



SSR NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF SOMALILAND CSOs

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African Security Sector Network (ASSN)

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Executive Summary

This study report provides an analysis and evaluation of the recent needs assessment of Somaliland Civil Society Organizations /CSOs/ on their engagement with SSR. The study also discusses Somaliland security actors and the ongoing SSR processes. In doing this, it will analyze the specific capacities and gaps of leading CSOs in SSR programming and policy development endeavors. On this note the study report indicates the areas of external support required, as well as the shortcomings to be addressed. Prominent among the study findings is the need for security literacy in Somaliland, the vital role CSOs can play which in turn requires training on SSR to few interested CSOs.

SSR is not yet widely acknowledged as an indispensable element of state-building processes and democratic consolidation in Somaliland, and most of the seemingly-SSR elements so far are not accredited as such. Though most of the activities such as demobilization of former combatants and the attempts at justice reform can be identified as ‘SSR’ or ‘SSR-related’, they were and are still being conducted without the authorities being acquainted with the term, and very few in Somaliland are aware of the full meaning or dimensions of the concept. The same applies to the role of CSOs. Meanwhile, donors have not been focusing on the subject. This is odd as the country provides an ideal context to test and implement SSR and Somaliland CSOs work at the grass-roots level of communities, a niche role often not effectively utilized by the government or international programs. The reality is that there are few clear SSR success stories to point to. In Somaliland the groundwork for civil society is ready but has never been prepared for SSR. In all the processes led by the government, civil society is often neglected. Hence, whatever happened in terms of SSR in Somaliland can be characterized as a pragmatic and grass-roots reforms that arose more or less organically, and in the absence of a relatively developed security sector, and its record of failure and achievement seemingly contradicts the growing influence of the model elsewhere.

Key findings of the study are:

- Very little knowledge exists about SSR in Somaliland;
- The role and contribution of civil society and the media are poorly understood by those in the defense and military sector;
- CSOs see the process related to security sector development and reform as a closed process that has lacked broad-based participation, especially from civil society;
- Gender is not prioritized in the SSR processes in Somaliland. There are few women in the Police and Custodial Corps, but women are not recruited in the Military Services;
- There is a huge knowledge gap and very little capacity of CSOs for engagement in the SSR processes; however, there is interest and a willingness to learn and engage;

- Little or no collaboration exists between the security sector and the CSOs, the Military in particular;
- The government of Somaliland has committed rhetorically to promoting the rule of law and human rights, and to delivering an effectively functioning justice system for its citizens, though lacking both the political will and capacity;
- There is a need to support members of the Justice Reform Committee to fully undertake their responsibilities of establishing and protecting the independence of the judiciary; providing training to members of a High Judicial Council Secretariat to effectively serve as judicial system professional administrative staff is critical.
- In line with its relative focus to reforming the justice sector, the government has established a strong body known as Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Commission to combat all kinds of corruption in the government institutions in general and the justice sector in particular.

List of Acronyms

| | |
|--------|---|
| APD | Academy for Peace and Development |
| ASSN | African Security Sector Network |
| CID | Criminal Investigation Department |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DDR | Disarmament Demobilization and Re-integration |
| HRC | Human Rights Centre |
| LRC | Law Reform Committee |
| MONPD | Ministry of National Planning and Development |
| NDC | National Demobilization Commission |
| NSP | National Security Policy |
| SL | Somaliland |
| SNM | Somali National Movement |
| SONSAF | Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum |
| SORRA | Somali Relief and Rehabilitation Association |
| SPU | Special Protection Unit |
| SJSR | Security and Justice Sector Reform |
| SSR | Security Sector Reform |
| SWLA | Somaliland Women Lawyers Association |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |



Introduction

This research is part of the project; **“Enhancing Civil Society Engagement in Security and Justice Sector Reforms at Continental and Regional Levels”** which is implemented by ASSN. The project is premised on the assumption that an empowered civil society will hold security institutions accountable and ensure a more people-centered security. The project, consequently, accentuates the need to further assess the main gaps in terms of operationalizing the AU SSR framework as well as the role of the RECs and to better identify and make more effective, the role civil society organizations can play in addressing some of the security challenges, at national, regional and continental levels. The aim of this research is to identify Somaliland Civil Society Organizations/CSOs/ whose work relates to SSR and further assess the ongoing activities of CSOs on SSR, and identify gaps and needs. As such it includes a nuanced if not detailed understanding of the security institutions including the local context. A sector-wide analysis with specific area/institution based studies will be attempted to offer a holistic picture of the security sector.

Currently we do not know enough about exact posture and capacities of Somaliland CSOs, and how external support can optimize engagement and delivery on SSR. It is the aim of this assessment to fill this yawning gap. The project is both derived from, and intended to respond to an identified fundamental gap in the prevailing discourse and practice of security sector reform (SSR) in Somaliland. The report intends to understand the present posture and capacity of Somaliland CSOs to work on security issues and by extension identifies a space for them to engage in the discourse on SSR. It seeks to highlight the findings and feedback from the assessment, which is extremely vital for the development of future ASSN-Oxfam project activities that respond to the needs of CSOs and the highly challenging structural, policy and operational security needs on the ground.

Five organizations fully participated in this research, including: NAGAAD Network, Academy for Peace and Development (APD), Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF), Human Rights Center (HRC) and Somaliland Women Lawyers Association (SWLA). Somaliland Lawyers Association (SLA) is not active due to internal conflict between the founders. These organizations have been selected based on their interest and role in the ongoing Security and Justices Sector Reform related activities in Somaliland. Since SSR has not been a major agenda in Somaliland and given the myriad of SSR needs the assessment has decidedly focused on the few ongoing attempts by key CSOs. As such the exclusivity is derived from the uniqueness of Somaliland’s SSR experiences. Besides, civil society actors are quite open to talking about security issues in general and SSR in particular to a fellow CSO representative, though some of them insisted their names not be used. Meanwhile, attempts to extend the assessment to

other players would not have been easy given that this would have involved extensive movements and appointments which were unplanned and therefore not budgeted for. Other constraints include poor understanding of security issues among the public and the general view that security is the sole domain of government officials and the few seurocrats at the top, perceptions and beliefs which inhibited respondents from discussing security issues.

The study employs mainly qualitative approach, combined with a desk review of all available documents such as project proposals, needs assessment and monitoring and evaluation reports of CSOs. Eight civil society organizations were interviewed so as to deeply understand their capacity needs on SSR. The report is reinforced by key discussions between the research supervisor and Somaliland political and civil society leaders. Needless to say, the analysis is informed by the Mapping Study and Political Economy Analysis of Somaliland. This report is structured into two broad categories and covers the SSR and CSO context, including an executive summary with key findings and a conclusion. Section one focuses on the main security actors and ongoing processes; section two discusses the views of Somaliland CSOs, opportunities and challenges as well presents a summary of the potential entry points; the concluding section examines the implications of these results and findings for the Oxfam-ASSN project in the short to medium term.



PART ONE: Security Institutions and SSR in Somaliland

Introduction

Somaliland emerged from the ashes of civil war and managed to establish sustainable peace and security through traditional conflict resolution mechanisms deeply rooted in their culture and tradition which remained interactive. This approach has not only produced sustainable peace, security and stability, but also generated relatively robust and resilient governmental institutions such as the legislature, executive and security institutions, civil society and a private sector with viable and flourishing economy. Security has always been a priority and successive governments of Somaliland have allocated around 50 percent¹ of the national budget to security institutions aimed at empowering them to maintain law and order. This is partly a reflection of weak institutions due to lack of external support (lack of recognition) and bad neighborhood particularly irredentist and Islamist insurgency from Southern Somalia than internal security imperatives. The self-declared independent Republic, which situates in one of the most volatile regions in the world, has made significant progress during the past two decades by establishing the necessary institutions of governance and building their capacity.² This doesn't mean that the trajectories of Somaliland security is not without challenges.

There is a general lack of knowledge on the new definitions of security and the nature and composition (breakdown and linkages) of the security institutions. A truncated and/or fragmented view of the security sector is still prevalent. The security sector is not understood, by either the public or the political elite, as encompassing all bodies directly or indirectly involved in the use of force, such as civil management and oversight bodies, including line security ministries, legislative committees and national security advisory bodies. Old definitions are still so dominant that judicial and public security structures such as the judiciary, corrections systems, and human rights commissions; non-statutory security bodies comprising private security companies and militia groupings; and civil society actors, most notably NGOs and the media are not considered as part and parcel of the security complex.

Somaliland security institutions face several challenges, prominent among these the fact that they are directly managed by the ruling party which is the government of the day. What is needed is thus democratic control and governance. The crucial role of civil society in the security functions of the state is largely ignored. Training and budgetary constraints are also a major concern. This is very much linked to the way demobilization and reintegration of former combatants happened in Somaliland in the early 1990s. The Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration/DDR/ process was conducted by the clans without any external financial and

¹ Nasir Mohamed Ali (UoH) *Somaliland Security at the Crossroads: Pitfalls and Potentials*

² *Ibid*

expertise support. Though Somaliland is said to have conducted a locally owned and successful demobilization process, it can be argued that for the most part former combatants were effortlessly ‘transitioned’ from rag tag militia to formal security actors. The imperatives of reconciliation and parity among clans led to the integration of the bulk of former fighters into the new security structures, particularly the military and the police.³ The dearth of resources makes them look like informal security actors, at least until very recently, lacking essential items such as uniforms. And yet Somaliland had a commission for demobilization, probably one of the earliest national security related bodies.

The National Demobilization Commission

The Somaliland National Demobilization Commission (NDC) was established in 1993 at the Borama inter-clan reconciliation conference in which the Somaliland government was formed after it declared independence from Somalia. Led by a Chairman and composed of four departments the Commission had a Director General and a total of 28 staff working at the head office in Hargeisa and in six branch offices in the regions. In 1996, the NDC conducted an overall survey of the military of Somaliland in order to carry out a head count and establish a baseline data to perform the required disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities. During the first round of operations, it successfully disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated around 811 ex-combatants from the Somaliland military with financial and technical support from the GTZ (now GIZ).

During its second and third round of operations, the NDC provided vocational training, and established small scale enterprises (including farms) for around 994 ex-combatants and their families, including the disabled, orphans and widows, this time with technical and financial support from the UNDP. Currently, the NDC is inactive, and has no budget and staff, even though demand for the demobilization and re-integration of ex-combatants has continued in most regions of the country. Hence, it can be debated whether Somaliland had a properly planned and executed DDR process. As indicated earlier, the legacy of this omission on the nature and composition of security institutions is glaringly evident, a major precondition for reform and transformation. The on-going activities in Somaliland emphasize that the early focus of engagement should be on developing police and judicial reform and capacity development. The recent high profile agenda on eliminating corruption during the last election and its aftermath also point to the same focus area. Another is revisiting the DDR process of the early 1990s including its impact on the composition and conduct of security institutions; hence the need to re-assess program plans.

³ *Discussions with former SNM members, Hargeisa January 2019.*

Key Security Institutions

The Somaliland Security Forces are comprised of the Somaliland Army, the Somaliland Police Force, Custodial Corps, Coastal Guards, and the National Intelligence Agency/NIA/. These security institutions form the core national security complex in Somaliland. The military intelligence unit is located within the Armed Forces headquarters, and is led by the Chief Military Intelligence Officer, supported by a small staff. The Somaliland Coast Guard also has an intelligence unit, contributing to the organizations' responsibility to maintain a range of lookout stations along the coastline. The National Intelligence Agency is an independent agency. Also, the Ministry of Defense is responsible for the national defense, were as the Ministry of Interior is responsible for national security.

The Military: The Somaliland military is the most powerful security institution in terms of budget and closeness to the president, and can influence reform in other areas. Their significance means that an effective, efficient, accountable and affordable defense sector is an essential objective for SSR, as well as for sustainable peace and development. Somaliland military forces have several drawbacks including, but not limited to, the absence of policies and legal frameworks for governing the military, lack of strong institutional frameworks, and poor and unskilled personnel. The role of the parliament in supervising military budgets and related activities is missing. CSOs have neither the capacity and/or space to extend their oversight role to the military forces

The Police: The Somaliland Police falls under the Minister of Interior. It also works closely with the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the military, who are involved in internal security during inter-clan conflicts. The force was founded in 1993 out of the Somali National Movement (SNM) which liberated the country from the authoritarian Syaad Barre regime of Somalia. Each of the six Somaliland regions has a police commandant and commissioned officers. The transition from an armed militia to police force was not accompanied by proper reeducation and training programs. Hardly any training programmes have been offered except the few attempts by British since the mid-2000s and most of them were narrowly focused on VIP protection and anti-terrorist activities. It is suspected that most of the support is geared more on professionalization, increasing operational effectiveness or rationalizing bureaucratic structures and less on broader governance, transparency, eliminating corruption, and institutionalizing international standards.

The police are tasked with carrying out criminal investigation, patrolling, and traffic management. There are also a small number of anti-riot personnel. In addition, since 2004 a British-trained Special Protection Unit (SPU)⁴ is tasked with the protection of leaders and foreign dignitaries. Some efforts by the United Nations Development Programme/UNDP/ focus

⁴ UK government trains Somaliland Police, specifically to SPU.

on the judiciary and penal systems. In 2005, the armed forces and the police received 15 percent of the Somaliland budget. Most of this money went to salaries and allowances.⁵ The police forces are paid only sporadically, and are highly vulnerable to bribery. Somaliland security institutions suffer from a double deficit: tradition and lack of training. This is particularly true of the police and intelligence sectors. Older policemen (and legislation) both leftovers of the Barre dictatorship, where human rights violations occurred on a large scale have dominated the conduct of the police. Compounding this is the lack of sensitization mainly on human rights and women's issues.

However, the US State Department's 2010 Human Rights Reports on Somalia observed that the Somaliland Police were firmly under civilian control, had not committed any unlawful killings (of demonstrators), were not conducting arbitrary or politically motivated arrests or committing torture and/or rape. The report noted that the prisons were also improving, partly due to UN supervision. Half of the 765 prisoners in the Mandheera Prison in Mandheera district of Somaliland had been detained on the orders of regional or district security committees.⁶

Challenges to the Somaliland Police Force:

- Somaliland police are poorly staffed, lack equipment and, in many cases, have not received sufficient training.
- Police fatalities during lawful arrests are a clear testimony of the vulnerability and risky situations facing the Police as the following evidences suggest:
 - a. On the 29th October, 2008 triple bomb blasts that targeted statehouse, Ethiopian Embassy and UNDP compound (killing and maiming over 50 people) showed the failure and how unprepared the Somaliland Intelligence Agency and the Police were for high level terrorist attacks.
 - b. In early 2011, a female police officer at the Berbera Airport was poisoned after coming into contact with explosives materials on searching passenger luggage mainly because the immigration services lack modern equipment.
- Somaliland police often use lethal force while dealing with public disturbances, so there is a challenge of developing from a force, considered for too long to be part of the armed forces, to a service that maintains the peace, protects law and order and serves the public of Somaliland.
- Staff recruitments and Ranks are not usually based on merit, most of the time people are promoted based on the duration of service. Men are more likely to get to the level of Superintendent and higher ranks.

⁵*Somali Joint Needs Assessment, UNDP*

⁶*2010 Human Rights Reports: Somalia*



Relative peace and lack of international recognition, external cooperation and engagement have starved Somaliland institutions of resources, the security forces in particular. Recent efforts have been highly institutional: building police instructional facilities, equipping military and police personnel, including the coast guard and some training activities to support counter-terrorist agendas. However little is known about the intelligence organs, though it can be assumed they are less developed.

The National Intelligence Agency:

Somaliland intelligence agencies are the products of two traditions both of which does not bode well with the idea of modern and accountable security services. One is the legacy of the Syad Barre regime characterized by secrecy and brutality. This is not limited to the intelligence services. Indeed, many members of the Somaliland elite including the two former presidents particularly Rayale Kahin was a senior officer of the Somali secret service during the authoritarian Barre regime. Hence, the organizational culture and legacy of this period is very much heavy and intelligence agencies cannot generally abandon past practices very easily mainly in the absence of successive training and experience sharing. The second foundation of the Somaliland intelligence is the liberation struggle led by the Somali National Movement, a popular resistance than a war of liberation led by institutionally strong and regimented organization. As argued by Medhane Tadesse the SNM is different from most liberation movements in Africa: Not tightly ordered, less secretive, political and military leadership not in full control and traditional leadership and clans playing key (often autonomous) role.⁷

Most of intelligence gathering during war time has been conducted by ordinary citizens and clans with little guidance and organizational structure. This has impacted on the professionalization of the man power which was hurriedly cobbled together after 1991 with little or no training and capacity building. Somaliland National Intelligence Agency faces similar challenges to the other security institutions. These include:

- Inadequate capacity building opportunities for NIA, except for the disparate attempts by British and Ethiopian experts.
- Lack of selection criteria regarding recruitment. The institution remains largely opaque.
- Inadequate resources to undertake assignments.
- The general public does not trust NIA officers and they are also feared by other security agencies. This stems from lack of transparency on who they are and their conduct. Somalilanders know very little about the institution, its personnel and modus operandi.⁸

⁷Medhane Tadesse, *Hybrid Security Governance in the Horn of Africa: Comparative Analysis between Somaliland and Puntland*. 2007. <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org> & <http://hdl.handle.net/10625/56878>.

⁸ *Discussions, Hargeissa January 2019*.



The Somaliland Justice Sector:

The Somaliland justice sector continues to face a range of obstacles in establishing independent, fair and efficient services. There remain deeply entrenched structural problems, in part due to Constitutional provisions and the absence of harmonization in laws (between Sharia Law, Somali Customary Law and Secular Laws). Yet the agenda of law reform, which is the responsibility of Somaliland's Law Reform Commission (LRC), has not been achieved.⁹ Somaliland's Judiciary Reform was officially formulated in 2008 when the Ministry of Justice organized the Justice Reform Conference with the support from UNDP, inviting Somaliland's key justice stakeholders including UN International organizations, donors, Civil Society and concerned community leaders. The conference was fruitful in providing the way forward. The objective was to advance and develop the Somaliland judiciary system through strengthening the capacity of the courts by providing extensive training and required equipment to ensure that they can carry out their duties and core functions. It also stipulated the need to address the issue of clarity on the role and responsibility of lawmaking bodies and strengthen their institutional capacity, including on how to prioritize and draft legislation that has to be harmonized with existing law. Besides, the conference emphasized, according to the priorities of Judiciary Reform, the need to promote a more responsive and accessible justice system that promotes human rights for all and intends to improve the infrastructure of access to justice and the protection of human rights¹⁰.

The first conference of the Judicial Reform process was held in May 2012. The conference was led by the Somaliland's Ministry of Justice, and attended by a number of CSOs including SONSAF, NAGAAD, SONYO, SLWA and others. Somaliland's justice stakeholders had settled on a ten-point agenda for justice reform. Accordingly at the first thematic conference on Judiciary Reform the following nine points have been set out to indicate the Judiciary Reform Strategy priority areas. These include:

1. Ensuring all law is written in Somali and that a Somali legal terminology is produced.
2. Recognizing the importance of an independent judiciary, particularly regarding financial matters in which judges has security of tenure (including appointment, transfer, promotion and dismissal) and empowered to make competent and impartial decisions without any interference. At the same time recognizing the importance of an accountable and responsible judiciary guided by a code of conduct.
3. Ensuring that the key legal institutions such as the Judiciary, The Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's Office, and The High Judicial Committee/HJC/ have adequate means to professionally perform their duties including legal education, infrastructure of buildings, equipment, transport communication and administrative costs.

⁹ Horizon Institute, 2016

¹⁰Somaliland Judicial Reform strategy report 2012-2017



4. Recognizing the need for legislative reform of outdated and incompatible laws with Somaliland Constitution and the requirement to draft new laws. These processes will be undertaken under the auspices of a Law Reform Commission/LRC/. Agreed priority laws to reform include, but not limited to, Panel Code, Criminal Procedures Code, Civil Code, Civil Procedures Code and Organizational of the Judiciary Act. Agreed priority laws to draft include, but not limited to, Civil Register and Commercial code.
5. Affirming the necessity for a minimum legal education requirement for entry into the legal profession. Encouraging the continued support for law faculties and clinics as well as establishment of postgraduate legal vocational training for admission to the Lawyers Association to practice law in Somaliland; and recognizing the importance of the development of the lawyers' provision of entry of newly qualified graduates into the legal profession.
6. Acknowledging the need to increase public confidence and awareness of the role of the judiciary and legal system.
7. Emphasizing the right to a fair trial and legal representation in all stages of criminal proceeding including arrest, pre-trial detention, trial and appeal of sentence. Ensuring access to justice for all, in particular provision of free legal aid for those without the financial means and vulnerable persons.
8. Recognizing the importance of women's participation in the justice sector and the need to provide women with adequate legal education, access to justice and entry into the legal profession.
9. Promoting a justice system in which the three legal systems (Xeer, Sharia and formal) can work together and identify compatible and contradictory practice with the Somaliland Constitution and accepted international human right standards, recognizing that Sharia is the fundamental source of laws in Somaliland¹¹.

The first phase of Somaliland Justice Reform launched in June 2011 with a Somaliland National Justice Conference was critical as it attracted more than two hundred and fifty Somalilanders, representing justice sector stakeholders and the general public. The participants of this conference recommended implementing the above comprehensive list of judicial reform considerations¹².

¹¹Judiciary Reform Strategic plan 2012-2017

¹²Somaliland Judicial Reform Strategic Plan 2012-2017, P.12

PART TWO: Civil Society Organizations and SSR

Introduction

Debates surrounding security issues are new in Somaliland and civil society organizations are only starting to engage in security sector reform agendas. This section is particularly interested in the present capacity of CSOs on SSR. It also examines SSR plans that they had in place, and whether they had the required SSR knowledge and skills. Having established the SSR capacity, the study further seeks to identify the training gaps/needs of the respective organizations. This was done by examining whether any personnel had ever attended SSR training, relevance of SSR training to the organization, existing SSR needs and recommended approaches of meeting those needs.

It is obvious that all the interviewed organizations have, to some extent, contributed to SSR implementation in Somaliland, by advocating and lobbying SSR related policies and legal frameworks; building the capacity of the security institutions through tailored trainings on human rights; and by improving community awareness on their security and justice rights. Below are some of the important capacity needs of Somaliland CSOs on SSR.

Capacity Needs of CSOs on SSR

1. All interviewed CSO representatives admitted that they have **no written SSR plans**, but were planning to conduct national level advocacy on formulation and adoption of legal frameworks and policies related to SSR, such as the Police law, and Sexual Offences Law., National Security Strategy (Does not exist currently).
2. Most of the CSOs (their staff and leadership) have **very limited SSR capacity**, particularly in terms of knowledge and skills. NAGAAD Network, APD and SONSAF stated that a few of their personnel have been trained on SSR or related courses in October 2016 and September 2018 respectively. Other CSOs (HRC, SWLA) stated that none of their personnel had attended SSR training, **due to lack of opportunity**. So, there is **soaring need for enhanced, sufficient and quality SSR training for all the personnel in each of the organizations**, in order make them well versed with security and SSR issues so that they will be able to influence reforms that are being considered and developed.
3. Civil society organizations also reported that they don't have enough capacity to formulate and implement inclusive and representative SSR, strengthen the capacity and participation of women in the security sector, and develop effective legislations that guide gender sensitive SSR processes. Few, notably NAGAAD, are particularly interested in how to integrate gender into SSR training needs assessment.

4. A few CSOs, particularly NAGAAD and SONSAF, have come to **realize that Somaliland needs a National Security Policy (NSP)**,¹³ in part because it is still struggling to navigate a rough neighborhood, but due more so to a combination of the ever changing Somali context and the rapid shifts in the wider security environment around the Red Sea and the region at large. In this regard they seem eager to learn from other countries experiences on developing an NSP.
5. Furthermore, all of them reported that they lack the **knowledge and skills that could enhance their ability to establish better and trust-worthy relationships with security forces but also how to approach the general population on security issues**. For example, courses on advocacy and influencing strategy will help them to boost their advocacy capacity.
6. The CSOs were asked to be more specific, and identify the particular knowledge needs of their organizations. There were multiple needs which include training in the following areas:
 - security forces-civilian relationship;
 - professionalism and ethics of security sector and security forces coordination;
 - avenues to successful rehabilitation of ex-militia serving in Somaliland security providers;
 - understanding and harmonization of SSR concept,
 - integration of Somali culture and traditions into SSR;
 - Gender mainstreaming in SSR;
 - Security sector-judiciary relationship.

Those who mentioned the coordination of security forces argued that there was a need to more clearly delineate the mandate, roles, and responsibilities of each security force through the formulation and implementation of reforms and how and how the security sector as a whole can be better coordinated for effective service delivery. However, the majority of the respondents highlighted that in the Somaliland context civil-military relations and –in general–the relationship between the public and security forces should be a major priority area.¹⁴

7. Finally, CSOs reported funding **limitations in attempting to engage and implement reform of security institutions** in Somaliland, as few donor funds were earmarked for SSR. They asserted that donors have not demonstrated interest on the subject matter of SSR and security, preferring rather to prioritize women and gender issues. SONSAF

¹³ This seems to be the result of the deliberations during the Oxfam-ASSN-AU training workshops.

¹⁴ Excerpts from a question and answer session with Somaliland CSOs who attended the sensitization meeting in Hargiessa on January 16, 2019.



reported that while the UK government invests in Somaliland SSR, the funds are directed to UNDP and other international organizations (such as Axiom) rather than local actors. Somaliland CSOs often work at the grass-roots level of communities, a niche role often not effectively utilized by the government or international partners.

Special needs per CSOs on SSR

| | Organization | Needs |
|---|----------------|--|
| 1 | NAGAAD Network | <p>Trainings: NAGAAD Network prioritized the following trainings as their capacity needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to SSR • Role of CSOs on comprehensive engagement and implementation of SSR programs. • Gender mainstreaming on SSR; Background research on linkages between security and gender issues in the cultural and institutional environment in which the training will be held. • Hostile Environment Awareness Training <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support CSOs to establish SSR coalition in Somaliland. |
| 2 | SONSAF | <p>Trainings: SONSAF prioritized the following trainings as their capacity needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction training to SSR, including breaking down the security sector; • Training and mentorship on CSO role on SSR implementation; • Security forces-civilian relationship; • How CSOs can exercise oversight on the security sector. |
| 3 | APD | <p>Trainings: APD prioritized the following trainings as their capacity needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge on SSR; • Fundraising training on SSR programs; • Support building partnerships between the government, security forces and civil society on security and justice issues; • Conducting awareness on SSR to political parties and business actors. |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 4 | Human Rights Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs, particularly the HRC, need to fully integrate aspects of SSR into their mission and activities of human rights by building an area of expertise before engaging policy-makers on SSR-related policies. • Developing CSOs’ technical capacity to provide policy advice on security and justice services; • Ideas on how to approach Police Reform aimed at mainly improving human rights. |
| 5 | Somaliland Women Lawyers Association | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building wider audiences in favor of SJSR by increasing media coverage and raising public awareness. • SSR and Rule of Law and Law Reform including gender mainstreaming. |

Opportunities and Entry Points

The following could provide practical opportunities to engage with national authorities on SSR issues and are presented in their order of importance.

- Specialized trainings on SSR; the need for training seems to be the common denominator to all CSOs discussed in this study. This might require conducting a training needs assessment.
- Trainings on monitoring and evaluation and more specifically the development of SSR indicators of success and failure;
- Somaliland’s Judiciary Reform; Somaliland’s Law Reform Commission;
- Ministry of Justice; High Judicial Committee/HJC/; Law Reform Commission/LRC/; Attorney General’s Office;
- The broader Harmonization in Laws, the Police Law, Sexual Offences Law, National Security Strategy/NSP/;
- Prison Reform, rights of marginalized groups, gender-based violence;
- Demobilization and re-integration of ex-combatants; Somaliland’s unfinished DDR;
- Externally funded training opportunities for CSOs. UK supported and UNDP-led programs;
- ADPs history of engagement with political parties as it might act as a much needed mechanism for political critique. It can serve as an important intermediary that provides two-way communication and political dialogue and can help ameliorate the blockages to public debates on security issues.
- The Somaliland House of Representatives (Parliament);
- The Format to establish a firm collaboration between security sector institutions and CSOs;



- The president's pledge to fight corruption as his election slogan including the establishment of Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Commission. CSOs such as the HRC are key for fighting corruption in the police and wider socio-political systems of a country.
- The passing of gender budget lines in all the security sectors that is going to take care of monitoring and evaluation components.

Challenges

By and large Somaliland CSOs have a clear idea of entry points as well as their possible contributions to SSR; however, several factors may hinder their effective involvement. These include,

- a. Poor coordination among Civil Society Organizations engaged in SSR. The fragmentation of civil society and the resource competition among them can disperse strengths and make it difficult to optimize the work and impact of CSOs.
- b. The management of security institutions remains essentially in the executive purview, with civil society playing only consultative role. Civil society organizations have very limited oversight role and the reason is both capacity constraints and lack of political will.
- c. Corruption is an impediment to any reform processes.
- d. Somaliland CSOs has very limited knowledge on SSR.
- e. There is serious lack of funds for CSOs to in SSR processes.
- f. Lack of attention and resources (human, material, technical and capacity) to mainstream gender issues in the security sector.
- g. Human Rights Center met a set back from the police force when they advocated on the amendment of the Police Act.
- h. The sexual offences law took seven years to approve; this shows law makers are not serious on SSR issues.
- i. Somaliland civil society is still far from a workable partnership. Although SONSAF, NAGAAD and HRC are engaging in specific aspects of SSR, such as police reform, prison reform, rights of marginalized groups, gender-based violence (GBV) and training services cooperation and experience sharing is minimal.
- j. Among the many challenges facing CSOs in Somaliland is the limited access to public information generally needed to draw up sensible and realistic reform plans and ideas. In the security and military sector, access to information is largely restricted by the authorities. Civil society in Somaliland is strong but sidelined by government.

Recommendations

A) Addressing SSR needs of Somaliland Government:

1. There is need to establish SSR coordination frameworks:
 - National level SSR Steering Committee (SL Government, UN, CSOs, IGAD)
 - Inter-Ministerial Task Force on SSR (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of National Planning and Development etc.)
2. Political commitment and developing a clear and concise Terms of Reference for the above committees and technical working groups
3. Concrete Action to be taken as next steps by developing assessment proposal and submitting same to potential donors, obtaining funding, hiring Security Sector Experts that will support the Inter Ministerial Task Force on SSR and the Technical Working Groups
4. Conduct a comprehensive security sector assessment in Somaliland, and
5. Based on the findings of this assessment and related studies on Somaliland, provide a comprehensive Security Sector Capacity Building programs for Somaliland security institutions.
6. Development of the Security Sector strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans.

B) Capacity needs of CSOs:

1. Provide tailored training programs on SJSR for Somaliland CSOs in all regions of the country. This will improve the technical capacity of CSOs to play a very important role in implementing SSR in Somaliland.
2. The establishment of CSO networks on SSR to facilitate access to one another, creating opportunities for collaboration among some members leading to a certain degree of coordination.
3. The creation of CSO coalitions around a shared vision, (such as Somaliland SSR coalition) to develop and implement an integrated joint plan of action. This type of initiative encourages information and skills sharing between CSOs around SSR and, therefore, requires agreement to broad strategic guidelines or at least coordinated action among the CSOs to support better SSR in Somaliland.
4. Support resource mobilization efforts of CSOs on SSR. There are few organizations such as SONSAF, HRC and NAGAAD with sufficient human, material and financial resources to conduct SSR programs in Somaliland.

Conclusion

Somaliland's unique experience of peace and state building coupled with the presence of a vibrant civil society offers opportunities for Security Sector Reform/SSR/. However, there has never been an officially branded SSR program and many of the SSR-related reforms came as an indirect effect of the bottom-up and participatory political processes. Individual organizations undertake specific tasks and activities such as community awareness raising, advocacy and capacity building to support the security service providers, and some of them have established working relationships with these institutions. Yet while their names have been frequently invoked in security related activities, Somaliland CSOs are the least understood, mentioned in general terms, and have remained outside the reach of targeted assessments. Besides, both CSOs and their external funders can be criticized for their inadequate attention as well as their tokenistic approach to issues of SSR.

However, recent years have witnessed some movement towards CSO advocacy campaigns for justice and human rights reforms. Somaliland CSOs are not only interested in SSR but they are particularly defined by their strong grass-roots presence and links with local populations, allowing them to translate policy into local culture and norms through local networks. The individual ties and cultural connections brought by local and international civil society organizations (CSOs) allow for the dissemination of important ideas and messages on security issues and the potential to promote dialogue on targeted programs and policies on SSR. The importance of including Somaliland CSOs in SSR is particularly evident in three cases. First, civil society organizations are a major factor in the ongoing justice and police reform debate in Somaliland, an area in which the government continues to support gradual, positive reform in the country. Second, the lack of knowledge and expertise among CSOs impedes SSR and the wider peace and democratic process in the country. Lastly, Somaliland is an interesting case where civil society is a potential source for much needed public support in the fight against human rights violations and corruption.

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- Interview with Mubarik Abdi, Human Rights Center
- Interview with Nafisa Yusuf, NAGAAD Executive Director
- Discussions with representatives from the Academy for Peace and Development (APD)
- Informal talks with staff from Somaliland Women Lawyers Association (SWLA)
- The discussions between the research supervisor and Somaliland political and civil society leaders in Hargeisa (January 2019) are also included in the analysis.