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REVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SOMALIA

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Note on Task, Process, and Organization of Report

Task

To assist the Somalia Mission in reviewing its draft Integrated Country Plan through the GHAI lens, particularly with regard to conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution.

Process

The consultancy is for a grand total of three days. Comments from a variety of USG personnel have been responded to in the final draft.

Organization of Report

To adequately respond to questions in the scope of work, the report is divided into six sections. Section One relates the scope of work to the organization of the report. Section Two reviews the Draft ISP. Section Three analyzes Somalia's internal and regional conflict context. Section Four and Five examine particular aid strategies which might be pursued to prevent and resolve conflict. Section Six presents a specific opportunity for conflict resolution of particular relevance at this time.

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SECTION ONE:
RELATION OF SCOPE OF WORK QUESTIONS
TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

There are three principal issues which are raised in the scope of work which need to be addressed by this review. Below I indicate how and where I address these issues in the report. A fourth question which requests a general strategy for USAID assistance replete with SOs and indicators is certainly beyond the scope of a three day consultancy, although I have commented in depth on the ISP's proposed strategy. Furthermore, I have prepared three sections of the report (Sections Four, Five and Six) which suggest possible directions for conflict (and crisis) prevention and resolution which will hopefully be helpful to USAID.

1. Impact on Crisis Prevention, Response, and Conflict Resolution

The strategy mostly addresses the physical components of potential crises -- food production and distribution -- but does nothing to deal with the political components of what causes vulnerability. With no identification of vulnerable populations based on political vulnerability, and no investment in local-level conflict prevention or resolution, the strategy appears ill-prepared to prevent any crisis or resolve any conflict, although the USG will be in a position to respond to a crisis because of the ongoing monitoring and assessment carried out by a number of agencies and the early warning systems which exist in the country. The section in which I review the draft ISP (Section Two) goes into detail on a number of related points. For more specific alternative programming strategies, please see Sections Four, Five and Six.

2. Assumptions Regarding Root Causes of Crises

As I pointed out in the section which reviews the ISP (Section Two), I find the draft's analysis of past and present conflict and instability in Somalia to be rather superficial. Hence, I have included a rather long section on the dynamics of Somali conflict (Section Three). I would recommend incorporating at least some of it into the ISP. A proper analysis of conflict is a prerequisite for an appropriate response.

3. Capacity of USAID to Address Root Causes

If implemented as is, the draft ISP will likely only be able to address some manifestations of food insecurity through USAID's efforts to increase food production and support local structures. Without more meaningful commitment to institutional capacity building and local conflict management, the strategy relegates USAID primarily to that of a responder to crisis rather than a preventer. Again, these issues are addressed in greater detail in the section in which I review the draft ISP (Section Two).

SECTION TWO:
REVIEW OF INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SOMALIA

In attempting to apply a GHAI lens to the analysis of the ISP for Somalia, there are two overarching themes that might be highlighted:

1. Adaptation to Chronic Crisis and Uncertainty -- Somalia defies any categorization: it's not at war or in peace; there's no state but not chaos; it is not solely a relief situation or long-term development situation. There is great localized variation. Overall, perhaps the concept of chronic, low-intensity crisis best captures the current state of the country. The response inside Somalia is hence one of adaptation to chronic, low-intensity crisis. In the 1980s, the dominant theme was adaptation to an aid-dependent, politically repressive state. In the early 1990s, it was adaptation to civil war. From 1992-1995, adaptation to massive emergency aid was the predominant response. And now, in the second half of the 1990s, adaptation to low intensity insecurity and aid withdrawal is the likely scenario.

2. Building on Local Initiative and Capacity -- Flowing directly from theme one, this approach respects some historical lessons. To wit, a USAID study of USAID projects from 1978-1990 in Somalia concludes: "USAID projects accomplished close to nothing if measured against their original design." Against that expensive historical backdrop we have the more recent UNOSOM experience, of which almost nothing in terms of institutions or structures remains only a year and a half after termination of the multi-billion dollar mission.

It is clear that a new way of operating is required. Responders need to find out what communities are doing for themselves, how communities are organizing, and how they make peace organically at the local level, and provide small supports for these initiatives. Anything beyond this is largely unsustainable.

The priority areas chosen by the ISP team on which to focus are entirely appropriate, given the current context of Somalia. An ability to respond to crisis is required, and is a major priority of the strategy. Being involved in food security is also critical, and given the EU's predominant position in support for the livestock sector, USAID's focus on rainfed food production is sensible. Finally, support for civil institutions and local administrative structures is a critical area which the ISP has identified as a priority area. Given this overall direction, my comments can be construed as fine-tuning an otherwise sound policy.

USAID-Somalia Mission Director John Bierke, who was unable to attend the Washington meeting at which we discussed refinement of

this draft, asked specifically about the use of media in the Somali context, and how USAID might be able to utilize media to further program objectives. InterAfrica Group -- in conjunction with UNICEF -- has run a peace radio project for Somalia for a couple of years; USAID specifically could approach IAG about certain kinds of programming. Another possible venture is exploring the extent to which the increasingly vibrant women's organizations in Mogadishu, Lower Shabelle and Middle Shabelle might be able to contribute to relevant radio programming if given a forum. Their concerns coincide directly with USAID's: food and livelihood security, crisis prevention, and conflict management. The Washington-based Center for Strategic Initiatives of Women has played an important role in strengthening Somali women's organizations' institutional capacity and conflict management expertise, and therefore might be a logical conduit for USAID's support for this kind of initiative.

There were three General Issues raised in the Questions/Comments for Discussion compiled by USAID staff in response to the first draft of this paper. I will briefly attempt to answer those three questions, and then integrate my answers to the other 15 issues directly into the text of my review.

QUESTION ONE: How can USAID do political vulnerability assessments? Vulnerability in Somalia, as in many war-driven emergencies, is usually a function of political targeting -- for racial, religious, ethnic, regional, and locational reasons. Therefore, what might be called the politics of vulnerability need to be analyzed, and -- in advance of any quick-onset emergency -- winners and losers need to be identified.

Consistent with the desire to introduce cost-neutral initiatives, it is important to incorporate questions about political vulnerability directly into existing assessment approaches and early warning systems. On this I would suggest consulting with the Save the Children-UK risk-mapping teams (headquartered in London but with regional offices) who are being challenged to more comprehensively address these issues in their already advanced assessment models.

If it hasn't already, USAID might bring together some of the key agencies collecting data in Somalia for an afternoon and discuss assessment methodologies and the extent to which political risk is incorporated in standard procedures. Mark Lawrence in the Nairobi SCF-UK office (the Food Economy Assessment Team -- FEAT) would be particularly knowledgeable.

QUESTION TWO: How can USAID deal with demobilization and demining? Rather than as a separate initiative, demining might be addressed on a limited basis in the context of food security

and agriculture, when certain areas might need to be demined in order to significantly increase productivity. Given the voluminous lessons learned about cost containment through the experiences with Rimfire and UNOSOM, low-cost interventions might be possible in the context of larger program objectives.

Regarding demobilization, it is agreed that it would be impossible to construct a jobs program for ex-militia members. Nevertheless, again in the context of food security initiatives some specific targeting and consideration might be given to militia members interested in returning to former livelihoods. Any demobilization venture should be firmly rooted in backward linkages to Somalia's productive sectors: pastoralism, agriculture and fisheries. Any urban-based employment and training programs with no links to realistic future employment only encourage continuing rural-urban migration and have no chance for successfully reintegrating graduates into the private sector.

QUESTION THREE: How does the USG engage in conflict prevention without doing more harm than good? First, not being actively engaged in understanding political developments in Somalia would be a mistake. The events of mid-August remind us that the internal affairs of Somalia at least have regional consequences, if not international, symbolized by Ethiopia's invasion of the Gedo Region, with the likely result in further information about international links between Al-Itahad and international Islamic groups.

It would be inappropriate for the USG to directly involve itself in political negotiation, but it is imperative to have an active dialogue with all parties. One method USAID might consider to more intelligently respond to a complex political environment is to appoint a Democracy and Governance Advisor for Somalia (or perhaps half-time Somalia and half-time Southern Sudan). A less ambitious plan might envision USAID bringing in an expert on Somali politics for two weeks every six months to help the State Department's Somalia watcher and USAID staff identify local peace efforts and how to support them.

It is important that conflict prevention and management initiatives are rooted at the community level, not at the national level where an accommodation of warlord interests would likely lead to the resumption of war. External responders should be judicious in their support for local efforts. Perhaps the mechanism of an umbrella grant for conflict prevention might be appropriate, where an agency with some knowledge about conflict prevention and management would administer very small-scale support for local peace processes, including food for peace conferences, transport, moral support, and positive incentives

which might include commitments of small support for the implementation of peace agreements.

In order to maximize the direct relevance of my review of the ISP draft, I provide here a section-by-section commentary on the draft. For the appropriate context, please refer to the draft ISP when reading these comments.

I. Integrated Strategic Planning

A. Background

The concept presented here of "transitioning out of or into crisis" seems flawed. Although significant transitions have occurred in most of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda, countries such as Somalia appear to be trapped in continuing cycles of conflict. Rather than moving in any identifiable pattern toward "long-term development," many regions within Somalia are engaged in a process of adaptation to chronic crisis. This process of adaptation is perhaps a more appropriate framework in which to place Somalia today.

The ISP presents a "gray area between relief and development" which seems to overstate the complexity of the situation. Why is it a "gray area"? There are relief components of the response (when instability or climatic/economic irregularities create humanitarian need) and development components (where stability and institutional capacity allow for longer-term planning and commitments). Somalia must not be viewed as one entity, but rather as many different locales and polities that all present unique opportunities and constraints.

B. What is ISP?

Number 3 under this heading discusses **parameter setting** and the process of making the determination of whether a country is a "sustainable development" country or a "crisis prevention" country. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, it must be continuously pointed out that Somalia presents a conundrum in this regard. Some regions have great potential for sustainable development, and other regions could only be imagined at most as crisis prevention areas. This kind of regional variation, though, is widespread in GHAI countries. For example, see the northern third of Uganda, parts of the Rift Valley in Kenya, the western border of Rwanda, southern Sudan's Jonglei Region, the Somali Region of Ethiopia, etc. In other words, it is very difficult to make a final determination on which of these two categories any given country fits into because of these regional variations within each country.

Number 7 mentions the lack of ISP planning for quick onset crises. This point is clearly inconsistent with SO2. (Some limited contingency planning for worst case scenarios is already and certainly ought to be included in this ISP, particularly for the crisis prevention component of the process. For example, limited consideration could be given to potential state sponsored or intercommunal conflagration between Abgal and Habr Gedir in Mogadishu and Garhajis and Habr Awol in Somaliland.)

C. Operationalizing ISP

In Number 1, it is important to include DoD when feasible.

D. Outstanding Issues

Number 1 observes the need to incorporate regional approaches. Here the ISP could introduce the importance of regional planning through the InterGovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and to a lesser extent UNDP and UNHCR. The former is obviously critical for inter-national challenges such as regional stability, intra-regional trade, pest control, eradication of rinderpest and other livestock diseases which cross borders. UNDP has demonstrated an interest in cross-border planning, and UNHCR has an obvious interest in cross-border issues.

Number 3 notes that the country planning process requires a participatory approach. Holding workshops with various groups for feedback on the draft plan in different regions within Somalia would strengthen it considerably.

Number 5 remarks on constraints in data and standards. Contrary to the draft paper's assertion that there is no data, assessment of production and nutrition are perhaps the areas to which the international donor community has contributed most (see FEWS, the Food Security Unit, SCF-UK's Food Economy Team, IOM displaced surveys, UNICEF's nutritional surveys, etc.). There are great gaps in the knowledge, but the base is not zero as is implied in the draft.

Number 5 also mentions the importance of rebuilding systems and institutions, and asks if this process counts as an impact. The answer to this question should be a resounding "yes!" Rebuilding vulnerable institutions is key. This goes beyond the usual (limited) focus on vulnerable people, and recognizes that building, supporting and reinforcing vulnerable institutions is often a prerequisite for lasting impacts of relief and development programming.

Some examples of possible institutions to rebuild or support include:

** local administrative structures (clan councils, district councils which have community support, local governments such as those in Bari Region and Somaliland),

** port authorities,

** women's organizations (again, I would recommend the D.C.-based Center for Strategic Initiatives of Women as an organization which can act as a conduit for USAID to many of the more representative women's organizations in Somalia),

** journalists' associations,

** local NGOs,

** *iskashis* (local cooperatives for business, particularly in Rahanweyne areas),

** local credit associations,

** religious communities in the Juba Valley, and

** local courts.

In terms of some criteria which might be used to better judge these institutions and systems, whatever rigorous criteria is used to separate organic, representative local NGOs from those that are not would be appropriate. Again, the idea of an umbrella grant for strengthening local structures might allow for some targeted analysis of local institutions.

II. Environment for Assistance

A. Country Background

End of second paragraph discusses the Shabelle River irrigation network. I would add that many plantations are now operational again; banana exports exceeded their Lome Convention quotas last year. But the fact that there has been such a major disruption in production provides a window to assess the exploitative relations which has driven mass production in this region in the past and present. Aid programmed for this region must be carefully targeted to the smallholder, food-producing sector to avoid reinforcing the exploitative dynamic.

The third paragraph should include mention of the historic trend toward agro-pastoralism as a defensive response for family food security.

The fifth paragraph again brings up the dearth of statistics. It should be noted that localized statistics are more important for relevant response-crafting than national statistics. This kind of localized data gathering is being done by certain agencies, and perhaps with minor effort could be more systematized.

B. USAID's Involvement in Somalia

Post-Ogaden War

It would be negligent if this section only mentioned U.S. aid to agriculture, health care and infrastructure. There is a much greater legacy in Somalia from other forms of U.S. aid, including military aid, ESF, balance of payments support, U.S. contributions to World Bank and IMF assistance packages, and the Commodity Import Program which USAID subsidized. It is a gross understatement to say that the U.S. aid package was "inappropriate" given the degree of repression exhibited by the authoritarian regime and the widespread conflict fault lines extant in the country.

1990-1996

Since there is no mention of Somaliland in this section, I would refer you to my Section Three for a brief overview of some of the important issues in the northwest, as well as for a fuller account of the situation throughout Somalia.

The first paragraph here is fraught with errors which ought to be corrected. The war didn't begin in 1988; it intensified with the SNM's invasion from Ethiopia. Siad Barre didn't flee the country in Jan. 1991, he fled Mogadishu, but he (but most importantly his forces) remained in Somalia fighting for control of key areas, including Gedo and Bay Regions. This leads into the importance of a brief statement on the basic cause of the famine in order that prediction of future cataclysms might be intelligently made. The cause of the famine was primarily the continuous contest for control of the agricultural heart of southern Somalia (Bay Region, the Juba Valley, and the Lower Shabelle River basin), and the war tactics of the militias of the United Somali Congress (USC), the Somali National Front (SNF), and the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) which prioritized asset-stripping and the destruction of property and physical infrastructure. The vast majority of people who died during 1991-92 were Rahanweyne and Bantu sedentary farmers and other minority groups who had their grain stores and small livestock looted, and were continuously displaced by fighting and militia depredations.

This first paragraph also asserts that the UN led the relief efforts during 1991-92, which is false. For large periods of

time no UN agency was even operational in Somalia during this period. What humanitarian activity which did occur was undertaken by the ICRC and a handful of NGOs, many of whom were funded by OFDA. In the latter half of 1992, the activities of these NGOs, ICRC, and the U.S.-led airlift from August were the primary reasons the back of the famine was broken by the time the international forces arrived. UNOSOM I was inconsequential in this regard, and the UN's legitimacy within Somalia was shattered.

The second paragraph claims that UNITAF stemmed "the tide of starvation." It's important to note that disease was a larger killer than starvation, and that the USAID/OFDA study undertaken by Refugee Policy Group found that a relatively small number of lives were saved after the military intervention (10,000 - 25,000); the bulk of lives saved resulted from NGO and ICRC efforts -- supplemented by the airlift -- in the second half of 1992. These two issues are important to note when constructing contingency plans for potential humanitarian crises in Somalia in the future.

The second paragraph also does not clearly spell out the mandate shift/expansion which occurred during the transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II. It also does not mention that a virtual war took place between the forces of Aidid and UNOSOM, and this conflict as much as anything spelled doom for UNOSOM II's objectives. Finally, the second paragraph's description of a "status quo" does not account for the perception that General Aidid's attempts to project his forces and control beyond his current strongholds makes the status quo very tenuous, particularly for populations in Benadir, Bay, Bakool, Lower Juba, and Lower Shabelle Regions. Somaliland is also entering an unpredictable period of potential government change.

The third paragraph could acknowledge that the current situation involving primary implementation by Somali staff contains important capacity building opportunities even if the situation does not stabilize further.

C. Development Constraints/Opportunities

Constraints

The Number 1 constraint cited is "insecurity." It might be helpful to make a distinction between three potential sources of instability, although in some places more than one factor is at play. The first source is criminal, predatory violence, such as looting and asset stripping. The second is resource competition, including attempts to accumulate resources and access to those resources (land, control of roads, food production, livestock, ports, irrigation channels, trade routes, etc.). The third is

the contests for power and territory that encompass the civil war, still driven in part by a quest by some military-political leaders to establish and control a national government.

The analysis in Constraint Number 2, the lack of local administration, suffers from false expectations. This paragraph mentions that a critical constraint is the lack of government-supported infrastructure and social services. It must be understood that infrastructure and social services were largely (if not entirely) internationally supported when there was a national government. It is necessary to search for new forms of service provision which local communities support; a national level, state-supported social security system will not be implemented and is not sustainable or institutionally feasible.

Constraint Number 2 also holds that the current ability of the local administrative structures which do exist to provide service is very limited. But it must be pointed out that these structures are often best suited and are consciously constructed for the tasks of conflict management, not service provision. To expect them to do more is often unreasonable. Finally, Constraint Number 2 asserts that these local administrative structures might not be able to meaningfully collaborate. Again, locational differences abound. In some areas, regional authorities (Bari, Gedo, Somaliland) have great potential for partnering with international agencies. In other areas, local NGOs are in a position to partner on service provision.

It should be noted that Somalia is quite unique. Throughout most of the 1980s -- before the intensification of the war -- the entire development budget was underwritten by foreign aid. There is no tradition of authorities taking responsibility for public welfare. Even where local administrative structures now are assuming something of a coordination role, public welfare provisioning is still an externally managed and resourced affair.

There are alternatives. One is the creation of social contracts. For example, USAID could say that any agency which contracts with it in the arena of service provision must as a condition of receiving funds develop a consultation process which results in a social contract with local authorities spelling out their responsibilities and the outsiders' responsibilities in a mutually agreed program.

Constraint Number 3 is problematic on two counts. First, the ten year cycle of severe drought has perhaps altered to one which is more frequent now. Second, production shortfalls are of course only one variable in the malnutrition function; the issue of access and ability to purchase food is often more important.

Constraint Number 6 points out the lack of employment opportunities. This section should acknowledge that private

investment risks vary by region, and in some places are seeing an increase, such as the northeast and Shabelle River valley.

Opportunities

The first opportunity highlights the revival of the banana export trade as a symbol of Somali entrepreneurial spirit. This may be true, but the point risks misconstruing given the expropriation of land and use of forced labor which has characterized this revival. It's a bit like saying slave traders in the early 1800s or mafia dons in the early 1900s in the U.S. exhibited entrepreneurial spirit. This is not Horatio Alger material.

Opportunity Number Two deals with the maritime industry, and I would only add at the end that the rehabilitation of other ports is contingent not only on capital investment but also political stability and conflict management, particularly for Mogadishu and Kismayo.

Opportunity Number Four is very confused. There are three separate points which should be highlighted: coping mechanisms, war weariness and culture. Coping mechanisms are usually desperate efforts to survive, and often involve the depletion of personal assets, leaving a family more vulnerable to the next crisis. "Exploiting" these mechanisms rather than protecting a family's assets is misguided, but certainly the suggestion to build on these mechanisms is correct. The main issue here is not to use the fact that coping mechanisms exist as a pretext for not responding when early warning signals are activated, because assets are spent down in the context of coping.

The point about homogenous Somali culture has certainly been debunked by the experience of the last five years. Besides understanding the divisions along clan and sub-clan lines, there are further differences between rural and urban, and agricultural and pastoral populations.

A fifth opportunity could be added: institution building. Local NGOs, clan councils, local administrative structures, women's organizations and other forms of community organization are taking responsibility at the local level throughout the country. This is perhaps the greatest opportunity facing donor organizations.

D. Lessons Learned

The second paragraph's mention of "limited progress" up to 1991 requires challenging. The inappropriateness of development policies like the irrigation strategies which furthered expropriation of land, the Commodity Import Program which

exacerbated Somali dependence on foreign produce, and the white elephant-style infrastructure projects were all fundamental to the dissolution of Somali society.

The third paragraph's conclusion about the primary lesson again leaves out the notion that economic and security aid artificially maintained a corrupt government in which all aid was fungible.

The fourth paragraph again presents the notion that the majority of lives were saved after the military intervention, a point contradicted by the Refugee Policy Group study.

The fifth paragraph concludes correctly that the huge flow of resources to Somalia (pre- and post-war) may have exacerbated tensions. It has. Refugee aid to the northwest from 1978-1988, donor concentration in Mogadishu from 1992-94 and then in Baidoa in 1995, and the imbalance of resources to areas controlled by the Somaliland government versus those of the opposition are all examples of resources exacerbating tensions and altering power balances. The points made in the paragraph about low-level interventions and support for Somali initiatives are excellent ones and should be highlighted.

III. Program Rationale

A. Foreign Policy Objectives

The summary paragraph states that our first policy interest is to avoid another humanitarian crisis; I would substitute "try to prevent" for "avoid." The second stated policy interest is to contain the spread of instability to neighboring countries "in which we have a greater stake." This choice of words is unsavory; after propping up Barre and launching UNITAF and fighting Aidid, it seems we ought to acknowledge significant responsibility in the country's future, even if only rhetorically.

The third paragraph mentions the lack of progress on oil concessions in the absence of a national government. The stabilization of the political situation in Somaliland could result in forward progress on this issue, even in the absence of the formation of a national government in Mogadishu.

In the first paragraph of the "regional stability" section, a couple items should be flagged. Irredentist pressures have been both ways regarding Somali populations in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, not just from Somalis inside Somalia. It is also inaccurate that Somalis have "avoided direct involvement in the civil war." Ogadenis from Ethiopia have been involved in Lower Juba; Habr Awol and Garhajis from Somaliland are participants in

the Somaliland conflicts; and Kenyan Somalis at times have intervened in the Somali complex.

The second paragraph of the "regional stability" section mentions Sudanese and Libyan contacts. It is important at this juncture to note that before his death Aidid was making an attempt to introduce *Sharia* law in his territories, which may have been a sign of his desperation and lack of outside help. More than any other faction, if his successors can successfully implement *Sharia*, they might receive an increase in assistance from certain international quarters. Furthermore, it will be important to watch closely the reaction of the remnants of *Al-Itahad* after the Ethiopian government's attack.

In the first paragraph of the "Humanitarian Interests" subsection, the figure of 100,000 lives saved is used in describing the effects of UNITAF. Once again, the Refugee Policy Group study contradicts this, putting the figure nearer to one-tenth of that number. The second paragraph calls for engagement on humanitarian issues which will "guard against another crisis." This kind of engagement requires political involvement, not just humanitarian. Humanitarianism is no substitute for political engagement if the U.S. is really serious about crisis prevention.

IV. Proposed ISP

A. Linkage to Agency Goals

The second paragraph emphasizes "self-sufficiency at the community level." This is an interesting objective. Given the limited range of goods produced by most rural communities and the total reliance on markets for urban communities, it seems misplaced. Cooperation and trade should be prioritized to maximize exchange and communication between communities. Mutual dependence and reliance on neighboring communities, building on centuries-old traditions, might be encouraged.

B. Goal/Sub-Goals

Perhaps I'm misunderstanding the goal of a more self-sufficient population, but again this issue of self-sufficiency is problematic. Production increases often don't translate directly into improved self-sufficiency in such a market-oriented economy.

The fourth paragraph should be highlighted. The concept of civil institutions to be supported should include civil administrations as well as civil society organizations such as indigenous NGOs and other associations.

C. Indicators

No major population outflow: This is problematic because a population outflow would likely result from insecurity and the ISP doesn't appear to directly address this. So is this a realistic indicator of USAID success? Also, non-seasonal internal displacement is important to monitor also because these populations are more vulnerable than more easily accessed refugee populations. Plus, the same food insecurity and decreased production results from internal displacement as from refugees, and even greater strains are placed on communities hosting internally displaced populations.

Maintain pre-war crop production levels: It might be unrealistic and practically irrelevant to have national targets. Perhaps an indicator of maximized local production where the opportunities exist would be more realistic.

Increased immunization coverage: Perhaps change "pregnant women" to "women of child-bearing age," and add mortality at the end to morbidity.

Increased community contribution: One point to stress is that the purposes of various civil institutions and local administrative structures can be diverse. Some are conflict managers, some are service providers, some are regulators. It is important -- on a case-by-case basis -- to analyze the institution and the community's objectives and work with and not against them.

IV. SO 1

A. Analysis of Problem

The third paragraph states that the target groups are not identified in this SO. But vulnerability is usually a function of political targeting, so the politics of vulnerability need to be analyzed, and the winners and losers need to be identified. Vulnerability, it must be understood, results from social and political organization. This is not a technical exercise, nor should it await actual population dislocation. (For example, agencies could have foreseen and prepared for Aidid's invasion of Baidoa by decentralizing operations and making the town less attractive and their assets and local populations less vulnerable.) Famine results from a process of impoverishment and increasing vulnerability which can lead to starvation, and usually involves political aspects of vulnerability.

D. Critical Assumptions

I would assume the opposite of the first paragraph's assumption. Agencies should plan around future insecurity, and prioritize assisting communities in a process of adaptation to chronic crisis and instability.

F. Illustrative Approaches

I believe this also should address commercial relations in some way. Promoting cross-line commerce and free movement of goods is an important by-product of aid. (See Section Five, Part B of this report for more ideas.)

G. Sustainability

Sustainability should be analyzed on a region-to-region basis.

On the idea of rehabbing primary canals, can't rich farmers pay for this? It would be good to get a read-out on SCF-US' experience in this regard. I would not recommend getting involved in this, not only because wealthy farmers can indeed finance these activities, but also because we know too little about the economic and social dynamics in Lower Shabelle now, and we'd be stepping into an arena where there are lots of allegations and some evidence of forced labor or slavery.

Further on sustainability and revenue generation, it would be important to review past studies and missions which have addressed revenue issues. UNDP (Walid Musa) and UNDOS (Gian Palow) would be the places (and persons) to start with. Also, consideration should be given to incorporating a revenue generating/taxation mechanism into the social contract idea, looking at outside resources more as matching funds for locally raised resources.

A schizophrenia has emerged in the last thirty years in that Somali society is vibrant and enterprising when it comes to private commerce, but moribund and dependent when it comes to aid. Breaking these cycles will be very difficult, but business as usual will be inadequate.

H. Indicators

Regarding the point about monitoring systems: community monitoring mechanisms are more important than external approaches. Advertising what people are entitled to can build internal accountability much more than our monitoring.

On the lists of indicators under SO1, IR1 and IR2, it seems that these are all about quantifying inputs rather than analyzing results. What can be learned from this? Not much. It would be much harder to construct meaningful output-oriented indicators, but it would certainly be more useful.

V. SO 2

A. Analysis of Problem

The end of paragraph 2 states that there is no intermediate ground between emergency objectives being met or not met. This comment is not consistent with the objective of the SPO, which is partly to build capacity. It is obvious that a critical intermediate goal exists. In a chronic crisis like Somalia, the strengthening of vulnerable institutions is very important, in particular local organizations, traditional conflict management mechanisms, and local administrative structures.

Paragraph 4 repeats a problem I flagged earlier when it states that Somalis will continue to need aid as long as there is no national government. The establishment of a government will have little impact on self-reliance or social service provision within Somali society. Plus, there will be no national government anytime soon, so plans should not be contingent on that happening. Don't wait for Godot. He's not coming.

IR1: Increased availability of food aid

The statement "food assistance is either provided or it is not" is too limited. There are other relevant questions: What types of food? Who are the interlocutors, the distributors? Who monitors? Assesses? These questions can have a major impact on local capacity, empowerment and conflict prevention and mitigation. (See Section Four of my report.)

IR2: Increased availability of health services

This indicator overall is perhaps too input-driven and totally unsustainable, particularly with no local and national counterpart. Public health education, therefore, ought to be stressed and prevention prioritized over input-driven strategies. Can the donor community afford to expand a totally externally controlled and underwritten system? Who will ever pick this up locally? New forms of health care provision need to be explored, because conventional models are completely unsustainable and are not organic. Perhaps Somalia should not receive the usual basket of health interventions. It is the conventional system which breaks

down in crisis. Non-conventional health approaches to populations in need should be debated.

Such an approach might include:

- a) Social contract: find out what locals are doing and what they will commit to do and support these things through resources, training and capacity building;
- b) Local revenue raising: there needs to be some element of local financial commitment;
- c) Stop the white elephants: end all financing for hospitals or unsustainable systems which aren't receiving community support in the form of voluntary labor and other contributions;
- d) Emphasize public health: use resources for public health campaigns and systems in a prevention strategy, implemented by trained Somali personnel;
- e) Stop the drug pushing: alter relationships with agencies which are emphasizing huge inputs, and encourage health spending in an overall strategy of prevention that builds capacity to locally initiate basic public health programming.

F. Illustrative Approaches

Health sector: Donors should guard against too much Nairobi collaboration and not enough field collaboration.

Identification of Vulnerable Groups: There is a need to address political vulnerability, as I mentioned before.

G. Sustainability

Capacity building of Somali institutions is more important than minimal cost-recovery programs. Institution building is sustainability enhancement.

H. Indicators

I'll make the same comment as in the previous section on indicators: that perhaps more output/result-oriented indicators should be developed.

VI. Special Program Objective

A. Analysis of Problem

In the second paragraph, the movement toward *Sharia* law in nearly every region of Somalia should be acknowledged.

The third paragraph asserts that non-governmental activities have been destroyed by the war. The opposite is true. Siad Barre's regime had destroyed these institutions, and the vacuum produced by the war and its aftermath have provided room for genuine local initiatives to emerge, particularly after UNOSOM's departure.

The fourth paragraph points out that the private sector is constricted by the absence of a banking system, but it should also be noted that it thrives in the absence of regulation and taxation.

The fifth paragraph picks up the difficult issue of employment creation. Since public employment strategies could never be more than an unsustainable drop in the bucket, the strategy's interest in private sector initiatives is on target. Wealth creation opportunities abound, and any assistance to facilitate these will increase livelihood alternatives in the country.

The sixth paragraph again repeats the assertion that civil society has been destroyed in the last five years. I repeat that the opposite is true. Siad Barre destroyed civil society initiatives, and their rebirth is at an embryonic stage. Our interventions should be careful not to hinder their development. At the end of this paragraph, a pessimistic note is sounded about developing reasonable benchmarks in this area. What about creating particular outputs, such as is the local authority or NGO doing x, y or z?

B. Intermediate Results

Regarding a possible IR on conflict resolution, I would argue that conflict management at the local level is a very attainable and realistic objective. There are a number of candidates with which to partner or processes to support:

1. The Center for Strategic Initiatives of Women (based in Washington) has an active project which is promoting conflict management training and institution building.
2. The nascent peace process in Somaliland, initiated by the Habr Ja'alo and Habr Yunis communities, could be supported.
3. The Somaliland Peace Committee is another potential vehicle for supporting conflict management.

4. The peace process between the Absame and Harti in Kismayo and Lower Juba might be supported with small amounts of food and transportation assistance.

5. Perhaps a small umbrella grant could provide very small inputs and technical assistance to hopeful peace initiatives and organizations, and conflict management training and networking opportunities.

Some Somalis suggest providing conflict management training or workshops for those that are already engaged in peacemaking, namely key elders who negotiate agreements between communities. This training should preferably take place in the field whenever possible.

There are a number of initiatives within civil society in Somalia and Somaliland which support long-term peace-building. The Somaliland Journalists Association is interested in promoting peace and justice issues. The organization Guardians of Civil Liberty is actively supporting ways to strengthen the justice system in Somaliland. Various women's initiatives for peace deserve an audience. Oxfam-UK has initiated a dialogue among civil society representatives in Somalia. A percentage of donor assistance should go to support the building of civil institutions that will undergird such long-term peace-building.

Demobilization and demining must return to the aid community's agenda. There are perhaps 15,000 government troops and thousands of opposition militia currently active in Somaliland. The creation of viable livelihoods for a percentage of these men is a prerequisite for lasting peace. In Somalia, the number of militia is unknown. With regard to the thousands of mines and other unexploded ordnance lurking beneath Somaliland's and Somalia's soil, many lessons have been learned about how to administer demining programs, and such initiatives should be undertaken in consultation with those community leaders steering the various peace processes forward.

C. Activities

Some suggestions: Regarding the local administrative structures, given the constraints outlined in the second paragraph, some kind of secondment of trained personnel to these nascent institutions, especially trained Somalis in the diaspora, might be appropriate.

Another possibility is the creation of a small umbrella grant for local administrative structures, maybe containing a matching grant component adding to resources raised by the local community.

E. Commitment/Capacity of Other Partners

There should be common capacitation objectives for all agencies through the SACB.

F. Illustrative Approaches

The local administration studies by UNDOS referred to in the first paragraph should be shortened and resources should be directed to the local structures themselves. Furthermore, capacitation of local structures should be an objective of all programming.

Referencing the CARE Umbrella Grant, it is important to expand this model geographically and catalogue and share lessons learned about institutional development and capacity building.

G. Sustainability

I would agree with the bold-face questions at the end. It is highly doubtful whether the local administrative structures will be able to raise revenue collection.

Programming Options**A. Implementation Issues**

Point One: There is a great deal of opportunity at the local level to support local conflict management. The suggestion of a Special Envoy raises the stakes and the level of engagement inevitably to the warlords. At this point, any national government initiative which emerges will no doubt have the SNA behind it or violently opposed to it, which makes it a non-starter as far as U.S. objectives go as articulated in this ISP.

SECTION THREE:

THE SOMALI CONFLICT CONTEXT

Ironically, it is not too long ago that Somalia was constantly at war with its neighbors to unify Somalis living across internationally recognized borders. Now, what was once known as Somalia is chronically at war within, dividing and sub-dividing along regional and identity lines. This section will simply provide a framework in which continual civil conflict in Somalia can be analyzed. This section is provided on the hypothesis that a better understanding of the conflicts in the Greater Horn will allow a more informed integrated strategic planning process to unfold. Both regional and internal dynamics are reviewed here.

Regional Dynamics

Long before Siad Barre's militaristic pursuit of Somali irredentist claims, regions bordering Somalia have been unstable. Colonial boundary divisions left Somali populations on both sides of the borders of four countries—Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia—as well as one unrecognized one, the Republic of Somaliland. The Somali remain the most isolated minority in Ethiopia and Kenya, in part because they retain strong ties to the Somali Republic.

Major wars and minor skirmishes have been fought to expand or maintain the Somali state, including the Ogaden War in 1977-78, the bombing of Hargeisa in 1990, the Shifta War on the Kenya-Somali border, and, following the 1988 peace agreement signed between Siad Barre and Mengistu, a surprise attack from Ethiopia by the Somali National Movement on northern Somalia, setting into motion a chain reaction which culminated in the 1991 overthrow of Barre.

Competition over lucrative trade routes constitutes an additional point of contention in the region. Ethiopia export options include Assab in Eritrea, Djibouti, and Berbera in Somaliland. Trade syndicates that operate in the region aggressively compete to route trade through the most profitable avenues available. Governments are heavily involved in the competition. One of the principal economic issues in Region Five in Ethiopia, for example, is control over trade routes for goods from the region exported through Berbera. Conflict in Mogadishu and Lower Juba is driven by similar issues. In all of the countries with ports (Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and unrecognized Somaliland), a port is the primary revenue-generating asset.

◆ *The Ogaden*

Ogadeni populations in what is now called the Somali Region of Ethiopia (Region Five) have historically fought to return their territory to Somalia's control. But the current ethnic federalist system in Ethiopia has added a new political variable, and the currently dominant regional faction (the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League -- the ESDL) is exploiting current arrangements to consolidate political control of the region while expanding its leaders' and supporters' trade ties with Djibouti and Somaliland. The previous governing group (the Ogadeni National Liberation Front -- the ONLF) is fragmenting along both sides of the debate about whether to join the political process in Ethiopia or fight for independence and eventual merging with Somalia.

In 1994, a low-intensity conflict arose between the government of Ethiopia and the ONLF over control of the regional government and the right of secession. The ONLF used guerilla tactics, while EPRDF forces employed counter-insurgency methods. In 1995, the non-Ogadeni ESDL formed the regional government after disputed elections, largely without a divided ONLF's participation. The ESDL has also since divided.

Large blocs of ONLF supporters are effectively outside the regional government. It is too early to tell whether these politics of exclusion will destabilize the region, with ripple effects possible in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Somaliland. With their independence aspirations blocked, will the ONLF slowly reengage in the political process, or will they return to the bush to fight another round of guerilla warfare? It is another question altogether whether the independence issue creates conflict, or whether the real fuel for fighting comes from the contest of regional political power and the patronage, access to aid and resources, and control of lucrative trade routes that can come from holding the levers of governance.

In July 1996, the Chairman of the ESDL, Abdul Majid Hussein, was shot six times in Addis Ababa. *Al-Itahad*, a radical Islamic organization operating in Region Five, claimed responsibility. *Africa Confidential* reports that *Al-Itahad* is receiving military training in Luuq in the Gedo Region of Somalia, and that the ONLF has signed a military and political agreement with the Oromo Liberation Front in Ethiopia.¹ Because of these and other dynamics, the Ethiopian Government launched cross-border incursions in August 1996 to determine the extent to which *Al-Itahad* is cooperating with other Islamic groups in the region and to destroy the organization's bases in Gedo Region.

◆ ***Djibouti-Somaliland***

In 1995, numerous clashes occurred along the Djibouti-Somaliland border between the Somaliland government army and the United Somali Front militia, an Issa organization. The Issa control the government in Djibouti. When tensions escalated in early August 1995, fighting focused on control of a nine-square-kilometer area claimed by Issa pastoralists in western Somaliland who demand regional autonomy based on the peace agreement signed by all subclans in Boraama in 1993. They are accusing the government of violating the peace charter by attempting to set up a regional administration controlled by the central government which would marginalize the Issa in that area in favor of the Isaaq and Gadabursi.

Djibouti has supported the opposition in Somaliland to undermine Mohamed Egal's government there for clan and economic reasons. The Issa are the dominant clan in Djibouti, and predominate in the Somaliland opposition. Economically, Djibouti is competing with Berbera for import-export traffic into Ethiopia. Djibouti has supported the opposition to undermine stability in Somaliland, although as of mid-1996 it appears the assistance is very small if it even continues at all.

◆ ***Somaliland***

Since the region's declaration of independence in May 1991, two civil wars have shattered any momentum towards an international referendum and concerted nation-building. Over a quarter of a million Somalilanders remain refugees in Ethiopia, with countless others internally displaced by continued fighting. An economy racked by unemployment and hyper-inflation furthers human misery. As the National Charter which has governed at least part of Somaliland since mid-1993 expires, the various parties to the ongoing conflict are pursuing potentially contradictory options which could lead to renewed war or perhaps lay the groundwork for genuine reconciliation.

The Somaliland government's span of control is firm only in Isaaq/Habr Awol areas, principally Hargeisa, Boraama and Berbera. The Issa/Garhajis opposition responded violently to the government's expulsions of an Iidagale militia from the Hargeisa airport in October 1994, sparking a new phase of the civil war. Broader grievances have sustained the rebellion, including the opposition's contention that President Mohammed Ibrahim Egal's government violated the 1993 peace agreement and National Charter by shelving regional autonomy, appointing regional governors, and re-centralizing authority.

There are numerous reasons for the resumption of civil war in Somaliland:

** a deep personal rivalry between Egal and Tuur, who never forgave Egal for ousting him as President during the Boraama Conference (described below);

** an historical legacy of broader competition for power between the Habr Awol and the traditionally dominant Garhajis sub-clans of the Isaaq.;

** the belief by the Garhajis members of the opposition that the wealthier Habr Awol are accruing more economic benefits the more entrenched their authority becomes, particularly through the monopolization of key trading routes and the structure of tariffs and taxes which puts smaller traders at a distinct disadvantage;

** a perception by the Garhajis opposition of government bias on the issues of regional autonomy and political appointments;

** disputes over other divisive issues of governance, including the unaddressed issue of control of the airports and Berbera port, with the economic and patronage interests which hang in the balance; the centralization of power in the presidency; and the composition of parliament, which the Garhajis opposition feels is stacked against them;

** the politicization of the demobilization process, which the Garhajis opposition alleges should have been the responsibility of each region but became a centralized process in which only certain groups were demobilized, creating perceived power imbalances. Some of these "demobilized" groups have become key militias in the opposition;

** the politicization of police and army recruitment, which opposition members say favors the Habr Awol;

** the opposition's accusations that the government favors the Al An'as faction of the Somali National Movement (SNM), which was antagonistic towards Tuur's first Somaliland administration;

** the growing phenomenon of militia membership as a semi-permanent livelihood. The Iidagale militia which was forced out of the airport in 1994 -- sparking the resumption of civil war -- is a case in point. They perceived the control of the airport as their only potential income. Realistically, the needs of militia members must be addressed for peace to come in Somaliland.

Strong patterns of cross-border economic exchange between elite economic groups in Somalia, Somaliland, Djibouti, and Ethiopia fuel the Garhajis effort to overthrow the Egal government, which has "cornered the market" on many trading opportunities. Current

links between Somalis, especially between those in the Somali Region of Ethiopia and Egal's commercial allies, are probably as strong and lucrative as at any time since the irredentist heyday of the 1970s. Conflicting economic and political ideologies held by an assortment of Machiavellian characters has produced a protracted, sometimes violent struggle for political power and economic control.

Conflict Within Somalia

Somalia is chaotic, but not chaos. It is a society without a state, but not, as is so often reported, "anarchy." Somalia today is a mosaic of fluid, highly localized polities, some based on traditional authority, others reflecting hybrid arrangements. These are stepping in to fill the vacuum created by the prolonged collapse of the state and perform many essential day-to-day governance functions.²

The ascendance of these local polities in villages, urban neighborhoods, and the pastoral range may only be a transient feature of the Somali landscape until a central state authority is revived. Yet it is much more likely that they are a glimpse of the future of governance in Somalia. With all indicators suggesting that efforts to re-establish a central Somali state will continue to meet with frustration, what we call "Somalia" will remain for the foreseeable future this collection of diverse and overlapping localized polities that collectively add up to something less than a conventional state.

The challenge to the international community—non-governmental organizations, multilateral donors, states, and the UN—is to learn to work constructively with these localized polities rather than against them. This will not be easy. Many international organizations are designed to interact with and through states alone, and will have to adopt flexible new rules of engagement with stateless Somalia. Moreover, the local polities emerging throughout Somalia are fluid in structure and authority, not easily amenable to the needs of donors and states for fixed and recognizable structures of authority.

The State of the Civil War³

Somalia's vicious civil war is thought to have caused the deaths of a quarter to a half million people. The primary legacy of this war is the geographical realignment of many Somali population groups with forced displacement, extrajudicial execution, gang rape, and asset transfer of land, livestock, and grain reserves based primarily on sub-clan affiliation.

Some combatants in the Somali civil war have taken to the conflict's sidelines, leaving only a few groups actively fighting throughout the country, excepting Somaliland. The main potential locus of military activity centers on Mogadishu, in a Hawiye turf war that involves Abgal, Hawaaqle, Habr Gedir and Murosade militias and has seen fragmentation within the Habr Gedir.

There are significant fissures within each of these four Hawiye groups. A number of internal disputes could cause today's situation in Somalia to explode, including:

- Competition between traditional elites, which enjoyed years of ascendancy dating well before the fall of Siad Barre, and Somalia's version of the "new rich," groups who have profited greatly from the conflict-ridden last half-decade;
- The war within Habr Gedir Sa'ad between Osman Ato and the late Mohammed Farah Aidid and his successors;
- Splits between Habr Gedir Sa'ad leaders and Habr Gedir Ayr leaders;
- An increasingly important Islamist movement;

For the most part, Darod sub-clans have stayed out of this intra-Hawiye fratricide, watching the internal fragmentation with glee.

There are also additional potential flashpoints:

- In Galgaduud in central Somalia, between the Habr Gedir and the Marehan in that area;
- In Hiran Region between the Habr Gedir and the Hawaadle;
- In Lower Juba between a number of different sub-clans.

Bay Region will perpetually remain a possible target of occupation either by the Habr'Gedir or the Marehan, who border the Rahanweyne of Bay Region on the southeast and northwest.

In September 1995, General Aidid and 600 militia captured the town of Baidoa in what was the General's biggest offensive in two years. The Leyson is the Rahanweyne sub-clan that emerged as the dominant Rahanweyne faction during and after the civil war. The Leyson formed the Rahanweyne Resistance Army (RRA) in response to Aidid's takeover of Baidoa, and in October 1995 launched a counter-attack on Baidoa which Aidid's militia repulsed. In January 1996, Aidid's militia took Xoddur from the RRA, driving nearly two-thirds of the town's 100,000 residents into the surrounding countryside. Although probably not militarily powerful enough to dislodge the late Aidid's forces outright, guerrilla resistance tactics and support from Aidid's rivals

means constant instability in Bay Region for the immediate future.

Superior firepower means the Habr Gedir may inevitably dominate militarily in the short run. Before his death, General Aidid's self-proclaimed government tried to formalize an army. There are many war veterans—the Ogadeni war, cross-border skirmishes with Kenya, the civil war, and the war with UNOSOM—with experience with a variety of modes of warfare—insurgency, counter-insurgency, and urban guerrilla warfare. Many were trained in Cuba.

The militias are heavily armed, thanks to UNOSOM. One Somali elder remarked, "UNOSOM came to save us from the warlords, and ended up aligning with them." Faction leaders benefitted greatly from rents, security contracts, employment, currency transactions and a variety of other fringe benefits courtesy of the UNOSOM cash cow. One estimate puts the number of technicals at the disposal of Aidid and Ato at roughly 160. "There weren't that many in the entire country in 1992," according to one long-time analyst.

Nevertheless, most observers feel that the Habr Gedir are not strong enough or sufficiently united to defeat the Abgal. They are exposed on many fronts and spread thinly throughout the south of the country. It is conceivable that no one will win the war, ever; a state of low intensity conflict could continue indefinitely.

The Habr Gedir militias have taken some key towns (Merca, Baidoa, Xoddur, Gelib and Belet Weyne, the last of which they have since lost) and have expropriated land and homes since 1991, principally in Hiran, Benadir, Bay and Lower Shabelle Regions. The full extent is unmeasurable. These areas are not necessarily "controlled" by Aidid, but are certainly subject to his influence.

Osman Ato was a key player in Habr Gedir expansionism, formerly paying for the khat for the militia in Belet Weyne and controlling some of the farms on which Habr Gedir militia subsist in Lower Juba and Shabelle. Ato and Aidid's son continue to vie for Habr Gedir leadership. Ato has some support because of the benefits his commercial interests bring. Until his death, Aidid retained his importance as a mobilizer for defensive or offensive military purposes as well as his historic leadership of the Habr Gedir dating as far back as during the struggle against Siad Barre. Aidid was also the best organized political/military leader in Somalia today.

The Habr Gedir now control access to the main road arteries: Mogadishu to Baidoa and to Kismayo, and the roads along the Juba and Shabelle Rivers up to the Ethiopian border and down almost to Kismayo. The Juba, Bay and Shabelle areas under Habr Gedir influence help feed Mogadishu South and provide tax (check-points), extortion, and export money. Control of key airports allows them to control much of the khat traffic. Observers fear that if the Habr Gedir lose control of or access to ports, they will move further inland to control internal production and trade more fully. As of now, if they can accrue jurisdiction over functioning airport and port facilities in Mogadishu, they will be able to dominate a significant segment of the import-export trade, and tax much of what they don't control.

If General Aidid's son was to go back to war, he would have the confidence of some big merchants, mainly from Nimaale and Ayante sub-clans of Sa'ad, commanding his faction of the Habr Gedir and many mercenaries. Aidid's rival, Osman Ato, has his strengths in heavy weapons and technicals, his membership in a large and influential subclan, and his position as former manager for the US Conoco Oil Company.⁴

Violence and Human Rights Violations

Lawlessness puts the Bantu communities and other minorities at increased risk of parasitic looting by the *mooryaan* (young bandits or youth gang members). Extortion is now a way of livelihood for the *mooryaan* and a fact of life for the Bantu and other farming communities. They use classic mafia rackets—"pay us to protect you from us."

Villages are randomly looted. Looting is certainly more frequent than before the war, but much less than in its height in 1991-92. This extortion is probably the equivalent of pre-war government taxation. There are cases of forced labor and forced displacement, and human rights organizations have found that rape is also frequent, although the exact scale is difficult to measure. Forced labor and looting are pure opportunism by the *mooryaan*. Forced displacement is part of a decades-long pattern of more powerful groups expropriating the best farmland along the rivers.

In the last year, forced displacement has taken many forms. The Abgal routed the Murosade out of the Medina neighborhood of Mogadishu, and the Murosade in turn burned many of the Abgal homes in neighboring Bermuda. But most of the displacement in Somalia was caused by Habr Gedir advances, pushing Biyaamal leaders (bureaucrats, elders, and the sultan) out of Merca; the Hawaadle from Mogadishu South, Belet Weyne, Bulo Berti, Jalalaxi, and Lower Shabelle; and Rahanweyne leaders from Baidoa.

The displaced are those who present a military or political challenge to the Habr Gedir. For example, when the Hawaadle attacked Habr Gedir-occupied Belet Weyne on December 26, 1994, the latter responded by destroying two Hawaadle villages, Badeere and Bowholle in Hiran Region.

Some Bantu have been pushed from the west to the east side of the Juba River, primarily by Ogadeni *mooryaan* looking to expand their territory. One official observed, "Bantu vulnerability lies in the lack of control of the militias, who do the looting."

A third to half of the Bantu population has disappeared from the Juba Valley; they either died or were displaced. The Bantu also have less employment opportunities than before the war. In the Lower Shabelle, Bantu workers earn somewhere between 5,000 and 20,000 Somali Shillings (\$1-\$4) per day working for the plantation owners who sell to Dole and Somalifruit, the two multinational companies buying fruit in Lower Shabelle. In the social structure of Somalia, the Bantu have always suffered deep-rooted discrimination akin to a *de facto* apartheid situation.

The Rahanweyne in Gedo are permanently displaced by default. They were displaced originally by the 1991-92 fighting. When they returned they found that the Marehan had taken over their lands as part of their drive to acquire the best farmland next to the Juba River all the way down to Bua'ale in Middle Juba. The Rahanweyne often leave their women and children in the displaced camps in Bardera (perhaps 10,000 displaced around Bardera) while the men go cultivate: Rahanweyne families must diversify income because they are now farming more marginal lands.

This vulnerability can shift among warring factions. If a group fights and loses, it immediately becomes vulnerable to the victor's repercussions. More broadly, when intense fighting erupts, everyone becomes vulnerable as market structures collapse and livelihoods are destroyed.

The clan structure is the only human rights protection in Somalia today. Most are armed, and the potential for clan retaliation causes some restraint—the MAD principle (Mutually Assured Destruction) writ small. Large armies engaged in major territorial advances caused the 1990-1992 human rights crisis by preying on defenseless subsistence agro-pastoral populations who could not retaliate. While this same factor still leaves some communities with no domestic "human rights defense," some have armed themselves (Rahanweyne), and others provide a useful function (Bantu labor), so there are built-in restraints governing the human rights situation in Somalia today.

Political Devolution

Politically, statelessness still has a constituency: those who profit from an economy of plunder, Mafia-like extortion rackets, and various other unlawful economic dealings; militia leaders whose power base rests on conquest and fear; the *mooryaan*, members of the militia whose status would decline if a government enforced the rule of law; and entire sub-clan groups who have occupied valuable real estate in Mogadishu and the inter-riverine areas, and who might forfeit ill-gotten gains if a peace agreement involved the return of stolen property.

Somalia has become a collection of "town-states," some of which have forged loose security arrangements with each other. The decision-making apparatus in these town-states is a balancing act between traditional authorities, merchants, and politico-military figures—in one agency representative's words, "An informal network of elders, militia, and money men." Another observer calls Kismayo "organized, stable, anarchy."⁵

The soap opera of national government formation continues. After Osman Ato claimed the chair of the SNA, General Aidid announced the formation of a government. A national army and tax system followed within a month. Ali Mahdi and other faction leaders of course objected, and continue to try to establish their own rival government.

There are no real examples of power-sharing at the local level. Power is pure: the Marehan in Gedo Region; the Hawaadle in much of Hiran Region; the Harti in Kismayo; the Ogadeni in Afmadow; the Habr Gedir in Lower Shabelle and Mogadishu South; the Abgal in Mogadishu North and Middle Shabelle; the Majerteen in the northeast.

The main forms of exercised, organized authority at the local and regional level are the provision of security and dispute mediation. In many places, there is insufficient will—or an inability—to organize anything beyond these two functions. Where there are airports and ports, some kind of structure is in place to administer and fight over the spoils.

On another level, there is also a balancing act between younger "anarchists" and older "traditionalists." One elder commented despondently, "The strongest person in Somalia is the young man in the bush with a gun." Another agency representative wistfully stated, "I'm increasingly coming to realize that the elders belong to another generation, another story."

Yet for every story of elder disempowerment is one of elder reempowerment. Many Somalis argue that the traditional authorities are gaining influence: the sultans, elders, *ugases*,

mullahs, imams and sheikhs are making a comeback. Again, Somalia is a mosaic of realities different in every locale. There are ongoing attempts to improve self-government; the leadership and balance of power is in constant evolution.

The militia leaders are strongest when attacking or under attack, when mobilizing for defense and offense. Peace erodes their usefulness to the community, and hence their authority. The faction leaders dominate more than control certain areas. They find it easy to mobilize but difficult to sustain.

Ironically, Aidid may have lost the most by UNOSOM's departure: UNOSOM played the role of outsider which unified his SNA and Habr Gedir. The series of debilitating UNOSOM attacks in South Mogadishu during the search for General Aidid between June and October 1993 created bitter resentment against the UN among the Habr Gedir population in that area; nearly every family lost a relative in the fighting. One particular incident—the UNOSOM attack on the Abdi house in July—served to undercut growing internal opposition to Aidid and solidified his leadership under an anti-UN banner. Cracks in the Habr Gedir front which were quite evident prior to those attacks took over a year to reappear.

The militia themselves are a wild card. With no demobilization plans in place and no employment or education prospects on the horizon, many young men see little alternative to their current occupation. One observer notes, "The militias are independent, autonomous, opportunistic and politically naive. They hop on the bandwagon that serves their needs." And how deeply have they permeated the social structure? One Somali woman sardonically replied, "Every sub-sub-sub-clan has a militia."

Historical Roots of War

Pastoral Marginalization: Conflict surrounding rangelands in the 1980s contributed to the formation of the three main militia organizations responsible for the overthrow of Siad Barre: the SNM, SPM, and USC.⁶

Pastoral society has always been economically stratified with a few extremely wealthy herders. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, a new phenomenon emerged in which small herders were unable to sustain themselves and became impoverished. A number of the men that have joined the USC and SPM were once impoverished pastoralists.

Prior to 1985, the prosperity accompanying the commercialization of the central rangelands was enough to absorb many of the tensions that arose. The onset of the 1987 drought brought a

drastic decrease in prosperity. This turnaround enabled the USC to mobilize and create insurrection and lawlessness.⁷

Poor herders' agro-pastoralism is a direct result of impoverishment and, more specifically, the rapid commercialization and monetization of pastoral society that has brought prosperity to many herders, but has left poor herders subject to severe strain.⁸

Livestock trade can be a source of conflict. Somalia has few ports as the main focus of economic resources, and these have become centers for political competition.

Resources: Conflict over land ownership played a key role in the outbreak of war and famine in Somalia. Other resources are in demand in addition to agricultural land. These include pastures, water points, urban property, and markets.

Although resources have been contested in Somalia for centuries, the race for southern Somalia's resources intensified by the early 1970s. Rights to land and water were expropriated using the levers of state authority, assisted by the 1975 Land Registration Act which made all collective land state property. The government nationalized large areas in Middle Shabelle, Lower Shabelle, Hiran and Gedo for distribution to Ogadeni displaced and others favored by the Barre regime.

Traditionally, farmers owned land collectively. Rights to land pertained for all members of a community, defined as a subclan or lineage. During the period of modern farming, large areas of farmland in the Lower Juba and Shabelle were confiscated for Italian banana plantations. In the 1950s, land alienation included Somali entrepreneurs. In the 1960s, the ruling elite continued to gather land. In the 1980s, the 1975 land reform was used as a pretext for land alienation. At this time, as in the past, land was acquired by a mixture of purchase, bribery, threat, and violent seizure.

Land values soared in the 1980s due to inflation-driven land investment, decreasing exports of livestock, investment capital from remittances, the end of grain price controls, and growing urban demand for commodities produced in the interriverine region.

The government of Siad Barre concentrated on controlling fixed assets of land and water within the country, partly through the 1975 Land Registration Act. As land increased in value, vast numbers of weapons from the government's arsenal were turned on domestic enemies that further militarized the process of resource control. The land war was further intensified by urbanization and the drastic population growth in urban centers.

Conflict Context as of August 1996

There are three areas in which conflict is chronic: Bay, Benadir, and the Juba Valley. In Bay Region, the Rahanweyne Resistance Army (RRA) has not been successful in their attempts to recapture Baidoa. In Mogadishu, conflict continues on three fronts: Medina, where SNA militias and Moussa Sudi's forces confront each other; Afgoye Road, which the younger Aidid and Ato contest; and various spots along the Green Line dividing the SNA's and SSA's militias. The Juba Valley situation is slowly stabilizing, as the threat of any Ogadeni attack diminishes.

The "banana wars" in Merca and Shalambod between militias paid by Dole (American) and Somalifruit (Italian) have shown how quickly one can take control of a productive plantation zone and their adjacent ports and reestablish business in exports.

SECTION FOUR:**CONFLICT PREVENTION IN AID STRATEGIES:
MINIMIZING AID'S CONTRIBUTION TO CONFLICT**

(NOTE: In response to a question about how these issues might be internalized by USAID staff, I would suggest a half-day or a day session with USG and NGO staff which deals with the linkages between aid, conflict and conflict prevention. Sections Four and Five might be used as a resource material for such a workshop, or Mary Anderson's latest work, "Do No Harm," would also be useful.)

With less resources and greater expectations, USG resources will have to be more strategically employed in the future to continue to be relevant to the Somali situation. Part of being more strategic involves incorporating conflict and crisis prevention principles consciously into conventional aid programming.

There are at least ten aspects of aid programming which -- if reoriented -- hold the potential for minimizing harmful conflict-sustaining side effects of aid in Somalia. The following principles could be incorporated into operating guidelines for contractors and NGO partners of USAID. At a minimum, USAID and partner agencies should: deepen analysis in planning and diversify information sources; do proper and independent assessments of needs; study options for modalities of access; be astute and flexible in the types of aid provided; study impacts of targeting and distribution methods; standardize costs and minimize extortion and hyper-inflation; commit to independent monitoring and evaluation; integrate human rights objectives; coordinate at all levels; and prioritize engagement and capacity building.

1. Deepen Analysis in Planning and Diversify Information Sources

Poor or short-sighted planning at the outset of an emergency response can dictate to a great degree the extent to which negative impacts result from that response. Questions about the effect of Somali conflicts on aid operations and the effect of aid operations on the conflicts need to be dealt with at the planning stage. Relief planners must broaden the scope of their attention from how operations reach at-risk persons to how they impact the economic and/or military strategies of all parties -- those who suffer directly or indirectly, and those that can alleviate, benefit from, and help to create famine and displacement. Planners must think in terms not of commodities but of winners and losers.⁹

One way to encourage better agency planning in Somalia is to build more extensive guidelines and requirements into Request-for-Proposals (RFPs). There is a wide disparity between what different donors require in proposals they solicit (as well as a wide variation in quality of planning among the agencies).

Having ethnographic or sociological expertise on call within an agency can assist that agency in developing population profiles of Somali communities before an emergency erupts. Risk-mapping with all of the various ingredients can make emergency response much more efficient and reduce mistakes which help sustain conflict. Throughout the response to a complex emergency, the development of a solid information system is critical. In the case of the situation of Somalia, according to Walid Musa of the UN Coordination Unit in Somalia, "The information system is the strategy."¹⁰

2. Do Proper and Independent Assessment of Needs

One of the principal culprits in creating an environment for easy diversion of aid in Somalia (and thus buttressing the predatory economy) is when population figures are inflated, a function of poor or inadequate assessment. This is of course compounded by the lack of accurate census data in Somalia to begin with. The proper collection of data is critical, especially in situations of mass concentrations of refugees or internally displaced people. Insufficient or simplistic assessments -- especially those that don't properly factor the effect of conflict on local economies -- are another weak link in the aforementioned chain of inconsistent accountability.

Another cause of aid feeding conflict in Somalia is that assessments normally do not uncover the entire food economy, especially the unofficial markets that are created by stolen commodities. These economic channels need to be understood. Where do the commodities go? Who sells them? Who gets the money? Who else benefits? Agencies must work out the hidden links.

Decisions agencies make about the deployment and utilization of resources can have profound impacts on local economies and local power structures. Ignorance of these structures -- even when resulting from a misguided sense of do-good neutrality -- is inexcusable. Assessment models which don't uncover these economic circles are inadequate for war situations.

Agencies have to be open to the data which empirical assessments produce. In Somaliland, some agencies found that the majority of civilians displaced by the resumption of conflict in 1994 were able to fend for themselves, and a major relief effort might add additional fuel to the civil war's fire. Not doing anything but

active monitoring may be the most helpful response in some situations.

3. Study Options for Modalities of Access

The various methods of negotiating and ensuring access for aid to Somalia can play an important role in minimizing aid's contribution to the sustenance of conflict. The access framework can be negotiated through humanitarian diplomacy, access can be achieved through cross-border operations in defiance of sovereignty, or it can be ensured through military or commercial means. It can go by road, rail, barge, air, or even donkey path. These distribution modalities are rarely looked at for who they empower, or for their sociological and economic ramifications. This section addresses the transportation of assistance from the point of origin to the town or village level; the transfer of commodities from that point to the end recipients will be covered in the section on targeting and distribution methods.

The search for more secure and less militarized channels to bring commodities into Somalia has led agencies to increasingly utilize commercial channels. WFP has sold commodities to Somali merchants in Mombasa, contracted them to transport the goods to targeted sites, where WFP buys back the commodities. A variation on this theme of commercializing aid deliveries is to directly contract merchants (or private cooperatives) to buy commodities and transport them to their destination of distribution, allowing the merchants roughly a ten percent profit margin, payable upon receipt of goods at the end destination. "Instead of sixty percent being ripped off, we could have ten percent mark-ups," asserts a European donor official. "Merchants have all their own arrangements," says David Neff, country director of CARE-Somalia. "The salient point is that the commodities belong to individuals."¹¹ A prominent Somali merchant agrees: "If WFP comes, the militias will loot. If the bags say 'Gift of the USA,' they will be looted. But if the goods are in the possession of businessmen, they will be safe. Businessmen will pay for security and make deals to move."

The security of the goods are ensured principally by the deterrence afforded by the certainty of clan retribution. For example, when a Habr Gedir militia looted a Rahanweyne (Leyson) businessman in Mogadishu in June 1995, the Leyson captured five Habr Gedir trucks, and held them until compensation was given. "The days of agencies controlling distributions are over," says Ali Salad Hassan of UNDP-Somalia.¹² Willet Weeks agrees: "Greater reliance on market-based solutions and commercial channels will be more effective than messy direct distributions."¹³

Of course, no method is a panacea. While this approach reduces the number of armed men employed by agencies for security as well as reducing diversion, it can empower merchants who are the financiers of particular warlords. Agencies must be very careful to understand and/or avoid cartels which try to manipulate markets and bring malnutrition levels up in order to increase the international response, and hence their profits. In some contexts, agencies will have to choose their poison.

Monetization is also utilized as a method of getting a diversified set of commodities into the market, as well as raising local currency for small-scale rehabilitation projects. Monetization is an inappropriate response when the purchasing power of affected populations has collapsed. Monetization also requires in-depth understanding of the commercial networks in a society, and a reasonable analysis of how monetized commodities will effect markets.

The limits of monetization in terms of inadequate purchasing power are seen in mid-1995 studies in Bay Region in Somalia conducted by AICF. The studies found that the global malnutrition rate for children 6-29 months of age was 25.7%, and only 16% of families had access to food on the market. The study concluded: "In view of the good sorghum harvests in the last two seasons, ... the precarious nutritional situation in the area could be partly due to the lack of variation in diets, caused by the population's lack of income and their inability to purchase other foodstuffs and sources of nutrition on the markets."¹⁴

The diversification of entry points for emergency supplies -- especially employing cross-border initiatives -- is a strategy which can reduce the unintended empowering of a particular authority. Utilizing various cross-border channels and/or smaller ports (or even beach landings, as in the case of ICRC in Somalia in 1992) can lessen the dependence agencies have on particular large-scale extortion networks, but may create smaller ones. In addition, diversification may not be feasible logistically, topographically, or economically.

In situations of regional instability and interrelated conflict across borders, the response should obviously be framed as regionally as possible. Staff from the same agencies can have totally different perceptions of common problems across borders. Quite often, the available principles and conventions are not applicable to these complex regional emergencies.

For example, the status of refugees and internally displaced persons is a false dichotomy, especially in regions where borders divide identity groups. Although normally these two categories of displaced are treated differently in terms of assistance and protection (primarily due to the distinction created by UNHCR's mandate), on the border of Somaliland and Region Five (the Somali

Region of Ethiopia, popularly known as the Ogaden) some agencies have refused to engage in a conventional refugee program for populations which had moved from Somaliland to Region Five. "We looked at this population as if they were displaced on both sides of the border, so as to not draw people artificially out of their home country," says a UN consultant.¹⁵

The Greater Horn of Africa Initiative formulates a regional framework as its starting point. But agencies usually don't cross borders with ease.

The root causes and solutions to the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons are often the same. In 1992, UNHCR and a handful of NGOs operating in the Somali refugee camps in northeast Kenya went rapidly to a cross border operation to contain refugee flows and prevent refugee camps from becoming lighthouses for affected populations in both countries. Minimizing dislocation should be a primary objective of access frameworks. As discussed earlier, displaced populations are more easily manipulated by warleaders, and subsistence economies which more directly support traditional and civilian leadership are undermined by dislocation.

4. Be Astute and Flexible in the Types of Aid Provided

The selection of the kind of assistance that is employed in Somalia plays a major role in the extent to which that aid sustains conflict. This choice is critical for three particular reasons. First, certain kinds of inputs are more easily looted and/or more valuable than others, and draw the attention of unsavory elements more quickly. Second, some aid strategies simply respond to symptoms and can promote dependency, whereas other aid can be utilized to promote subsistence and thus undergird traditional community structures and efforts to protect livelihoods. Third, in some cases targeting assistance directly to military authorities in order to reduce their predatory behavior toward local populations makes sense.

Emergencies which require interventions in Somalia are consistently misinterpreted as food emergencies. But food shortfalls or inaccessibility are usually only a symptom of deeper, structural problems which food aid sometimes even can exacerbate. Better assessment and analysis can lead to a more appropriate mix of inputs and policy responses that invariably would include much less food than that which comprises most current interventions.

Flexibility is a key concept in providing agencies with the tools to reduce their contribution to conflict. Although there are significant logistical and political obstacles, USAID mandates should be more flexible to allow Somali-appropriate responses

unfettered by overrated distinctions between relief and development. (Although donors have become more aware of the importance of prevention, resources are still harder to access for prevention than for cure.) Agencies must be flexible to respond to fast-changing conflict contexts.

Sustainability should also be a guiding principle in Somalia. National social welfare systems underwritten by large foreign aid programs are a thing of the past in many countries impacted by chronic conflict. Linear development models completely fail to capture current Somali realities. The potential Somali tax base is grossly inadequate, and development aid budgets are shrinking globally. Attempting to reproduce western-style state-administered welfare programs is unsustainable. Much more rethinking must be done regarding appropriate basic needs responses. External response to these emergencies should be driven by what already works at the local level, what structures are already in place and supported by the community, what the indigenous social welfare mechanisms and kinship exchange dynamics are in a society, etc.

Types of aid which less easily feed conflict are situation-specific, but in general a food's market value can play a major role in whether it draws the interest of Somali military forces and looters. The ease of converting direct food aid to cash makes it easier for militaries to exploit than agricultural rehabilitation programs.¹⁶ Internationally donated rice (a high value commodity) in Somalia reached legendary status in terms of its attractiveness to looters, whereas sorghum drew little interest. CARE reports an experience in the Juba Valley in which one of its convoys was attacked by looters, but upon discovering that the contents were sorghum, the looters departed, leaving the trucks and their contents untouched. The strategy of OFDA and some other agencies by mid-1992 was to flood the country with maize, bulgar wheat and sorghum instead of rice.¹⁷

ICRC moved to cooked food in hundreds of kitchens in Somalia to reduce the interest of looters. In many cases, blended foods -- nutritionally high in value but less appealing to the taste -- could be considered. Blended foods would be appropriate as general rations, rather than only as emergency food for severely malnourished children. Blended foods -- powdered, vitamin-fortified blends of cereals, pulses, and possibly milk and sugar -- are not too expensive for such use and there is less likelihood of its diversion for adult consumption. Foods that can be stored for extended periods of time for communities which keep their supplies buried in grain stores to avoid preying militias should also be considered.

One of the biggest killers in complex emergencies is measles. In many conflict areas, there are extremely low rates of immunization. EPIs (Expanded Programs of Immunizations), or at

least measles vaccinations, should be undertaken as widely and early on in a war zone as possible. To wit, Refugee Policy Group's study of the emergency response in Somalia asserts that preventive public health and primary care measures could have prevented the deaths of over 150,000 people in 1992.¹⁸

5. Study Impacts of Targeting and Distribution Methods

The section on Access Modalities covered movement of commodities to affected areas; this section looks at methodologies of getting assistance directly into the hands of affected populations. Again, decisions about how and to whom aid is targeted can have important ramifications on the balance of authority at the local level in Somalia. Some key principles should be operative here: promoting gender sensitivity; demanding independent management; and supporting alternative structures and moderate voices. Also, agencies must improve targeting by making registration, distribution, and monitoring more transparent and informing local people of their rights.

It is imperative for agencies to understand patterns of political and social marginalization in order to develop distribution structures for their assistance which targets those most seriously affected by conflict. There is usually great differentiation in suffering within a community along class and identity lines. Navigating along these fault lines is a critical ingredient in the recipe for minimizing the offtake from aid to warring parties. It is necessary that agencies understand the internal social relations within a community that often predetermines who will receive how much aid in any given distribution.

6. Standardize Costs and Minimize Hyper-Inflation and Extortion

In studying the extent to which aid feeds conflict, analysts often tend to focus on the diversion of inputs and other visible signs of sustenance, and overlook the other economic by-products of agency operations and how they might reinforce military authorities or war economies. Controlling these costs -- especially physical costs -- is a critical element of an overall strategy to reduce aid's contribution to conflict, particularly in an environment as conducive to hyper-inflation as Somalia.

It is extremely difficult to impose standards on a group of agencies with their own parochial mandates and cost structures. "Each organization has its own needs," acknowledges an agency official. "No decision can be binding. Nevertheless, consultative processes and aspirations toward standardization are important. Imposed solutions don't work, but consultation does."¹⁹

In attempting to negotiate on behalf of agency consortia, there must be unanimity among all agencies. For example, all agencies operating in Baidoa collaborated to cut vehicle costs together. Further efforts were being expended in that town before Aidid's invasion in September 1995 to standardize payments between all UN agencies and NGOs. Also in Somalia, UN agencies developed the UN Common Wage Policy in mid-1995, which standardizes the payments to certain categories of national personnel such as security guards, storekeepers and other local support staff.

7. Commit to Independent Monitoring and Evaluation

A commitment to adequate, independent monitoring and a willingness to continuously evaluate programming are key elements in reducing aid's contribution to conflict. Once funded, programs often don't undergo prompt review.

Better monitoring requires proper training for local Somali staff in particular. Knowledge by the primary implementors of agency operations of both donor and local community expectations is critical for full advantage of monitoring and evaluation to be taken.

The extent to which donor agencies must themselves submit to scrutiny helps dictate the degree of accountability they demand from agencies. USAID and OFDA must concern themselves with US Government Accounting Office audits, with inquisitive Congressional committees, with cynical media investigators and a public predisposed to suspicion about foreign aid. "U.S. vigilance is greater because of its political system," says Andrew Natsios.²⁰

8. Integrate Human Rights Monitoring, Advocacy and Capacity Building Objectives

Unlike human rights monitoring and advocacy organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, the mandates of most relief and development agencies do not include speaking out aggressively and publicly on human rights issues. But many of these agencies provide key information to human rights groups. Tremendous benefits would be derived from greater coordination between those that can respond publicly to particular human rights incidents and issues and those that can't. For example, MSF might be able to withdraw from Ethiopia in 1984 or Goma ten years later and shed light on particularly egregious practices, while other agencies can continue to provide needed assistance, serve as witnesses, at times provide a deterrent to more egregious actions, and quietly channel information to human rights organizations.

Over time, all agencies must make cost-benefit analyses of their interventions: "If we're not helping in silence, maybe we should leave and speak out," suggests a USAID official. Clarity about mandates is essential, thereby freeing agencies to focus on what they should be doing, rather than constantly being pulled in uncomfortable directions for which they may not be qualified or prepared.

9. Coordinate at all Levels

In order to fully address aid's role in sustaining conflict, agencies and donors must enhance coordination, communication, and decision-making chains of command, both within a country and regionally. The role of the UN's Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) should be revamped and its coordination role in the field clarified, which currently varies from emergency to emergency. UN agencies responding to emergencies -- UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP and WFP -- must eventually be reined in by the Secretariat and better coordinated, most logically by DHA. The current effort by UN agencies to develop a common plan of action in Somalia is a positive step, and that process should be coordinated with the development of the ISP.

At the outset of a future emergency (preferably before if early warning systems are utilized and heeded) which draw dozens of agencies to the scene, coordination over a rational division of responsibilities is critical in avoiding manipulation by warring factions over the placement of agency resources and other unintended consequences of large-scale humanitarian responses. Donors such as USAID, DHA, and veteran agencies should all strive to increase the opportunities for coordination, to come to a consensus on a division of labor, and to facilitate discussion on program areas. Even if only the major agencies can agree on a coordination mechanism, their leadership by example can influence others.

Rudy von Bernuth of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies has suggested that in their Request-for-Proposals (RFPs), donors could ask agencies to submit their organizational policies on field coordination mechanisms and the instructions they send to the field regarding coordination. Rather than a heavy-handed mandate, this would encourage agencies to more seriously integrate field coordination into their planning processes. In 1995, InterAction, the US consortium of NGOs, is asking agencies to submit their Board resolutions on the Red Cross Code of Conduct or any other code in order to stimulate further thought and action on coordination and standards.

By early 1996, InterAction had moved further. Their NGO Field Cooperation Protocol Working Group had drafted a Protocol

committing signatories to instruct their representatives engaged in emergency response to consult with other NGOs on a wide variety of issues. Consensus will be sought on the following: relations with local authorities, local employment practices, local leasing and contracting, media relations, relations with indigenous NGOs, security arrangements, division of labor, information sharing on project selection, and adoption of socio-economic program approaches.²¹

The Somali Aid Coordination Body possesses a mandate to do meaningful coordination. "The most positive aspect of the SACB is the acceptance by donors of their responsibility," says Geoffry Loane of the ICRC.²² One of the most important aspects of the development of common policy through the SACB is the insulation against manipulation: "The Somalis know it exists; they can't manipulate agencies one by one," asserts a donor official. But the leadership style of the secretariat is forceful and controversial, and some agencies feel it is extremely inappropriate. Furthermore, the effectiveness of coordination of the SACB suffered at the end of 1994 when the decision-making authority was moved from Nairobi to Geneva. Some agency personnel also charge that the SACB meetings are completely procedural, and "there is very little discussion about the substance of the needs of Somalia," says one agency consultant.

10. Prioritize Engagement and Capacity Building With Authorities and Civil Institutions

Engagement and capacity building are perhaps the most important components of a strategy of minimizing aid's sustenance of conflict. Engagement and capacity building are key concepts in most attempts to operationalize humanitarian principles. Engagement can be viewed as actively advocating particular principles with authorities, as well as consulting with them on these issues and building where appropriate on their views.

According to the Geneva Conventions, the primary responsibility for the welfare of a civilian population is with the authority of that area. They are the first line of response. Humanitarian agencies and donors can be a positive influence in encouraging the fulfillment of these responsibilities. Even if it's lip service, agencies have a duty to challenge authorities on their public welfare responsibilities.

Aid providers should also engage local communities on their commitment to addressing the needs of their most vulnerable members. According to a donor official, "Somali society should help its vulnerable groups. The onus of responsibility must be thrown on the community. We can give them ideas, but they should

construct their social welfare approaches." Aid providers should then support these local decisions and initiatives.

Capable, responsive governance and administration -- even if only the local administrative structures in Somalia -- is a critical element in developing capacity to prevent conflict. There is great variation in the way different international agencies address the issue of capacity building and the engagement of local authorities. For some, capacitation is an early priority; for others, maintaining control and circumventing authority are preferable. NGO circumvention of authorities has become a major issue in the Greater Horn, especially in areas where governments or authorities believe that NGOs should not be replacing authorities in their capacities as planners, assessors, implementors and evaluators.

One objective of capacity building in divided or collapsed societies is the support of grassroots governance. This can be viewed as a tool of preventive diplomacy. Governance is often a source of conflict at the national level and the local level, and providing training and other support can enhance the professionalism of local authority, which in turn can help increase the stake of local populations in their local representation, which can affect local stability. Both local communities and donors need to give a great deal of thought to what functions of a Somali local authority are sustainable without major external financing, and adapt to a more self-reliant future reality.

Another approach to capacity building in divided or collapsed states is sectoral. Capacity building must be integrated into the planning processes of each sectoral response in Somalia: food security, water, sanitation, health, veterinary, etc. Training and the encouragement of responsibility-taking of local structures should be a part of all responses. If a major objective of capacity building is to assist communities in managing the response to chronic crisis, this approach makes eminent sense. For example, in anticipation of the recreation of some form of a collapsed Somali health service, capacity building can take the form of the training of medical personnel, the standardizing of health guidelines, and the discussion of how to restructure health provision in a manner relevant to limited-resource, highly unstable environments.

District Councils in Somalia²³

An attempt to recreate civil administrative authorities in a situation of state collapse took place in Somalia when the Swedish Life and Peace Institute and UNOSOM attempted to implement the results of an agreement among the factions to allow the creation of District Councils. The Addis Ababa peace agreement staked out a "two-track" approach to peace in Somalia which was supposed to address grassroots peace-making with

warlord accommodation on parallel tracks. The District Councils were envisioned as the lowest level of local administration in the reconstitution of the Somali state.

The Life and Peace Institute has District Council training centers inside Somalia where international trainers are paired with Somali counterparts. District Councilors undergo roughly a week of training in administration and management. Training sessions usually include Council members from a number of different locations, stimulating cross-communal interchange and communication. There was a requirement agreed to by the factions at the Addis conference that a woman must be on the District Council in every location.

The District Councils are a new development in Somali political structure building and arguably allow a new approach to participation. They are nevertheless a foreign entity, whose structure was determined externally. In some places, the new form of participation may work, and communities may come to own their Councils. But in others, parallel structures have already formed, and the District Council has been marginalized and rejected as an external imposition. In still others, the Councils threatened existing interests and have for that reason been sidelined.²⁴

UNOSOM's hasty implementation of the District Councils has also undermined their validity. At the time of elections in many places, displacement was too great to allow truly representative institutions. "We are disenfranchising people," observes a Somali activist. Other concerns include: the legitimacy of the districts; the fairness and extent of external manipulation of the council elections, including by UNOSOM Political Affairs Director Leonard Kapungo; the current councils' questionable representativeness, given mass displacement; the replacement of existing local governmental structures; the tokenism of the one-woman requirement; the uncertainty over council jurisdiction and authority; the lack of resources; the inadequate time both for UNOSOM to form the Councils and for training Councilors, (less than a week); and the uncertainty of the role of elders in forming the Councils.

In some locations, such as Bardera, District Councils grossly over-represent the dominant sub-clan of that locale (Marehan), and training sessions for those Councils arguably buttress the legitimacy of those imbalances.

Even more fundamental are questions about the sense of ownership which communities have of these District Councils. In Bay and Bakool (before Aidid's September 1995 invasion of Baidoa), the creation of a clan-based Supreme Council had rendered the local District Councils largely irrelevant, as has the resumption of elder authority in Absame areas of the Juba Valley. "The

DigilMirifle have developed a protective structure based on human affinities," says one observer. "The sense of communal responsibility is toward the clan. That's what needs to be mobilized."

Where District Councils do remain, they are being reoriented and reconstituted by the true authority structure of the area. For example, in Kismayo the District Council is largely a formality, a functionary for the military and elder authority structure. There is no organization of public services like health or sanitation. The education system is completely privatized, and has no involvement of the Council. The Supreme Council in the Digil-Mirifle areas was envisioned as the civil administration in Bay and Bakool before Aidid's invasion.

SECTION FIVE:

CONFLICT PREVENTION IN AID STRATEGIES: MAXIMIZING AID'S CONTRIBUTION TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The previous section examined strategies and approaches to emergency operations which might minimize the degree to which aid sustains conflict. This section will address how aid might positively and pro-actively contribute to longer-term conflict prevention and peace-building.

At the operational level in Somalia, USAID and NGOs can move beyond treating the symptoms of crises and use aid to mitigate conflict and address the economic disruptions at the root of complex emergencies. NGOs and USAID must continue to be more flexible in removing often artificial barriers between relief and development activities.

Even beyond Somalia's active war zones, conflict pervades all economic development at micro and macro levels: socio-cultural, over values; political, over power and decision-making; and economic/environmental, over resources. International organizations nonetheless generally lack institutionalized mechanisms to manage conflict.²⁵ Aid agencies should abandon any implicit belief that development might lead to political stability and recognize that conflict pervades development, causing massive disruption and suffering, rather than appearing occasionally or exceptionally.²⁶ Most NGOs in conflict areas lack clear, systematic principles of their relations to conflict and its resolution, given their internally and externally driven needs to maintain an image and ideology of neutrality.²⁷ Throughout Africa's internal conflicts and complex emergencies, humanitarian agencies lopsidedly respond to the casualties and manifestations of war, such as refugee flows, with very little investment in peacemaking and preventing wars' expansion.²⁸

Reconstruction in Somalia entails attempting to rebuild infrastructure and economies, absorb traumatic changes in social relations (as well as demobilized fighters), and rehabilitate every level of society -- household, community, civil group, professional association, and government -- with a grasp of social relations to avoid reinforcing inequality or deepening marginalization. Despite its immediate exacerbation of poverty and risk, Somalia's war can be a positive agent for change. This can be both direct -- when people fight for justice and equality -- and indirect, when war prompts women's, community, and other civil groups to emerge.²⁹

Aid in an emergency context holds little hope for significantly contributing to peace at the national and regional levels. But at the sub-national level, where local resources and identities

are fuelling tensions, aid has great potential in addressing some of the igniting factors. The operative principle underlying this optimism is that given the increasing ferocity of sub-national conflict, the comparative advantage which aid agencies have in their proximity to these conflicts on a day-to-day basis makes their engagement in laying the groundwork for their eventual resolution a logical endeavor. Furthermore, the logic multiplies when the peace-building work is portrayed in functional terms. In emphasizing ways in which humanitarian assistance can foster local peace-building and cooperative alternatives to conflict, Mary Anderson urges the international community to find ways to identify not merely early warning signals of imminent factional rupture and violence but early hope signals of local movements to build peace and justice. Aid agencies must not merely provide resources but do so in a way that helps local institutions to rebuild if conflict resolution efforts are lastingly to facilitate recovery and forestall recurrences of violence.³⁰

Some of the following strategies attempt to directly or indirectly address local problems which provide fodder for conflict in Somalia.

1. Forging Intercommunal and Economic Links

A. Create intercommunal or cross-line aid committees

Most participatory mechanisms for aid planning and distribution in Somalia only involve intra-community participation, not inter-community cooperation. In areas where communities or contesting militia groups have frequently clashed and created emergency needs, agencies might facilitate the creation or support of existing intercommunal mechanisms to discuss those emergency needs. These mechanisms often already exist, but are under extreme pressure. They take such diverse forms as kinship ties between neighboring communities which are activated during periods of extreme stress, local religious committees or communities which incorporate multiple groups, or border chiefs or elders whose responsibility it is to negotiate between communities in the aftermath of intercommunal conflict.

Strengthening cross-line communication may have no impact on the warleaders, but perhaps will lead the peace-seeking elements of neighboring communities to see mutual interests in cooperation. With communication and cooperation partially restored, neighbors can continue to trade, graze animals, and maintain other ties even while warleaders continue to fight.

In the greater Somali and Afar communities inhabiting Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somaliland and Somalia, the UN is examining cross-border strategies regarding resource use, trade, grazing routes, communication and transport. Since the UNDP established

guidelines regarding its response to complex emergencies, and conflict avoidance is a key element, these kinds of non-traditional cross-border planning and programming have greater latitude when being explored by UN agencies. Since these countries are all continuous recipients of emergency assistance, this regional framework should be utilized and intercommunal planning should be a part of all emergency responses.

Entering this area of promoting intercommunal cooperation without a specific product or agenda in mind might create suspicion or leave agencies vulnerable to charges of political meddling and might be generally counter-productive. But particular interventions at the sectoral level become more sensible when seeking cross-line dialogue. Food is obviously a tool for negotiation, from Operation Lifeline Sudan to the Joint Relief Partnership (JRP -- an Ethiopian church consortium during the war) in the Horn to other negotiated access agreements throughout the world. There is also room to manoeuvre intercommunally in areas such as animal health, education and training, water, human health and housing.

B. Promote Intercommunal Trade and Exchange

Trade and exchange mechanisms are often the most important vehicles through which communities survive times of conflict-induced scarcity, and often are the most severely affected element of the food economy. Animal-grain trade, for example, is the primary survival strategy of communities throughout the Horn. Economic exchange between communities also keeps lines of communication open, which are critical for addressing misperceptions about the intentions of neighboring communities. Encouraging, supporting and protecting these indigenous responses should be a major priority of intervening agencies.

Commercial activity is often a leading rationale for stability. Mudug in Central Somalia is a continuing potential flashpoint because of its multi-clan composition, but relative peace held since a 1993 peace agreement due to the commercial imperative. "Mudug is the Dubai of Somalia," claims faction leader Osman Ato. "The businessmen are keeping the peace."³¹

Organizations interested in supporting reconciliation can seek creatively to foster interdependence rather than competition. Exchange mechanisms are often cut off by front lines, or communities are so impoverished by chronic conflict that transporting goods back and forth becomes problematic. Supplying means of transport for locally produced and traded commodities should be explored by intervening agencies. Backhauling of goods by air, allowing trucks bringing inputs also to be used for transporting local goods, and providing bicycles or canoes (depending on the topography) to facilitate the movement of small

amounts of produce are all critical in keeping lines of cooperation open between neighboring communities whose relations are perhaps strained by the actions of warleaders.

Cooperatives and other methods of community cooperation are in some places key actors in sustaining intercommunal exchange. Utilizing these kinds of indigenous mechanisms supports local adaptation to conflict as well as keeps lines of communication open. Simply knowing these cooperative mechanisms exist is important in agency planning. For example, since the early 1990s Rahanweyne sub-clans in the Bay Region are increasingly pooling their money into small, cooperative, profit-sharing businesses called *iskashis*. The profitability of these ventures and their ability to penetrate markets in Mogadishu and Bardera will greatly influence the Rahanweyne's ability to one day defend themselves from military and commercial incursions from militarily stronger and wealthier Habr Gedir and Marehan neighbors. Supporting non-indigenous forms of social organization like local NGOs will do nothing to reduce conflict and little to reduce vulnerability in Bay Region, but perhaps supporting *iskashis* will. The conquest of Baidoa by General Aidid in September 1995 reinforces the analysis of interdependence between Bay Region's food production and Mogadishu's markets and port. Gradually equalizing the power balance between the two neighbors is a prerequisite for non-predatory relations.

Trade can be the great equalizer. Some of the conflicts in the Horn have partial roots in exclusion from trade routes. In Somaliland, perceptions of unequal access to Berbera-Jijiga trade routes fuels the Garhajis' militia in its war with the Somaliland government and its Habr Awol supporters. Agencies should at least factor this in to their humanitarian response to the displacement caused by the war, and to ensure the assistance that's going into government-held areas doesn't reinforce patterns of domination and exclusion. Aid into the Lower Juba Region in Somalia also requires political savvy, as the exclusion of Ogadenis from Kismayo's political and commercial benefits enhances the chances of future conflict.

C. Address Economic Roots of Conflict

Those localized conflicts which have their roots predominantly in competition over resources are obvious candidates for interventions which seek to resolve the underlying resource-driven tensions. Pressure on the food economy is a major contributing cause for participants in cattle-raiding.

The supply side of recruitment for armies and militias is often driven by failed development, as is evidenced by the recruitment by militia leaders of disenfranchised youth from Somalia's

maldeveloped regions. Investment in those regions might draw back some of these militia to their home areas. "When people are satisfied, doing business, growing crops, they will not take up arms," claims Abdi Aden Ali of Oxfam UK-Somalia. "People take up arms when they see negative trends in development."³² Low-level economic activity provides some measure of economic independence, which lessens dependence on military authorities. This can reduce rationales for joining militias and reduce a community's dependence on aid which often cements local populations to military leaders.

For example, on the road from Boraama to Hargeisa in Somaliland, the number of checkpoints increased because people all along the road needed money to buy water from the limited number of usable water points. UNDP dug two more water holes, and the checkpoints disappeared. The fighting over water points in the Bakool Region of Somalia in the spring and summer of 1995 between the Jiron and Hadame sub-clans was also amenable to resolution through elder negotiation backed up by limited agency resources in digging additional water points per the eventual agreement. Environmental restoration is another key sector in which economic roots of conflict can be addressed and solutions can cut across the lines of battle.

In Somalia, addressing the economic interests of the Habr Gedir pastoralists in their home areas would contribute to reducing the ease with which militia leaders recruit young men. The processes of maldevelopment in the central regions of Somalia which impoverished huge numbers of families throughout the 1980s provided a breeding ground for resentment and were easily harnessed by manipulative politicians. The vast majority of externally provided resources go to the areas which these militias attack or where they reside now as militias, rather than their areas of origin. Thought must be given to the development of sustainable alternative livelihoods for these young men in their home areas.

As mentioned earlier, the commercial imperative often requires stability. The greater the potential for marketing -- especially exporting -- the more vested interest exists in defusing conflict-producing instability. The ports in Somalia hold great potential for backwards peace-building linkages. The more well-functioning ports become, the higher the potential for profits, and the greater logic will exist for stability.

2. Preventing Conflict and Building Peace as Explicit Objectives of Emergency Aid

A. Plan for Peace-Building

Aware of their lack of experience, many agencies are increasingly exploring issues of peace-building and reconciliation in their programming. For example, CARE held a workshop on the subject for its regional managers in the Greater Horn in early 1996, and World Vision hired someone full-time to advise the agency on reconciliation. Some agencies have a long history of peace work, including the Mennonite Central Committee and American Friends Service Committee, as well as a number of other denominational church agencies.

In the field, interest has been expressed by various agency personnel in the possibility of bringing in local and international conflict resolution experts (or those intimately familiar with the dynamics of particular conflicts) at the planning or evaluation stage to advise agencies on how to better contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building. Even without such external assistance, some agencies informally introduce conflict mitigation or prevention as specific objectives in their planning processes. This requires checking the location, staffing and project content for their peace-building potential.

Some agencies facilitated dialogue in Somaliland in the early 1990s by donating or lending radio equipment -- including transmitters -- to the conflicting parties at conferences in Boraama and Erigavo. In Somalia, some agencies have provided support for various grassroots peace conferences, such as those in Baidoa, Kismayo and various failed efforts in Mogadishu.

B. Support Peace-Building Capacity

Related to the earlier discussion of capacity building, emergency interventions can also support local peace-makers and constituencies by virtue of who the agencies utilize as local partners. Rudy von Bernuth holds that local institution building which supports participatory democratic processes and pluralism is the most effective method to ensure peace.³³ Again, the division of labor must be recognized at the local level as well. Some forms of social organization are geared toward service provision; others, such as elders' councils, are appropriate for conflict resolution; still others make sense as profit-seeking ventures. Much agency frustration results from naively trying to force groups from the latter two categories into undertaking service provision. If a woreda council in Ethiopia, a chiefs' court in Sudan, or an elders' council in Somalia are constituted

and show a disposition toward resolving conflict, that priority should be respected and, in some cases, supported.

Relief and development aid not preceded by or including the strengthening of domestic conflict management systems can create and exacerbate conflicts, such as the cattle rustling endemic to pastoral groups, whose development as much concerns conflict management as economic improvement. Similarly, aid to farmers can raise tensions where it seems to legitimate disputed occupancy. Community or government institutions that can resolve competing claims should be supported before distributing inputs.³⁴

The most important element of sustainable reconciliation is to build and/or support peace constituencies. John Paul Lederach of Eastern Mennonite College describes this as meaning that aid organizations must view local people not as recipients but as resources for citizen-based peacemaking.³⁵

War can particularly be a positive catalyst *vis-a-vis* women and gender relations, as women's groups are often among the new civil organizations that arise to challenge conflict and promote peace and rights. Aid organizations can support this process and help women to consolidate their gains against pressures to retrench when war ends.³⁶

Social capital can be defined as institutional arrangements -- trust, norms of reciprocity and tolerance, and associational networks -- that foster voluntary cooperation and civic engagement and correlates it with effective, responsive government, economic development, and public well-being.³⁷ While some believe that social capital is rooted in long history, recent experience suggests that even long-antagonistic parties can quickly create bases for cooperative social problem-solving.³⁸ Agencies should be cognizant of the important role social capital may play in the managing and/or resolution of conflict.

SECTION SIX:**CURRENT PEACE INITIATIVES IN SOMALILAND:
A CONFLICT RESOLUTION OPPORTUNITY**

Conflict resolution efforts in Somalia by the international community have tended to focus on Mogadishu and the faction leaders. But at the time of this review of the ISP, there is a unique opportunity to help influence events in Somaliland away from war and towards peace. Somaliland stands at an historic juncture between war and peace. With a small investment of diplomatic and aid resources, the donor community might be able to tip the scales toward long-term peace.

As of mid-1996, there were a number of competing processes aiming at some form of peace in Somaliland. The primary initiatives include: efforts by the *guurti* to bring opposition elements into the government fold; an initiative by an Iidagale minister in the government named Mohammed Barood designed to reconcile community leaders as a means of bringing about peace; a process launched by a group of Somalilanders living abroad who are attempting to broker negotiations between competing groups; and a genuine grassroots reconciliation effort launched by the leaders of the Habr Ja'alo and Habr Yunis sub-clans. I will highlight the latter two processes as worthy of potential support and encouragement by the USG.

The Somaliland Peace Committee

A group of exiles from Somaliland initiated the Somaliland Peace Committee in 1995. They have primarily focused on the role of elders and intellectuals in conflict resolution. For example, they organized a group of Isaaq intellectuals in the diaspora to return to Somaliland and start a negotiations process, but were constrained by their lack of resources. The group first met in Addis Ababa in April 1995. They sent delegations to the government and the opposition to initiate a dialogue. This meeting was followed by the Conference of Somaliland Intellectuals Abroad in London at the end of April, which endorsed the Addis decisions. The Peace Committee sent delegations to Hargeisa and Aware in eastern Ethiopia near the end of 1995. Peace fora were conducted with the council of ministers and council of elders in Hargeisa.

In the Aware area (an opposition rear base in Ethiopia), camp residents and leaders finally endorsed the Peace Committee's mission after extensive discussions. A delegation was sent off to Oodweyne, where the Garhajis war committee is resident. The war committee has the ultimate jurisdiction over war and peace issues for the Garhajis clan. The sultans on the war committee

opposed any negotiated settlement with the current government at that time.

The next Somaliland Peace Committee initiative took place in Kam Aboker in Ethiopia in June 1996. Delegations of Iidagale opposition representatives and elders dialogued with elders and representatives from government areas, including Isahaq, Arab, and Habr Awol elders, many of whom were not necessarily government supporters, but rather residents of government-controlled areas. The representation from the government itself was weak. The Iidagale continue to be internally divided over whether to negotiate with the Egal administration, so some of their key representatives attended while others did not. The Iidagale Sultan Mohamed endorsed the initiative. Even if an agreement is reached between elders on both sides, the militia and government still are not directly accessed in this process.

Habr Ja'alo-Habr Yunis Peace Process

The most promising peace initiatives emerged in 1996. The most important process -- in mid-stream at the time of writing -- involved the two principal adversaries on the bitterly contested Burao war front, the Habr Ja'alo and the Habr Yunis.

The process began when the Habr Ja'alo had an internal clan conference -- reportedly the first Habr Ja'alo clan conference in 35 years -- in Ainabo (between Las Anod and Burao) in March 1996. The conference lasted forty days, and its major theme was how to bring peace to the Burao area. For the closing ceremonies, the Habr Ja'alo sent out letters for all other clans to come. The Habr Yunis declined. Nevertheless, the Habr Ja'alo elders had primarily discussed whether they want peace with the Habr Yunis and under what conditions. They concluded that they had largely won the war, and there was little reason to maintain the current state of low-intensity conflict in which everything was paralyzed. They created a 33 man committee to direct Habr Ja'alo representatives in the *guurti*, ministries and parliament. This committee took the lead in forging peace with the Habr Yunis.

After an incident in the Haud in Ethiopia between Habr Ja'alo and Habr Yunis residents in May 1996, the Ethiopian government stepped between the two groups and told them to meet. Subsequently, a conference took place in Gashamo for three days in early June between representatives of the two parties. Next, a meeting between the Habr Ja'alo and Habr Yunis was held in Bali Dhaye (in the Haud) for two weeks later in June. The Habr Ja'alo reportedly offered the Habr Yunis elders and militia leaders a choice: full-scale war or peace, stating that the current state of low-intensity instability was unacceptable. Both parties established conditions on the other: the Habr Yunis said that Egal must be removed, and the Habr Ja'alo said that the Habr Yunis must accept Somaliland's independence. The Habr Yunis

chose peace, and the elders of both groups negotiated an end to violent confrontation between the two groups, deciding to jointly spearhead peace in the whole country. The parties agreed that the Habr Ja'alo would take the lead in reconciling Habr Yunis with other clans.

Another conflict arose in June 1996 between the Issa Musa and the Habr Yunis near Burao. The Habr Ja'alo did not want another diversion from the peace process, and thus intervened between the two groups and secured their commitment to a peaceful resolution of inter-group conflict. In June 1996, the Issa Musa were also holding an intra-clan consultation regarding the process, and observers expect them to join the peace initiative.

The next step was a meeting in July 90 km south of Burao. The objectives were to achieve a lasting ceasefire in Burao and a withdrawal of forces and mines from the area. People were already moving back into Burao before the July meeting, so eager to reclaim their homes that they were not waiting for the mines to be cleared. The meetings only peripherally involve politicians, military leaders, and intellectuals; the process is led by elders. Women are not active participants in these conferences.

The Habr Yunis Sultan gave his blessing to the process. The sultan is reported to have said that he will stand by the process even if 100 people die per day due to outside interference from Egal or other anti-peace elements. As of the end of July 1996, the process was on hold, while delegations from both sides consulted within their communities.

The ultimate objectives of this process are to create peace among all of the clans in the eastern two-thirds of the country, to hold a genuine national conference at the end of Egal's term, and then to have a subsequent conference which would select a new president, parliament and guurti. The process would first secure inter-clan reconciliation before it moved on to the political process of creating a government.

The conferences within the Habr Ja'alo and between the Habr Yunis and Habr Ja'alo have proceeded with resources exclusively raised at the local level. The process appears to be genuinely organic, and fully consultative with local communities throughout the affected areas. Egal has already tried to disrupt the process, even recruiting a Habr Yunis militia which attacked a position of the Habr Ja'alo in an unsuccessful attempt to provoke a resumption of fighting. But the initiative continues, and the potential for the process is characterized by this Somali activist's assessment: "With the Habr Ja'alo, Dolbahunte, Warsengeli, the Habr Yunis, and perhaps the Issa Musa all supporting the peace, this comprises the major grassroots political grouping in Somaliland."

Popular Pressure for Peace

Ultimately, the most important sentiment may be the one expressed by a former political prisoner: "The ordinary people are fed up. They don't care about politics. They just want peace." A resident of Hargeisa opposed to the Egal administration adds, "Peace advocacy is coming from the people, not the politicians. The politicians are out of it. People are the fuel of war. Their emotions for war are now down. They have now realized the truth, and they want peace."

In a similar vein, a veteran Somali activist concludes, "Once people are serious about peace nobody can stop them." This war weariness can have immediate implications, especially in terms of the logistics and manpower which communities supply to the opposing parties.

A Potential Response

Sometimes localized peace processes involving inter-clan reconciliation continue for long periods of time. There are occasions when a small donation of food, logistical support, and other signs of assistance might be catalytic in maintaining forward progress. Such is the case currently with the peace process initiated between the Habr Ja'alo and Habr Yunis. Support should be provided to the ongoing peace process in eastern Somaliland. Diplomatic gestures from governments supporting peace in Somaliland and small resources in the form of food and logistical help would have a positive impact. Some of the leaders of this process have gone into debt underwriting the initiative.

With limited inputs backed by renewed commitment to peace, the donor community can have a major impact on the course of Somaliland's future. It is not often that potential courses of action are so clearly laid out. If the locally initiated peace processes referred to above are supported, and the Egal administration is convinced to relinquish power and peacefully participate in a genuine political debate, a durable peace is achievable in Somaliland.

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