

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN  
GOVERNANCE, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOMALIA  
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**ABSTRACT**

With over two decades of conflicts, Somalia has witnessed a systematic deterioration of its security, governance, and economic development structures with the resultant effect being mass displacement of populations and irregular migrations. In response, several international and regional organizations have put their efforts into rebuilding Somalia's security, governance, and development structures with the majority of these organizations still present in Somalia. The purpose of this thesis is to document and critically analyze the contribution of international organizations in governance, security, and economic development in Somalia taking the time frame between the years 2012 and 2023. This extensive study explores the various ways that foreign organizations supported Somali's governance, security, and economic growth between 2012-2023. This analysis provides a comprehensive summary of the accomplishments and continuous difficulties encountered by these units. It is, therefore, a resource for policymakers and the organizations working in Somalia to evaluate a decade of their involvement in Somalia.

**Keywords:**

Sustainable Development, Piracy, Terrorism, Security

**INTRODUCTION**

Somalia's instability can be traced back to October 15, 1969, when president Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke was assassinated while visiting the northern part of the country. The military coup led by General Siad Barre in 1969, the head of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), led the military government at that time. The Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), United Somali Congress (USC), Somali National Movement (SNM), and Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) were among the militia groups that led the rebellion against Barre's administration, along with the nonviolent political oppositions of the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM), Somali Democratic Alliance (SDA), and Somali Manifesto Group (SMG) (Ken, 2004). General Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi Mohamed, the commanders of the United Somali Congress (USC), led military forces in the south that fought for control of the capital. Armed conflicts became endemic, levels of crime and unemployment were high, and levels of human development were low (Menkhaus, 2004). Insecurity in Somalia has also led to the radicalization of the youth. Radicalization is the process through which the youth, and even adults, are exposed to imaginary extreme beliefs that are violent. Radicalization is meant to make the youth more violent and recruited into militia groups (Mwilu, 2015). The trafficking and widespread availability of these weapons exacerbate instability and conflict, posing a threat not only to security, but also to sustainable development. The widespread availability of small arms contributes to alarming rates of armed crime in both rural and urban areas. The proliferation of firearms has exacerbated various forms of conflict, harmed peace, and contributed to an increase in criminal activity. According to Collier (2003), the prevalence of firearms in this region exacerbates civilian suffering.

The refugee problem is also a concern in Somalia. Many Somalis have been displaced and are dispersed among neighboring refugee camps. According to the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) (2020, p. 4), Somalis continue to be displaced as a result of conflicts and natural disasters like drought, which cause widespread famine. It is estimated that approximately 2.6 million are internally displaced within the country. The capital, Mogadishu, is home to approximately half a million IDPs. IDP camps are frequently located on privately owned land, and the living conditions there are unsanitary and overcrowded. Also, Somalia women

and children are particularly exploitation and abuse on the sexual front. Al-Shabaab terrorists have been recruiting young women and girls for forced marriage to combatants and using sexual assault against them as a resource of maintaining control over areas in recent years. As the recorded of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) as of 2021, For the main offenders of conflict related sexual abuse against 400 girls, 12 women, and 7 boys were clan militias and Al-Shabaab.

According to the Economic Commission for Africa (2007), drought and desertification are core threats to sustainable development in the region. Since the year 2011, Somalia has witnessed a deteriorating economic situation that has been brought about by the constant failure of annual rains. In this scenario, crop production has been affected and the majority of Somalians need humanitarian aid. This situation has further exacerbated the already volatile political situation in the country (Clark, 1992; Oxfam, 2011). The situation had already become a threat to the international community as Somalia became a haven of lawlessness with many international terrorists and their organizations finding it a place to carry out their attacks. As a result, the international intervention started with the UN Security Council Resolution 733 and UN Security Council Resolution 746 which created UNOSOM I. UN Security Council Resolution 794 was unanimously passed on December 3, 1992, which approved a coalition of UN peacekeepers led by the United States. Coming together to form the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), the alliance was tasked with assuring security. Then, in 1993, the UN peacekeeping coalition started the two-year United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) (Ahmed 1995).

Somalia lost a centralized governance system when the state collapsed in 1991. This lack of effective governance structure precipitated lawlessness, civil wars, and piracy along the coastlines. As a response, various international organizations, regional organizations, and governments instituted various attempts through peace and reconciliation conferences to reconcile the warring parties leading to the formation of a transitional government (Samatar, 2016).

In 2004, The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established later in the year. The Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took over Southern Somalia in 2006, but the TFG overthrew them with the help of Ethiopian forces. After that, the ICU split into extremist organizations, most notably al-shabaab, which is still fighting the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali government today. Security aid to the government and other foreign agencies is still provided by AMISOM, and it is becoming increasingly important. According to awale (2014), the experience of foreign intervention in Somalia has resulted in peace and growth, in contrast to previous government efforts within the country.

Regionally, Kenya and Ethiopia have for some occasions had contentious relations. Ethiopia invaded Somalia in 2006. For Kenya, the relationship has not always been smooth. Kenya and Somalia were involved in a cross-border dispute known as the *Shifita Wars* between 1963 and 1967. In this dispute, ethnic Somalis in Kenya's North Eastern Province attempted to secede but the attempt was thwarted by the Kenyan government. However, Kenya has always (after the Shifita wars) tried to mend its relationship with Somalia. For example, Kenya played a significant role in the Somali peace process. Kenya hosted the Somali peace talks (2002–2004) and provided a base from which the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) operated until it moved to Mogadishu in 2005. But, still in the wake of Al-Shabaab threat in Somalia, Kenya argued that the al-Shabaab's frequent kidnappings and killings of tourists in its coastal and north-eastern provinces had become a threat to trade and tourism, both of which are vital sectors of Kenya's economy (Miyandazi, 2012). The Kenyan government deployed troops in pursuit of the terrorists amid claims that its troop deployment had received approval from the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) (Leftie, 2011).

In this scenario, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides services and support for Migrants and Mobile Populations (MMPs) with a special focus on women, youth, and host communities. Moreover, IOM recognizes that migration, when well-managed, can be both a development strategy and a development outcome. Therefore, IOM works to respond both to the immediate needs of migrants and displaced persons as well as linking migration to sustainable development (<https://somalia.iom.int/>). Apart from IOM, other international organizations are currently working in Somalia. Among the organizations are: the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), European Union (EU), Regional Centre on Small Arms, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations (UN) ENTITIES such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNOPS), United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) – Swedish agency for peace, security and development, CARE International, World Vision and SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency), among others. Therefore, the purpose of

this thesis is to record and examine how these International organizations have aided Somali's Governance, Security, Development in Somalia.

### Methods and Techniques

The data for this research was collected mainly through secondary sources. Secondary data collection involves retrieving already available data from sources other than the target audience, as is the case with primary data the secondary data that this thesis used was categorized into two broad categories: published and unpublished data. In this study, therefore, the researcher used multiple sources of data reports from the international organizations working in Somalia, as well as empirical literature published by other scholars.

### Purpose of the Study

This study documents and evaluates the contribution of international organizations in security, governance, and economic development in Somalia. The uniqueness of this study rests in its ability to not just to document the contribution of international organizations in Somalia, but analyse how these international organizations are engaging the Somalians from the grassroots. The thesis argues that grassroots engagement of Somalians would lead to the Somalians owning the security, governance and economic development processes in the country. It, therefore, contributes to the body of literature that may be used by policymakers and the organizations working in Somalia to evaluate a decade of their involvement in Somalia.

### Analysis of Somali's Economic, Governance and Security (2012-2023)

Somalia's political, security and economic environments have changed significantly since 2012. Both internal dynamics and external intrusions have influenced the enlargement and setbacks that have happened over this time.

#### I. Difference between 2012-2023 Economic analysis

Somalia's economy concentrated on recovering at this period after decades of conflict. furthermore, important industries like agriculture, especially cattle were essential and greatly boosted the GDP. The economy was still undeveloped with inadequate banking services and inadequate infrastructure. The economic recovery efforts were further challenged by recurring droughts and humanitarian problems. Somalia continues to face drought and acute food shortages in several parts of the country. This food shortage is worsened by insecurity (IMF, 2023). One of the key development strategies spearheaded by IMF and World Bank in Somalia since the year 2013 was the adoption of the 'Interim Strategy Note Period, 2014–19'.

In recent years from 2018-2023, the economy has grown moderately averaging 2.8% yearly. There has been modest success in diversifying the economy and telecommunications sectors. Another key priority area sought to expand economic opportunity by supporting job creation through private sector investment through public-private partnerships, public-private dialogue, and targeted financial support; and Financing basic rehabilitation of infrastructure for employment generation and productivity (World Bank Group, 2023).

Just as in the governance sector, can conclude that the international intervention on the economy of Somalia is a mix of two approaches. One approach is the donor-funded projects and monetary assistance coming from the World Bank and the IMF. The second approach is the bottom-up approach which is anchored on capacity building with USAID and ILO, among others, focusing on the training of young people and women to develop necessary skills necessary for economic growth.

#### II. GOVERNANCE

Somalia's governance has traditionally been based on a clan-based framework known as the *Xeer* system. The clans used this system to settle disputes and keep things running smoothly. The *Xeer* system was founded on intergenerational customs and laws. *Xeer* regulates relations between lineages on the basis of an unwritten, but well understood agreement. However, the *Xeer* system of governance was challenged, weakened and at best eliminated by the advent of colonial rule in Somalia. Colonialism saw the scramble and partitioning of Somalia between Italy, France and Britain. The colonialists used local chiefs, who had little understanding of the colonial system of governance, to enter into treaties. Treaties that were never understood by the chiefs. The colonialists blackmailed the chiefs into agreeing to a new centralized system of governance based in Mogadishu. However, agitation and clamor for independence began to take root in Somalia led by some religious leaders and prominent political figures at the time. This clamour reached its peak of resistance and in 1960, Italian Somaliland and British

Somaliland attained independence and subsequently merged to form the new independent Somali Republic (Khayre, n.d, pp. 10 -13).

The Somalia Republic adopted the parliamentary democracy as a system of governance. However, governance in Somalia took a downward trend with the assassination of President Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke and a military coup d'état on 21 October 1969 which essentially ended multiparty democracy in Somalia. Thereafter, Somalia state collapse in 1991 and Somalia became one of the nations without a functional government. After a series of negotiations and peace conferences sponsored by the UN and IGAD (Mbagathi peace conference), Somalia finally adopted federalism as a system of governance in 2004 with the first transitional government being formed in 2012 with a Provisional Federal Constitution. There are five Federal Member States (Puntland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South West State, and Jubaland), and Somaliland and Banadir Regional Administration, which together form the current Federal Government of Somalia.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) defined governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. Since 2012-2017 after transitional governments were replaced by the federal Government of Somalia in 2012, there were substantial changes to country's governance. Federalism was first established by the provisional constitution, nevertheless political infighting, poor institutions, and corruption obstructed development. From 2018-2023, the pursuit of fortifying governance frameworks has persisted accompanied by notable advancements in the provision of community aids and modifications to monetary administration. Nevertheless, there is political instability, as seen by the adjournment of elections and the conflicts between the federal government, the states in the province. State-building initiatives have been strengthened in spite of these problems by greater international support (UNDP2020).

### III. SECURITY

In terms of security, this article found out that Somalia's instability and its subsequent insecurity can be traced back to the 1969 assassination of President Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke. This assassination was then followed by a military coup d'état on 21 October 1969 which essentially ended multiparty democracy in Somalia. The military government was then headed by Major General Mohamed Siyad Barre (Payton, 1980). Thereafter, insecurity in Somalia continued to escalate reaching its climax in the total state collapse in 1991. The lawlessness that followed saw the emergence of terrorist groups including the Al-Shabaab and other militia groups that continued to terrorize communities and civilians. One of the consequences of Somali conflict is mass displacement of populations. Another dire consequence of the prolonged insecurity in Somalia has been the emergence and proliferation of terrorist groups. Terrorism within Somalia has precipitated to the international borders with significant terrorist attacks, orchestrated in Somalia, being witnessed in the East African region and beyond. Scholars argue that it is the extensive Somali conflict that has attracted international terrorists and made Somalia a hub for international terrorists. The Al-Shabaab terrorists carry out attacks indiscriminately through car bombs, grenades, shelling/artillery, abduction, remote explosives, and landmines, making Somalia a security threat in the East African region. "In addition to Al-Qaeda linked Al-Shabaab, there are renegade terrorists that separated from Al-Shabaab and declared that they are allied with ISIS international terrorists. The terrorists see Somalia as a suitable place for hosting terrorism because of the absence of persuasive central authority besides the availability of weapons and much-unemployed youth that can be recruited as fighters" (Zakarie & Abdifatah, 2021 p. 53).

Somalia was placed on top of the International Rescue Committee Emergency Watchlist of countries facing the greatest risk of a major deterioration of their humanitarian situations in 2023. The country has experienced five consecutive below-average rainy seasons that has made food production difficult. However, decades of war have depleted Somali's ability to respond to new shocks of hunger. Because a large proportion of the Somali population engages in farming and/or livestock raising to feed their families, attacks on rural populations, by Al Shabaab and other militia groups, have had a major impact on the levels of food production. Displacement in particular affects food production. A report by Insecurity Insight (2023 p.2) further notes that drought has made an estimated 7.8 million Somalis dependent on humanitarian aid.

Although it has made progress, the Somali National Army still mostly depends on outside assistance. concerns have been raised over the sustainability of security improvements during the shift from AMISOM to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). Moreover, it has been noted that between June and early August 2023, there has been increased attacks involving al-Shabaab militants in the border areas of northeastern Kenya and coastal Lamu county, and a parallel surge in al-Shabaab activity recorded in neighboring Jubaland state in Somalia in July. In Kenya's Mandera County, al-Shabaab militants exploit clan differences to gain the

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favor of clan-based militias and historically marginalized groups, to recruit locals. Positive relations with clans could mean access to good hideouts in the area, such as locations along the Dawa river, which flows through Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia (ACLEED, 2023).

Militants have also been using new tactics, such as small units and false flags to launch attacks, as well as surveillance drones. In Lamu county, Kenya, security officers have been caught off guard by the militants. On 5 July, 2023 Kenyan security forces shot down an al-Shabaab drone that was gathering information at the site of the planned attack. Nearly a month later, on 1 August, 2023 suspected al-Shabaab militants attacked several civilian vehicles using rocket-propelled grenades and assault rifles on the Lamu-Witu-Garsen road in Lamu West, Kenya (ACLEED, 2023).

The main reason behind the international failure to eradicate the problem of piracy is that piracy constitutes only one aspect of the wider Somali crisis and is strictly connected to the lack of alternative remunerative activities. The only viable solution to the phenomenon of piracy involves addressing its root causes: human security and development (Rossella, 2012 p. 10).

The emergence of Al-Shabaab in Southern Somalia has also widely attracted international intervention. Al-Shabaab which later claimed links to the Al-Qaeda terrorist movement has continuously been carrying out widespread violence through bombings, shootings and grenades. They make the life of the Somali civilians unbearable. In response, in October 2011, a coordinated operation between the Somali military and the Kenyan military began against the Al-Shabaab in southern Somalia. Later, the Kenyan government agreed to enlist its army under the AMISOM general command (Awale, 2014 p.17).

In December 2013, the U.S. government established a military coordination cell in Mogadishu at the request of AMISOM and the Somali government. It is intended to provide consultative and planning support to the allied forces in order to enhance their capacity and to promote peace and security throughout the country. However, in all these attempts to eliminate the terrorist attacks of Al-Shabaab, no substantive results have been realized. Al-Shabaab continues to launch attacks and hostage taking in Somalia (Awale, 2014 p.17). Due to insecurity, poverty and general lack of livelihood opportunities for a vast majority of the Somali youth, Somalia is also facing human trafficking problems. One of the international organizations working to counter human trafficking in Somalia is International Organization for Migration (IOM). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been operational in Somalia since 2006. IOM closely works with the Federal Government of Somalia, regional authorities, the UN, donor governments and civil society. In order to respond to human trafficking issues, IOM's Counter Trafficking (CT) Project, has been focusing on combating human trafficking in Puntland since 2012, guided by the 4P approach, the; Prevention of human trafficking, Prosecution of offenders, Protection of Victims of Trafficking (VoT) and Participation of the stakeholders, for effective co-ordination of actions against human trafficking (IOM, 2014).

### CONCLUSION

Somalia has achieved progress in security operations, governance change, and economic recovery between 2012-2023. However, in order to achieve long-term stability and prosperity, these places face persistent problems that call for ongoing foreign help as well as internal reforms. Conflicts that have lasted for more than 20 years have caused Somalia's governance, security and economic growth structures to steadily deteriorate. Unpredictable migration patterns and huge population relocation are the results of this. In response, a large number of regional and international organizations, many of which are still in operation in Somalia, have focused their efforts on restoring the nation's security, governance and development frameworks. Somalia has made tremendous progress in enhancing security operations, putting new governance into place, and promoting economic recovery between 2012 and 2023. The contributions made by international organizations to various fields throughout. The maintenance and improvement of the progress made thus far depend heavily on ongoing foreign support in addition to internal reforms. This thorough analysis provides insights into 11 years of foreign involvement, making it an invaluable tool for organizations and policymakers operating in Somalia. In addition to emphasizing the importance of ongoing and coordinated efforts to solve persistent issues, it also underlines the crucial role that international organizations play in assisting Somalia's government, security and economic development. The results highlight the necessity of working together to guarantee long-term peace and progress in Somalia.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this article, this part presents some of the recommendations that have been drawn from this study. The recommendations discussed below include: integrating indigenous peace and reconciliation

mechanisms into the current security and judicial system, incorporating communities in security through the formation of family units; embedding social entrepreneurship skills into the school curriculum and public civic education about governance and political participation. This section also presents recommendations for further study.

**A. Integrating indigenous peace and reconciliation mechanisms into the current governance and judicial system**

This study found out that the indigenous form of governance that was germane to the Somalians is the *Xeer* system. The *Xeer* system regulated relationships and was deeply embedded and rooted in the religious worldview of the Somalians. This thesis, therefore, recommends that a committee can be instituted to check how *Xeer* system can be integrated into the current governance structure of Somalia.

**B. Incorporating communities in security through the formation of family units**

This study found out that UNDP has worked in Somalia to strengthen local governance structures through the formation of local districts. However, this thesis argues that this is not enough to deter insecurity in the communities. Insecurity in the villages requires that families are mobilized and grouped into smaller units of 10 or less families. These families then chose their leader and are trained on surveillance so that they are able to know suspicious people who come to the neighborhood. This approach could help deter insecurity in Somalia.

**C. Embedding social entrepreneurship course into the school curriculum**

This article recommends to the Ministry of Education, that a Social Entrepreneurship Course be introduced into the school curriculum. This course will equip learners with the problem-solving abilities. The learners will be able to identify social problems and device ways through which they can solve such problems by themselves. This will eliminate dependency on donors and it will also solve the problem of unemployment in Somalia.

**D. Public civic education about governance and political participation**

This study found out that international organizations such as the ILO and the FCA mobilize and train women on governance skills as well as political participation. However, among the available literature, the role of the government of Somalia (Federal States Governments and the National Government) in civic education about governance and political participation is missing. This thesis therefore recommends that the governments of Somalia venture into public civic education through social media and other public avenues to educate Somalians about the importance of political participation and their role in governance.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

Based on the findings, this study recommends that a further independent study could be carried out to explore the nexus between the indigenous Somali *Xeer* system of governance and the contemporary systems of governance. It is hoped that if this nexus between the two systems of governance is fully understood and explored, then Somalia stands a chance to develop a hybrid of the two systems that pragmatically works for all Somalians.

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