with the kin of the accused for his or her handover. The police are requested to assist with arresting suspects and to take them into custody. Thereafter, the crime is the subject of inter-clan negotiations and is

usually resolved according to the customary practices of blood compensation. Customary law exists as a complement to, not a contradiction with, formal police and judicial systems; it resolves more than 80% of all cases (Gundel, 2006 p. 11 footnote no. 12). Where such arrangements with the clan are not enforceable, sometimes the relevant ministries step in as outlined here by the Director of Internal Security:

*Most of our time is spent on conflict resolution. We play a role of major role in clan mediation and to ensure that the customary practices for example of blood compensation are applied. We also say for example a policeman kills a person, and then when necessary the ministry pays the compensation rather than a clan in order to protect this policeman/woman and maintain peace. We try to limit insecurity through dealing with registration of small arms owned by the citizens. (Mohamed Ahmed Mohamoud, Director of Internal Security, Ministry of Interior, interviewed on 9th Oct 2012)*

Indeed it was because of this security that the Sector was able to implement most of their programmes in Somaliland whilst the same was impossible in Somalia. Security did not seem to hamper programme implementations for mine action and indeed most of the annual programme reports to donors by the various mine action actors repeatedly reported that security risks to their programmes remained within manageable levels and had not impeded the progress of their operations (DDG and HALO Trust Annual Reports 2003-2005). In terms of humanitarian access, UN OCHA described Somaliland as having a high level of peace and security across largely homogenous clan lines, which ensured relative unhindered humanitarian access (OCHA, 2005). The only exception remained within those regions where the military standoff with Puntland over control of parts of Sool region remains unresolved (Interview with Rory Logan, HALO Trust Programme Manager).

The incidents that had occurred in 2003, temporarily damaged Somaliland's reputation for security (Menkhaus, 2006b); and prompted changes in security policies, including tightening of security procedures stipulated in the Minimum Operating Security Standards for Somalia (MOSS) which included not just

Somaliland but also Somalia (Gundel, 2006). It also fed into enhancing a perception of general 'insecurity' especially within the UN.

As a response the UNDP RoLS programme together with the government set up a new security force, the Special Protection Unit (SPU), to protect UN agencies and International NGOs. For the NGO sector, each agency has its own security rules, which often refer to the given agency's global security standards. The SPUs are the only legal armed protection available for humanitarian and development workers. SPU operations are designed to ensure the ability of the international community to implement humanitarian and development activities. At the request of the agencies/actors, they provide security on a 24/7 basis to UN/INGO staff residences and offices as required; provide armed escort teams to UN/INGO missions in country; offer a quick response capacity during an emergency situation as required; and provide mobile security patrol services to UN/INGO staff residences and offices.

In regard to the implementation of the security measures in Somaliland, Gundel (2006) argues that though the attacks prompted the implementation of such policies, in reality these programmes had long been in the pipeline following the Baghdad bombings in 2003 when the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1502 which emphasised that;

“...there are existing prohibitions under international law against attacks knowingly and intentionally directed against personnel involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission undertaken in accordance with the charter of the United Nations which in situations of armed conflicts constitute war crimes, and recalling the need for states to end impunity for such criminal acts” (UN Security Council, 2003: paragraph 5).

This raised the perception of danger within the UN, and saw the speedy implementation of security procedures in places like Somaliland (Somalia) and this led to 'bunkerisation'<sup>80</sup> and demands for dedicated security officers, safety and protection. The security arrangements that were thus put in place had

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<sup>80</sup> The term “bunkerisation” was used by Mark Duffield when giving a lecture in 2011 <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/global-insecurities/news/2011/7.html> that built upon the key concepts of Duffield, M., Development, Security and Unending War, Polity Press, 2007

several implications for the management of mine action programmes in Somaliland; directly for the UN operations as they had to be MOSS compliant. This had a huge impact on the role of the UN in terms of programmes and less so on the operational capacity of the NGOs within the mine action sector as explained by Graeme Draemu Abernethy of UNMAS;

*Security levels are UN security levels. There are really few NGOs who feel the impact. If they want to work there, they are free to work there. The difficulty for us in the UN is because of restricted mobility, getting around to the locations is challenging. I think the important thing is that in Somaliland we are working with the national authority. So we mostly are around and move around within Hargeisa, to support the SMAC and police EOD teams. (Graeme Draemu Abernethy)*

However, many agencies invested in improving their internal procedures to facilitate their work in insecure environments. They were obliged to adopt stricter security measures as security management became professionalised<sup>81</sup>; they had to undergo standardised training programmes due to insurance obligations and the need to comply.

Between 2004 and 2008 there were hardly any security incidences reported, but there were concerns about the possibility of the jihadist infiltrations that it was feared would extend regional terror networks into Somaliland threatening the foreign expatriate presence that has come to make that country the base of its operations. Thus on-going instability in Somalia and the presence of radical Islamist groups with cross-border tentacles remained the principal source of 'threats' for security in Somaliland. The growing strong buoyancy of Islamist groups such as Al Shabab based in the Eastern part fed into these perceptions (Adam, 2010 p. 130; Forberg and Terlinden, 1999; Marquardt and Shinn, 2009).

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<sup>81</sup> With initiatives such as the SPHERE Project (which provides information on minimum standards which agencies should work to attain in disaster assistance), Humanitarian Accountability Partnership – International (HAP) aims to make humanitarian action accountable to the beneficiaries of such action, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief The code of conduct provides a set of standards for the behaviour of agencies when working in disaster relief, and ALNAP which was established in 1997 following a multi-agency evaluation of the Rwanda Genocide. It works to improve humanitarian performance through improved learning and accountability.

The above process can be explained within a global context; specifically, the attacks in Somaliland. Justification for such policies was influenced by the global context which was a heightened change in perception of an increasingly hostile operational environment due to framing within a changing aid context. There was a growing perception among aid agencies that they were facing increased external risks and as a result aid workers were being targeted and attacked. This resulted in the need for professionalisation of security within the aid and peacebuilding contexts and hence extensive security measures were adopted by aid agencies. Attacks targeting aid workers generally had increased from round 30 a year in the mid-1990s to over 150 in 2008 primarily due to the humanitarian organisations being seen as ever more complicit with state militaries and a western liberal intervention agenda. There was an acknowledgement that in contexts of integrated missions, and based on growing international interventionism and internal changes within the UN system, humanitarian and development work has become part of the peacekeeping missions. This has therefore eroded the universality of values of neutrality and impartiality promoted by the UN and therefore they no longer guarantee the security of its access in conflict situations. Hence humanitarian aid has become politicised in places such as Afghanistan leading to a paralysis of the humanitarian aid sector (Donini, 2009).

In response to these challenges a dominant aid response became either remote management of programmes or ‘bunkerisation’ as a way of strengthening protection and more readily adopting deterrence measures’ together with adaptation of generic industry-standard training templates on security for field workers (Duffield, 2012b; Van Brabant, 2000)<sup>82</sup>. The field-security training left little room for ambiguity regarding the outside world; the threat for the humanitarian sector was no longer the threat of disease (Fast, 2007), but threats present from insurgents. Therefore the rhetoric became the need to

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<sup>82</sup> It has been noted that the aid sector in general (of which mine action is part) has opened up a fast-expanding market for security advice and training that many from the security services and private security companies have been quick to exploit see Guerra, C., Howes, R., Patil, A., Gething, P., Van Boeckel, T., Temperley, W., Kabaria, C., Tatem, A., Manh, B., Elyazar, I., Baird, J., Snow, R. and Hay, S. (2010) The international limits and population at risk of Plasmodium vivax transmission in 2009. *PLoS Negl Trop Dis*, 4. Pp:19. One of the key people interviewed for this research is now the managing director of one security based company that has branches in Stabilization & Development, Mine Action, Construction & Camp Services, Medical Services, Specialist Training & Capacity Management, Risk Management, Conflict Mitigation and Information Operations – all offered to high risk contexts and emerging markets.

manage the threat environment with constant vigilance and risk-minimisation (Duffield, 2012a). Such approaches to security that relied on separation and fortification alienated aid workers from those in need, representing both a symptom and a cause of crisis in the humanitarian system (Fast, 2014) . It meant that for the UN or INGO to comply with the security requirements international staff would not live in the local community, and had to avoid informal interactions with local inhabitants. This inevitably led to reinforcing global hierarchies and divisions between aid workers and excluded populations. This has resulted in a predilection towards risk aversion in response to the fulfilment of requirements by insurance policies<sup>83</sup> taken by the organisations that expect establishment of strict security procedures and structures.

This led to further consolidation of the security policy decisions including a blanket classification of Somaliland by the UN as Security Phase IV from Security Phase III. This had a huge impact on the implementation of mine action in Somaliland; it led to partial withdrawal of expatriate staff which meant the remote management of UN programmes from Nairobi as outlined below.

### **Remote management as a result of the perceived security challenges**

Despite improvements, by the time of this research in 2010 the security categorisation was still at phase 3 in Hargeisa whilst the rest of the country was phase 4. Such categorisation by the UN happened at a crucial time for mine action implementation. White and Cliffe (2000) have in the past argued that the lack of flexibility in some situations is a reflection of formal divisions of labour and inflexible practices within and between UN agencies, ( p. 335).

The need for a better thought process in regards to the security classification was raised by Hibaq Kosarl during the interview; she questioned the logic by comparing to the September 11th bombing of New York and the July 7th Bombing in London; to which they ask:

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<sup>83</sup> For example Flavia Wagner, an aid worker who was abducted and held for three months in Darfur in 2010, filed a lawsuit against the organisation that she was working for on the grounds that they had insufficient contingency plans to deal with the threat of kidnap; see article 'Why western aid workers are coming under threat' available on <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/may/27/western-aid-workers-under-threat>. Accessed on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

*When 9/11 in New York, or 7/7 July occurred in London, did travelling stop in London?, was that phase 4 or 5 as far as UN expatriates travel? Nothing like the security phases we have here happened and yet they do this for Somaliland. Somaliland has had just one suicide bomber for maybe 15 years, and immediately the security level and travel slots for UN workers are put in place.*

The Somaliland mine action programme at the time of this research came under the UNDP Somalia country office (based in Nairobi) under the Rule of Law and Security Programme for Somalia (UNDP - RoLS), whose stated objective in relation to mine action was 'to build the capacity of national mine action institutions whilst ensuring coordination and quality management of mine action'. This was implemented by UNMAS. Following a recommendation from an interagency assessment mission to Somalia in June 2007, organised and led by UNDP/UNMAS, a programme officer was recruited by UNMAS to work on mine action within the UNDP RoLS office Nairobi. The RoLS programme in itself was described as lacking coherence but was rather a grouping of discrete, but worthwhile activities. The main tasks for the programme officer included preliminary planning for potential mine action activities in South Central Somalia, fundraising, and liaison with African Union planning staff in Addis Ababa (MASG, 2007b). Thus, whilst the Programme officer oversaw the UN support to Somaliland, Puntland and the South Central region of Somalia, UNMAS' primary area of interest remained the latter (MASG, 2008).

The management of Mine Action from Nairobi was not without its challenges, as donors and UNDP's concentration in Nairobi, rather than in-country, led to a highly ineffective 'virtual management' i.e. management by proxy (UNDP, 2010 p. xiii). A situation where interventions by the international community, be they of a political, humanitarian or developmental nature, are governed from the comfortable distance provided by operational bases in Nairobi. This means that the programmes are 'remotely managed' and the staff have only limited opportunities to make short field site visits. A reduction in access, information and a limited capacity for analysis increases the operational risks regarding effectiveness, cost efficiency and accountability. This phenomenon has produced what Menkhaus (2003b) refers to as an acute "field versus



headquarters” tension in almost every aid agency working in Somalia (p. 44). Similarly the costs of maintaining offices and personnel in Nairobi are exceptionally high, so that much (some would argue most) of the total aid allocated to such projects never leaves Nairobi (ibid). In terms of peace building (Opongo, 2011) refers to those carrying out peace building remotely as ‘satellite peace builders’.

Individual agencies are then allocated a number of authorised personnel (‘slots’), which are revised, regularly by the UNCT. UNDP was allocated 4 rotating slots for RoLS with 1 additional rotating slot at a time for Somaliland and the same for Puntland. Slots are time based and availability is dependent upon demand. This particularly affects those employed under UNDP contracts who are often unable to perform their functions when out of country.

This arrangement saw the number of International UN staff reduced from 75 to 32 with UNDP only having 18 in Somaliland. Of these seven are permanent whilst the others were rotating. Somaliland had 35 slots in total. As explained by Hibaq Kosar:

*After the bombing of 2008 the UN security phase became Phase IV<sup>84</sup>. There were restrictions of mostly international staff having slots to come in and out. Mine action within UNDP was under the RoLS programme. So it was one of so many other programmes. It had to share the allocated RoLS slots.*

A blanket classification of Somaliland as Security phase IV was seen as ‘reactive rather than part of a planned strategy’ whose consequence according to Hammond and Vaughan-Lee (2012) in relation to the longstanding problem of maintaining authority outside led to mistrust and negative feelings, as Somalis questioned whether the utilisation of the money intended for aid in

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<sup>84</sup> Suicide bombings occurred in Hargeisa and Bossaso on 29 October 2008. In Hargeisa, the UNDP office was targeted, killing two UN employees and injuring six. Somaliland was raised from Security Phase 3 to Phase 4 after the bombing. This is the same level with Afghanistan

- Security Phase 5 is a total suspension of operations
- Security Phase 4 places immediate restrictions on access; activates the slot system allowing only emergency humanitarian and crisis actions. Armed vehicles must be used
- Security Phase 3 implements family relocation – single person posting
- Security Phase 2 requires heightened alert
- Security Phase 1 requires precautionary measures
- Security Phase 0 allows total freedom of movement

Somalia was, and is, being spent on management outside of their borders. As illustrated by this interviewee:

*The challenge is there is no actual distinction between Somali and Somaliland. Most of the programmes/ projects are designed in Nairobi and predominantly in the minds of humanitarian issues in the south. Then based on that the objectives, outcomes are being decided there and that's where majority of the funds are actually spent. (Ahmed Adan; Head of Policy and Programme; Action Aid; Interviewed on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2012, Hargeisa).*

Similarly the view of one Senior SMAC official was that not only were the funds utilised remotely, but also that some the funding used to beef up the security would have been funds utilised in other important areas:

*The other thing is that with the UN agencies, there is a security issue. Somaliland had one suicide bomber since its existence. Elements from the south central have come. Before and after, nothing has happened and yet immediately decision was made from phase 3 to 4. And it took more than two years for that phase to come down. This meant that not only Mine action but a great deal of other activities have lost out because obviously funding that was earmarked for Somaliland was spent in the offices in Nairobi because the people who were hired to do the job were unable to come to Somaliland. They remained in the offices there and some of the funding also went to security that was being marked for an activity because security was beefed up for these agencies. The funding was channeled to say, build a big wall, build concrete slabs instead of digging a well for a community that needed. It was during a drought period in 2009. So many other needs building schools, roads and other activities. So really, Somaliland does lose out a lot when it comes to UN security phases. (Hibaq Kosar).*

Thus due to the perceived increase in threat, remote management of the programme meant shifting responsibilities for programme delivery to SMAC, a most common programmatic strategy for adaptations to insecurity practised in varying versions in challenging insecure environments (Stoddard et al., 2010).

Such strategies are used for extremely insecure areas where international staff and organisations have been targeted and they are seen to represent a pragmatic approach to ensuring the provision of humanitarian aid to individuals and communities in need. However, for Somaliland it was driven more by the perceived security challenges than real risks.

At the time, comparing the security classification of Afghanistan to that levelled on Somalia across the board, a UNDP evaluation report called into question the appropriateness of such an undifferentiated approach. The whole of Afghanistan including Kabul, was classified as a phase 3 situation, with the only exception being Kandahar, where phase 4 had been applied (UNDP, 2010). This reflected what is perceived as a slow UN reaction to realities of security in the field, which ultimately affects access in terms of swift responses to programmes. Another perception is that reluctance to decrease security phases by the UNDSS is related to UN insurance concerns.

#### **a) Prioritisation of Mine Action within the RoLS Programme**

Within the RoLS there are other components such as Judiciary, Law Enforcement (strengthening police services), Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), coupled with Small Arms Control, Mine Action, and Gender and Human Rights. Patterson et al (2008), citing an evaluation report on UNDP, pointed out that the managing of the Mine Action component under the RoLS programme suggested that it wasn't a priority; he noted that 'there was persistent failure to allocate a Mine Action specific budget in the proposals. Every year, the Reconstruction and Development (RDP) reports for Somaliland failed to include any need for Mine Action. Similarly he noted that 'the UNDP Country Strategy paper dropped any mention of Mine Action even though some key donors asked for the same to be included during consultation meetings that took place in April 2007'. According to DfID this was an indication that UNDP RoLS management did not see Mine Action as a programme that they were directly executing thus failing to capitalise on clear synergies that existed between mine action and other security components e.g. DDR and Small Arms and Light Weapons management (Paterson et al., 2008 pp. 19-20)

Similarly, the RoLS programme went through a number of evaluations which left out the Mine Action component as falling outside the remit of these evaluations;

an indication that as a component, it was not considered important. It also means that it did not benefit from a critical evaluation that could probably have helped in the way it was structured and undertaken. It also fell outside of the Strategic Partnership and therefore was not evaluated during the evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Partnership for Somalia (ASI, 2009) neither had it been evaluated during the UNDP RoLs – DDR/SAC Program, Somalia (Molloy, 2008). This suggests that opportunities to capitalise on any positive synergies or even correct any anomalies to capitalise on mine actions potential was consistently been missed.

#### **b) Limiting potential for capacity and skills development**

The Landmine Monitor acknowledges the good institutional structure that exists in Somaliland for Mine Action, but notes that there has been lack of adequate technical support from UNDP. The fact that SMAC is managed from Nairobi meant that the UN's impact in regards to building SMACs capacity is limited. Although previous UNDP personnel arranged training, equipment, facilities, and funding for SMAC personnel, and advice on policy matters, the Landmine monitor, (2009) acknowledges that this was not followed up with ongoing support to help in the application of training. Even when Senior Technical Advisors were employed, their responsibilities extended to the whole of Somalia meaning that they were unable to spend any significant time in Somaliland (Interview with Senior SMAC Official).

Additional problems included unclear job descriptions and travel/logistic problems for the UNDP staff resulting in poor, or lack of, coordination by SMAC (Landmine Monitor, 2009).

The lack of technical skills was partly due to the absent or remotely located UNDP Operations Technical Advisers who were mainly based in Nairobi as acknowledged by Neil Feraro who attributed SMAC's lack of capacity to:

*The UN keeps talking about capacity building. How long does it take to train and set up a small capacity like SMAC? I mean how big is it? There are only like 10/15 staff members in that SMAC compound and they've got some very good intelligent people there. But because there is no management oversight, everybody is doing their own things.*

According to a Hibaq Kosar, the security categorisation of Somaliland after the 2008 bombing weakened the technical support that UNDP was providing for the programme:

*It became extremely weak to support as far as the technical support was concerned. Yes they did arrange for training, equipment, facilities, and remuneration for SMAC personnel, and advice on policy matters; however they failed to provide an on-going support to help SMAC personnel apply their training. This led to the UN asking UNMAS to take over fully with support of SMAC and PMAC. .*

The reality is that SMAC is just an organisation that rubber stamps what has been undertaken. Similarly, SMAC's role includes quality assurance, to ensure that demining for example is carried out to acceptable standards.

*Possibly about 2004/6 period when I was with DDG, they had a quality assurance team. DDG did a lot of technical training for them both on the demining side and for the medical staff. And they would go to our sites but at a technical level, it was kind of ridiculous because of the minimum land to person on mines, and the limitation at that time to technology. We excavated everything. They were doing their quality assurance with a technology with was basically not good. Not as effective. So it was just complete window dressing and as soon as there were the regular gaps in the UNDP funding, of course they stopped doing their work. It was very stop start etc. And it was totally ineffective and they weren't sampling the areas to any proper plan. They would go down there, spend 10 days until their per diems run out and then they'd come back to Hargeisa. I mean we never saw any reports. There wasn't any formal quality assurance reporting. So again it was just another employment generation exercise (Nick Bateman).*

There is actually a sense that the involvement of SMAC in any of the tasks seems to slow down the work rather than help. This is because SMAC lacks the assets needed to carry out their work effectively. For example in order for demining tasks to be signed off by SMAC, they have to be physically at the site where demining has just been completed. However, unless the demining

agencies provide the transport for the SMAC personnel, their presence is never guaranteed. This causes a lot of frustration and slows down the work adversely.

## **RECOGNITION AND THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN MINE ACTION**

SMAC has limited capacity not only in coordination or tasking and prioritisation. The mine action actors are all essentially self-tasking, although all operators ensure endorsement of their tasks by the SMAC.

### **Limited role in mine action governance**

The governance of Somaliland within the rubric of Somalia has had an impact on the coordination and management role played by the UN. At the time of the field work it was still being supported by UNDP Somalia from Nairobi. Bimonthly mine action coordination meetings involving other sector stakeholders are organised by SMAC, as is a Risk Education working group supported by UNDP. The National Demining Agency (NDA) which is part of the Ministry of Defence is to coordinate all demining, mine awareness and victim assistance programs by the government and national and international NGOs but is not operational.

Similarly support from the government has not been forthcoming, the Vice President is supposed to chair the Somaliland Mine Action Committee (the national authority) comprising eight ministers. However enquiries within the various ministries and with SMAC on how or when the last meeting took place revealed that this had never happened (2010 and again 2012).

The Somaliland government does not engage in Mine Action, for various reasons, including what a majority of those interviewed highlighted as the pursuance of the recognition agenda to the detriment of other areas of concern; and partly because mine action is not a major priority:

*The idea that the government, for instance the NDA or SMAC are a perfect success story for national capacity would be that international funding or government budgetary would go through SMAC or NDA and they would manage their budget. Equip, train, deploy their staff to provide 100% national solution to a national problem. That's not going to happen because the government has got other priorities and this country doesn't*

*have any significant<sup>85</sup> mine problem. So in my opinion the government has rightly different priorities. (Southern Craib<sup>86</sup>, DDG Programme Manager, interviewed in Hargeisa, on 25th September 2012)*

Similarly there is evidence in other locales of over-reliance by governments on international programming and the distribution of aid and expertise that have caused countries hosting mine action actors to have little interest in initiating or supporting mine action operations themselves. This is because they realise the saliency of the landmine issue internationally and, thus, they know that outside resources will likely be forthcoming (Spearin, 2001). This was illustrated by Mr Southern Craib:

*I think the government has got other things to worry about and frankly that is not unusual. And in the Somaliland context, I don't blame them. The Afghan government shows very little interest in mine action and yet its mine problem is significantly worse. The Angolan government shows next to no interest in mine problem because it doesn't affect them. It doesn't affect the well to do, it affects the poor. So as long as there aren't mines on major roads or cities then they don't care but it still has a significant problem. Somaliland doesn't have a significant problem. Mines generally speaking don't impact infrastructure. They are not negatively impacting the national economy. They are not around suburban population so I think in Somaliland the government has got bigger things to worry about.*

This lack of cooperation, or disengagement of the Somaliland government was highlighted by some within the Sector as a challenge they faced and it impacted on their work. The HALO Trust, for example, argued disengagement has contributed to the lack of impetus by the government in incorporating the need for mine clearance into support of huge infrastructure projects within the National Development Plan in order for mine clearance priorities to be set

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<sup>85</sup> This is the present state of mine contamination at the present. Previously as outlined before Somaliland did have a significant mine problem that has since improved with the demining efforts.

<sup>86</sup> Southern Craib previously worked with HALO Trust Somaliland as Programme Manager from September 2000 to July 2008; He then went to Afghanistan as Programme Manager for DDG; during the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of my data collection in 2012 he was Programme Manager for DDG Somaliland.

coherently with the identified needs. For example the government was carrying out some infrastructure rehabilitation at Hargeisa airport, including the construction of a departure terminal. It was not until the work had started that the Ministry of Aviation approached HALO Trust with a request to undertake some work around the vicinity of the airport to ensure that there were no mines. (The airport had been very heavily mined and the risk of residual impact is always high). HALO Trust expressed frustration over such a late request by the authorities, lamenting that had this been prioritised then such a requirement would have been reflected within the National Development plan. As this had not been the case, HALO Trust had not planned nor budgeted for the task, and it was only by luck the heavy equipment required for the task had been at the area and they were able to respond to this request. Such random requests meant that a layer of accountability to their donors was added. This was a demonstration that there is a certain level of disinterest within the government in ensuring mine action coherence with national plans; which in turn indirectly interferes in the practical aspects of the work, by disrupting the organisation's own schedules and plans as much as it can, without crossing the line of total non-cooperation (Interview with HALO Trust Program Manager). On a positive note it also showed the adaptability and responsiveness of HALO Trust in responding to such needs.

### **Limitation in adherence to treaty obligations**

Since 1997, in acknowledgement and appreciation of the impact of mines/UXOs in Somaliland, the authorities have continually and perhaps strategically<sup>87</sup> expressed their commitment to the Mine Ban Treaty and, on 1 March 1999, its House of Representatives passed a resolution in favour of a total ban of landmines. Similarly on 14 November 2002, during a ceremony marking the handover of military landmine stocks to the DDG for destruction, the Commander of the Somaliland Armed Forces said, "The army's move was a practical testimony to the willingness of Somaliland to implement international standards for mine action and the Mine Ban Treaty. However, Somaliland is not an Internationally Recognised State, and therefore cannot accede to the Mine

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<sup>87</sup> Somaliland's quest for international recognition means that the government is always more than eager to engage and endorse international norms and practises. This includes participation and undertaking democratic practises such as elections etc.



Ban treaty. Somaliland considers itself to be a state; the authorities are reluctant to sign the Geneva Call 'Deed of Commitment', which is an alternative instrument that the international community provides for Non-State Actors (NSAs). The Deed of Commitment is a response by the International community following the realisation that the Mine Ban Treaty was an inter-state treaty which was insufficient to eliminate anti-personnel mines amongst Non-State Actors to comply with international humanitarian norms and persuade them to renounce the use of these weapons. This instrument was put together by an organisation called the Geneva Call and was established in 2000 by members of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). The Deed of commitment promotes ownership of the International Mine Action Standards and Non State Actors (NSAs) are encouraged to sign the formal instrument to express their adherence to specific humanitarian norms and to be held accountable for their pledge (Geneva Call and PSIO, 2006 ).

Not surprising though, the mere fact that the Deed of Commitment is aimed at NSAs is problematic in various ways, as Baker (2012) has argued, 'the very categorisation of a 'non-state', is indicative that subtle questions remain on whether these groups are or ever can be professional, effective, reliable or authorised' (p.27). In a sense, even though arguing in relation to access to justice, this would seem to be inappropriate for Somaliland as they perceive themselves as a legitimate government. Although the language of policy makers is slightly changing, the predominant assumption by donors and security scholars has been that such groups are not methodical and not recognised. They are defined as *armed groups that operate beyond state control* and include, but are not limited to, rebel opposition groups (groups with a stated incompatibility with the government, generally concerning the control of government or the control of territory); local militias (ethnically, clan or otherwise based); vigilantes; warlords; civil defence forces and paramilitary groups (when such are clearly beyond state control) (Baker, 2012 p. 27).

Thus in 2004 Presidential Decree No. 016/2004, was issued to regulate mine action. It stated that all mine action organisations and government entities must comply with its provisions. This led the civil society organisation that had been part of the mine ban process, the Institute of Practical Research and Training

IPRT (representing the local campaign), together with the Geneva Call and the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Internal Affairs, Security and Defence to draft a bill to illustrate Somaliland's commitment to the Mine Ban Treaty. (Interview with Ahmed Essa, Director of IPRT, Hargeisa 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011) see also (Landmine Monitor, 2008). This Act came into effect in March 2009, and it mirrors the Mine Ban Treaty; it bans the use, possession, development, production, acquisition, and transfer of antipersonnel mines by any civilian or government official. It also requires citizens who possess mines to arrange for their immediate collection for destruction by the authorities. Similarly, it includes obligations for mine clearance within 10 years, stockpile destruction within four years, and victim assistance (VA). It provides for penal sanctions for persons found violating the prohibitions in the legislation, including extraterritorial violations of the prohibitions by its citizens.

### **Limited sources of funding**

Somaliland's lack of recognition places real constraints on her capacity to function like a state, both domestically and internationally. Just as it is usual for donors to be generally cautious in granting recognition to transition authorities before a legitimate government is formed, the same principle is applied to a non-recognised state. Thus Somaliland cannot access some international development assistance which normally depends on the existence of an internationally recognised government, and hence what has continually been provided is humanitarian assistance i.e. relief and to some extent rehabilitation. Somaliland is ineligible to enter into bilateral agreements with donors as they shy away from the implication that such a provision of assistance may be seen as diplomatic recognition<sup>88</sup>. This means that there is a limit as to what authority the government can impress on those working in Somaliland.

The lack of recognition by the international community means that Somaliland is ineligible for foreign aid; however, this does not mean that Somaliland does not receive any external aid from donors although claims have been made that "Somaliland has never been eligible for foreign assistance," (Eubank, 2012 p. 446) or that it receives "little outside assistance" (Kaplan, 2008 p. 147). On the

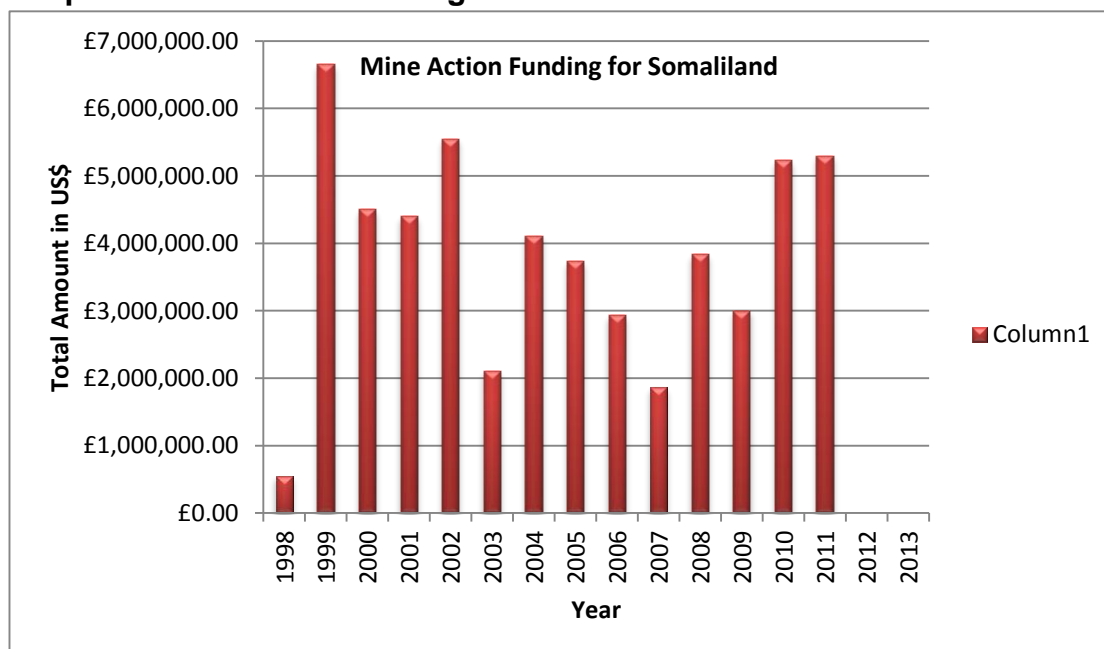
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<sup>88</sup>This is changing, for example Department for International Development (DFID) UK, does fund some projects but through the UNDP.

contrary, Somaliland receives considerable foreign assistance; for example in 2004, 37 percent of all aid going to Somalia went to Somaliland, while 41 percent went to South Central Somalia (Bradbury, 2010 p. 8). However, this is not bilateral aid that can be given to Somaliland directly but it is channelled through the UNDP and other international organisations.

Indeed before the recent peacekeeping mission in Somalia, most of the donor funding given for mine action for Somalia went into Somaliland as the only place in Somalia where programmes could be implemented. For Mine Action assistance in 2009: eight donors contributed US\$2,997,842 for mine clearance and risk education in Somaliland, which was a decline of approximately \$1.3 million from 2008 (Landmine Monitor, 2009). Since the launch of mine action programs, and except for periods of intense conflict where only limited mine clearance was taking place (between 1991 and 1993), mine action funding has been on the increase from US\$546,000 in 1998, to about \$6.65 million in 1999 and early 2000 as illustrated in Graph 1: Mine Action Funding for Somaliland 1998-2011.

**Graph 1: Mine Action Funding for Somaliland 1998-2011**



**Sources: Own Compilation from Landmine Monitor Reports<sup>89</sup>**

<sup>89</sup> For funding figures from 2012, Landmine Monitors reports give figures for the entire Somalia without desegregation between regions.

However, the funding modalities to a non-recognised entity limit the extent to which they have control or are otherwise involved in governance of the mine action sector on the ground. Political non-recognition means that this funding does not go through the Somaliland government as bilateral aid, but through the UN and or directly to the various NGOs in the Mine Action Sector.

*I think the biggest difference that you can see in the way the UN and international community engage in Somaliland is because Somaliland is not a state; it is not eligible for majority of bilateral funds like other countries. So as a result bodies such as the World Bank cannot support directly and as a result everything is channelled through the UN or through the civil society. (UNMAS Senior Official, interviewed on 15th October 2012)*

According to the global Mine Action strategy, funding is through the trust fund or a cost sharing modality that is established and managed to offer the international donor community an entry point and mechanism to channel funds directly to the field where they are needed most (Mine Action Strategy). Applying this mechanism in Somaliland has a limitation factor because of its non-recognition status.

*Definitely for Somaliland, because of the issue of recognition, obviously you cannot have bilateral agreements with countries so you are always under UN agency and often you have to convince the UN agency to support you in that program and in turn they go to the donor on your behalf. (SMAC official)*

Unlike other contexts like Afghanistan where the UN fund 52 humanitarian and commercial organisations that comprise one of the largest mine action programmes in the world, in Somaliland, the UN does not directly fund any of the humanitarian NGOS to undertake mine action. Indeed most of the funding by the UN was to undertake the LIS; most of the rest of the funding is what the NGOS in the Sector raise as explained by Nick Bateman;

*It's not as if the UN really raised a lot of funding for the NGOs. I can't remember a single funded UN project there that either HALO or DDG did in Somaliland. And all of the funding was not bilateral. It was generated*

*by those NGOs. There might be some commercial money or money for commercial contracts that had gone through the UN in the past before the arrival of NGOs for mine clearance but in my time there – there was no single project funded by the UN and they were absolutely peripheral to the mine action process (Nick Bateman).*

Thus, the non-recognition status means that the range of funding sources directly to the Somaliland government are limited, including whether it is from the African Development Bank or from the World Bank. When funding is available from such institutions it goes through the UN as the only channel and then the UN contract NGOs to carry out projects through what the UN calls 'Direct Execution' (DEX) instead of having the government to implement and take control of the budget through 'National Execution'. This further challenges the implementation of programmes.

For Somaliland, it means that the implementing partner, SMAC, suffers from endemic funding problems. Until 2006, the Landmine Monitor highlighted the fact that the Somaliland Government had not allocated any funding to SMAC, which gave the impression that SMAC was a UNDP rather than a government agency. In 2006, the government did allocate US \$15,000 (but disbursed only US \$7,000), and included the same amount in the 2007 budget (Lardner, 2008).

This mode of funding also limits the visibility of Somaliland as an equal partner in mine action and compromises the position of the government in being able to drive the process and therefore limits local ownership.

*Whatever help that the US, Britain or the international community is going to give us, it has to pass through these international organisations. It passes without our knowledge and we don't have the capability of knowing what has been sent to them. Maybe you can hear from the United States that they have that amount of money to be transferred to some of these agencies, but the accountability is between them and the agencies. These international organisations, mostly work with the UN or the UNHCR, UNDP and so on, but most of them are here and working instead of the government because of that lack of political recognition. (Boube Yusuf Duale.)*

According to an SMAC official, the biggest challenge is not that funding for their work has to be channelled through the UN but it is because of the increased bureaucracy that creates inefficiency:

*Even if it means the funding will go through the UN agency let SMAC be the end receiver and at least let SMAC make its case to the donor directly. So that the donor can see or be convinced but first SMAC has to convince the UN agency, then the UN agency puts it back to the donor and back again. To us, the challenge is a major challenge and that is the number one challenge that there is no direct relationship with the donor. (Hibaq Kosar).*

The same observation was made by a UN official who highlighted the limited ownership of mine action from the government:

*It means that the Somaliland government hasn't been given same level of ownership capacity as you see in other countries. So this means lesser capability. Because from World Bank are loans to the government and thus it is liable of paying them back and making sure that the money is well spent' (UNMAS Senior Official Interviewed in Nairobi on 15th October 2012).*

### **Reduced accountability of Actors**

It has been noted that accountability for interveners, even where states are recognised, tend to be oriented towards external donor entities and not towards their beneficiaries (Autesserre, 2014). It can therefore be argued that the status of being unrecognised lends itself to an interest in those who play on external actor's non-engagement with the government. Thus the NGOs, both international and local, may not be obliged to be accountable to the government but only to their specific donors and neither does it extend to their beneficiaries. An observation that was noted here:

*Well you should understand that you cannot call it a bilateral relationship with any country because of the lack of political recognition from the international community. Whatever help that the US, Britain or the international community is going to give us, it has to pass through these international organisations. It passes without our knowledge and we*

*don't have the capability of knowing what has been sent to them. Maybe you can hear from the United States that they have that amount of money to be transferred to some of these agencies, but the accountability is between them and the agencies. (Boube Yusuf Duale).*

Such institutions include those that continually get funding and continue their engagement with very little accountability. This is because the Somaliland authorities see such organisations as the only way that aid can be channelled into the country and therefore may not demand much from them. The issue of accountability was also highlighted by a respected Somaliland Statesman who noted that due to the fact that bilateral funding is not a possibility, funding is channelled through international aid agencies for onward transmission meaning that accountability by the International community to the people of Somaliland is lacking.

Similarly the same is said of the Mine Action Sectors accountability which only extends to their donors and not even to their beneficiaries. According to the Landmine Monitor (2001), though not reporting directly on accountability, there were indications that some Sector Actors that received funding for various activities did not disclose the funding levels. Landmine Monitor reported that Handicap International and UNICEF had received funding for Mine Risk Education during the reporting period of 2000, however, 'Landmine Monitor was not aware of the funding levels' (Landmine Monitor, 2001).

General availability of funding is always a constraint; not only in the overall amount of available funding, but it has often been the case that donors effectively block priority-setting discussions by tying funding opportunities to specific programmes or geographic areas.

This accountability was not just limited to the Sector but also to the government and the view of some of those interviewed was that the lack of recognition meant that the government lacked the impetus towards accountability to its people.

*The reason is currently this government if it wants to they can get things done but right now there is no accountability maybe only the donors can hold back fund but they feel the people can't say anything because they*

*don't pay taxes and the people do not have the capacity to organise themselves to bring the community back up. I think what can happen is, if it is internationally recognised the international community and bilateral donors can bring it to account. Still their accountability to the people will be weak but maybe that can help. (Haroon Ahmed Yusuf, NAGAAD, 30th September 2012)*

The view of another interviewee was that recognition would promote stronger government institutions which would mean that funds would be channelled through the government rather than through the international agencies. The view was that accountability might be strengthened by stronger institutions.

*Because Somaliland is not recognised, there is institutional weakness and because of the institutional weakness now the aid is turned to NGOs and other International agencies. It hardly goes to the government institutions. The little that goes through the government, the government is not accountable because they hardly give satisfactory accounts on how funds are spent. There is hardly any documentation to justify the expenditure. So the donors and the UN become reluctant of interacting with the government institutions. So they refrain from the money aspect of their relationship and try to maintain the political side of it. Then they will never be satisfied because whenever they ask for funding there is no accountability. If the country is recognised then the accountability will be easier to track (Ahmed Adan, Head of Policy and Programme; Action Aid, interviewed on 4th of October 2012).*

As noted even in other contexts there is generally a lack of downward accountability however, the non-recognition context does tend to make it easier for organisations, including those within the mine action sector, to ignore this at all levels.; Even where there was upward accountability, to the donors, it was quite evident that they lacked a critical eye in the reports that they received as will be explained in the next chapter. The evidence gathered from the reports submitted to donors clearly indicated that they did not take the question of accountability seriously as some of the recurring problems could have been highlighted and probably addressed.



NGO involvement has been noted to further weaken the service delivery potential of state structures and 'crowds' them 'out': generates dependency and shifts accountability towards donors instead of state structures, reinforcing citizens' perceptions of incapability of their political leaders (Rosser, 2006 p.11; Vaux and Visman, 2005 p. 24). When states seek to re-enforce their role in service delivery they frequently suffer from funding problems and the lack of qualified personnel. Furthermore, services operated by humanitarian agencies are often offered for free, creating a problem for 'regular' state services which will need to be charged for (Dijkzeul and Lynch, 2006)

## **CONCLUSION**

There is a lot of attribution to non-recognition as an overriding theme in defining the role of the state and the way in which organisations respond and undertake their work in Somaliland. Accountability is minimal as the government has no control over the organisations working in Somaliland. Similarly the government is accused of pursuing the recognition agenda to the detriment of other issues that need addressing. It certainly seems that the issue of non-recognition remains a genuine stumbling block not only to the implementation of mine action but to other development programmes in Somaliland. It is evident that the perception of a lot of the people is that recognition will help solve a number of problems; this may not necessarily be true but for now it serves a particular narrative that conveniently works for all sides within Somaliland.

This chapter therefore helps to illustrate how important aspects of post conflict reconstruction and peace building have been when undertaken within a context where Somaliland has continually been marginalised and neglected by the international community which continues to draw no distinction between Somaliland and Somalia. The UN has continually placed and treated Somaliland as Somalia, leaving the country largely to the sphere of NGOs and other agencies while the UN directs its attention to explicitly humanitarian rather than longer term development assistance (Hogg, 1996). Similarly, Menkhaus (2013) has noted that the UN does not take into account the resilience of the communities that it seeks to serve, instead, it tends to carry out security assessments by the UNDSS focusing on security threats rather than on resilience.

Specifically for mine action, It has been noted that coordination within the Sector appears as an additional component that does not seem to be incorporated within the Sector's own definition and one which Jennings et al. (2008) argue is surpassed within demining as a costly factor. Coordination is subsumed within various levels of mine action and is one where nominal meeting of different humanitarian functions cohere around demining as the greatest focus of resource mobilisation (op cit p. 16). The role of the UN demonstrates the way in which it has relegated coordination as a less important component to the detriment of and with far reaching implications on the Sector and mine action in Somaliland in general.

This chapter has demonstrated that the Somaliland context, like other post conflict contexts, is complex and that each element has a political connotation and therefore presents its own particular challenges. Somaliland's unique political non recognition status presents the Sector with a challenge when implementing programmes using standard approaches. The challenges encountered in Somaliland highlight the need for knowledge and awareness — specifically in terms of how intervention activities, actors, and methods impact on, and are perceived in, the immediate local and national environment. It further highlights the call for interventions to be tailor-made to reflect such unique contextual aspects.

## **CHAPTER 7: SOMALILAND'S CONTEXT AND SECTOR PROCESSES: IMPLICATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A LANDMINE IMPACT SURVEY**

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*“As a tool in general (the LIS), in Somaliland has been widely inadequate due to its own inherent quality problems” (UNMAS official in Hargeisa).*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, I use the implementation of the Landmine Impact Survey to illustrate the challenges and limitations of standardised approaches and also the importance of context in programme implementation. As noted in Chapter 4 (Global Approaches to Mine Action) the Mine Action sector is guided by the need to apply a standardised set of protocols irrespective of context and history of the specific country. Efforts to pursue such standardised responses in Somaliland have largely been driven by the efforts of the UN through UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS); the rhetoric by the Sector is that these standards are only a guide and that national contexts should guide their application, however in reality this appears far from the truth.

As discussed earlier the purpose of implementing a LIS is ‘to provide the three major partners of mine action-national authorities, donors, and implementing agencies with a common database. This database is constructed to give national authorities the ability to manipulate the data in a transparent way that is responsive to national priorities. International donors will have data that conforms to an international standard that will put individual countries in a global perspective. And implementing agencies will have detailed information for tasking resources and measuring progress across all areas of mine action’ (Eaton, 2003 p. 915)

In this chapter I will demonstrate the failure of the LIS to map and measure the extent of contamination. The Sector uses the same tools and methodology irrespective of context; the data that is collected, irrespective of its validity, is stored in a standardised data management system (the Information Management System for Mine Action), and the Sector insists on using both the data and the data management tool. The implementation of this process is

challenged by the context as will be illustrated below. Similarly, most of the challenges and limitations highlighted in other contexts continue to recur within the Somaliland context.

## **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A LANDMINE IMPACT SURVEY**

Having identified the need for a survey UNDP mobilised resources for a comprehensive Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) in 2002. With funding secured from a multi-donor group (The EC, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the government of Finland and the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA) through the Survey Action Centre (SAC), a memorandum of understanding between the DDG and the Ministry of Resettlement Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (MRR&R) was drafted and signed. The Survey Action Centre (SAC) executed, and the DDG implemented, the survey in accordance with the principles and operating protocols established by the Survey Working Group. DDG engaged four international staff members and more than 60 national staff during data collection. Field staff members were organised into two survey groups of one field supervisor, two field editors and eight interviewers each, and with four interviewers operating out of the Hargeisa office. During this time, SMAC and NDA had entered into a restructuring that lasted almost the entire survey operations period and therefore did not play the active role that the survey had originally envisioned. Technical support and material assistance was provided by the UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. UNMAS and the UNOPS provided a quality assurance monitor to assist with the certification process. The purpose of the survey was to access and analyse the socio-economic impact of mine/UXO contamination on a village-by-village basis. It was envisaged that this data would then be utilised as a basis for prioritisation of mine action activities in each region and in turn the data would be utilised to update the mine action priorities in the region. Due to the uncertain security conditions in the rest of Somalia; data collection was to start in Somaliland as the first phase. This phase covered Awdal, Galbeed, and Sahil regions and part of Togdheer region and this took place between 2002 and 2003 and was completed in March 2003. In 2006-7 the security situation improved allowing access for the LIS team to the remainder of the areas, Sool, Sanaag and the remaining 33 communities that were not reached in Togdheer districts (Survey Action Centre, 2004).

## **THE OUTCOME OF THE LIS: VALIDITY AND QUALITY OF DATA**

The surveys identified 982 Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHAs), affecting 447 communities. This corresponded with the results of Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices (KAP) survey previously done by Handicap International in 2002, which registered the Togdheer region as having recorded the highest positive answers (72.1%) in regards to people who felt that they lived in an area that had mines/UXO. Other areas were Awdal (62.5%) and Galbeed (52.8%) (Handicap International, 2002). The most important widespread resource blockage, according to the LIS, were roads and pastureland, whilst serious blockages in respect of safety and socioeconomic security were sources of drinking water and irrigated cropland (Survey Action Centre, 2004).

The Sector acknowledged that much of the data collected was of partial or poor quality (Lardner, 2008). The susceptibility to errors can be attributed to a number of reasons.

### **Factors contributing to poor quality of data**

#### **a) Data sources and the culture of opportunistic aid**

As indicated in chapter 4, the LIS follows a standard methodology that is based on social science; this involves the reiterative process of collection of “expert opinion” to establish the location of possible mined communities; starting at the national level and proceeding through each subsequent administrative layer, gaining detail until a comprehensive list of all impacted communities is generated; interviews are then conducted in each identified community in order to assess the nature of the mine impacts. This involves interviewing people who are deemed to be knowledgeable such as national authorities, former combatants and medical professionals, as well as conducting a review of relevant databases, mined area records and any existing data (Kidd, 2000).

These methods and practices of engaging local communities are the most widely used forms of local involvement within the Sector and they acknowledge that the data collected in this way is only as good as the community sources providing it (GICHD, 2006a). The communities are approached through group interviews or individuals and are requested to share information on landmine contamination. In Somaliland, for example, the networks used included elders,

community leaders and religious leaders in order to use established networks to gain access to local knowledge. The data from the survey was therefore bound to be flawed; the extent of the contamination areas was overstated; dependence on local knowledge meant that the survey data was compromised by the fact that the local communities had learnt to associate a survey with mine clearance and hence the communities tailored the information they provided to steer mine clearance to suit such motives. This phenomenon has been described by Hammond and Vaughan-Lee (2012) as 'culture of opportunistic aid, both on the part of Somalis and as part of the response' (p. 8). They base the concept on the modern history of humanitarian engagement in Somalia, i.e. assessing needs, negotiating access and delivering assistance. In Somalia, it has involved engaging with those in positions of power, who often seek to manipulate aid for their own ends. In Somaliland I would argue that this manifests itself with the communities, who see the political and economic benefits of humanitarian assistance as an incentive to create opportunities for humanitarian actors to provide assistance. Thus the local communities knew that overstating the problem had potential economic or employment benefits from clearance operations that they assumed would follow. This was not just a challenge for the implementation of the LIS but it was a response that the Sector could have anticipated given their own engagement with the demining as acknowledged by Nick Bateman (formerly DDG) and Southern Craib (DDG and formerly HALO Trust):

*The concept of the LIS, I think was sensible and clever since they were trying to get the donors a clear picture of the social and economic impact of landmines. Somaliland I think is possibly the worst place in the world that they could have chosen because of course the local communities they were so used to adapting to interventions; they would try to look at their side of vehicle, if it said 'water & sanitation', they would quickly tailor their responses. What happened was that the problem and because DDG was very naïve and at that time myself included we were all interested in creating a problem and having a problem there rather than saying that there's no problem here and we shouldn't be here. So the problem got so over-reported and so blown out of proportion in Somaliland because the local community just reported Willy nilly on*

*where there were mines and where there weren't. And the problem was because there wasn't proper verification of what the LIS teams were told. It went into the database. It was subsequently adapted by the UN and became de facto. And as late as 2006/2007 myself and colleagues in DDG were fighting a battle with the UN in Nairobi at the true scale of the problem. Whereby they were saying the LIS is the definitive document and that is what we have to use. They understood the reality but nobody within their system had the guts to say that's not the case. They were just empire building as well as everybody else. So the LIS did a massive dis-service to Somaliland because it has diverted millions of dollars into a virtually non-existent problem.*

Southern Craib noted that:

*The biggest problem with survey is that mine clearance is associated with jobs so if your main source of information is usually conversation or interviews with local population, if your interview target also understand that presenting a mines problem is likely to get a mine action agency involved in the area given they understand the usual policy to raise security and safety in the area is to employ locals and train them; then very quickly they work out that indicating that there is a significant mine problem is likely to generate jobs. This completely skews survey information. By the time the mine action organisations discover that there's nothing there they've already had several months' salary. That's a major flaw with the impact survey done here. That is more significant here than anywhere else that I can think of that a survey has been done partly because Somaliland people do not speak as individuals so they very quickly learn how to play the game. I think DDG will accept the fact that if they knew then what they know now, they could have queried an awful lot of data.*

The LIS was undertaken by a demining organisation therefore who had the full knowledge of this 'culture of opportunistic aid', especially the relationship between employment and demining as the same culture had continually dogged the work of the clearance agencies. The Sector had long recognised this pattern as their respective annual project reports indicated (HALO Trust and DDG Annual Project Reports). Similarly, Mohammed Ali Ismael, a DDG ex-deminer illustrated the same:

*What we traditionally did when we went to carry out demining was ask the local people "where are the mines?" And they said "that area". Then we started, not realising what is the motive of the local people, for us to do demining there because we had to employ people. (Mohammed Ali Ismael - Director NDA, 1998-99; DDG Deminer 1999 – 2005 interviewed in Hargeisa on 26th October 2010)*

Nick Bateman in a consequent response to the failure of the LIS responded that:

*The subsequent criticism was therefore with the benefit of 20:20 hindsight when we actually understood much more about the Somaliland context (via Skype message dated 15th January 2013).*

Another problem associated with dependence on local knowledge for Somaliland is the fact that as a community, the Somalis are a very mobile therefore local experience and knowledge may be limited to a certain degree as communities have implications for how well they reflect local realities.

#### **b) Role and knowledge of the survey teams**

GICHD has acknowledged that there is usually an overestimation of total Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHAs) and this has been observed in most of the countries where an LIS survey has been undertaken. This appears to happen in circumstances where the survey teams are not well trained to fully determine boundaries which appears to have been the case in Somaliland (GICHD, 2006a)

The lack of local knowledge had a great impact on the LIS with regard to multiple and / or incorrect names. The Somali language borrows many elements from Arabic. The process of transcribing it into the Roman alphabet, however,



allows words such as Ali, for example, to be spelled in three different ways; Cali, Hashi, and Xashi. So names of the same location may be found more than once in an alphabetical listing, depending on whether the inventory's author had chosen a Somali or English spelling as these changes depend on the impulse of the spokesperson of the day or whether the name is given in Somali, Arabic, English, or Italian. Unfortunately, this had the effect of increasing the total contaminated area and reducing credibility of the survey. This was an issue that Mark Belford established to his dismay:

*The last thing I heard literally only last week is that there was also going to be some sort of problem in regards to locality names and things like that because the actual LIS wasn't particularly accurate in naming name of places<sup>90</sup>. There was a bit of double up, and that is a good indication of the technical accuracy of the LIS, they weren't doing a very good job in that respect. I don't know whether that was what they were told to do or what they chose to do. (Mark Belford; 1st October 2012).*

Such information can only be verified by detailed local knowledge that a short term researcher like those working on the LIS might understandably fail to grasp. Thus, others have raised the issue of the qualifications of the survey teams. In the case of Somaliland the survey was supposedly carried out by 'university graduate students', and not qualified, experienced mine action personnel as noted by this interviewee:

*These landmine impact surveys if they are done properly by well experienced mine action agencies they are great. But often that is not the case. The one in Somaliland I believe was done by 'University Graduates' with no mine action background or experience. And so you can imagine, the problem was hugely exaggerated. And that's been the case not just in Somaliland but in many other countries as well and many other contexts as well. (Interview with Neil Feraro<sup>91</sup>; Ex HALO Trust Programme Manager 2004-2010 in Nairobi on 13th September 2012)*

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<sup>90</sup> LIS have been undertaken in 2003, and 2005, this anomaly was only realised in 2012.

<sup>91</sup> Nick Feraro had just left his position as HALO Trust programme manager and he made it clear that this represented his personal views and did not reflect the position of HALO Trust.

The results of the LIS were challenged as having been highly exaggerated and hence the validity of the data was called into question. DDG having been part of the survey process have maintained their belief that the LIS inadvertently over-reported the scale and significance of explosive ordnance and the related accidents<sup>92</sup>. However their position was that the skewed data can be attributed to the fact that in 2003 the LIS process was still new and little understood which meant that the first few country surveys were poor.

Nick Bateman argues that the issue of questionable data was raised with the relevant authorities during the process, however no one was bold enough to admit the mistakes and the LIS has continued to serve as a baseline for measuring the extent of the problem in Somaliland. According to the UN:

*The LIS is the base document for mine action in Somaliland and you can't change it and that's the unfortunate thing, the LIS is there so you're not going to go back and say let's cancel it. The only thing you can do is to discredit particular SHAs but it will always be there so that should at least be reflected somewhere in the database. (Mark Belford; 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012)*

Mark Belford further acknowledges that the usefulness of LIS is thus questionable:

*As a tool in general in regards to Somaliland, it has been widely inadequate due to its own inherent quality problem.*

The Sector argues that 'the methodology and professionalism of partners means the risk of bias is modest, while the benefit of working with implementing partners already in the country brings critical contextual insight and language skills'. However, the Somaliland LIS proved that this was not the case (Filipino 2006 p. 14). The contextual insight to guide the LIS was certainly missing and the language skills did not seem to have been applied.

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<sup>92</sup> Danish Demining Group and Cranfield Mine Action were the implementing partners for the LIS phase 1 in 2003. DDG is a member of the Survey Working Group, however for Phase 3 2006, only SMAC and PMAC are listed as implementing partners.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE LIS ON THE SECTOR

It has been pointed out that poor quality data collection, analysis and dissemination can cause an increase in additional costs through additional allocations of resources to deal with the consequences of data-management problems. Such allocations results in non-conformance quality costs argues (Harutyunyan, 2011). The LIS was met with scepticism by the Sector and this prompted DDG and HALO Trust to undertake a more detailed process of resurveying the communities that came through as highly impacted. This was in 2004 and 2005, and involved returning to those communities previously surveyed and identified as being highly impacted and undertaking more detailed analysis.

There are conflicting views on the scale of the contamination problem in Somaliland from many of the key stakeholders involved. Previously Somaliland was quoted as having had between 1 -2 million landmines deployed (Landmine Monitor, 1999). In 2000 UNICEF commissioned a feasibility study in which these estimates were seen to have been 'questionably calculated and implausibly high', the reality (the report estimated) could have been as low as 50,000-100,000 (Taylor, 2000 p. 5).

There is also a limitation of the extent to which the LIS has provided any guidance to informing the work of the other stakeholders.

*The idea with the LIS is great because it is supposed to be the guiding tool and in areas where it is well done it works well. In areas where you have a strong government mine action centre it works well. But you don't have a strong mine action centre here. They guys are great and enthusiastic but it still leaves a lot to be desired. So we have different agencies doing their own stuff and nothing is fed in the system even though UNMAS is trying to streamline, it has never really gotten to the stage that we want it to (Karina Lyngge, DDG Head of Programme Development AVR; Interviewed in Hargeisa on 26th September 2012).*

It can therefore be deduced that it would have been challenging to use the LIS as a tool to guide Somaliland's national plan as the data was flawed. The aim of the survey was to provide a clear understanding of the impact that mines

have within communities so that the response of Mine Action could be prioritised based on a clear understanding. The view is that a LIS provides vital nationwide data that helps facilitate sector planning and integration (Eaton, 2003). However, DDG as the LIS implementing agency acknowledges that the LIS provided little information at the technical level to accurately guide the activities of mine action operators, or indeed to assist the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) with the development of annual national mine action work plans. As such, more data needed to be collected in order refine the data produced through comprehensive technical survey (DDG Report Annual Report 2003).

### **Limited use of the IMSMA data management system**

The Mine Action Sector pursues LIS with an aim of providing for improved collaboration between the primary stakeholders of the process: national authorities, donors and implementing agencies, and provides for the utilisation of the same dataset. The Sector is driven by preference for quantitative data as quantification provides standardisation where the same attributes can be measured anywhere in the world. The UN emphasises and almost demands a method and model which is universalisable and thus utilises the International Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA)<sup>93</sup> data management programme. Thus, once data is collected, it is then fed into the IMSMA programme which is the UN approved standard information system. However, this system is reliant on well-collected and well-interpreted data from the ground; unfortunately the UN insists on relying on such information, even where it is flawed. This offers little relevance for a national mine action programme and it could, as argued by Rae McGrath, be replaced with a far simpler and country and task specific system. The continual imposition of the IMSMA has therefore become an encumbrance to mine action programmes such as Somaliland's as it serves little purpose beyond the perpetuation of its own existence (cited by Björk, 2012 p. xvi). The continued need for standardised data means that mine action programmes expend significant resources to "clear the database" rather than to clear minefields (GICHD, 2006a p. 15) as evidently significant human and financial resources and time are needed to address the problem. The quality of

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<sup>93</sup> The IMSMA programme was developed for the UN by the Centre for Security Studies and Conflict Research at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich.

data is not the only problem with the utilisation of the system, as with other technologies utilised by the Sector, these are developed in a technologically savvy world, and thus are mainly externally managed, too-complex and have been accused of being pacifying mechanisms for mine action rather than assisting in the creation of nationally adaptable, appropriate and sustainable measures to solve the problem. This means that the programme continually relies on training that is offered by expatriate staff. In 2010 during my first field trip I arrived at the same time as three expats from Geneva, whose task was specifically working on the database under UNMAS.

Post the LIS, SMAC still had version 3 of the IMSMA system installed and had data from the LIS stored, however, this data was not used to task operators and neither was there any recording of the survey and clearance work done by operators (Lardner, 2003).

However international technical advisors have continually been assigned to SMAC and have mainly concentrated on establishing the IMSMA, staff and building their capacity to develop a mine-related database. However, immediately after the LIS, at the most data intensive period, the post of operational advisor was vacant, leaving a significant gap. In addition, the Country Technical Advisor at the time was given responsibility for the whole of Somalia, and relocated to Nairobi and was therefore not available to spend significant time in Somaliland (Interview with SMAC; Lardner, 2008).

As highlighted by a Senior SMAC official:

*The biggest contribution So far right now, as far as SMAC is concerned, is that we have a Swiss in-kind contribution which UNMAS secured from the Swiss government. This is for updating our IMSMA programme as the version and therefore the information system we have is very poor due to the fact that we have never had any formal training. The software was put in there but no formal training. Also the programme is updated continually and we still use a very old version.*

Similarly, the local computer operators who had been received training from the GICHD had subsequently left their positions and leaving a gap in the already limited capacity that existed. This is the status that I encountered when I visited

SMAC. During both research periods, I was unable to get any data due to lack of computer operators. However, I was also informed by various people within the Sector that the lack of data is not simply from lack of capacity and that it was also due to the fact that the data was simply not available. Similarly, the DDG Evaluation noted that “the operators had no copy of, nor access to, IMSMA, and any encouragement for operators to report is tempered by the well-founded suspicion that the data simply do not get entered into IMSMA. This is reinforced by the fact that the operators have been asked for their complete data sets to be entered into IMSMA several times over the last couple of years” (Lardner, 2008 p. 13).

Due to this issue with data, HALO Trust continually kept their own database, whilst SMAC has its own which presents particular challenges as expressed here by Mark Belford;

*This comes back to this disagreement between HALO and SMAC. SMAC have sometimes incorrectly chosen to use HALO figures and sometimes haven't. Certainly a couple of months ago I was trying to come up with new figures for of how much more there is to do and I picked up a SMAC annual report for last year and the year before and I had a look at it and I thought it didn't look right. Then I picked up the baseline survey report and SMAC had taken some of those figures and you just couldn't get a correlation. HALO indicating there were so many LIS SHAs, SMAC was saying so many but in another report SMAC says so many, when you added them up it showed something else altogether. That made me start to query what's wrong with the database or more particularly the verification side of the database. Have we not loaded all the SHAs into the database? That's what I'm still waiting for a really good answer on which one is right (Mark Belford; October 2012).*

According to another UN official there was a feeling within HALO that their data was more adequate and therefore there was resistance in combining the two. The end result of this means that the national database is not a current national database and the operators have been keeping their own records since they began operating.

## **Limited use of the LIS as a prioritisation tool**

The role of the data produced as a standard reference and its utility for priority-setting remains questionable in general as was highlighted by the Global evaluation report citing Mozambique and Cambodia. The findings of this report highlighted that local actors 'had shown little interest or even hostility' towards the survey and that local Mine Action actors appeared to ignore the LIS outputs (Scanteam and DEMEX, 2003 p. 36). The same was demonstrated in the case of Somaliland.

As explained by Southern Craib, DDG:

*Operationally not at all because it is an overview so none of it can be used as specific information for a particular mine field. Where they are quite useful is in preparation of documents for argument of donors. It would be useful if you are the single or leading landmine organisation in the country because it would establish for you where you should base your main operation centers. That likelihood falls down because the mine clearance organisations would have been on the ground for years before the LIS was done. So they've already established themselves where they want to operate. Now there are economic impacts that are making them have to re-organise themselves. The other issue is that the mine action authorities themselves are often involved in generating the information that goes into the LIS. (Southern Craib,)*

The same views were reflected by Graeme Draemu Abernethy:

*A lot of the agencies, HALO, DDG and HI, look at what is required where they are working and SMAC knows that these are the priorities that have been given. We are going to be working with these priorities. So it is probably in reverse, wrong, so to speak. You would want to think that in the near term, SMAC will be able to implement a work scheme based on priorities for each region and then give it back to the organisations in terms of a priority list clearance for each handling each year. (Graeme Draemu Abernethy).*

Given all the clearance effort, one thing that is still unclear is what the current levels of contamination are and how long it will take to tackle the remaining

residual problem. The (Landmine Monitor, 2012) indicates that HALO estimates the remaining area to be released, as of April 2012, as approximately 242 suspected mined areas covering 12km<sup>2</sup> and 18 BAC/explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) tasks covering 15.5km<sup>2</sup>.

HALO Trust uses a prioritisation of tasks which is set against standard factors, such as the risk of accidents if the land is not cleared; the number of beneficiaries that will benefit from the removal of threat, and subsequent use of land, for example access to the community by aid agencies; the socio-economic impact of use to which the land will be put following clearance; technical, security and access issues.

### **Limited utility of the LIS as basis for donor funding**

The LIS is seen as an important tool by the donors as it is the basis for funding and also for prioritisation. The main intention of carrying out a LIS is so that the available resources are utilised for maximum benefit to the mine affected communities, and to enable communities to be cleared countries must prioritise mine action activities. Such information is also needed for strategic and operational planning and is made available in a timely manner to planners at the national level—normally the staff of a mine action centre (MAC), to implementing partners such as demining non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and to other stakeholders such as the donor community (Morete, 2003). Thus the LIS for Somaliland was not very useful, in terms of mobilisation of donor interest it had a negative impact on other prospective areas such that there is less donor interest in future LIS even in other regions such as Puntland. As highlighted by Mark Belford

*And when we address the utility here but also raises it up in Puntland because we can't get anyone to do any landmine clearance work in Puntland because they don't believe in the LIS. At the moment we have got DDG looking for specific funding, they've just done specific training to get teams back out in the field and to do surveys particularly in the areas where they think are going to be high impact. Down in the south west and areas like that. But on the basis of that concrete information they should be able to attract donors. But unfortunately for the rest of*



*Puntland there is maybe if or what type of things because people understand the LIS wasn't built up.*

A follow-on survey was undertaken in 2004-2005 by DDG and the HALO Trust with the support of SMAC, in order to attempt to clarify some of the data and conclusions presented by the LIS. Similarly, HALO Trust, with agreement of SMAC/UNDP, undertook another resurvey from September 2008 to October 2009 and confirmed 346 SHAs, of which 329 were mined areas and 17 were battle area clearance (BAC) tasks. The total contaminated area was 18.9km<sup>2</sup> (ICBL-CMC, 2011).

The phase which the mine action programme in Somaliland is at now, is not a phase that would naturally be heavily reliant on data as Mine action systems are not data-entry intensive at the late stage of the project. On the contrary, data entry is the only meaningful activity that can be done at the early stages of the project, and this is the data-entry intensive phase (Grujic, 2002).

### **Incoherence within the Sector; unintended impact of the LIS**

Thus rather than the intended impact, the LIS can be seen to have contributed to unnecessary and seemingly negative distraction within the mine action sector in Somaliland. In 2006, after seven years of implementing mine clearance in Somaliland, DDG decided to cease its clearance operations and focus on village-by-village clearance of UXO and small arms control, a decision based on a re-survey of several identified high and medium impacted communities in 2008, which confirmed that mines were not having as serious an impact on communities as previously believed. As a result DDG believed that the funding received for mine clearance would be better spent on other activities. Having been the organisation that implemented the LIS, in the first place, the decision was reported to have caused a certain amount of bad blood between DDG and SMAC/UNDP. SMAC claim they were not consulted during the decision making process whilst DDG believe that SMAC were part of this process. SMAC felt that they were presented with a *fait accompli* rather than being able to form a part of the strategizing process.

Nick Bateman defended this decision as noted earlier, and argues that it was based on a fundamental feeling that all indicators in Somaliland showed that it

was time for DDG to leave mine action – and mine clearance. During the interview in Nairobi, he repeated the question he previously posed to the evaluation team (2008):

*How would a community choose to allocate resources if they were offered the funds required to clear suspected mines close by to their village? He wondered whether they would choose to clear the minefield, build a school, a health post, drill a well for clean water, or some other risk reduction strategy?*

Mine Action had been undertaken for more than a decade without a LIS, its result, instead of bringing coherence and clarity within the Sector, created divergent views within the stakeholders as it was fraught with controversy and the results continually dominated the discussions between the clearance agencies, the local authorities and the UN.

Nick Bateman, the then programme manager, argued that Mines and UXOs in Somaliland had been a context in which although there was a humanitarian impact, the situation in Somaliland was well-managed by the local population and, therefore not too severe. *"The problem is manageable and could, with the necessary international assistance, be resolved within a limited timeframe"* (IRIN 2004b; online). UNDP's position was that progress in clearance would be slow and cautious adding that some factions were still planting mines; the civil society represented by Ahmed Essa highlighted the decrease in the annual rate of incidents from two reported incidents per day in Hargeisa alone, to approximately 100 per year throughout the country (IRIN, 2004b). This article highlighted the lack of coherence within the Sector at the time.

The clearance agencies did not utilise the LIS for their planning. Indeed following the LIS, there was acceptance that mine action was no longer a priority for DDG, a position that was surprising and has proved divisive within the Sector in Somaliland. This was especially because DDG had been an implementing partner for the Survey Action Centre and for the LIS:

*We took a conscious decision in 2007 not to ask the Swedish government, which was our main donor, for more funding for the demining because it was pointless. We felt that HALO Trust still had a*

*large capacity there, and the evidence was that contamination was not that bad; it would have been immoral to ask for more money at that stage because of all these arguments (Nick Bateman).*

Other than credibility the LIS has generated a lot of disagreements with the Mine Action actors and remains a bone of contention.

Similarly, resources that would have otherwise been used in carrying out other activities seem to be used in re-surveying. Due to such anomalies and claims of over-reporting and validity of the data, HALO Trust and SMAC agreed to do some resurveying. This was carried out between September 2008 and October 2009. Out of the original 982 SHAs, 346 were confirmed SHAs, of which 329 were mined areas and 17 were battle area clearance (BAC) tasks (Landmine Monitor 2009). However, there is still contradiction and lack of guidance on the levels of contamination and the impact of the same but all data points to a decline in accidents and limited impact. However, this information is from various sources and not primarily from the LIS. For example, HALO Trust's documentation indicates that since 2009 there had been a declining number of accidents in the various regions of Somaliland (presentation given to Researcher by HALO). Similarly, the Landmine Monitor (2011) reported a decrease to 36 mine/ERW casualties reported by SMAC for 2010 which was significantly lower than the number of casualties recorded in 2007 (97) and 2006 (96). The evidence is that there have been a decreasing number of accidents and or incidents involving mines/UXOs.

## **CONCLUSION**

Historically, within the Sector, implementing organisations' have had an incentive for high-figure reporting in order to get more donor funding and interest; similar tactics were used during the mine ban process when the international media quickly seized the opportunity to report on the highly sensational, but poorly supported, statistics of more than 100 million landmines throughout the world. Mine-affected governments realised that it was in their interests to publish the 'worst case scenario' statistics and estimates to the international community to encourage donor funding (Bottiglierio, 2000; Elliot and Mills, 2000). In other contexts such as South Sudan over reporting was used as a fundraising strategy (Bolton, 2010). In the case of Somaliland, this

was a contradiction as the implementing DDG used the LIS as a basis not to go for more funding.

This also means that the implementation of centralised control over data that was supposed to ease the ultimate transfer of responsibilities to SMAC and NDA could not be undertaken without challenges.

According to the Sector, the LIS was the first attempt to 'gain a strategic perspective' on the problem of mines and UXO on Somaliland (Lardner 2008 pp 9), and was supposed to be the creation of an invaluable benchmark for the government of Somaliland, international donors, the UN, NGO's and demining operators. However it failed to achieve this and therefore the LIS had its limitations as a tool for prioritisation and as a guide national planning. The data was of poor and questionable quality and therefore the validity was questioned; this meant also that with questionable data, the implementation of the data management programme was hampered. Effectively, this means that there was no clarity on the contamination levels nor are there clear goals to guide the Sector.

According to the evaluation report by Scanteam and DEMEX on the LIS, where the LIS were undertaken they were a "stand alone" event and externally driven by donors and as a process it was described as poorly integrated within national tools and tasks (Scanteam and DEMEX, 2003 pp: 2). This evaluation was done prior to the results of the LIS in Somaliland, however a lot of the conclusions apply to the Somaliland case as has been illustrated.

Therefore the chapter demonstrates that the implementation of the LIS reflects the peacebuilding critique of being implemented based on 'standardised templates' that ignore local context. The implementation of the LIS supports the critique as articulated by Sending (2009b) that 'peacebuilders are both "blind" and "arrogant"'. He argues that they are "blind" to local factors that are central to effective peacebuilding because their frame of reference is mainly drawn from universal templates for how to build peace which draws heavily on western experience, expertise and institutions' ( p. 1). This is exactly what the implementation of the LIS demonstrated. As observed by the Sector workers themselves, the LIS highlighted that those carrying out the data collection were

'blind' to the local context; the lack of knowledge of the context was demonstrative of this. The LIS follows a specific standard methodology and by the Sector's own admission whether implemented by the UN or other partners this methodology needs to be followed; this demonstrates the 'arrogant' nature of the process. The Sector fails to take into account the different contextual factors that inevitably would challenge such standardised approaches thereby sacrificing context specific approaches to universal templates.

## CHAPTER 8: SECTOR ACTORS AND SOMALILAND CONTEXT; IMPLICATIONS FOR MINE ACTION'S PEACEBUILDING POTENTIAL & CONCEPTUALISATION

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*"Peace isn't 'Kumbaya' or a dove and a rainbow," – Jody Williams<sup>94</sup>*

*"For the Somaliland people Peace is something that you cannot measure" –  
Shukri Ismail<sup>95</sup>*

### INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, I argued that mine action is conceptualised in similar ways in both academic peacebuilding literature and by the Sector. I argue that the same factors that dictate this mode of conceptualisation are reflected within the Somaliland context. In this chapter I demonstrate the extent to which mine action actors and the context of Somaliland have interacted to contribute to such a narrow conceptualisation. The chapter is informed by Goodhand's (2010) "peace auditing" methodologies which he employed to assess the outcomes of NGO activities in terms of peace building impacts. The approach uses the idea of a peace audit which assesses the 'peace-ability' of the Sector by looking at the Sector's relationships and linkages, using a multiple stakeholder analysis which addresses questions around the organisational identity and values of the Sector, and how these are transmitted to stakeholders.

Using the peace-ability approach I analyse the extent to which there are endowments of "peace capital" accrued or undermined by Sector activities; the types of activities, at which time, and in which particular context, have had a positive or negative impact.

I demonstrate in this chapter that the extent to which the Somaliland community conceptualises mine action as peacebuilding is informed by the Sector Actors; including their relationship with the communities; the Sector's identity and values and most importantly the Sector programmes. This then shapes the

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<sup>94</sup> Jody Williams, co-recipient with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize

<sup>95</sup> Shukri Ismail, Head of Candlelight the largest local Somaliland NGO; recipient of ICG's award the International Crisis Group for Commitment to Peace, Justice and Security

perceptions of the communities and a narrative is formed based on the historical association with peacebuilding, Sector behaviour and Sector programmes. Evidently from the narratives, the mine action's 'peaceability' potential is increased by its intrinsic capacities that support peacebuilding and peacebuilding processes; however the Sector's behaviour, and some factors, limit or enhance that potential or capacity for peace.

## **FACTORS LIMITING MINE ACTION'S 'PEACEABILITY'**

### **POTENTIAL**

Mine action achievements are conceptualised in terms of its role in increasing or decreasing probabilities for peace, rather than as precise cause and effect relationships. This is because "impact" is a concept that is inappropriate for the examination of peace-building for a number of reasons. The problems of attribution, time frames and the lack of the counterfactual mean that it is difficult to talk with precision about the contribution of Mine Action programmes to peace building or conflict fuelling processes. At best, I can only talk about the general direction of change and the *probabilities* that Mine Action interventions have had an impact on peace and conflict dynamics (Goodhand, 2002)

The Mine Action Sector globally seeks to be viewed as one homogenous entity that is driven by a common goal. This may have been the case when they called for a ban; the reality now is that the Sector is not as homogenous, as they have different mandates and therefore there is a need to differentiate between actors and types of impact on development.

### **Mine Action Sector relationships and linkages**

Goodhand's peace audit methodologies call for interrogation of relationships and linkages of organisations; specifically looking at the nature and quality of linkages with stakeholders; how organisational identity and values are explained and transmitted to stakeholders; how the organisations position themselves in relation to their various constituencies; how they manage conflicting pressures and demands and the extent to which they are reactive or proactive in influencing stakeholders. (Autesserre, 2014) observes that the social lives of international peacebuilders, their personal relationships and their informal actions carry an enormous significance in post conflict zones. There are however several factors that determine this behaviour; and these, as Autesserre

(2014) has observed, are based on daily work routines driven by the security requirements that dictate their operational contexts. These routines dictate procedures which in turn have an impact on the how the perceptions of local communities emerge. These arose as a result of a changing humanitarian operational context in which mine action and other interventions were taking place; and, as highlighted in the previous chapter, the 'perceived' or real danger that was associated with the context that had led to the humanitarian aid sector 'bunkerisation' or 'conflict proofing' and hence eschewing direct relations with local populations (Duffield, 2012a; Goodhand, 2006). The lack of interaction with ordinary people due in part to security concerns means that the Sector Actors do not interact with the local people who might challenge the dominant ways of acting and suggest alternate solutions. The result of this was a culture of distrust between the mine action sector and local communities; however, the distrust was not entirely due to the disconnect but also due to the extent to which the Sector was deemed sincere in their operations' as explained below.

### **Distrust between Mine Action Sector and Local communities**

The aforementioned policies contribute as noted earlier to the formation of hierarchies between local and international staff, and also between International organisations and the communities they seek to serve. The policies did not just create physical barriers but also made it difficult for the Sector Actors to appreciate or understand the people and societies they are engaged with (Guerra et al., 2010). Bunkered compounds, restricted and protected movement and short deployments all have been seen to contribute to aid actors 'substituting acquaintance for knowledge, activity for understanding, reporting for analysis, [and] quantity of work for quality'. As Van Brabant (2010) observes 'anybody who spends some time in the Western-dominated aid world cannot but be astonished by the pervasive levels of distrust: distrust within agencies, between agencies, between agencies and their alleged "beneficiaries"' ( p. 10).

Local populations comprehend mine action interventions through the daily activities of the Sector Actors on the ground, their contrasting lifestyles, values and behaviour. Arrogant or derogatory attitudes towards local populations were highlighted by many of those who were interviewed, specifically the HALO Trust



and the UN. These attitudes were perpetuated by little or no contact with local people therefore building an air of arrogance by Sector workers.

These attitudes were pointed out by majority of the interviewees. I also was privy to conversations within the Sector and the anecdotes exchanged during informal conversations about the Sector; for example members of the community highlighted that they saw HALO Trust only in their very badly driven vehicles, and only heard of them in relation to the various labour disputes that were on-going and that were reported in the local media. The drivers were seen to drive carelessly which led to a number of road accidents mainly involving the numerous livestock that roam around Hargeisa. The running joke amongst the expatriate community is that if HALO Trust hits a goat, the owner always insisted that the goat was always a she goat and pregnant at the time (even where the goat is proven to be a he goat). The cost of which sometimes is as high as \$300 per goat (*Research diary notes*). This is because it happened all the time and the local communities learnt to take advantage of the numerous accidents and saw them as economic opportunities.

Similarly, the behaviour of the expat staff in general in Somaliland and specially that of HALO Trust employees, including the local ones, often was a subject of resentment. Thus even where the values of the Sector and its operations might not necessarily have contradicted their local views of the world, the baggage, modus operandi, technique and personal behaviour of expat mine action workers often did. Thus, for those interviewed, mine action and the employees were always linked with the vilification of HALO Trust in the media and this overwhelmingly negative perception of their role at the local level contributed to a serious credibility crisis.

Other than the credibility of the organisation, in several cases the labour disputes amounted to project terminations and delays as highlighted in various annual reports to donors by HALO Trust. This was also reflected by Nick Bateman who recalled being driven out of sites at gun point by the local communities partly because there had been lack of communication with the communities and hence lack of appreciation of the what each party expected (interview notes).

HALO Trust as an organisation did not seem to address such negative perceptions. This can be attributed to the common approach of the operations of Sector agencies' access to communities being widely through the relationships of their staff and partners with local power-holders. HALO Trust and SMAC did not assess or monitor local perceptions of their presence and activities and their senior managers' direct presence on the ground was often limited. This may have meant that they remained largely unaware of how negatively they are viewed among the majority of their client populations.

Another reason for distrust was lack of communications whether explicitly or implicitly about the Sector's projects and lack of clear information on what the Sector was trying to achieve. The Sector lacked any systematic or reliable approach to understanding or engaging with the interests and agendas of other stakeholders, a problem significantly compounded by the social and physical detachment and weak contextual knowledge of many sector workers especially the decision makers within the organisations. The view of those interviewed was that, generally, mine action organisations were very secretive. This was especially with HALO Trust, which is known to be generally secretive. Such views were common, and I was constantly asked '*so what are those people doing?*' whenever I mentioned that I was looking at the role of mine clearance agencies.

The secrecy might be seen as a carry-over that the Sector has to overcome because of their reliance on personnel from a military background. Those employed by the UN on mine action related activities, and other mine action implementing organisations, largely rely on the same competence in advisory and leadership positions of former military personnel – and are therefore less different in orientation than their basic mandates might suggest. While national armies are the most common government body in terms of engagement in mine action, both NGOs and commercial companies seek military competence when recruiting internationally. This explains their secrecy in carrying out their work which contributes to a negative perception of the community towards Mine Action which is seen as part of a western conspiracy. The majority of those interviewed perceived mine action as an activity that is shrouded in secrecy, externally driven (by foreigners) and not responsive to the immediate needs of

the Somaliland people. Mine action workers being primarily ex-military means that their motives are questioned by the members of the communities that they are trying to help.

The Sector does not seem to see the importance of informing the local communities about what is being done so that they could fully understand and appreciate what they were aiming for, especially since there was lack of visibility of what their output was. For example, a number of interviewees were sceptical as to what the deminers were doing and aiming to achieve as previously mine clearance was always accompanied by public demolitions; this was no longer the case. The perception of those interviewed was that there were indeed no mines and no need to demine:

*I don't think these institutions responsible for the mines clearance are very sincere with what they are doing. I think it is some kind of business so that they stay here for long. Yes in 1991 you could hear that they are collecting some amount of mines, explosive shells whatsoever and they are exploding them somewhere so that you could see. Since 1995, or 1997, I have never heard of that. You see them having tents in agricultural areas with a line of stools with line making them white etc.*  
(Boube Yusuf Duale)

Similarly the impact of mines was no longer being felt as there are fewer accidents from landmines and their impact was no longer curtailing movement including that of animals. This was dramatically illustrated when I first visited a demining site just outside Hargeisa, (HALO Trust Makadra demining task), in November 2012; deminers were using heavy machinery but this did not appear to deter or hinder the daily activities undertaken by those living in and around the areas. The local people were grazing their animals, and going about other normal activities with full view of the demining activities but total disregard for 'safety' and or whatever was going on in their vicinity.

**Figure 10: A family herding their goats within the vicinity of an on-going demining task.** ©Sarah Njeri



The above illustration can be interpreted as a display of lack of awareness and knowledge of what was taking place within their own community through non-engagement with the deminers or a diminished sense of danger.

The lack of communication; the secrecy; the use of ex-military (as programme managers) and the diminishing need for mine clearance added to the commonly believed myth that HALO Trust was actually placing mines in some of these areas in order to justify their existence ;

*Some people even have the perception that the agencies are putting the mines because for as long as they have been doing demining they should have cleared all by now. It is an overdue program (Senior NGO worker interviewed in Hargeisa on Thursday 11th October 2012).*

The lack of communication is not just with the local communities but also across the Sector, as the relationships between HALO Trust and the UN are tepid. Similarly, HALO Trust resists collaboration with others within the Sector such as DDG as reflected by one Senior DDG official:

*We have very good collaboration with Handicap and SMAC and PMAC & MAG a while back when we did some material together to address mine action education for children then HALO decided they did not want to be part of it. (Senior DDG official)*

### **The Sector's culture of 'self-justification'**

Mine Action like humanitarianism is bound with a strong culture of self-justification; this is driven by dependence on external funding, there is therefore a tendency to portray themselves as indispensable (Goodhand, 2006); This is a similar culture that seems to prevail especially within SMAC and HALO Trust and less so with DDG (who are playing a different role all together). The evidence of this self-justification can be found in a dominant rhetoric that the sector has continually upheld. Some of the claims made may have been relevant at the beginning of the mine action activities, however, over time, these claims can no longer be justified. The withdrawal of DDG from mine clearance related activities may have challenged these and therefore cause a certain amount of consternation within some parts of the Somaliland mine action sector. Following the decision, DDG invited the GICHD (Lardner, 2008) to carry out an evaluation report which concluded that part of this was ascribed to poor communications by DDG in terms of explaining to their partners the full reasons for the decision and partly it could also have been seen as a slight to some elements of the Sector who continually state that Somaliland still needs significant resources to be allocated to mine action.

HALO Trust's own documentation indicates that since 2009, there has been a declining number of accidents in the various regions of Somaliland (Presentation given to Researcher by HALO). Similarly, the Landmine Monitor (2011) reported a decrease with 36 mine/ERW casualties reported by SMAC for 2010, significantly lower than the number of casualties recorded in 2007 (97) and 2006 (96). The evidence is that generally there has been a decreasing number of accidents and or incidents involving mines/UXOs as illustrated in

**Figure 11: Graph on Mine/UXO Casualty data for Somaliland (2000-2011).**

However, on one of the donor reports, justification is made for the reason for the drop as:

The reasons for this decline are obvious: a large number of mines and UXO have been cleared by international organisations, military engineers and the local population since the cessation of hostilities in 1991. Importantly there has been no significant remaining during this same period.

“However the apparent drop in victims to almost negligible levels indicates a trend only; there are many accidents amongst the pastoral community, particularly in border regions, which go unreported each year”. (Excerpts from HALO Trust Annual Report; The HALO Trust/Ireland Aid 6 month Report for 1/4/03-31/12/03)

Nick Bateman also attributes lower impact to a community that was well informed about the dangers and more importantly having had to learn to live with the contamination:

*HALO worked on the mine fields on the border of Ethiopia. They were also clearing UXO from villages and had some mobile teams that were doing that survey. We (DDG) however, very quickly began to realise and this was re-enforced time and time again, over a period of the 10 years that I was around, that those mines, (there are mines no question about it) were not in huge numbers. There were UXOs there, again not in huge numbers as well but with DDG we had the village by village clearance program when I was there. Every month they would take the teams that were clearing 100-150 items from villages. So there was stuff there. The nagging thought that grew in my mind was that those mines there, the UXOs there, were not creating any significant problems. I came to the realisation relatively quickly to that in terms of impact on communities the mines and the UXO had a very minuscule or decimal impact in terms of security. And the reason I say that is that both with HALO and DDG we cleared mine field after mine field after mine field where deminers will be out in the morning and 15 minutes later a local guy would come with 30*

*camels and goats and graze though the whole area. And they would just sit there looking at the deminers like what on earth are you doing? And you quickly come to a realisation that we are clearing these mines in these minefields and the last recorded accident was 5 years ago, a goat or something like that. The land is in use so what are we doing here? And I spent a lot of time focused on risk assessment and risk management and the perception of risk and on how local communities manage. I did not do this in a formal way at all but I was very interested in the way the Somalis approach this issue of this minefields by their communities. They actually had a very good understanding of not necessarily where the mines were or had been but of the risk that they now presented. And within their context, they essentially were quite happy with the situation where they would allow their children and livestock into those minefields or close to them and they would accept the fact that every 3 – 5 years there would be an incident. And I really suspect they worked hard that within their norms that were acceptable. The trade-off of having access to that land against the outstanding risks was an acceptable one and a loss of the 3-4 years was so be it, Insha Allah.*

According to Karina Lynge Head of programmes at DDG, such an observation had informed DDG in the lead up to the cessation of mine clearance activities by the organisation:

*I started working with DDG and at the time, the mine action funding was up in 2008 and they were considering whether or not to apply for new mine action funding. At that time all of the high impact mine fields had been cleared in Somaliland, almost all of the medium impact mine fields had been cleared. So there were only a few medium impact and quite a number of low impact mine fields left. At this point DDG had already stopped doing the mine field clearance and had since 2003 been carrying out village by village UXO clearance. For the first couple of years we gathered round 17 UXOs per community visit by 2007 it was down to 2 or so per visit. It seemed the need was dropping. DDG began worrying about whether the cost of a mine action program was*

*proportionate to the benefit it would have for the poor population. (Karina Lyng).*

Handicap International, an organisation that carries out Mine Risk Education in Somaliland, supported this view:

*Much more awareness having been carried out within Somaliland and the clearance of fields which have been taken place. The numbers of people that are currently affected or maimed because of mines is therefore lower as compared to those who are generally with disabilities. (Charles Ameso - Programme Manager, Handicap International: Interviewed on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010).*

According to one deminer who had (at the time of this research) over ten years of mine clearance experience, having worked previously with Minetech and Santa Barbara, mine incidents in Somaliland were not as prevalent as they had once been. He however acknowledged that where there were, most of the accidents or incidences were isolated and far between. He believed that it would take less than two years for Somaliland to be mine/UXO free<sup>96</sup>.

The Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention (OCVP)<sup>97</sup> in assessments on community safety reported that perceived threats and presence of mines and UXOs isare only relevant in Togdheer district. Out of those interviewed for these assessments, only 21.4% of respondents declared that mines and other unexploded ordnances were present within their own communities whilst the perception of 78.6% was that there was no threat at all (OCVP, 2012).

However, according to an IRIN report dated February 2011, there had been a notable increase of child victims of landmines in Somaliland, the article cited Dr Ahmed Ali Maah, the Director of SMAC (IRIN, 2011). However the reality on the ground was different. There was no evidence of a significant increase of victims and neither did any interviewee substantiate this. The report noted that a child protection officer with a local organisation Comprehensive Community-

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<sup>96</sup> This information was not given during a formal interview. The discussion took place as I waited for a meeting with another official who failed to turn up.

<sup>97</sup> An institution that has the backing of, and funding by the UNDP, and prides itself as being an 'apolitical and neutral Somali institution, which is independent of governments and civil society', according to its own website See <http://www.ocvp.org/> as of 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013.



Based Rehabilitation in Somaliland (CCBRS)<sup>98</sup> was calling out for an increase on effective continuation of mine-risk education and psychological rehabilitation of landmine survivors. The report also noted that civil society organisations including the National Demining Agency were calling for awareness-raising mine education programmes, especially in schools<sup>99</sup>.

Interviews with both SMAC's Mine Education Officer Hibaq Kosar and Jessica Buchanan, DDGs Education coordinator in 2010, indicated that there were efforts towards the inclusion of Mine Risk Education (MRE) programmes into the school national curriculum. DDG had been part of a curriculum development committee (CDC) whose mandate initially was to review a new curriculum that was being written, and to translate it into the Somali language. This was done in collaboration with a consultant for UNESCO. DDG were approached to develop an MRE text book that was to be incorporated in the social science/ studies text books. This process brought together Handicap International and DDG to developing the material (Jessica Buchannan, DDG Education Coordinator).

Unfortunately the efforts to get Mine Risk Education included in the school syllabus were stalled by unscrupulous government officials. The sensationalisation of the IRIN report can therefore have been an attempt to draw the attention of the authorities in regards to the importance of MRE in schools.

The continued presence of the mine action sector in Somaliland in spite of the fact that there is no need can be understood from what Duffield argues as a view of the agencies wanting to see their presence as a reflection of organisational criticality (p. 485), it is also true that, in order to maintain market share, they have little choice but to follow the money. For international NGOs, especially, not having a visible presence in today's challenging environments threatens brand loyalty, weakens financial sustainability and brings into question an agency's capacity for humanitarian rescue (Van Brabant, 2010)

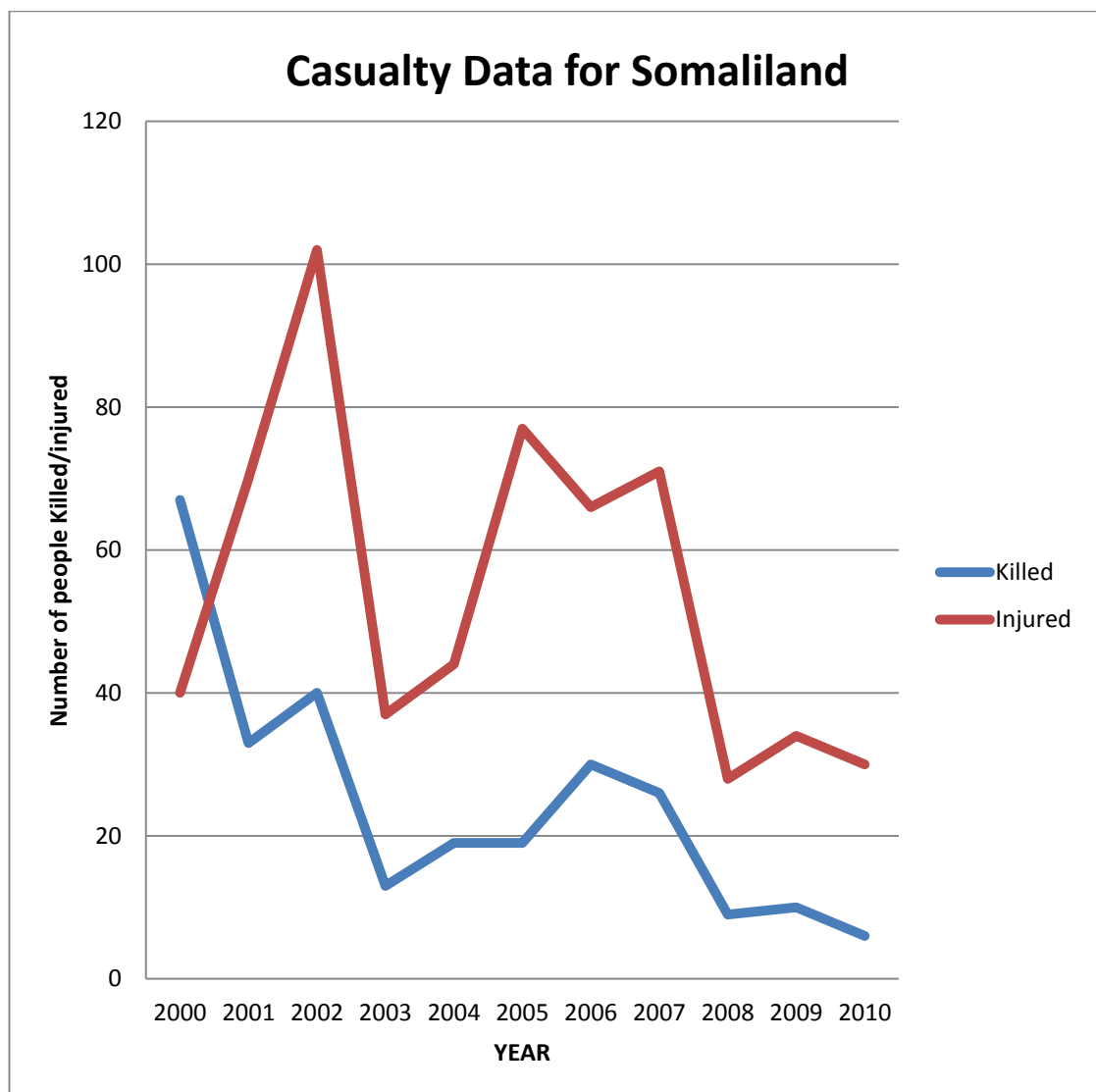
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<sup>98</sup> During the fieldwork, none of the mine action agencies or the UN ever made reference to this organisation as carrying out any work on mines/UXOs. However the Landmine Monitor lists the organisation as a provider of Victim Assistance.

<sup>99</sup> The evidence suggests NDA is a dormant organisation that has 2 teams working under HALO Trust and would be the most unlikely organisation to issue statements.

I therefore encountered a lot of cynicism in regards to the role of mine action in Somaliland in general as a direct result of the Sector's operational practises. Regarding the role of DDG, I argue that their withdrawal from mine action related activities had the unintended consequences of raising this cynicism even more. In spite of the figures and the evidence as highlighted, the Sector has continually maintained a narrative that justifies their presence in Somaliland; I highlight some of the dominant rhetoric.

**Figure 11: Graph on Mine/UXO Casualty data for Somaliland (2000-2011)**



**Source: Own Compilation from data available from Landmine monitors 2000 – 2011**

## Examining the rhetoric vs reality

### a) The Mine Clearance challenges

There are claims made regarding the challenges that have affected clearance; these include the problem of accurately defining the limits of suspect areas due to the lack of any minefield maps; the predominance of relatively low density minefields and that there is an existence of large numbers of 'grey areas' throughout the region, which it is claimed are both costly and time-consuming to clear. With at least 24 different types from different countries, it claimed that this challenges clearance due to the fact that the majority of mines found are plastic-bodied i.e. minimum metal mines. The implication for this is in clearance terms is that it is an arduous task, because of the minimum levels of metallic components; however according to Colin King,<sup>100</sup> a respected military expert the Sector has continually relied on for military expertise has argued that 'many of the pressure- operated blast mines are plastic cased and have a minimal metal content that does makes them difficult to detect. However, he argues very few are truly non-metallic or 'undetectable' and the most universal clearance method that uses metal detectors and probes although slow and dangerous is effective. He further highlights two points in favour of such mines, 'that the fuse requires direct and often fairly substantial pressure and secondly, that the plastic casing creates a very limited fragmentation hazard and is rarely lethal hence the reason that many deminers have escaped with minor injuries when detonations occur'. Thus according to King, in situations where the operator strictly adheres to standard operating procedures, such antipersonnel mines are not the greatest threat; he further asserts that were it the only major problem faced by deminers, clearance rates would have been higher (King, 2004 p. 142).

Similarly, HALO Trust has continually made the claim that the combination of these hard to detect mines (plastic), with rocky, laterised, metal contaminated ground and inconsistent depths at which the mines were laid, allegedly makes detection of mines especially difficult to detect in Somaliland. King

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<sup>100</sup> Colin King is an EOD consultant, who served 14 years in the British Army, mostly in EOD, including operations in the Falklands, Gulf, Bosnia and Kosovo; he also led the first British team to train Afghan deminers. He was an instructor at the British EOD School, and spent six years as an EOD intelligence analyst before his final tour with the Gurkhas. King also writes two reference yearbooks *Mines and Mine Clearance* and *Explosive Ordnance Disposal* for Jane's Information Group.

acknowledges that there has been very little formal research into the effects of ageing on mines and other types of ordnance. His opinion is that there are many instances in which it would be difficult or foolhardy to second-guess how a munition may change, and there are many environmental factors and other variables that might prove critical (King, 2008). Thus, in his view there is the prospect that some mined areas might already be safe, while others of low priority could possibly be fenced and abandoned for a number of years to gradually self-neutralise. Certification of this ground might then be more akin to area reduction<sup>2</sup> than to full-scale clearance.

### **b) Impact on Economy**

There have been repeated claims that Mines/UXOs had an impact on the livestock and agricultural sector especially by HALO Trust (including the ex-programme manager). The same claim is made by HALO Trust on their website; the claim is that minefields principally block agricultural and grazing land; two activities that HALO Trust cite as forming the backbone of Somaliland's economy (HALO Trust Website as of 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013)<sup>101</sup>. And also cite in their annual reports to donors:

However the apparent drop in victims to almost negligible levels indicates trends only; there are many accidents amongst the pastoral community, particularly in border regions, which go unreported each year. It is this socioeconomic grouping which HALO is most concerned to target through its mine clearance and survey activities. Whilst there is a diminishing but still significant presence of mines in Somaliland, the threat posed by UXO is of equal concern. (Excerpt from HALO Trust Annual Report; The HALO Trust/Ireland Aid 6 month Report for 1/4/03-31/12/03)

According to Neil Feraro:

*Mines/UXOs made a huge impact on livestock; this has been the result of contamination of most of the grazing land, making the availability of land limited. When there is pasture land or when areas have good*

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<sup>101</sup> See more at: <http://www.halotrust.org/where-we-work/somaliland#sthash.mxZPS4EA.dpuf> accessed on 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2015

*potential those have a mine problem. There could be an accident that happened 10 years ago but they will not move on to that place because of the history. It could have been the only mine but of course it is very natural for human beings to avoid the area if they know there has been an accident before and people have been killed. So they are deprived of that grazing land and as a result it impacts and then what's happened is there are all those other issues which have come into play. You know land is a big issue in Somaliland. Conflict also revolves around it. (Neil Feraro)*

There was however no evidence to support this. The view of DDG's program manager regarding the impact on livestock was:

*I don't think anybody knows. It is an easy one for people to throw out. But the reality is that if a herdsman has a stock of 50 goats and one of them steps on a mine and is killed then arguable he has lost 2% of his worth. He can obviously sell the meat. The religious connotation here is that if they died they are worthless. If that was a significant issue they wouldn't be herding their goats in these areas. The fact that they continue to use areas that may or may not contain a mine threat would strongly suggest that there isn't a significant impact on their livestock numbers. Otherwise they would change their behavior. (Southern Craib)*

This view was shared by Ahmed Essa:

*I haven't heard anybody really worrying about landmines as an impediment to what they would normally do. I have been to some farms where they've spotted things that look like mines but I don't know of any area that has been blocked. Maybe some roads like the one that goes from here (Hargeisa) to Burao, so it is not used anymore and probably it is mined. I think it would have been demined if it they were very critical. I think it is not being focused on because they are other roads that people can take. There is still an impact but it is not a priority. It is not our top priority.*

In 1996, an estimated US \$155 million was the revenue gained from livestock exports, the following year; this went up to US\$ 176 million. Such gains in

revenue contributed to the demobilisation programme by enabling the government to pay civil servants and security personnel thereby keeping them away from militia and banditry (Ambroso, 2002 p. 8). Any impact on livestock would therefore raise concerns with the relevant ministries or with the government in general. According to interviews carried out at the Ministry of National Planning and Development (MNPD, 2011), the various Director Generals confirmed that indeed the livestock sector contributes to and accounts to more than 60% of the GDP and 85% of foreign exchange, 70% of the population also finds employment from the sector. It would therefore follow that if mines still had an impact, the ministry would be fully aware of this. According to an economist at the ministry the impact of mines and UXOs on the economy in general or on livestock was not significant;

*I don't think the impact is that much significant at the moment but when it happens it can impact. The impact has been declining over time. I don't see from the public and media anything to suggest that this is a major problem. (Economist at the Ministry of National Planning and Development)*

Similarly looking through reports such as one by the International Institute for Environment and Development entitled '*Securing Pastoralism in East and West Africa: Protecting and Promoting Livestock Mobility*', there is no evidence that mines/UXOs cause any impediment on the mobility of livestock in Somaliland (Birch, 2008). In another study by Save the Children entitled *The Resilience of Households' Livelihoods to Hazards in Somaliland*; carried out in 2012 and based on the Todgheer region (a region that is seen to be highly impacted)<sup>102</sup> there is no reference to mines/UXOs impacting on livelihoods (GebreMichael, 2012). Instead the report highlights other hazards such as drought, livestock diseases, population pressure, private land enclosure, flooding, invasive weeds, charcoal making, resource base conflicts and chat chewing as those impacting the livelihoods of communities living in this regions.

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<sup>102</sup> About 30% of the population in the area resides in urban area, while about 65% of the population is engaged in nomadic pastoralism, and about 5% practice agro-pastoral livelihoods.

### **c) Challenging return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs**

As noted above, the Ogaden war of 1977-1978 and the continued instability in Somalia provoked a massive refugee movement, displacing thousands of people in Somalia. The UNHCR reported that by 1981, refugees constituted perhaps as much as 40 per cent of the population of Somalia (UNHCR, 2005).

The UNHCR had previously repeatedly reported<sup>103</sup> that the repatriation and reintegration of these refugees was constantly hindered by their reluctance to return for fear of mines/UXOs, especially in the coastal area (Awdal region) to which some returnees, especially those from Djibouti, would have proceeded. Mines/UXOs were not the only limiting factor for repatriation. Reports also indicated that a limited absorption capacity in Somaliland, been caused partly by the detrimental effect of a livestock ban<sup>104</sup>, had compelled UNHCR to adjust its original target for returns from eastern Ethiopia from 80,000 to 30,000 in 1999. This meant that by the end of 1999, only 23,200 Somalis had returned from Ethiopia (UNHCR Global Report 1999 p. 155).

One of the reasons for UNHCR's allegations that mines/UXOs were hindering the return of refugees from Djibouti is that the French government was putting pressure on UNHCR to repatriate the refugees. Djibouti has a precedent in breaking the principles of refoulement of refugees. By 2001, UNHCR had anticipated closing most of the camps situated in the neighbouring countries, but continually failed due to the largely real or perceived presence of mine fields. By June 2004, about 670,000 refugees, either on their own or with UNHCR assistance, had gone back to Somaliland over a 13 year period (UNHCR, 2004). The voluntary repatriation of Somalis from Ethiopia to Somaliland was finally completed in June 2005, leading to the closure of seven Somali refugee camps, Aisha camp being the last one. To enable the safe

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<sup>103</sup> This was reported on the UNHCR Global Report, Somali, as an impediment to repatriation in 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2005 (UNHCR Global reports)

<sup>104</sup> In 1998, Saudi Arabia suffered the first ever outbreak of the Rift Valley Fever (RVF) outside of Africa. This resulted in a regional ban on imported livestock from Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya, and Djibouti. In 2000, Yemen also suffered an outbreak of the same. This resulted in a further imposition of a ban on all livestock imports from the region by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Yemen and the UAE. Although most of these countries lifted the ban the following year, Saudi Arabia maintained it until November 2009. The livestock trade form is a major economic system that continues to provide jobs and livelihoods for majority of the people not only in Somaliland but the whole region in general. See Majid, N. (September 2010) Livestock Trade in the Djibouti, Somali and Ethiopian Borderlands. *Chatham House Briefing Paper*. Available from <http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/0910majid.pdf> for more details.

return for Aisha's Somali refugees, a UNHCR-funded road ensured that the area was checked for mines/UXOs. In November 2007 the final phase of the voluntary repatriation programme helped some 1,800 Somali refugees return home to Somaliland, from Djibouti, by the end of the year.

However, reports to the USDOS by HALO Trust during the reporting period reflecting the work carried out from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2000 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2001 had indicated that mines did not seem to represent a threat to returning refugees in the Awdal region. "From our Awdal experience it is possible to state that mines **do not represent**<sup>105</sup> a significant threat to refugees returning to the region. This stance was reiterated by all three demining organisations in Somaliland on the 17.02.01 to Ms Wendy Shapiro, Programme Officer of BRRM in US DOS and UNHCR representatives. The border roads are well used by traders and are considered safe. The few areas of inland mined roads are well marked and bypassed" (HALO Trust Report to USDOS).

Since 2007, continued armed conflict in southern and central Somalia has caused widespread and massive violence, causing the internal displacement of more than 1.3 million persons, and more than 450,000 refugees, from southern and central Somalia (Amnesty International, 2009 pp 10 Citing OCHA figures). Many of these refugees can be found in settlements of displaced persons in Hargeisa. These settlements were originally for returnees to Somaliland. Interviews with organisations currently working with these groups, either returnees, IDPS or refugees, revealed that mine/UXOs had no impact on this sector of the communities. According to Mr Valentine Ndibalema, the UNHCR Head of sub-office Somaliland, there were very few incidences and/or reports of Mines/UXOs (Valentine Ndibale, Interview on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2012). This was collaborated in an Interview with Khadar Qorane Yusuf, Protection Officer with Norwegian Refugee Council Horn of Africa. The National Development Plan 2012-2016 indicates that mine clearance in Burao has allowed 70,000 residents to return to the city (Ministry of Planning & Coordination, 2012 p. 170). The report gives no indication whether that figure is for just one year or for the entire period that mine clearance has been on-going.

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<sup>105</sup> my emphasis



#### **d) Length of time remaining for demining**

The target for achieving an Impact free status in Somaliland has continually changed even where acknowledgement has been made about the levels of contamination. The Landmine Monitor in 2006 quoted a UNDP Chief Technical Adviser for mine action, saying that the impact of mines/UXOs throughout Somaliland was not as severe as had sometimes been claimed, and the greater threat came from Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs). The concern, according to the UNDP, was the amount and availability of stored or stockpiled ordnance and explosives which, if not controlled, could be used for lethal, unlawful means (Landmine Monitor, 2006). In the same year, in a donor report dated January, HALO had reported that 'HALO believes that continued donor support will be required for a further 2-3 years of clearance operations across all regions of Somaliland' (HALO Trust Report 2006 submitted for Grant. No. 6607 (DMV0018273 to the Royal Netherlands Government)).

Similarly during the period of my fieldwork, 5-6 years was given as the projected completion, this was back in 2010 and again in 2012. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2013, in a statement issued by HALO Trust to coincide with the visit of Guy Willoughby, then Director of HALO Trust, they are quoted as estimating another 5-6 years of mine clearance in order to get Somaliland mine-impact-free (HALO Trust, 2013).

According to one deminer who has over ten years of mine clearance experience, having worked previously with Minetech and Santa Barbara, mine incidents in Somaliland are not as prevalent as they used to be. Still working within mine action, he acknowledges that most accidents or incidences are isolated and far in between. He believed that it would take less than 2 years for Somaliland to be mine/UXO free.

This shifting completion deadlines also added to people's suspicions alarming even those working within the Sector. For example Mark Belford noted that the figures' in spite of all the clearance efforts, did not add up; the area remaining to be cleared seems remain constant. He explained:

*In the two years that I have been here, the length of time that it is going to take to clear hasn't actually reduced. HALO Trust is still talking of 4 or*

*5 to 6 years. They were saying that two years ago when I got here. This is one area that is of interest; the figures in the annual report and those from the LIS figures don't really collate, the amount of land left to clear from 2 years ago was may be 20KM<sup>2</sup> as listed in the HALO report; this was also reported by SMAC and is what was in the database. You then look at the HALO clearance records and they report to have cleared 15 KM<sup>2</sup> but they are still saying they still got about 20KM<sup>2</sup> to clear. I would think that within the LIS there were estimates on the area because that was part of what they did and it was very unclear. However, when the verification survey and benchmark survey and some of the areas are discredited area on accepted as SHA you still get discredited area. (This could be called reduced area as opposed to discredited). I can see why there are reasons for inaccuracy but why we've done much clearance according to the reports for the last two years and we actually haven't gone down in terms of square kilometres, I don't know because we've reduced so many SHAs under the benchmark survey. No I don't know (Mark Belford; October 2012)*

SMAC reported that there are more than eighty minefields in Somaliland, sixty-three of which were reported to have been confirmed. The majority of these minefields are found near the Ethiopian border (MNPP, 2011). As of 2012, the Landmine Monitor reported that Galbeed, Togdheer, and Woqooyi are the most heavily affected regions in terms of accidents and casualties (ICBL-CMC, 2011). The areas where conflict has previously prevented any meaningful clearance activities from taking place such Sanag, Haag area and Todgheer and the border region with Ethiopia remain highly contaminated. According to Rory Logan, Programmes Manager of HALO Trust, the only organisation in Somaliland that is actively carrying out demining, a lot of the work is on-going in these parts of the country. Recently HALO Trust has opened up a new base in Burao in order to address access in that part of the country; Burao is the capital of the Togdheer district, and is bordered by Ethiopia to the South, and the regions of Woqooyi and Galbeed to the West, Sanaag and Sool to the East.

*A lot of clearance work is to the West of Somaliland. One of the reasons is that there was a lot of contamination due to the fighting that actually*

*happened in this area. Security in the eastern part was not necessarily always conducive for us to engage in work. Also this year we have started clearing these areas in Western Sool with a view to raising our profile in the area. (Rory Logan; HALO Trust Program Manager 2012; Interviewed in Hargeisa on 25th Sept 2012).*

The evidence indicates that the contamination and the remaining challenge are within manageable levels. However, the Sector, and specifically HALO Trust and SMAC, are unwilling to establish a specific timeframe for the cessation their efforts.

Within a post conflict setting such as Somaliland, managing perceptions requires that the messages an organisation projects are consistent throughout the organisation, and across contexts. The sector, particularly the UN and HALO Trust, lacks a systematic approach of assessing their humanitarian operations through the eyes of recipients. By contrast, far more positive actions have been taken by other sector actors such as DDG who incorporated the perceptions of the communities in guiding and informing their work.

The view of those interviewed was that the presence of a high number of demining organisations over a long period equates to less contamination and therefore a diminished need for mine action (See APPENDIX 5: A TIMELINE of MINE/UXO RELATED EVENTS AND ISSUES IN SOMALILAND). Mark Belford, also acknowledges that:

*The actual landmine impact on Somaliland is decreasing through clearance and through the operations that have been conducted so far (Mark Belford).*

His view was shared by most of those interviewed, who believe that, after 20 years of constant demining work, the threat should now be low or non-existent. Indeed as early as 2001 the Landmine Monitor began to report that Somaliland was 7 years away from being declared mine free. This however came with a caveat that to achieve that status the prevailing funding levels and clearance activity at the time were to be maintained (Landmine Monitor 2001).

There is however an acknowledgement that there is a residual problem of mines/UXOs, but that these levels of contamination are low. Mr Boube Yusuf Duale, accepts that he may not be fully aware of the number of mines/UXOs present in his country, but argues that over time and given what he thinks has been invested, the problem should have been addressed fully.

*I don't know the number of mines we had but by 20 years, the amount of mines that have been cleared by what has been invested, I think by now they should have cleared everything (Boube Yusuf Duale)*

These views support the pragmatic perspective taken by DDG in recognising that within the communities that they had worked with, or close by, mines had become an insignificant factor in the lives of the communities, who have developed (as yet not really understood) coping mechanisms to deal with the presence of mines and which posed a lower level of risk to those communities than the presence of small arms, or indeed the presence of a main road close by, with fast moving vehicles.

Nick Bateman summarised the impact as follows:

*Somaliland is not and was not Cambodia. There is not a desperate attempt of pushing to land or wanting to return to it. And even with the roads, there was a big thing made of road closures but that's just how it is like in Somaliland. The roads are sort of 2km wide in many areas because there are so many diversions. I can hardly think of a single community in my 10 years of engagement there that was genuinely isolated because of landmines or whatever else that was there. (Nick Bateman).*

In terms of peace writ large, it has been acknowledged that support from local actors is essential; similarly, it is important that international actors are sensitive to how their policies and policy choices shape and affect local perceptions. I have argued elsewhere that the perception of Somaliland people matters a lot and as (Talentino, 2007) has argued “perception seems to matter a great deal in the arena of nation and peacebuilding”. The humanitarian sector in general and the Mine Action Sector in particular have highlighted the important fact that peacebuilding and Mine Action are more than technical exercises in creating

political structures (for peacebuilding) or removing mines on the ground (for mine action); it is also about teaching people to believe and to build trust as failure to secure the trust and confidence of the affected population in the demining operation can negate most of the impact such an operation might have.

Therefore, as observed by one of the interviewees, when the needs (in general) were obvious, then the responses by the international community were targeted and responded to the needs of the Somaliland people at that time. The priorities were in sync with those of the beneficiaries. The same is true for mine action in relation to the impact or potential to be perceived by the local community as contributing positively to peace.

## **THE SECTORS' OPERATIONAL PRACTISES**

The Sector primarily operates as though the State does not exist meaning that there is no recognition whatsoever of the structures that exist. This means that the government does not feel obliged to be involved in Mine Action. Macrae (1999) recognised that such an approach which fails to operate through the state breaches the traditional idea that accountability of aid rests upon the recipient state sanctioning and monitoring aid flows (1999, p. xv). Thus, apart from violating accepted codes of humanitarian conduct, on a political level this approach undermines the Keynesian social welfare state ethos and social contract that states are, or should be, responsible for service provision (Schuller 2009, p.86). In this instance therefore, The Sector, especially the NGOs, 'lets them off the hook', by allowing them to shirk their governmental responsibilities; this is clear even when the government pledges funding – it does not honour this. The Sector thus garners its legitimacy and power from its ability to raise funds, usually from outside the country, rather than from any social contract with the local people. The result of this can range from resentment of organisations to situations where communities just accept what is available because there is no choice. For example, Ahmed acknowledged that Mine Action was donor driven and not based on national priority however in its absence the funding would be put elsewhere;

*The donors' mind is set few years down the road on mine action and if HALO Trust leaves now, those funds will not be directed into other things*

*that are useful for us they will just dry up. And we won't get any. So as long as far as we are concerned for as long as HALO Trust is here and is got funding, then they can do what they want as without them we probably won't get that funding anyway. Which is such a pity.*

### **The UN's: Neutrality and impartiality approach**

The UN is fundamentally guided by the principles of humanitarian assistance, namely, humanity, neutrality and impartiality (General Assembly resolution 46/182). This principle has been translated by the Mine Action governing structures (IASG) that “as a matter of principle, the military and civil defence assets of belligerent forces or of units that find themselves actively engaged in combat shall not be used to support humanitarian activities”. This principle is part of the United Nations policy on mine action (A/53/496, Annex II, para. 10, dated 14 October 1998) which the General Assembly welcomed at its fifty-third session (A/RES/53/26 dated 13 November 1998). Hence even though most UN mine action projects are focused on the development of a government's capacity to manage a national mine action programme, as a rule the emphasis is on the creation of indigenous mine action NGOs rather than to adapt or enhance an existing related capacity within host nation military organisations, this is pursuant to policies that desist from providing assistance to former belligerents including armed forces and ministry of defence of the host nations and the opposing former insurgent armed combatants.

*I think there might have been a few externalised internationals trying to push the quality of NDA but as far as we know the history of the NDA has been part of the army and then part of the military defence and now part of the ministry of interior and the NDA has been one of these posts that government promote to give good positions out with not much effort to these positions. (Mark Belford; October 2012)*

Similarly this meant that opportunities to build on existing capacity through the utilisation of a well-established pool of experienced deminers that had been trained was not utilised. This means that resources are wasted in training as was observed by this interviewee; it also raises a security concern as the mine action training involves the use of explosives:

*Another factor on capacity was the training that takes place every time the Sector trains a group of deminers; what people are worried, you have hired a lot of people, you train them to international standards. Whenever there is need to hire new people after you have got funds, you should give priority to those you have trained or other agencies have trained. Don't start from scratch every time. (Abdikadir Jirde)*

Similarly when DDG wound down its demining programme, it provided a list of trained deminers to HALO Trust in the hope that they would absorb the existing capacity. This was not taken up and instead HALO Trust was still training the NDA deminers even at the time of this research. There is no doubt that a considerable amount of resources goes into these trainings.

Thus, UNDP could not work for or contribute to the mine action capacity that existed through the Pioneers that had been trained by RIMFIRE and that had established National Demining Authority. This is because it could be seen as having provided assistance to belligerents even though they outline that it is imperative that there are cooperative and collaborative arrangements with national institutions so long as they do not hinder the United Nation's neutrality and impartiality. The need to be neutral therefore meant that they could not utilise this capacity and instead set up a parallel Somaliland Mine Action. This set UNDP with a collision path with the government, as a result mine action coordination suffered from repeated friction between the government of Somaliland and UNDP and both bodies became ineffective due to the lack of clear separation of responsibilities and clear mandate. This impasse caused intermittent (UNDP) funding, poor political will and the lack of a legal basis for the SMAC and NDA and therefore their effectiveness in the management and coordination mine action. The UN's role was characterised by slow mobilisation of resources and a reactive approach, which are totally inappropriate to the context. Today, the capacity of SMAC remains weak with budgetary allocations still under the mandate of the UN and not under their direct management.

The 'community' has often proven to be resilient in contexts of post conflict reconstruction, providing survival and coping mechanisms for insecurity and fragility. Mine Action, especially the role of the Humanitarian Pioneers corps,

illustrated that even in areas of sheer desolation, life and organisational systems can readily re-emerge within communities. However, the Sector through the UN, disregarded and overlooked this resilience and the available local resources. This has been observed by Skåra who has argued that “local capacities [for mine action] are too often disregarded and overlooked” (Skåra, 2003 p. 292). Similarly with the UN insisting on working with just SMAC, it portrayed their lack of appreciation for the coping mechanisms that the local communities had demonstrated and their efforts through the HMPC to clear mines. Such arrogance by aid workers was noted by Donini (2009) who in reference to Afghanistan argues that the sometimes arrogant externality of the aid enterprise led to dominant–dominated perceptions.

Funding remains scarce for SMAC, also funding is required for the NDA to become operational as explained by Mark Belford, who attributes the lack of funding to issues around accountability and transparency:

*The problem is that they don't have a budget for it so there is a problem on that side. The NDA coordination mechanism, command structure is still being developed. The deminers are very good but they are using HALO Trust equipment and I think they might be paid by HALO Trust. NDA doesn't have the coordination mechanism, operation mechanism in the office so that needs to be established. The main thing is the funding mechanism. It has to have a government funded mechanism. International agency is not ready to give NDA money because there is no transparency as to who is receiving the money and producing results. If you've got an entire list of 50 mine fields that you need to clear then you go to the international community to give you the money to do it and you end up not doing it, then there is no accountability and transparency. The main thing is to build the confidence to have a central government funding to say 3 teams to do 3 tasks per month. We expect to get them done within this period if we get the money. If there is a reason why you can't do them then you just need to explain it. (Mark Belford; October 2012).*

However, SMAC attributed the lack of financial support for NDA to the UN's policy of neutrality meaning that they do not fund mine action agencies under



the authority of a Ministry of Defence (Landmine Monitor, 2008 citing an Interview with Dr. Ahmed Ali Mah, SMAC, Hargeisa, 16 February 2008.)

Although not an invested 'party' to the conflict in the traditional sense, by the very fact that they are engaged in the context the UN (and the Sector's) role as a third party becomes a part of the political landscape that defines the conflict. Even where due diligence is taken when implementing programmes, given the historical association of humanitarian aid in Somalia, for the UN or the Sector to perceive impartiality of their actions and the neutrality of their identity is what has been labelled a self-created fantasy. The politics of conflict are an inescapable, omnipresent reality third parties ignore at their peril and to the detriment of others.

Although no specific threat to mine action in Somaliland, in Somalia, Al Shabaab has previously accused and forced Mine Action organisations in south central Somalia to cease operations in areas under their control. The accusation labelled against UNMAS is that it is paying the salaries of government police officers. The group accused the UN of attempting to disrupt peace and justice by bribing various community elders and inciting them to rebel against the Islamic administration; Furthermore, "they have been surveying and sign-posting some of the most vital and sensitive areas under the control of the Mujahideen," (Omar, 2009 online).

### **Lack of conflict sensitive approach to interventions**

There is a need for external actors, whether in humanitarian mine action or peacebuilding, to think through the implications and ramifications of their work in order to forestall or minimise unintended consequences and maximise positive peacebuilding and confidence-building effects. In so doing, they employ a conflict sensitive approach to their interventions; this means the ability of an organisation to: understand the context in which you operate; understand the interaction between their activities and the context; and act upon the understanding of this interaction, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts.

The Sector, although operating within the humanitarian assistance rubric, has neither embraced its own framework – Bad Honnef Guidelines on Mine Action -

nor incorporated lessons from the work of Mary Anderson's approach on Do No Harm. Only one of those interviewed made reference to the Bad Honnef guidelines for mine action and that was because they had participated in the drafting. None of the Sector actors had ever heard of them. Questions regarding the same were met with responses like:

*Maybe my HR would know about such guidelines;*

Another response was:

*In most cases, practices developed by most agencies are shared. Maybe they are new.*

Apart from individual awareness of conflict sensitive programming there does not seem to be a great effort towards this. In spite of conflict sensitivity being implied in most of the organisations that were interviewed, out of all those interviewed within the various organisations, none made reference to the 'Do No Harm principles' and during an informal conversation with a senior manager within the Sector, the response to my use of the term indicated the obvious fact that the person had never heard of the term. Indeed in a different informal discussion – the person made reference to a line of discussion as to '*oh similar to Sarah's Do No Harm approach*'. In yet another conversation with a different senior manager within the sector, the response was – '*I do not deal with that part of the work, it would be best for you to refer to XYZ, as they are the ones who are best informed*' a clear indication that such principles are not mainstreamed within the Sector.

Programming for mine action lacked such an understanding and though there is evidence of efforts to track conflict, it appears that this was mainly driven by concerns for security and safety of the organisation and its assets rather than the need to track the interventions to identify patterns and trends that were presenting challenges. If this was at all part of the intentions it was not clarified and was minimal at best.

At the beginning of their interventions in Somaliland, both DDG and HALO Trust employed local staff at demining sites for the duration of a task; deminers, cooks, security and others were recruited from the local communities. They would then undergo training, with deminers going through a specified period of

intensive training; a local deminer or anyone working at the site could have expected to work for 6-12 months while the team was working at this location. This had both a negative and positive impact; it was an important factor for the provision of local employment opportunities for those living in these communities. Such instances are inevitable in a resource strained context where opportunities for employment are scarce. Using a political economy approach, some of the challenges that the Sector has experienced would have been teased out, for example the extent to which the communities inflate the mine action incidents with a view to getting the Sector engaged in their communities. Mine clearance agencies were at times been denied access whenever jobs were not negotiated beforehand and thus access is used as a political tool.

*They view those mines and the NGO (you know the aids circus) as an economic opportunity. So, at the beginning of every task we would have to send out senior Somali guys going to the areas for negotiation with the local elders. We negotiate how many jobs they would get for the duration. If we hadn't done that there is not a chance they would let us anywhere near those mines. So negotiation was done. And all the various clans and sub-clans were happy that they would get a bit of the spoils. And that would be we would employ 20 locals for 8 months, 6 to the clans, 4 to the sub-clans. They would sort all that out determine the split. I think they just basically laughed at us behind our backs (Nick Bateman).*

One of the areas I encountered that was not addressed at all was the issue of how the work of the sector was likely to impact on resources such as land and land rights. Research has shown that mine clearance is likely to impact land rights as post-conflict and conflict-affected countries have weak or non-existent property enforcement in place to deal with land conflicts and this can lead to instability and land grabbing. Humanitarian and development organisations cannot use neutrality as an excuse to avoid dealing with land issues. Removing landmines raises the risks of raising competition and even violence over land ownership. Answers given by the various Sector actors regarding how this is addressed revealed that it is not considered important at all.

As evidenced in this quote:

*Each community needs to have a system in place that when the land has been cleared or is being cleared, there must be a record of who owns it. Because that land needs to go back to the owner for their use. Good governance, good rule of law, good community practices should tell you who owns the land. It is not for the clearance agency to tell you who owns the land. We determine through SMAC who the land belongs to. The national authority (SMAC) would hand the land for clearance and ensure it is done to required standards and hand back to the owner.*  
(Graeme UNMAS)

Although the issue of land ownership post demining is not a huge issue, the lack of reflection and action planning is indicative of the potential of reversing the progress made by humanitarian and development organisations by releasing land haphazardly. The Sector indicated that they tended to be unaware of the exact status of contaminated land (i.e., legal status, ownership, etc.) before commencing work in an area. This also meant that they generally did not know how survey and clearance affected adjacent land and land rights once they have handed over an area to a community. Some believe that because they do not encounter many land disputes during survey and clearance, land problems are therefore few or minor. An intervention that is conflict-sensitive would have identified and anticipated such constraints and factored in ways to ensure that such areas of potential conflict were covered.

This lack of foresight in relation to conflict sensitivity was also reflected by Handicap International. In response to a question on the extent to which conflict sensitive programming informed their actions the program manager responded that:

*We do not necessarily engage in conflict programming. Our mandate is straightforward to create awareness and that's it. Social-economic impact or any other impact comes as a by-product of that. It is not like a main requirement* (Charles Ameso, Handicap International Programme Manager, interviewed in Hargeisa on 24th November 2010).

The Sector is embedded in the interconnected nature of the post-conflict contexts which are usually exacerbated by scarce resources. Thus external actors are usually (though not always) the bearers of new resources, in the form of contracts, employment, development projects, and humanitarian aid. Thus these actors, many of whom are external actors, need to be cognisant of this context as their point of departure (Sending, 2009b). To operate in such contexts the Sector needs to appreciate that everything is political, and therefore it is vital that they understand how interventions are perceived in the immediate local situation. This means that context is very important in the shaping of their programmes. Thus, in tandem with working towards achieving a peaceful end result, the programmes need to be well implemented as even very careful, well-informed strategies for negotiating resource allocation can easily set off communal clashes. When outsiders are not well-informed or are rushed, they may in effect contribute to armed violence.

One of the interviewees highlighted the ignorance of international actors in accepting the political realities that they work within. This illustrated that there is some level of acceptance of these realities and some effort to work within them. One informant specifically underlined the importance of knowing and understanding not only the national perspective, but also the micro-dynamics of the situation.

*I suppose it depends because mine action is such a broad range of activities as well as peacebuilding involves a broad line of activities. An activity might not be related to peace building at all but because of the situation, it does. In Somaliland, removal of explosives in communities, increases stability but that doesn't necessarily bring peace building (Tammy Orr, UNMAS)*

The need for a conflict-sensitive approach had long been recognised by the Sector globally when the 'Bad Honeff guidelines' for mine action were developed. However, none of the interviewees engaged within the Sector had ever heard of the guidelines. Instead, those addressing conflict did so as a result of their intrinsic practical attributes.

## **National ownership and local capacity**

Brinkerhoff draws attention to the shortfalls of 'stand-alone' operations which 'fail to integrate with country practices and procedures' (2010, p.70). He argues that the propensity for bypassing capacity development at the local level is 'heightened by the emphasis on assistance templates that assign performance roles to external actors in situations where capacity is weak' (Brinkerhoff 2010, p.70).

Most UN mine action projects are focused on the development of a government's capacity to manage a national mine action programme, and of implementing agencies established to execute the mine action plan. The lack of a recognised government with the capacity to develop a mine action authority has prevented this approach in Somaliland for various reasons; mainly financial incapacity to do this, lack of political will, and the fact that mine action is not a priority. The UN takes a very patronising attitude in regard to SMAC, they are viewed as unable to stand on their own feet, and raise their own funds; they don't know what they are doing. Whichever UN body happened to be taking the lead role in Somaliland (either UNOPS or UNDP or UNMAS) failed to see or even think or allow SMAC to be an independent, self-sustaining, domestic entity. It thought of them as outgrowths of the UN.

*This is their initiative but for ownership, we are in charge. They are the administration and they are accountable to their government. Their engagement is much better than it is in some other countries. (Senior UNMAS official)*

Though it has proven to be difficult to determine how the UN determines when a MAC has developed sufficient capacity to function with reduced assistance or even without UN or other donor assistance. According to the UN:

'indigenous capacity is achieved when the indigenous entities have acquired the capacity to define and articulate overall policy and direction, to co-ordinate, and manage a programme that is capable of addressing the humanitarian implications of landmines, to generate and allocate resources in line with, clearly defined priorities, and are able to

ensure that the overall endeavour is accountable and undertaken in a cost-effective manner' (Eaton et al., 1997 p. 29)

Significant questions remain over the development of capacity to govern mine activities by national authorities; According to a government official:

*Though a lot of local people have been trained, I still don't think they have that capacity yet. The people are just given basic information but not the technical bit of it. (Mohamed Ahmed Mohamoud; Senior Official in charge of Internal Security, Ministry of Interior)*

The National Mine Action Centre (itself probably a focus for capacity building – see below) may be able to advise on the correct procedures. In this way the contractor will create good working teams with experienced local managers, with a good working relationship with the National Mine Action Centre and, perhaps, even the government. These operational capacities can function very well when the international NGOs are still in place. It is through them that the local teams will get their funding, their tasking and the supervision. The Situation within the Sector has created what Brinkerhoff's (2010) analysis calls the 'two-track problem' of service delivery and public sector capacity building, whereby the 'two tracks of NGOs and government have fundamentally different strategies and time frames', meaning that when the Sector staff exit, the country projects have no further viability (p.70). Similarly, donor aid for mine action is generally short-term.

*So the international demining agencies are the shakers and the movers. They are the people who come up with the funds and programs will happen with supervision. Even with the presence of a ministerial board chaired by the Vice President, which sets the policy. Demining is actually done by the international NGOs – HALO Trust, DDG, Minetech, and St Barbara. When funds dry up, they pack and go or leave some skeletal staff. They come and go depending on funds availability (Abdikadir Jirde)*

Somaliland has now seen concerted Mine Action programmes for nearly two decades. Unfortunately over this period the reality is that there isn't a local institution that has been empowered enough to take up the role once the

international organisations have left. Unfortunately, it has been demonstrated that international attention, effort, and financial commitment cannot be sustained for as long as is required. The NDA still works under the supervision of HALO Trust, though the manpower needed for undertaking demining may be available, the ability of the organisations to thrive, to fundraise and to manage on their own has not been nurtured. Indeed as noted by this senior UN official, supporting the NDA is just a by-product and not a priority:

*As we move inside, we are also looking at supporting the police EOD teams in terms of capacity development, equipment and training. The full aspect of our support requirement is to be in discussion with peacemakers to induce the political mood information clearance in terms of national strategies, national policies documentation and the rules and guidelines for legislation and things like that. As a by-product, we are also looking at supporting the NDA. That has got to be the national capacity in terms of migrants and development of teams who are supported financially through the Somaliland government but operationally they are supported by HALO Trust for training and deployment. (Graeme Draemu Abernethy; Programme Coordinator, UNSOMA, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010, UNOPS offices, Nairobi)*

Prof Ahmed Essa reflects on the lack of capacity after 20 years of Mine Action intervention in Somaliland;

*We started with international NGOs saying that the capacity is not there and that is how SMAC came about, UNDP capacitating SMAC. HALO Trust & DDG all of them worked with SMAC. 20 years later to say the capacity is still not there doesn't make any sense at all. Then there is a failure from the international organisations who were trying to capacitate these groups or it is the local people who were not stepping up to the role. It's a failure to say the same thing that was said 20 years ago. 20 years on we are still talking about capacity building for SMAC and building the capacity of the NDA. We are running around in circles and are not being sincere. (Ahmed Essa)*



The lack of capacity is used by the Sector as a justification for a longer role with the continued presence of international actors being justified; the result reduces the credibility and legitimacy of the Sector which in the eyes of the communities.

*I mean in terms of genuinely building the capacity of the Somalis to manage the problem it didn't change in 10 years. SMAC was as inept and under-skilled when I left in 2007 as it was 10/12 years before. And that I'm afraid was the downfall because that is what UNDP was there for. And I think it's disingenuous of them if they were ever to claim that they had leading or primary role in Somaliland (Nick Bateman)*

This will consequently have meant that the peacebuilding potential for Mine Action is weakened and as such the effort will be perceived to have failed; even if effective from an institutional point of view, it is likely to simply increase the sense of resentment and extent of disassociation as Talentino (2007) has argued. It is important to note though that DDG had originally focused on establishing a mine-clearance capacity that the Somaliland government would take over, this was abandoned when they realised that the capacity of mine action within the government was unlikely to be developed or effectively sustained (Wertz, 2006). The intention of a phased out hand over to the National Demining Agency (NDA) was to be as follows. To position a senior DDG local staff as Head of Operations Manager with NDA by the end of 2003; to transfer two mine clearance sections to NDA by mid-2004 and to then transfer the remaining two mine clearance sections at the end of 2004. Political obstacles remained, in terms of full acceptance of this concept by the government, in particular due to the then head of NDA, who was widely viewed as lacking the requisite skills to fulfil his role as head of a national agency. His post was reportedly "assured" due to his high-level political contacts. Thus, and whilst DDG was keen to hand over assets and contribute to the building of a true national capacity, this remained effectively stymied until such time as a new or more appropriately qualified head of NDA, who had the support of the Somaliland mine action community and international donors, was appointed.

Past experiences of humanitarian organisations in Somalia seem to manifest themselves in the Mine Action Sector. The past was characterised by deep grievances which were not helped by the fact that the international actors

continually paid lip services to the agency of capacity building for local NGOs; and did not appreciate the achievements of local NGOs had gained under difficult circumstances and instead highlighted their weakness. There was little or no involvement of local actors despite the rhetoric of capacity-building by UN agencies and international NGOs. The international agencies perceived the local NGOs as clan-based contractors whose claim to represent the local communities was put to task (Abdillahi, 1997). Within the Sector, this has not changed.

### **Failure to understand the local context**

A well-recognised critique is that aid agencies are weak on contextual understanding and analysis to support their programming in conflict-affected countries. This critique remains relevant to the Mine Action Sector; evidence from donor reports indicate that these were done as requirements and nothing contextual and substantive was put into them. Going through most of these reports, there were patterns that emerged that an astute programme manager or donor interested in context analysis would have picked up. This is indicative of a weak contextual analysis as some occurrences had been recorded in several reports; and basic information on the context was repeated in every report year in year out. Similarly, some informants highlighted that there was lack of understanding of the specific contexts in which mine action programmes were implemented which required that the situation be carefully analysed in all its specificities, taking into account local knowledge.

Familiarity with local contexts is crucial for various reasons: a nuanced understanding of the specific conditions of each place of intervention, the motivations of each party, the patterns of alliance and conflict at play, the history of antagonisms. Similarly in-depth knowledge of local histories cultures, traditions and attitudes would enable the actors to adapt foreign or standardised ideas to the context specific conditions during programme design (Mac Ginty 2008).

Donor reports that intend to give an illustration of how the organisations analyse conflict tend to describe the conflicts very briefly in terms of conflict history but with limited analysis of the root causes or political and other dynamic triggers of violent conflict (see APPENDIX 7: AN EXCERPT FROM A DONOR REPORT).

Some of the paragraphs in the analyses of the conflicts are cut and pasted from one programme or project to the next one, representing missed opportunities to refine the analysis and the tools of the new project. Comprehensive and systematic analysis of a conflict will obviously encourage the development of projects that use and design their tools to address the dynamics and root causes of conflicts, and should lead to greater effect.

Failure to understand the local context can be attributed to strategic short-sightedness stemming from short-term missions and employment policies of international organisations. The high turnover means that there is a lack of general information, clear commentary, and leadership particularly by the United Nations as highlighted by (Donini, 2012 p. 107). It also contributes to the lack of contextual knowledge by the Sector especially amongst the expatriate staff who had the leadership roles, an inherent problem of transient leadership and minimal local knowledge. A problem that Fast et al. (2013) identified as a leading cause of success in complex humanitarian actions being incremental at best. This problem has resulted in loss of institutional learning especially with every departure of a Programme Manager. This was a common problem across the Sector and was not limited to any one organisation. This loss of institutional learning was highlighted when I emailed a former Programme Manager for DDG seeking clarification of a specific key event in the life of the programme. The response received indicated a total lack of awareness of a crucial element within the programme. It appears that programme managers did not get an introduction to the history of programmes so as to understand the context of the programmes they were taking on. Similarly, upon their departure, any reports written during their time left with them. The organisations had no physical archives for reports etc. and these were only available where the respective people had stored them in their personal PCs and were happy to share with me.

Similarly the Sector did not always make use of the experiences of former actors. RIMFIRE had provided the actors that followed with valuable lessons on engaging with the local communities amongst other areas. It however appears that lessons were not learnt, and some problems, including labour related issues, continually dogged mine clearance organisations. Similarly as well as

making the failure of the international community in Somalia as a good starting point for all RIMFIRE with all its failures managed to take Mine action in Somaliland from a humanitarian emergency to a hindrance to economic development and, to a certain extent, social engagement.

During the period of preparing for my data collection and being in the field, HALO Trust had had 3 changes in programme managers, and DDG had 2. I could not trace any person who had worked with UNMAS for longer than a year and there was only one individual within the UN who I managed to interview during both field visits. During my second visit he was finishing and leaving for another assignment. Such turnover negatively affects community trust in an organisation, relationships within the organisation and with external entities, and the ability to implement effective programmes.

## **MINE ACTION VIZ A VIZ OTHER PRIORITIES**

In the late 1990's when the 'Bad Honeff' guidelines were being drafted, mine action was considered a key element of development; this has somehow failed to be operationalised. Although landmines have long been considered an issue of safety and security, the UN emphasises integration of mine clearance in broader national programs for reconstruction and development (Harpviken and Isaksen, 2004; UNGA, 2004). In most mine affected countries, mine clearance is largely conducted apart from peacebuilding and development because it is considered a highly technical sector, whose practitioners often have military backgrounds (Harpviken and Isaksen, 2004; Kjellman et al., 2003).

Somaliland is a context where conflict is beyond the immediacy of dealing with anti-personnel mines or cluster munitions, as other human security concerns have become a more nuanced development issue. Out of the 45 interviewees, none of them thought mine action was a priority; in a scale of 1-10, where 1 was the top priority, mine action was listed at 7 and below. None of them thought it was even as high as 5.

Although the political context of non-recognition limits the extent to which the government engages in mine action; I also view the lack of engagement as an illustration of the acknowledgement that the government does not see mine action as a priority and hence their failure to incorporate the requirement for

demining some of the areas. Jessica Buchanan, reflecting on the challenges they were encountering in having Mine Risk Education incorporated in the curriculum, came to the same conclusion:

*Come to think of it, the lack of engagement by the government is a really good point. Maybe that's something that we should have to step back and ask, what are they really saying? Maybe they are saying it's not all that important. Even though SMAC believes it's very important, but at the same time they task us (DDG) to pursue the curriculum with the government. They have the motivation, however, it is their job to liaise with the government and yet they are asking us? Are they saying there is a problem here so we need to prove it by getting this curriculum in?*  
(Jessica Buchanan, DDG)

Mine Action is undertaken amidst a myriad of other complex developmental and humanitarian needs facing Somaliland, therefore the question that needs addressing is whether Mine Action can continue using 'isolated intervention' where the primary goal is removing mines from the ground and reducing the impact of mines to the communities, in the face of many other challenges (2003 p. 943). HALO Trust is the only remaining organisation in Somaliland undertaking demining and has traditionally maintained such a policy especially in Somaliland. Indeed, HALO Trust's Executive Director has argued against treating mine action like other humanitarian disasters that need a full blown "multi-layered" response. He has previously argued that 'drought, flooding, hurricanes, HIV/AIDS are recurring, mines are not' an argument that he presented on the eve of the MBT Review conference (Willoughby, 2004 online).

HALO Trust's operationalisation of mine action seems to disregard the caution by Horwood that mine action should not just be interested in returning land to the communities in a non-contaminated state without necessarily addressing other social issues. This he argues is a potential weakness in pursuing an 'isolated intervention' with mine action being disengaged from development and socio-political contexts (Horwood, 2003 p. 943). Southern Craib, defended HALO Trust's position in relation to concentrating on just mine clearance; he uses an analogy of a Taxi company and argues that:

*HALO Trust is a mine clearance organisation. It is not an education or health organisation. I think HALO will question the validity of continued risk education and rightfully so frankly. What surprises me to a degree is this accusation that is levelled against HALO. It's rather like saying, Hargeisa Best Taxi Company, they only provide taxis, maybe they should get involved in selling pizzas, they are a taxi company, if they wanted to sell pizzas they would be a pizza company. HALO Trust is a mine Clearance organisation that's what it does, and does very well, why are people surprised that they don't do other things if they did other things, if they wouldn't be HALO Trust they would be Oxfam. At most times I miss the point. Therefore I think they are justified to stick to what they do best, mine clearance.*

As a reflection that mine action is donor driven, this interviewee felt that HALO Trust was justified in doing more if the donors requested they do more; then his argument is that the organisation should oblige:

*I do understand particular donors e.g. DFID significant in the HALO Trust situation want to see more evidence of mine action being linked to follow on development. The old argument that it is about casualty reduction is less and less accepted. So donors and DFID are examples of those who want to see more tangible evidence of benefits, economic or otherwise for all mine clearance and HALO have traditionally argued against it. They very famously took DFID to court over the award of the contract in Cambodia and they lost. I don't think the case was thrown out, it wasn't even heard. But they will continue to argue that they are better off doing what they are good at rather than they are watering down with other things that are being done by others. I don't think that is necessarily a bad argument. However I do think it's relatively sensible if a donor asks for something then if you try and provide it for them you are likely to have more success. Other clearance agencies will largely give the donor what donors want. This avoids conflict with donors. HALO will argue its position and on occasions end up in court.*

Indeed the court case that he refers too was filed by HALO Trust on the grounds that neither it nor the other bidders had been told whether, and if so

how much of the budget could be spent on development rather than de-mining. This in HALO's view was in breach of the general principles of transparency and equal treatment in EU law. Despite what HALO felt about DFID's inclusion of an imprecise demand for development activity alongside de-mining, DFID won the case on the grounds that they need under certain circumstances to enter into a new contract in a short period of time (BRODIES LLM, 2011 p. 47). The Mines Advisory Group was awarded the contract as they have a broader focus on mine clearance.

A similar view by a HALO Trust programme manager at the time was:

*Our mandate is to get the mines off the ground. We were set up as an organisation which specialises in saving the lives and limbs of poor people in countries that can be able to benefit from our clearance. The policy of the organisation is that mine clearance is a precursor of development. What we do has massive impact on development activity here. What we make very clear and we do not believe should happen is that allocated funding should be put towards development because there is just too much mine clearance to do. What I personally and HALO Trust position is, is that if the donor want to put money toward mine clearance then it should be used for that. (Rory Logan, HALO Trust Programme Manager)*

Such a view or is blind to the reality of maximising impact in context of limited resources. However, it seems that HALO Trust's position on the same is wavering and is now edging into moving beyond 'single issue' to a more 'rounded view of human security' and has addressed the problem of explosive security in its pilot Weapons and Ammunition Disposal (WAD) programme which HALO Trust has established together with the police and the military.

Besides conducting clearance for humanitarian benefits, HALO is currently addressing the problem of explosives security, and has carried out a pilot Weapons and Ammunition Disposal (WAD) programme in collaboration with the police and the military in order to assist in the safe storage of explosive ordnance. The move by the Sector in Somaliland and globally should be seen more in line with OECD/DAC guidelines that call for development actors to

move to embrace a broader view of human security in all its aspects, a move that will contribute to making the wider socio-political and cultural contexts safer.

## **SOMALILAND CONTEXT: LIMITING MINE ACTION PEACEBUILDING CONCEPTUALISATION**

I argue that the way of conceptualising is largely based on how the Somaliland people define peace and therefore the activities that they see as enhancing peacebuilding. Thus, mine action both by the Sector and those outside the Sector demonstrates that the way in which peace is conceptualised dictates the way in which peacebuilding is defined, highlighting the importance of the history of the country as an important aspect in understanding how key aspects of life are understood. Thus the historical turmoil that the country has gone through, and the efforts made to achieve stability, have shaped the way in which future activities are perceived in Somaliland. It is therefore not surprising that peacebuilding is seen primarily as activities that deal with conflict resolution. To the majority of the people, peacebuilding cannot be anything other than efforts towards the resolving of conflicts, as witnessed post 1991, and the continued role that is carried out by the elders in addressing everyday conflicts.

Kurtenbach (2007) asserts that the way in which societies conceptualise peace is dependent on various factors; the society itself, its history, cultural and social foundations, the legacies of violence and the peacebuilding initiatives. For any country that has gone through a phase of war, the transformation or the reconstruction that takes place immediately after conflict happens within a context of the legacies of violence and the post war process that the country has gone through. Therefore conceptualisation of Peace and Peacebuilding in Somaliland has been shaped by the context in which the state was founded; Somaliland's history, her culture and the conflict transformative process that has taken place.

*So peacebuilding is both the reconciliation and conflict resolution process and also later on building on common interests (Haroon Ahmed Yusuf)*

Thus when one talks of peacebuilding in Somaliland, a number of assumptions are made; that peacebuilding is about reconciliation; peacebuilding is about



state building (that is the reconstitution of the State from scratch), that peacebuilding is outside the remit of any external actors and finally that peacebuilding is confined to the Elders and government officials. The Ownership of peacebuilding is also another critical element as articulated by Ahmed Essa:

*The peacebuilding in Somaliland didn't have anything to do with international agencies here and I think that was a good thing. Peacebuilding is still local. We still have problems. The problems we have are the same ones we had before. Clan conflicts, land disputes. At the moment we have one land dispute right now at the coastal region between two clans. Three days ago the elders from each clan were here giving a press conference about the other clan taking their land. Then the other day the other group came here saying the same thing. These are the sort of conflicts that may end up into a real armed conflict. However, this is still not for the international community to sort out. It is for us, the elders, the parliamentarians, and Somaliland people. We have parliamentarians and elders from each of the two sides, they talk together and then talk to us. UNDP or other International actors have nothing to do with that.*

The Program Manager at DDG, expressing his personal views on the role of this, argues that the two are mutually exclusive; he is of the same view as the majority of the Somaliland people who view peace and peacebuilding as about reconciliation:

*In the Somaliland context, we are talking about reconciliation among clans and political groups. I don't necessarily see mine action as peace building because the problem of mines in Somaliland is based on a war that ended in the mid-70s. The clearance of them now is not remotely relevant to peacebuilding in Somaliland. Because they are basically just an historical wreck that causes accidents on occasions or prevent the full use of land. They are not doing anything necessarily to affect peace. You could argue and it has been argued that the continued presence of large tank mines or large caliber ammunition provides a supply of explosives which could then be used for terrorism or other purposes. There has*

*been some evidence of this. So you could argue that the full clearance and destruction of those minefields will remove that threat. But generally without that dynamic, and that dynamic doesn't exist for instance in Angola, and Angola has peace and it still has mines. So I am not entirely sure of the full link of mine clearance and peace is. They are mutually exclusive. (Southern Craib)*

The only role of external actors in peacebuilding according to Professor Essa is the promotion of good governance:

*Some activities that international community can focus on are the rule of law. There is room to enlighten people, the stakeholder, local people and also the leaders. We have a rule of law, to have respect for good governance, we have to have respect for transparency and we have to have respect for the really bad effects of corruption. Those all help peace in one way or another. I think there is some room for the international community to play on that level. In terms of good governance, fighting corruption, I think there is room for outsiders to come in and train.*

The historical reconciliation process described in Chapter 2 and Appendix 2 was largely rooted on the strength and resilience of the local communities, which makes Somaliland a success story. Peacebuilding and the formation of a political community invariably emerged from below – rather than being imposed through a top-down process – and, unusually, took place in the absence of a central monopoly of violence (Ibrahim, 2010). As articulated by this interviewee:

*For me peace has more to do with how the government conducts its business. Not HIV programmes, WASH programs etc, however programs addressing the control of firearms and issues of advocacy, yes. So governance and peace building are inter-related. So if we want to talk about peace we have to talk about how the government conducts its operations. How does it function? A government that is functioning well is a government that is transparent and providing safety for its people in a fair way. Sometimes the government is not fair then there would be some conflict. I think the Somaliland people value peace as a post conflict situation. The reason why we are trying to come up with a very*

*democratic system of governance is one of it. No matter who comes here, people want to see the process continue. So anybody who comes against that, people will come against him (Suad Abdi, Programme Coordinator, Progressio interviewed on the 10th October 2012)*

The historical context offers both a challenge to implementation and a limitation to the extent to which mine action is conceptualised within peacebuilding. The history of humanitarian aid in Somalia shapes the extent to which the communities of Somaliland interact with interventions – thereby challenging the implementation of mine action; similarly the post war reconciliation process defines the views of the Somaliland people in the way they conceptualise peacebuilding. This means that though there is acknowledgement that there are elements of mine action that can be seen as peacebuilding, the historical process that they closely associate with peacebuilding remains within the constraints of reconciliation.

A study by the World Bank entitled, “*Consultation with the Poor*” conducted in Sanaag and Togdheer, found that rural and urban people in Togdheer refer to security in terms of the presence or absence of armed conflict and conflict related issues, such as killing, robbing, rape etc. Though armed conflict was a relatively new phenomenon in urban centres during that research period, the rural nomadic pastoral environment had a long history of conflicts between clans.

According to the programme manager for NAGAAD<sup>106</sup>, an umbrella organisation for Women’s NGOs in Somaliland, peace is when there is physical security; thus it goes in tandem with the human security concepts of basic freedoms such as freedom from needs (such as hunger), and in a more restricted sense, that people should be free from fear (of war, for example). This conceptualisation is expressed within the comforts of the cultural explanations as discussed above.

*Physical security is one (indicator of peace) and when I add ‘milk’ it is because of the other security which is the basic needs. Both are very*

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<sup>106</sup> NAGAAD is a non-governmental umbrella organization founded in 1997 and registered under the Ministry of Planning and Office of Attorney General in Somaliland. The organisation’s main goal is the promotion of women’s political, economic and social position within Somaliland. Information from website <http://nagaad.org/index.php/about-us> accessed on 5th of December 2014.

*important. The other thing is, because of the clan system social support system is involved and that is important for building peace. So having good relations with other is part of the peace. That is peace at all levels.*  
(Haroon Ahmed Yusuf)

*I think mine action is done and has nothing to do with peacebuilding. Mine action has to do with reducing the risk of people using mines during conflict but it is not in itself part of peacebuilding. But it reduces our ability to use mines during conflict. On the basis of that you need to make people see that using landmines is not the way and also you need to make sure that there are not landmines in the hands of individuals or militias. So that's where it would fit* (Ahmed Essa)

Indeed the suggestion that mine action can be considered as peacebuilding generated various reactions. One senior NGO worker actually laughed at the thought that anyone would consider Mine Action as peacebuilding:

*Mine clearance helps people move freely. But the question is who laid the mines in the first place? Is it Somaliland people or is it someone else? People do not see it as peacebuilding and neither do I see it as peacebuilding component. It is just an extra activity.*

This view is held by some within the Sector as well, out of all those interviewed working either for the Sector directly, or indirectly, none considered Mine Action to be part of peacebuilding. This is a position shared with several others including a senior UN official working for the UNHCR who acknowledged that mine clearance does create a secure environment however; he argues that mine action cannot be related to peace. *“There is peace, therefore mine clearance is not part of creating that peace, but is part of reconstruction”* (UNHCR Head of Sub-Office)

Similarly, security is increasingly viewed as an all-encompassing condition in which people and communities live in peace, freedom and safety. As such, it was not surprising that the people of Somaliland conceptualised peace in terms of concepts such as security, stability, safety, freedom and lack of fear.

*Well, it is. If you define peace as absence of physical harm, then mines cause physical harm. So it is peace building. It is giving people security, freeing grazing area thus improving the economy.*

This is relevant especially in the broader conceptualisation of peace as applied within what can broadly fit within the human security discourse. In this conception, peace is akin to security which is associated with personal security and not the security of the country. Thus embracing the basic tenets of human security where to be at peace is a matter first reflected in the lives of the people and not in the larger notion of the State. Human Security in this instance is also more tightly focused and linked to the 'freedom from fear'. The Peacebuilding coordinator at the Ministry of Interior articulates this by defining peace and the Director of Internal security links peace with the absence of fear and with mobility:

*'People living free from fear and able to move freely.* Ahmed Hersi (Peacebuilding Coordinator, Ministry of Interior)

*There is no conflict. When they see people working, business is open, movement of people. 'No conflicts with rivals, no fear of movement and can carry out all the operations they need to.* Mohamed Ahmed Mohamoud; Director Internal Security Ministry of Interior; Interviewed in Hargeisa on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012)

## **FACTORS ENHANCING MINE ACTION PEACE-ABILITY POTENTIAL**

Following the end of hostilities, mine action activities help in reducing deaths and injuries and most importantly facilitates relative safety for the return of refugees and internally displaced. It provides an enabling environment for rebuilding economies, opens up transportation routes and other infrastructure and most importantly is a source of employment including for former combatants.

SMAC provides the Sectors with the crucial linkage with the government; however, it remains weak in implementing and putting to action any policies and agreed actions. In order to address this weakness; HALO Trust employs a full time employee for liaison with SMAC to confront the problem of weak

organisational structures. In this way, HALO Trust ensures that the bureaucratic process of dealing with the authorities does not necessarily impact heavily on their planned activities. It also illustrates an understanding and the ability to adapt to the political bottlenecks that occur. This highlighted flexibility and understanding of the circumstances in which mine action takes place.

Such pragmatism by the Sector to facilitate both the implementation and operationalisation of mine action ensures that mine action as activity is implemented and continues to exploit its intrinsic potential; similarly the Sector is engaging more with activities that are not traditional mine clearance related activities; amongst the interviewees, mine action could only be conceptualised as mine clearance.

### **The Sector's pragmatic approaches beyond mine action**

According to the Sector's own guidelines, programmes must be part of an integrated response able to support peace-building including reconstruction and development of the community with the aim of enhancing the socio-economic and cultural infrastructure; thus the Sector's pragmatic response beyond traditional mine related activities has further contributed to the way in which mine action is perceived by the communities in Somaliland. This is illustrated by the following quote:

*Mine Action is peacebuilding in two ways. Some of them are building the armoury for the police and they are also dealing with registration of the small arms of the police. They also deal with a number of projects which create job opportunities and thus reduce crime rate. (Mohamed Ahmed Mohamoud)*

#### **a) Addressing Armed Violence Reduction and community Safety**

The role of DDG has encompassed the broader aims of humanitarian mine clearance. Having carried out an assessment in 2007, DDG realised that it needed to broaden its interventions from traditional mine clearance to include armed violence reduction initiatives in accordance with the needs of the Somaliland people.

*With us it is a simplistic approach. If you only address the institutions you are not looking at the agents and the weapons. For us, no matter where*

*we are, we would always try and have a comprehensive way of addressing things unless someone else is addressing it then we can align ourselves with them and they can take care of something.* (Karina Lynge; DDG).

A great majority of the people in Somaliland keep a private store of ERWs, and this needed to be addressed. According to DDG, this needed a completely different approach requiring extensive advocacy and education. They therefore launched a Community Safety Programme whose goals are largely about changing behaviour and attitudes towards Explosive Remnants of War and small arms, which are a huge problem. The programme incorporates destruction of ERWs from private stockpiles, provision of education on firearms safety including provisions for safe storage for weapons, provision of Mine Risk Education and also conflict management courses.

This focuses not only on destroying the instruments used for violence, but also endeavours to affect positive change in people who commit violence within the wider institutional and cultural environments that enable and/or protect against violence. This approach, based on the OECD “armed violence lens”, is one that captures all the elements and levels that shape armed violence patterns, namely the people affected by armed violence, the agents of violence including the instruments used for violence, (OECD, 2011). DDG does this through a bottom-up approach through development and safety as a means of effecting change within the Somaliland communities. They do this in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council’s (DRC) community driven recovery and development programmes. Such a venture ensures a holistic perspective that addresses the conflict as well as the communities – a critical approach that is needed for a complex context such as Somaliland (Hamming, 2011). DRC manages activities focusing on humanitarian assistance and socio-economic development, while DDG helps communities become safer and resist negative pressures. Both programmes are community-driven, have a bottom-up approach and are based on the communities’ expressed needs. In so doing, these interventions privilege ‘community-defined’ where communities engage in activities that are relevant and/or important to their specific context in order to comply with the ‘do no harm’

principles. It also ensures that the programmes are not standardised but are delivered in accordance with the needs of the communities.

DDG acknowledged, quite early on, that the threat from landmines and unexploded ordnance was decreasing, and that it needed to refocus its work in Somaliland to ensure maximum impact for the communities it works with. In response to the LIS findings that the major causes of accidents were by ERWs, and that this was likely to have been caused by tampering with UXO, DDG formally adopted the concept of *threat reduction* across all areas of the programme, through an initiative called 'Village-by-Village Clearance Project', an innovative approach that was highly successful in convincing private owners of explosive remnants of war to give up their stockpiles for destruction by working with local leaders in implementing advocacy and education initiatives. Having identified a problem of private possession of ERWS and UXOs, the project was structured so that a country wide UXO threat could be reduced, by physically providing a comprehensive and effective coverage of the villages, with the aim of reaching a high number of communities in any given area. The aim was also to form liaisons with the communities so that information could be gathered through local elders, locally identifying stocks of landmines and UXO (whether held within the community or by individuals) and ensuring that the same were collected and safely disposed of. Upon its inception, the UN reported that 'first indications are this is to be a successful approach to reducing the dangers of ERW and increasing security in the area' (MASG, 2006).

DDG appreciates that communities can be suspicious of interventions on sensitive issues and they therefore include sensitisation projects which sensitise them regarding the safety concerns that they face including those related to Small Arms, Light Weapons and ERWs. This is done before they fully engage with organisations implementing community safety interventions through intensive awareness-raising, advocacy and education; people are encouraged to stay away from situations that could escalate minor disputes into armed violence; through education they are also able to convince the significant minority of people who think that small arms are desirable and normal that this should not be the case.



Due to people's perception of security within their regions and also due to the past history of violence and war, a significant number of people not only possess firearms but also keep (private) stockpiles of explosives. These would have been harvested and kept with a view to use for protection and also for monetary gain. Thus, DDG undertakes interventions that focus on changing people's attitudes and behaviour regarding ERW. These stockpiles represent a significant risk to the population of Somaliland as they are commonly stored in households with few safety precautions. The impact of accidents in these circumstances has been shown to be severe (DDG and Small Arms Survey, 2009). DDG believes that the scale of the risks surrounding ERW being held in private ownership or being harvested for economic and protection reasons are significant and require further examination.

Given the widespread availability of arms and the recognition that little can be done to immediately restore the rule of law and establish the new state's capacity to maintain peace and order, there is a natural presumption that an early step, some would say prerequisite, should be a programme for disarmament. Cliffe (2005) argued that given the long period of insecurity and the reliance on SALW as a means of livelihood and self-defence, these people would rather prioritise the establishment of a climate of security and the provision of alternative livelihoods as prior means to encourage eventual collection of SALW (Cliffe, 2005).

#### **b) Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) programmes**

Mine Action's potential to respond to security is consistent with the broad notion of human security as promoted by the UNDP, and widely used by development actors. Thus, for Somaliland having negotiated and having worked on the reconciliation process, the people's view on peace is that it is not simply absence of war and violence; with relative peace and stability peace is conceptualised more broadly; peacebuilding is thus seen as an activity that addresses insecurity as this is seen to obstruct development and hence perpetuate conflict. This level of insecurity is perpetuated by the presence of the remnants of unregulated small arms, landmines and other ERWs. This, coupled with the presence of ex-combatants, raises the risk of post conflict countries returning to violence (Muggah, 2005).

*Well, it is. If you define peace as absence of physical harm, then mines cause physical harm. So it is peace building. It is giving people security, freeing grazing area thus improving the economy.*

Therefore the sector is seen as responding to this through the provision of appropriate responses to post conflict countries through Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) destruction projects as well as Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) activities. Mine Advisory Group (UK) undertakes this primarily within their mandate of addressing human security issues and humanitarian disarmament. MAG has not been previously involved in traditional mine action programmes in Somaliland however. Within such an approach, MAG helps States in developing what they consider as sustainable solutions to armed violence, in their efforts of addressing the daily threat posed by explosive weapons to civilians in populated areas. Through the invitation of the Police Commissioner in Hargeisa, MAG renovated the main police armoury whose poor condition was putting the population at the danger of an accidental explosion. This prompted an invitation by the police to undertake a nationwide survey of the more than 40 armouries under the government's control. The survey was meant to establish if similar poor standards were evident and to define how best to secure and manage firearms and ammunition under the control of the Government. Upon completion MAG received funding for a Physical Security and Stockpile Management project based in Hargeisa, which began in June 2011. This saw the construction of armouries for Mhaybe Police and the Police HQ in Hargeisa and Police and Coast Guard armouries in Berbera, Ceel Sheikh and El Sheekh were also surveyed and construction completed. Gun racks, door constructions and windows including a welding plant at the MAG compound to construct doors and firearms destruction were done (MAG Website<sup>107</sup>).

A peacebuilding perspective on small arms proliferation is not *as such* concerned with the availability (total numbers) of SALW, but rather with their impact on individuals and their communities.

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<sup>107</sup> See <http://www.maginternational.org/where-mag-works/mag-in-somalia/#.VR0V4PzF8uc> accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2014

### **c) Mine Action as source of Employment**

Unemployment is a huge problem in Somaliland; therefore any activity that is seen to employ a huge workforce is seen as contributing positively to reconstruction and therefore peacebuilding. Hence as articulated here, the only way that mine action is seen as peacebuilding is in the provision of employment as articulated by an ex- Mine Action employee:

*Well I think mine action contributes hugely especially when we go into these remote communities where they've had no outside assistance or very limited outside assistance. Quite often in these types of communities there is tension and conflict because there is nothing else for people to do. There's no job, there's no accompaniment and also in the case of Somaliland for example, there is limited resources for land. Eventually there is potential and then we have organisation that go clearing when there's a task and for a number of months employ local people the local economy is slightly better because there is money. Whether it is the deminers who go out to the shops and purchase food, and other items or the local people benefit because the agricultural land has been cleared and they can go by and start ploughing or they can even graze their animals. So you know all of this contributes to peacebuilding efforts.*

Similarly, in response to Lardner's (2008) evaluation of DDG's activities on livelihood; Hammond observed that a large number of staff over DDG's ten years of mine Action in Somaliland would undoubtedly have contributed to the societal benefit in Somaliland (pp: 26). Both DDG and HALO use the concept of operations referred to by Willett (2003) as "proximity demining" which means that the staff are recruited locally to work on local tasks (p. 56). Hammond (in Lardner's 2008 evaluation report) and a number of those interviewed concur that this contributed the communities from a financial perspective and appears to have had a positive impact to society in the parts of Somaliland where the Sector operated.

A similar view was held by a senior UNMAS official:

*HALO is extremely economical in terms of value for money. Their costs are extremely reasonable and they employ a lot of Somalilanders. So in terms of peace building from that perspective it is like the fourth or third largest employer in Somaliland. Having 400-800 men employed, getting busy every day, getting a salary is a huge benefit. So in that way there is a little bit more justification for it.*

As with other communities affected by landmines there are often other problems caused by conflict or low levels of post-conflict development. From this perspective, it is important that demining achieves as much as it can.

Various pillars of MA contribute to employment, for example Mine Risk Education provides employment and support to youth NGOs working in mine education development, integrated programmes of local NGO capacity development, inter-ethnic reconciliation, community development, non-formal education. Mine risk education is critical also to livelihoods.

It was the view of some of those interviewed that there was no guarantee that the funds available for demining could indeed be utilised in Somaliland; this remains a valid point.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are several factors that challenge or limit the extent to which mine action is conceptualised as peacebuilding. I use the policy analysis triangle as a method of grouping these factors. I further use Goodhand's concept of a peace audit in assessing the peace-ability of Mine Action. The 'peace-ability' methodology, is whereby Mine Action achievements are conceptualised in terms of their role in increasing or decreasing probabilities for peace, rather than as precise cause and effect relationships. The peace audit concept critically looks at the way in which Mine Action is or has been undertaken in Somaliland and how this has raised or lowered the probability for peace (Goodhand, 2006). In so doing, I support the argument that mine action is inherently part of peacebuilding, however, the context in which it takes place, the Sector and the implementation process limit the extent to which the recipient community perceives this and therefore the way they conceptualise mine action.

The way of conceptualising mine action is largely based on the Somaliland context, and the Sector actors. The chapter highlights that the way peacebuilding is understood and conceptualised is largely based on the history of the country; an important aspect in understanding how key aspects of life are understood. Thus the historical turmoil that the country has gone through, and the efforts made to achieve stability, have shaped the way in which future activities are labelled in Somaliland. It is therefore not surprising that peacebuilding is seen primarily as activities that deal with conflict resolution. To the majority of the people, peacebuilding cannot be anything other than the efforts towards the resolving of conflicts, as witnessed post 1991, and the continued carried out by the elders in addressing everyday conflicts. Peacebuilding is therefore narrowly associated with the historical reconciliation process limiting the extent to which mine action can be conceptualised as such. Despite the huge impact over the years that Somaliland has had to deal with mines and UXO contamination, today mine action is not considered a priority by the majority of those interviewed, and neither do the mine action practitioners themselves consider mine action as peacebuilding.

Over time even though peacebuilding is seen mainly as conflict resolution, the communities have an understanding that, beyond conflict resolution, peacebuilding takes on broader notions that encapsulate the ideals of human security and development. As a result therefore, mine action is only seen as peacebuilding when it addresses those components that address issues of human security such as community safety. Similarly the extent to which as an activity mine action is seen to address other priority needs in the society such as provision of employment, then the society does see it as peacebuilding. Some actors within the Sector are aware that as part of the humanitarian aid sector good intentions are no longer sufficient; and that as agencies working within post-conflict environments they need to demonstrate that they are achieving positive outcomes. However, these principles do not necessarily appear to guide their work as they carry out their activities within the neutrality and impartiality cloak.

For mine action, this context further dictates the way the way the Sector actors interact with the communities in Somaliland. Mine action has taken place

within a 'securitised' dominant aid response context that saw agencies harden themselves through strengthening protection and more readily adopting deterrence measures (Van Brabant, 2010 p. 8). The most visible of these deterrence measures for the host community has been the widespread retreat of international aid workers into their own expatriate world of the UN and international NGO compounds and residential units that are fortified and inaccessible; (on which I reflect on in chapter one). With mine action traditionally being seen as a secretive operation, coupled with the disconnection from the local community especially on the part of HALO Trust, this practise has created local grievances with local employees with the behaviour of the actors often feeding rumour and supposition. Hence rather than the politicisation of mine action as was seen during the RIMFIRE period, the weakness of the Sector is more about the culture of aid that reduces interaction, the behaviour of Sector workers and the endemic distrust between the Sector agencies. Among host populations, the negative cultural and organisational factors are illuminated by the fact that mine action is no longer seen as a priority and the impact of the Sector's intervention is perceived as limited and at times not visible.

This is made worse by the fact that the time frame and goalposts for achievement of an impact free environment have constantly shifted, this can be attributed to the nature of mine action, however as noted, there is a certain demonstration of insincerity by the Sector. This has therefore contributed greatly to the cynicism regarding the role of mine action thereby limiting the peace-ability potential of the activity to peripheral activities that the Sector undertakes. The continued 'self-justification' of the need for continued presence by mine action organisations feeds into the local cynicism with the common view that the stated need to be present and operating in such environments is solely in order to maintain cash flow, especially in the hope that Somalia becomes safe enough, to present budgetary growth opportunities (Van Brabant, 2010).

There has been a great reduction in rates of new accidents and victims diminishing the humanitarian role for the mine action related activities especially demining. The Sector's role has therefore become less central and current

programmes are expected to be more in support of development as is already the main role of demining in other places. Thus the Sector is slowly realigning itself in order to continue to be relevant; this interaction remains minimal. However, the Sector has engaged with activities beyond the traditional mine clearance role increasing its peace-ability potential.

The Sector's failure to build local ownership reflects the critique of liberal peacebuilding that external actors see local ownership as a conditional right; this is demonstrated by DDG's reluctance to transfer to the NDA. The critique further suggests that in claiming that ownership is a conditional right the external actors typically refer to lack of local responsibility, capacity or political will and, by implication, they assume that ownership is theirs to grant to local authorities or local stakeholders (Sending, 2010 p. 3). This is DDG alluded to in the case of NDA and what others in the Sector are doing, thus conforming to the critique.

This chapter therefore illustrates how mine action reflects the same problems of international interventions such as lack of local ownership, dearth of local knowledge, use of universal models and conflictual relationships between interveners and local stakeholders; however, as Autesserre (2014) has established, these problems are not primarily due to the liberal content of peacebuilding, in this case mine action as an intervention programme, however the source of the problem, he argues, lies in the very act of imposition of the everyday practise of the interveners on the ground (p. 53). I argue that the everyday modes of operation and behaviour are some of the factors that contribute to negative perceptions about mine action hence diminishing the extent to which the society can conceptualise mine action as peacebuilding.

# CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

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## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In this concluding chapter I revisit the research question and provide an outline on how this has been answered. The central goal for this thesis has been to answer the research question: to what extent are the dominant critiques of the liberal peace agenda relevant to Somaliland with particular reference to the implementation of mine action intervention? In an attempt to understand how mine action was conceptualised within this literature, I carried out secondary data research as the first part of the research; this mainly focused on peacebuilding. The analysis of the literature re-affirmed what (Kjellman et al. 2003; Harpviken and Isaksen 2004) had noted; that mine action was only marginally acknowledged as part of peacebuilding. They however attributed this conceptualisation to the extent to which the Sector, including donors, limited mine action within security rather than across the entire peacebuilding spectrum. Other factors include the characteristics that define the Sector; its position of isolation within the wider Humanitarian Sector; the nature of the activity itself; and the actors that engage in mine action.

I argue for the need to reconceptualise mine action and I do this by tracing the debates on landmines, in order to illustrate these normative underpinnings that guide mine action. I argue that mine action as an activity is intrinsically peacebuilding – I demonstrate this through the interrogation of mine action within the peacebuilding palette to demonstrate the interrelatedness of mine action in supporting the broader peacebuilding goals thus arguing for the need to re-conceptualise mine action as an activity within broader peacebuilding.

The process of reviewing the literature on peacebuilding in general was also instructive in the extent to which the academic literature was quite critical of peacebuilding as reflected in chapter two. I concur with those critics (e.g. Chandler, 2010; Sabaratnam, 2011a) who note the extent to which the liberal peacebuilding discourse has become increasingly distanced from the concerns of the policy discourse and implementation and had become ‘meta-critiques’ of



contemporary projects of conflict management. The critics had become 'hyper-critical' to the extent that even those within (see for example Paris, Begby and Burgess; Newman) have argued that such criticism had gone past the point of justified questioning, and verged on unfounded scepticism and even cynicism (Paris, 2010 p. 338) also see (Begby and Burgess, 2009; Newman, 2009). I therefore narrowed my analysis and identified that these critical debates were based on several broad standpoints and these were what I called the 'dominant' critiques. I noted how this literature and the critiques were generalised and the most dominant critiques focused on 'states' and the failure of interventions to succeed in rebuilding states. I therefore argue that the critics of liberal peace building have a tendency to be state-centric in approach, and therefore this largely limits their critiques. More generally they fail to widen their interrogation to include other peacebuilding interventions. I support this argument by presenting the case of Somaliland; a state without recognition; and therefore interventions within Somaliland are not subjected to such critiques. To further illustrate the state-centric focus of the liberal critiques, and the claim that I have made that the most critiqued liberal peace agenda is the state building element of peacebuilding; I present the case of Somaliland vis a viz the Somalia to and demonstrate the way critics offer Somalia as a classic example of the failure of liberal peace project and disregard Somaliland's state formation process which would support the suggestion that a 'hybrid' approach offers a more sensitive operational process and outcome that can be achieved in certain places. Somaliland as a context has engaged in an indigenous process of state-building that incorporates indigenous local authority within the central government. However, this is rarely cited by critics and when it is, it is only done marginally. Similarly, the post conflict reconstruction arena in Somaliland is littered with interventions which have made limited progress therefore supporting the same characteristics that the critics highlight.

I therefore assert that the critics critique the standardised 'one size fits all approach' employed by interveners, yet they take the same approach, and in so doing apply broad brush across a diverse range of programmes, issues and activities that are indeed peacebuilding, as illustrated by the mine action case study and contexts such as Somaliland.

The critiques are based on systems, structures, and organisational values of international peacebuilding based on a single interpretation - liberal peace - thereby making a generalised conclusion on the failure of peacebuilding. This means there is a limited pool of academic research or interest in issues such as mine action thereby contributing to the narrow conceptualisation of mine action within this literature.

Thus, the literature review partly responded to the research question on how mine action was conceptualised and the factors that dictated the way in which it was. The second part of the research process was to respond directly to the specific questions in relation to Somaliland; and to answer the two broader questions on mine action implementation. Further literature review on how mine action was implemented and operationalised globally revealed an uncritical and self-referential Sector. This literature on peacebuilding and on mine action allowed for preliminary conclusions to be made and provided guidance to the data collection phase of the research.

Drawing from the mine action grey literature, it was evident that the mine action sector globally generates guides, instructions etc. to facilitate the implementation of mine action on the ground. This approach is formulaic, based on templates that dictate and define the way the Sector engages on the ground. In general terms from the conception of the Sector to its implementation, mine action seems like a microcosm of peacebuilding, the way it is implemented reflects the same dominant characteristics i.e.; it is standardised; technical and externally led especially in that as an intervention, the sector preferred standardised 'one size fits all' approaches; This same process of implementation was reflected in Somaliland where the Sector is inherently guided by the need to apply a standardised set of protocols (such as establishment of NMAA, undertake LIS, use of the IMSMA) to most mine contaminated countries irrespective of context, within a rhetoric that these standards are only a guide and that national context should guide their application. However in reality this context does not guide implementation as highlighted by the process of setting up the Somaliland Mine Action Centre, and undertaking the Landmine Impact Survey. Both processes reflected the critique that the failure to secure the respect of the elements of local ownership was

based on the peacebuilding actors as external actors formulated peacebuilding strategies and implemented them in practice.

The echoes of the liberal peace paradigm can be discerned in the implementation of mine action implementation in Somaliland. These do not manifest themselves implicitly but can be discerned in the implementations and format of programmes and projects carried out by the UN and other international actors in the field.

Coordination is another element that has elicited critiques; according to critics due to the many actors engaged in conflict environments coordination is required and is either undertaken by dominant states or by the UN; similarly, within mine action and precisely due to the disparate actors involved, the UN emerged to take the strategic role of coordination whilst funding for mine action is provided by key states that emerged during the formation of the sector; these states are largely western based; and according to Mac Ginty (2011), therefore the direction policies, funding and ideological stances of international NGOs including the UN, reflect western interest that fall under the liberal peace rubric.

According to the critiques the failure emanates from the interventions' limited effort to command legitimacy from the grassroots leading to insufficient 'local ownership' of the strategic direction and daily activities of such operations leading to potential for building a lasting peace being limited by failure by external interveners to correctly identify peace in complex war-torn environs (Cubitt, 2013 p. 92) see also (Donais, 2009). The Sector in this case has not only failed in building local ownership more than two decades since they first arrived, but has also failed to establish sustainability to enable local actors to take over the ownership of mine action related programmes upon the departure of the international organisations. According to critics, failure to create ownership contributes to the lack of sustainability important for an effective Liberal Peacebuilding agenda (Chandler, 2013; Paris and Sisk, 2009; Richmond, 2007; Suhrke, 2002).

I agree with most of the critiques, however, I argue that in the case of mine action, the intervention cannot be seen as having failed completely as the evidence indicates that mine action has to a certain extent enhanced the

peacebuilding potential in Somaliland by facilitating the reconstruction process. However it is narrowly conceptualised as peacebuilding; according to the majority of the people who were interviewed, many did not see mine action as peacebuilding and those who did only saw it within the narrow view of either mine action's role in enhancing security; or the Sector in general as a means for the provision of employment. Such a limited conceptualisation is a result of several factors beyond the way in which the Sector implements programmes which have influenced this conceptualisation and these include; actors within the Sector, including their relationship with the communities; the Sector's identity and values and most importantly the Sector programmes. These shape the perceptions of the communities and therefore a narrative is formed based on their unique history.

Similarly, the context (including the political status and perception of recipients) has not only limited the peacebuilding potential but also the extent to which mine action is conceptualised within a 'peacebuilding sphere'. The Mine Action Sector in its governance and operationalisation structure is guided by a conventional view that conflict and post-conflict recovery in every context follows a universal pattern of social progression. Somaliland's unrecognised status therefore presents a unique challenge to the way in which the Sector frames the context; implements programmes and challenges efforts to respond to mines and UXO contamination. The Sector struggles to implement their standardised responses because Somaliland is not a typical post conflict environment which conforms to the UN and International communities' neat sequencing of aid.

The historical context further challenges implementation and the efforts of the sector in implementing programmes. This is due to the history of humanitarian aid in Somalia which has continually shaped the extent to which the communities of Somaliland interact with interventions – thereby challenging the implementation of mine action as demonstrated by the efforts of implementing the LIS and other programmes in general. The history of the post-war reconciliation process further defines the views of the Somaliland people in the way they conceptualise peacebuilding. This means that though there is acknowledgement that there are elements of mine action that can be seen as

peacebuilding, the people of Somaliland closely associate peacebuilding within the constraints of reconciliation. This supports the assertions made by Kurtenbach (2007) that the way in which societies conceptualise peace is dependent on various factors; the society itself, its history, cultural and social foundations, the legacies of violence and the peacebuilding initiatives. Somaliland's conceptualisation of peacebuilding is thus shaped by the context in which the state was founded; Somaliland's history, her culture and the conflict transformative process that has taken place.

I therefore challenge the argument that liberal peacebuilding has failed by arguing that this is a standardised critique that fails to engage with the complexities of the inter-relatedness of factors and interventions; how they are formulated and implemented on the ground and how they impact on the same. Just as there are many actors (intervening) in the name of peacebuilding, so there is a number of contexts in which the intervention is taking place and therefore different ways in which the recipients (read local) conceptualise their own understanding of what peacebuilding is.

Thus, interrogating the role of mine action and the Sector through the adaptation of the simplified model "Policy Analysis Triangle" by (Walt and Gilson, 1994) helped in teasing out interrelationships that are pertinent to carrying out a critical analysis. Adapting this approach prevented a limited focus on the Sector allowing an analysis of the role of the actors (Sector Actors), the context (Somaliland political and historical context) and process (implementation process) in order to demonstrate how inter-related the factors are in the outcome of mine action globally and further how the same factors shape and coalesce to challenge implementation in Somaliland.

Similarly, the combination of secondary data, interviews, personal discussions and observations generated rich and coherent data that would not have been generated by a single method. Hence, methodologically, 'triangulation' has mitigated the weaknesses and intrinsic biases that come from single-theory or single-method studies and provided empirically grounded, convergent and comprehensive answers to the research question posed below.

1. To what extent is the critique of Liberal Peacebuilding reflected within mine action especially the implementation and operationalisation?
  - Which of these critiques are supported by the implementation and operationalisation of mine action in Somaliland?
  - To what extent does the Somaliland context define the way in which mine action is implemented?
2. How is mine action in Somaliland conceptualised and what factors dictate the way in which it is conceptualised?

Reflecting on the process of data gathering, it was surprising to come across the Sector's own policy in regards to research and especially the role of the National Mine Action Centres. They are seen as part of the effort to create broader awareness of the landmine problem whereby they can stimulate research and debate in academic and public policy circles regarding landmines and their impact on the country; through the provision of the mine action database as a research dataset; circulating the results and reports with an aim of stimulating wider discussion that informs policy (Downs, 2010). Like much rhetoric from the Sector, this remained just that throughout this research. Responses to request for data went unanswered and indeed a majority of those within SMAC who were asked to be interviewed turned down the request, or promised an interview and didn't turn up. As the SMAC is funded by the UN, I requested the data from them, but was constantly referred back to SMAC.

## **WHY IT MATTERS**

This research was mainly driven by my interaction with the Sector through my involvement as an activist and a Landmine Monitor Researcher from 1999 to 2004. This, combined with a sharpened interest in academia and the need to challenge my previously uncritical outlook on mine action, prompted the interest in this project. A short engagement in 2 research projects for the Sector and an encounter with a divided Sector in terms on the approach on operations increasingly challenged my pre-conceived ideas. My engagement in the Landmine Monitor had brought an acute awareness of the contrast between what the MA Sector was saying and the reality on the ground. With a growing academic literature that was highly critical of the peacebuilding interventions that were taking place, the need to interrogate the Sector that I had been immersed in drove the research project. Thus, in order to answer the research

question above, I carried out research in three main phases. First an analysis of the secondary data on mine action, liberal peace and peacebuilding and Somaliland; this was as a means of establishing the foundational background to the study. Second was the process of data collection that led to the investigation of the Mine Action Sector, institutions that largely work within peacebuilding, relevant government ministries, as well as academic institutions. The representative samples were mainly from Hargeisa due to security restrictions and also due to the fact that most of these organisations are based here. The third phase was the process of data analysis. I relied on an iterative process that contributed to understanding of the practice and discourse of the mine action sector in Somaliland.

The importance of Somaliland in the thesis is illustrated in two ways; it demonstrates the tendency of liberal peace critics to be state-centric with the most critiqued liberal peace interventions drawing heavily on the failure of state building processes; Somaliland's statebuilding project as has been demonstrated, has been largely successful and is demonstrative of a hybrid model, a process that the critics propose in response to the failure of the liberal peace approach. However, Somaliland's case study is important in demonstrating the extent to which as a context it is populated largely by externally driven interventions in areas that are not necessarily defined as priorities by local populations or that respond towards the larger goals of peace beyond the absence of violence. However, the failure of the international community to reconstitute the Somalian state remains the key example of the limitation of the liberal peacebuilding agenda through the failure of liberal critics to offer scrutiny of the numerous peacebuilding interventions within Somaliland which have not had as much success as the state building process. This case study fills this gap and offers a much broader and more nuanced view that transcends beyond the 'state'.

In conclusion therefore, the implementation and operationalisation of mine action reflects a the dominant peacebuilding critiques; the thesis has demonstrated that mine action intervention is largely externally driven; operates within the standardised one size fits all approaches and that just like liberal peacebuilding interventions the Sector ignores local context with far reaching

consequences. However, as an activity, mine action cannot be deemed as having failed to enhance peacebuilding as its intrinsic values contribute to enabling key post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives to take place. However, there are factors, some beyond the role of the Sector in implementing their programmes that form constraints on enhancing this peacebuilding potential.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

One area for future research would be to engage in a critical analysis of a different sector in Somaliland; this would provide more evidence of the extent to which reconstruction in and now development are being driven by external actors. Such a study will further give credence to the claim I have made that beyond the state building arena, the rest of Somaliland's reconstruction and development agenda is primarily an externally driven process. Such a study would further test the assertions of liberal peace critiques.

On mine action in general, there is certainly need for research beyond the anecdotal evidence on how mine action enhances peacebuilding in post-conflict contexts. Having established that the liberal peace building critiques are supported by mine action implementation globally, a study that looks into how other different contexts supports or challenges such implementation modalities would also contribute further into supporting or discounting the assertions made by liberal peace critics.

Beyond Somaliland, the UN Security Council resolutions 1863 (2009) and 2036 (2012) provided the mandate for UNMAS to coordinate mine action and support AMISOM, the Somali Security Sector, and humanitarian aid in what UNMAS describes as "explosive management support" (UNMAS, 2012a p. 12) In south central Somalia, UNSOMA provides capacity-building support to AMISOM regarding explosives management in Mogadishu where there are large quantities of ERW, weapons, and ammunition stockpiles (Landmine Monitor 2012). Thus just as in Somaliland, mine action agencies have provided external actors and the international community one of the significant earliest entry points and is currently engaged in mine clearance in Somalia. Therefore further research could usefully look into the extent to which the Sector's engagement in Somaliland informs their operationalisation and implementation.



Similarly, the context of Somalia is one of that is riddled with security challenges, thus research into the suitability of implementation of mine action in its current standardised approach will provide more evidence in engaging in critical discourses of liberal peace interventions.

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# LIST OF APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX 1: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

### PART A: INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCHER

**Researcher:** Sarah Njeri

**Contact:** 39 Pendragon Lane, Bradford, BD2 4JL

**Affiliation:** PhD Research Student, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, UK.

### PART B: DECLARATION TO PARTICIPANTS

The participants will have a right to the following information before they can sign the consent form:

- *Participation:* Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Your role in this research will have no bearing in your work or any related evaluations or reports. You are free to withdraw from the interview without giving any reasons, to amend or correct their responses, as well as add or subtract any comments from the transcript. You are thus free to terminate your participation at any time during the research and interview process.
- *Confidentiality:* The recorded responses from the interview will be treated confidentially by the researcher. The collected information from the interviews and the meetings will only be accessed by the researcher and her supervisor, if requested, but will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- *Anonymity:* If requested in questions where anonymity is requested, this will be given and attempts will be made in instances where answers given can be easily attributed to the interviewee. The identity of the participants will be treated confidentially in the publications and will only be disclosed with the full consent of the respective participant.
- *Risks and benefits:* there are no foreseen risks or benefits (financial or otherwise) to you individually from your participation in the research.



- *Archiving:* The collected data from the interview will be kept in a safe for the duration of the PhD project and beyond. It will however be destroyed after a period of satisfactory use.
- *Questions about the Research:* If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact Professor Donna Pankhurst by e-mail ([d.t.pankhurst@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:d.t.pankhurst@bradford.ac.uk)). This research has been reviewed by the Humanities, Social and Health Sciences Research Ethics Panel, University of Bradford's Ethics Review Board.

Researcher signature:.....

Date:.....

## PART C: CONSENT FORM

**Researcher:** Sarah Njeri

**Contact:** 39 Pendragon Lane, Bradford, BD2 4JL, United Kingdom

**Tel:** +44 7735420988 (mobile)

**Email:** snjeri@bradford.ac.uk

**Affiliation:** PhD Research Student,  
Department of Peace Studies,  
University of Bradford, UK.

I ..... (Name) have read the above information and I have had the opportunity to get clarifications. The same have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my participation to this research is on a voluntary basis and that I have a right to withdraw at anytime without any repercussion. By signing this form I am attesting that I have read and understood the information above and I freely give my consent/ Assent to participate. I also hereby understand that due to the nature of this research my anonymity may not be guaranteed fully.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher Signature	Date	

## APPENDIX 2: FACTORS THAT CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF THE SOMALILAND RECONCILIATION PROCESS

**Local ownership:** This process was based on a policy of non-involvement of the SNM leaders (political leadership) thus making it a genuinely grassroots, locally owned, process unlike the externally funded peace conferences in the rest of Somalia which have thus far ended in failure (Walls, 2009). The process remained locally instigated throughout, and was funded primarily by domestic and diaspora Somalilanders (Bradbury, 2008; Farah and Lewis, 1997). The extent to which the process was exclusively without external intervention is said to be 'contentious' and 'topical one' and Walls argues that it is important to note the constructive role that 'interested outsiders' played (2009 pp 18).

The reliance on a **clan system**; the traditional Somali clan system had always served as a mechanism of solidarity and fragmentation as well as competition and coalition building. Unlike Italian Somali, the traditional institutions of Somaliland had survived British colonial rule (Reno, 2002; Walls and Kibble, 2010b). Where the clan structure became a source of fragmentation in Somalia; it became a source of cohesion in Somaliland. Somaliland thus adapted those positive features and functions of clan organisation in its strategies of organising resistance to the regime; resolving conflicts within the SNM movement during the struggle, as well as in post war reconciliation and in building political consensus (Jama, 2003). The clan became the key regulator of the intricate social interactions of the sub-clans. Through the process of employing dialogue and consultations as a strategy of reconciliation during the inter-clan conferences inter-clan factional conflicts were curbed and this enabled Somaliland to implement a peacebuilding agenda and also maintain the peace. Gradually the country developed a modest capacity to govern, and a national assembly of traditional clan elders. Inadvertently, the Barre regime had helped to reinforce the bonds of the Somaliland traditional elders (*Guurti*) (Omaar, 1994 May). They came to present continuity and normality. Similarly during the democratisation process the elders were given recognition in the constitution of the SNM as a form of continuation of the vital role and collaboration regime

(Farah and Lewis, 1997 p. 359)<sup>108</sup>. Reconciliation and state-building thus began in earnest with the transformation from SNM 'politico-military vanguard' of the struggle against Barre to a more popular based leadership of the clan elders (Jhazbhay, 2009 p. 59)

**Inclusiveness;** During the peace conferences all decisions were based on consensus with the numbers of official delegates agreed upon in advance based on proportional representation by clan. Delegates were accountable to their communities and spoke and negotiated their behalf. Initially when the process started, the SNM leadership policy was not to establish an independent state in the North, as they believed the status of the northern regions was too war ravaged to survive on their own, however the majority of the grassroots was enthusiastic and therefore independence became SNMs policy (Walls, 2009 p. 9). Inclusiveness in this context extends to the extent to which the minority clans became included in the process. However there is not much evidence on how the views of those not directly involved, (including refugees and IDPs and women to a certain extent) but who could have become an obstacle to a settlement, were being accommodated.

**Role of Women;** The role of women in the peace process in Somaliland was minimal due to the Somali society being a patriarchal society in which internal conflict resolution mechanisms do not promote gender equality. Only two women sit in the lower house of Parliament, from a total of 82. In the upper house or *Guurti* there is only one woman from 82 members. Women are not seen as capable of exercising leadership either at village or national levels. However, they did play a role in Somaliland even though their role has not been acknowledged in the various narratives. They capitalised on their capacity to embrace multiple relationships within the clans, either through birth, marriage or even friendships. This enabled them to easily interact and share information that helped mobilise the various clans to participate in the peace rallies. They were able to use their rich culture of poetry and speeches, song and dance to challenge clans and appeal to them to end violence and participate in the conflict resolution process. In Dini's view, "such actions ultimately undermined

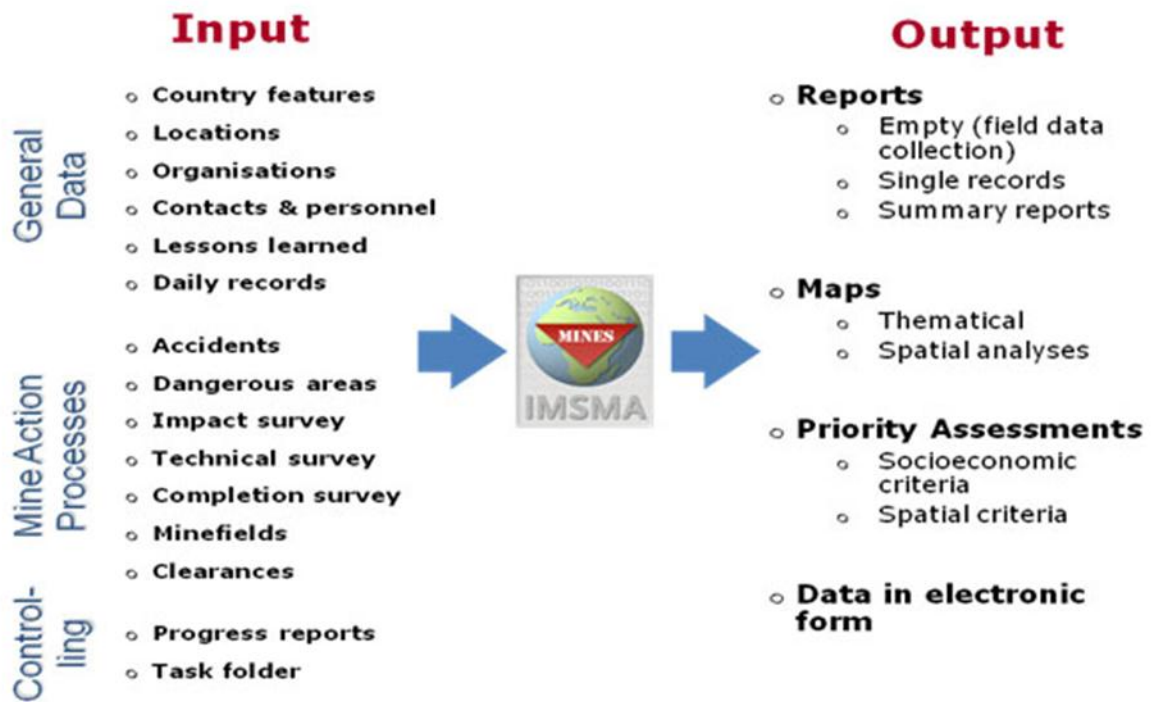
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<sup>108</sup> Walls and Kibble (2001) however note that this arrangement is today increasingly under pressure, and calls up for a rethink on how these traditional institutions will interact with the norms of nation state democracy.

militia groups' attack plans thus preventing further conflict. They were also able to deter revenge motivated violence through providing resources to conflict-affected families and groups (Dini, 2010 online).

# APPENDIX 3: IMSMA THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

## IMSMA: Theoretical Overview



# APPENDIX 4: SAMPLE OF RIMFIRE DATA COLLECTION TOOL

## RIMFIRE INTERNATIONAL LIMITED.

### MINE FIELD QUESTIONNAIRE.

#### 01 AGENCY DETAILS.

Agency Name.

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person.

\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate main field of work in Somalia.

Medical.

Reconstruction.

Education.

Agricultural.

Veterinary.

Commodity Inputs.

Please state others \_\_\_\_\_

How long has the agency been operational in Somalia? \_\_\_\_\_

Rimfire Consultants. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Location details. Name \_\_\_\_\_

G.P.S. \_\_\_\_\_

**02 CONTACTS.**

Details of key contacts in the area / village.

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION	TRIBE
------	----------	----------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

How many families are in the area ? \_\_\_\_\_

How many farming families are in the area ? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the security situation in the area ?

(Use a separate sheet if necessary).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**03 MINES AND THE COMMUNITY.**

Do the community consider that mines are a major obstacle in their daily life ? Yes / No

Do the community find mines a greater hazard at specific times of the year

Rainy season Yes / No

Planting season Yes / No

Movement of livestock Yes / No

Please specify others \_\_\_\_\_

When a member of the community finds a mine, what action is taken ?

No action Yes / No

Tell family and neighbours Yes / No

Report to village chief Yes / No

Report to local militia Yes / No

Mark with stick Yes / No

Other action \_\_\_\_\_

**0 4 MINE CASUALTIES.**

How many people have been killed by mines in the area ?

In the last month \_\_\_\_\_

In the last year \_\_\_\_\_

In the last two years \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any people that have been injured by mines in hospital now ?

What hospital \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Son of \_\_\_\_\_

Date of injury \_\_\_\_\_

How many animals have been killed by mines in the last year ?

Oxen - Cattle \_\_\_\_\_

Camel \_\_\_\_\_

Donkeys \_\_\_\_\_

Goats \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

How many vehicles have been destroyed by mines in the past year ?

Trucks \_\_\_\_\_

Cars \_\_\_\_\_

Others \_\_\_\_\_

**05 LOCATION OF MINES.**

Which activities are most seriously affected by the presence of mines ?

Work in fields \_\_\_\_\_

Travel on roads \_\_\_\_\_

Travel by foot \_\_\_\_\_

Grazing of animals \_\_\_\_\_

House repair \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

How many farming families are in the area ? \_\_\_\_\_

How many farming families are affected by mines laid on :

Grazing land \_\_\_\_\_

Arable land \_\_\_\_\_

How many water wells are mined ? \_\_\_\_\_

Give their location \_\_\_\_\_

How many homes are mined ? \_\_\_\_\_

How many homes cannot be approached because of mines ?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are the mountains and hillsides in the area mined ?

(Or thought to be mined ).            Yes / No

**6 TYPES OF MINES.**

What are the most common types of anti personnel mines known to have been laid ?

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Who laid the mines ?

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---

Have any kind of booby-traps been used in the area ?      Yes / No

Describe any method of mine marking known to have been used by Government or SNM Forces.

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Have any attempts been made to de-mine the area / village ?      Yes / No

Who organised these attempts ? \_\_\_\_\_

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Will the local Militia Commander support a policy of immediate destruction of all mines and devices found ?

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**07 OTHER INFORMATION OF VALUE TO THE DE-MINING PROJECT.**

SKETCH MAPS

G.P.S. POSITIONS

TRIBAL AREA

TRANSPORT AVAILABILITY

WATER SUPPLIES

VICTUALS

ACCOMMODATION - HMCPC

ACCOMMODATION STAFF

AIRSTRIP

HOSPITAL

MEDICAL

One copy of questionnaire to be retained in Somalia, one to RIL London.

## APPENDIX 5: A TIMELINE OF MINE/UXO RELATED EVENTS AND ISSUES IN SOMALILAND

YEAR	EVENT	
1977- 1978	War between the Somali Democratic Republic and Ethiopia	Mines heavily laid in the border regions of mainly the Northern Somalia (now Somaliland)
1981 -1991	War between Somali National Movement (SNM) and Siyad Barre's regime	Mines heavily used by both parties
1992/3	Physicians for Human Rights release a report	Estimates 1,500-2,000 landmine amputees in Somaliland
1992	Handicap International (HI) moves from Hartisheikh refugee camp in Ethiopia to Hargeisa, Somaliland	A short-term, small scale, emergency program for the production of crutches begins
1991-1993	US State Department and UN fund a commercial demining programme	
1994-1995	Militia opposed to the government of newly formed Somaliland (President Ibrahim Egal) and the loyalists forces fight mainly in Hargeisa	Mines used widely especially in Hargeisa and areas east and south.
1997	Somaliland government constitute the National Demining Agency (NDA)  UNDP/Somalia Civil Protection Program (SCPP) also constitute	UNDP starts compiling data for Level 1 survey. This is done by SMAC, the Somaliland War Veterans Association (SOYAAL) and the

	the Somaliland Mine Action Centre	Somali Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SORRA)
<b>1998</b>	Somaliland Campaign Against Landmines is established	A coalition of organisations formed to work against the use of landmines. Consists of 3 local NGOs and 2 International NGOs
<b>1998</b>	Increased funding for clearance ; UNDP hires Mine Tech of Zimbabwe (\$202,000 Spent on training and assessment by Mine Tech)  Care International receives \$343,817 from US department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. Establishes CARE Somalia Mine Action Program (SOMAP)	Commercial Demining starts for 3 months.  Level 2 Survey and capacity building to NDA and SMAC initiated
<b>1999</b>	NDA starts attempts a systemised data collection on casualties	Data on landmine casualties for the period of 1988-1999 by region and district is made available.
<b>1999</b>	UNDP/SCPP expands the mine clearance program	Another commercial demining contract is awarded to Greenfield Associates.
<b>1<sup>st</sup> of March 1999</b>	House of Representatives pass a resolution in favour of total ban of landmines	
<b>1999</b>	Danish Foreign Ministry awards 4M	The start of

	Kroner (approximately \$600,000) to the Danish Demining Group;	Humanitarian Mine Action
<b>1999</b>	Danish Demining Group starts based in Adadley	Start of Level 1 & 2 Survey and Clearance
<b>1999</b>	Santa Barbara Foundation (SBF) Germany starts	Mine clearance and Mine Risk Education in the region of Gabiley (in the East) especially the minefields around the military bases. Later move to Burao
<b>1999</b>	HALO Trust Starts in September	HALO Starts Level 1 Survey of Awdal region. Starts deminer training
<b>1999</b>	SMAC negotiates for funding for comprehensive Level 1 & 2 for Togdheer and Awdal regions	
<b>1999</b>	UN Secretary General's October report calls for Improved coordination and support; including the implementation of a centralised control over data collection and management	Care International complete Level 1 & 2 surveys in Awdal and Galbeed regions;  Care International trains medical personnel and starts a mine awareness program
<b>1999-2000</b>	Donors increase funding to \$6.65M	Clearance starts in Burao allowing 70,000 residents to return.
	UNDP/SCPP and SMAC train 35 civilian trainers as educators in Burao	
<b>2000</b>	HALO Trust finishes the Level 1	



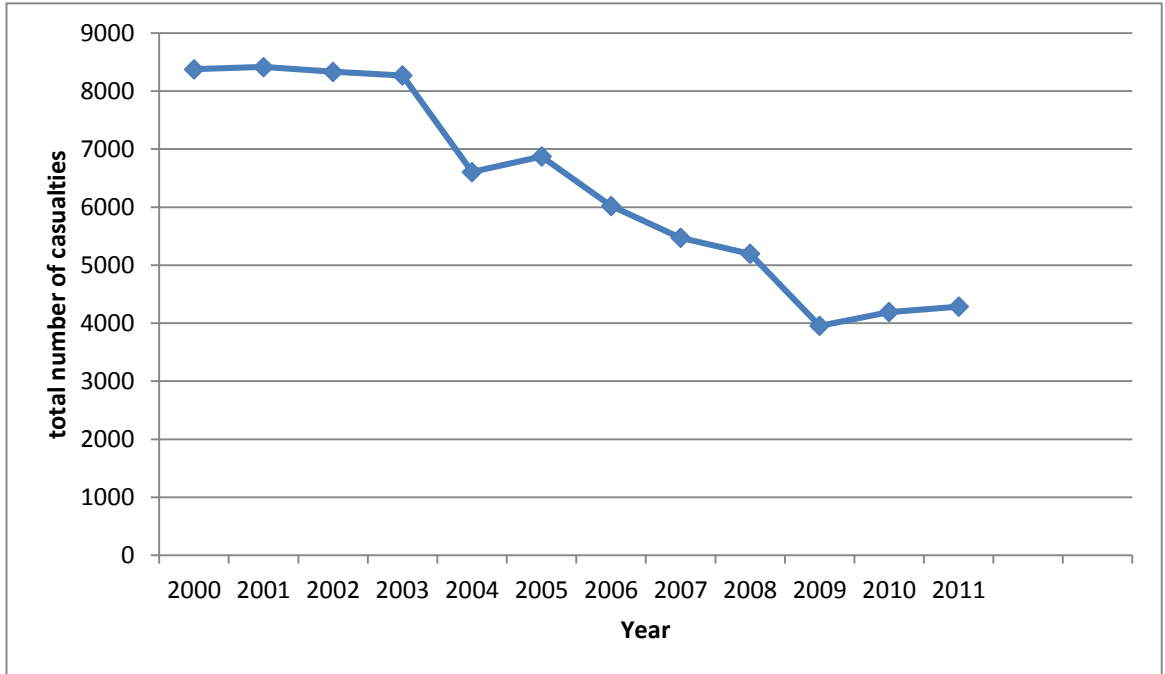
	<p>survey</p> <p>HALO Trust receives \$1.3M funding by the US State Department</p>	
<b>27 -28 Oct 2000</b>	UNDP/SCCP Mine ban advocacy workshop	Advocacy conferences
<b>16-18 Nov 2000</b>	Horn of Africa/Gulf of Aden States conference	
<b>2001</b>	Survey Action Centre arrives for an Advance Survey Mission	Plans for a Landmine Impact Survey
<b>2001</b>	UNDP Rule of Law (RoLs), formally UNDP/SCCP establishes Police EOD	Initially started with 2 teams, and later increased to 5 teams
<b>2002</b>	Handicap International and UNICEF undertake a Knowledge-Attitudes-Practice (KAP) survey Somaliland	KAP Survey covers 634 households 29% of population surveyed is unable to identify potential risk.
<b>March 2002</b>	DDG is contracted by the Survey Action Centre to carry out a comprehensive Landmine Impact Survey	357 Impact surveys are conducted in Awdal Galbeed, Todgheer, Sahil and parts of Sanaag. Eastern Sanag and Sool not surveyed for security reasons.
<b>14<sup>th</sup> November 2002</b>	Ministry of defence hands over 2,382 APL mines and 16 AVMs to DDG for destruction	In compliance to the obligations of the treaty on stockpile destruction
<b>2002</b>	Ministry of RR&R and UNDP disagree on the coordination of	SMAC's contract not renewed by UNDP

	Mine Action	resulting in it becoming a unit within the ministry. NDA reforms as a mine clearance unit; regional officers lose contracts
<b>March 2004</b>	Handicap International undertake MRE programs based on the 2002 KAP Survey and the Landmine Impact Survey	Coordination and training on Mine Risk Education for other Mine Action organisations start.
<b>August 2004</b>	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) provides an introductory MRE course in Hargeisa at the request of UNICEF	
<b>January 2005</b>	Handicap International starts a Mine Risk Education program	Program targets children and adult herders (aged 5 to 29 years in Awdal, Togdheer, Saaxil and Galbeed regions.
<b>2008</b>	Three Swiss EOD experts provide operational guidance to the 5 Police EOD	Reinforcement of the implementation of IMAS
<b>September 2008</b>	HALO Trust starts a Baseline Survey	Designed to re-assess the SHAs identified by the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) of 2003 and 2007 conducted within Somaliland's six regions. The BLS is largely a reassessment of the LIS, rather than a village-by-village survey

<b>October 2009</b>	HALO Trust's Baseline Survey (BLS) is completed.	Identifies 346 SHAs, of which 329 were mined areas and 17 were battle area clearance (BAC) tasks. The total estimated contaminated area was 18.9km <sup>2</sup>
<b>November 2009</b>	HALO Trust re-trains 22 deminers from the NDA.	
<b>2010</b>	2 NDA demining teams were deployed alongside HALO demining teams under HALO supervision	
<b>2010</b>	HALO Trust begins the implementation of its road resurvey project.	The project involves resurveying each of the 222 mined roads that HALO had previously surveyed.

**APPENDIX 6: NUMBER OF MINE/UXO CASUALTIES PER YEAR (2000-2011)**

**Figure 12: Total number of Mine/UXO Casualties per year (2000-2011)**



**Source: Own compilation from data take from Landmine Monitor 2000-2011**

## **APPENDIX 7: AN EXCERPT FROM A DONOR REPORT**

Name of Project: The HALO Trust/Ireland Aid 1/4/03-31/12/03  
Project Phase: Final Report  
Duration: 6 months  
Contractor: The HALO Trust  
Date of Report: February 2004  
Reporting Period: From: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2003 To: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003

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### **1. Context of Activity**

The HALO Trust, supported by the United States Department of State (USDOS) commenced its humanitarian mineclearance programme in the Republic of Somaliland in July 1999. Initially, the programme consisted of 3 manual mineclearance teams, 1 battle area clearance (BAC) / manual mineclearance team and 1 explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) / Survey team supported by a headquarters staff.

Two years later, in July 2001 The HALO Trust received further funding from the Royal Netherlands Government (RNG) which allowed a fifth manual mineclearance team to be established in Somaliland (1<sup>st</sup> July 2001 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2001). This was extended (1<sup>st</sup> January 2002 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002) and furthermore RNG agreed to fund the first of Somaliland's mechanical mineclearance teams, consisting of 15 personnel, 1 Terex Medium Wheeled Tractor, a set of anti-tank mine rollers (AT Rollers), a Low-Loader and 8 ex-Kosovo 109 Land Rovers.

In June 2003, USDOS ceased to fund HALO in Somaliland. At this point, from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2003, Ireland Aid began funding 3 manual demining/ BAC teams, a mobile EOD and Survey capacity together with operations and support staff totalling 235 personnel. Over two thirds of the programme's capacity were threatened with being unfunded before this, the first Ireland Aid contract for Somaliland, materialised.

### **2. Background to mine contamination in Somaliland:**

The origins of the mine problem in Somaliland are varied: the first were laid in the aftermath of the 1977 - 78 Ogaden conflict between the then united Somalia and Ethiopia. The Ogaden is a region of Ethiopia, traditionally coveted by Somalis as grazing land for their livestock. After an initially successful pre-emptive strike, the Somali National Army (SNA) was beaten back by a superior Ethiopian force, backed and trained in part by Soviet weaponry and military advisors. Consequently, the SNA were forced to lay anti tank minefields along a vast stretch of border frontage as a means of denying access for Ethiopian armoured forces, on the counter-attack.

These minefields were laid on one level strategically- covering natural crossing points between valleys- and on another as defences for the proliferation of SNA garrison military bases, which sprang up along the border.

Additionally during this period, mines were laid to protect camps for the benefit of Ethiopians living inside Somaliland, and also along strategic roads and tracks, likely