



# **'NOBODY LIKES WOMEN EXCEPT GOD'**

**EXAMINING THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF GENDER-BASED  
VIOLENCE IN SOMALILAND**



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## ACRONYMS

CCBRS – Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation in Somaliland  
CID – Criminal Investigation Department  
CSO – Civil society organization  
FGD – Focus group discussion  
FGM/C – Female genital mutilation/cutting  
GAVO – General Assistance and Voluntary Organization  
GBV – Gender-based violence  
IASC – Inter-Agency Standing Committee  
IDP – Internally displaced person  
IPV – Intimate partner violence  
INGO – International non-governmental organization  
IRADA – Initiative for Research and Development Action  
KII – Key informant interview  
MOLSA – Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs  
NAFIS – Network against FGM/C in Somaliland  
NGO – Non-governmental organization  
SIHA – Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa  
SOFHA – Somaliland Family Health Organization  
SONYO – Somaliland National Youth Organization  
SWLA – Somaliland Women Lawyers Association  
UN – United Nations  
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund  
UNICEF – United Nations Children Fund  
VOSOMWO – Voice of Somaliland of Minority Women Organization  
WAAPO – Women Action for Advocacy and Progress Organization  
WHO – World Health Organization  
WORDA – Women Rehabilitation and Development Association  
Y-PEER – Youth Peer Education Network

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a research study funded by Amplify Change and implemented through a partnership between Progressio and a coalition of twelve Somaliland civil society organizations. The aim of the research is to deepen the understanding of gender-based violence (GBV) in Somaliland and the social norms that underpin this practice.

The study has been guided by four research questions:

- What are the causes and consequences of GBV across Somaliland?
- What are the existing narratives, perceptions and social beliefs about GBV in Somaliland?
- What are the lived experiences of survivors of GBV across Somaliland?
- What are the perceptions of men and boys on GBV in Somaliland?

The research seeks to inform partner organizations understandings of GBV for evidence based programming. It also aims to use collected data to support the capacity of state institutions, as well as to advocate for policy change and legislation on GBV in Somaliland.

Qualitative methods including key informant interviews and focus group discussions were used across six locations in Marodijeeh and Togdheer regions. Data was collected from September to November 2016, with a total sample of 254 participants. The research team was made up of 24 Somali researchers from the civil society coalition. Coalition members were involved in all aspects of the design, data collection and analysis of the study, facilitated by a research advisor from Progressio.

The perception that Somaliland is relatively peaceful in comparison to south-central Somalia is a common, but distinctly un-gendered view. Women and girls continue to face multiple forms of inequality and violence. The research shows that gender-based violence is rooted in ideas of gender roles and responsibilities. Although women in Somaliland have responded to challenges such as conflict and changing socio-economic circumstances by taking up key roles as breadwinners or peace-makers, fluctuating gender identities have also led to hostility, backlash and the use of violence to maintain patriarchal control.

As reported by participants, there is a wide spectrum of gender-based violence that exists in Somaliland. Common types of violence reported across all case study locations include intimate partner violence, rape, gang rape, sexual assault, FGM/C, forced marriage, denial of resources and general discrimination. Although GBV can be found in all communities, certain populations demonstrate heightened vulnerability, including IDPs and refugees, young women and adolescents, minority groups, people with disabilities, and women with spouses who demonstrate gender inequitable attitudes.

Consequences of gender-based violence occur at multiple levels, including individual, relational, community, and structural impacts. Consequences include injuries, pain, emotional distress and trauma, family breakup and divorce, clan and community conflict, the destruction of social fabrics at the community level, and negative socio-economic impacts.

The causes behind reported cases of violence are layered and intersecting. When examining intimate partner violence (IPV), or family violence, respondents described the interplay of factors between changing gender norms, neglect of male responsibilities and conflicts over financial resources. With the rise of unemployment and the abuse of substances such as khat, men were perceived as neglecting their financial responsibilities. As women move into breadwinner roles to compensate, conflict over changing roles and over existing financial difficulties often sparked incidents of physical, sexual, and emotional violence within the home.

Respondents described a perceived rise in rape and multiple perpetrator sexual assault, or gang rape, across urban areas in Somaliland. A rise in youth street gangs, unemployment, and a lack of positive social spaces for youth were reported as underlying factors for the rise in violent crime. Due to both the normalization of violence and existing stigma around GBV, gangs operate in a climate of impunity, where they can assert power and act out social bonding through rape.

GBV is met with shame, stigma, and silence across all case study sites. There are high rates of blame toward the victim, and a general social acceptance towards certain forms of gender violence. Overall, this has led to the normalization of GBV within society.

Overlapping and competing legal systems make it difficult to obtain justice for GBV crimes. Customary law is the primary justice mechanism used by communities, as it is quick, embedded in the social fabric, and seen as confidential. However, it can be detrimental to victim’s rights, using methods such as compensation or marriage to the perpetrator for redress. Although the formal justice sector is seen as critical for punishing perpetrators and deterring future cases, it faces challenges such as logistical difficulties, a lack of capacity, and very little trust and confidence at the community level.

The current institutional framework in Somaliland is weak, with few laws or policies on GBV. Gender violence is not seen as a national priority, and an effort needs to be made to connect GBV to national development objectives. Although civil society organizations are committed and engaged on GBV response, they face challenges such as few resources, lack of sustainability, and difficulties in coordinating and harmonizing across the sector.

As the research has demonstrated, gender-based violence is a serious concern that impacts communities across Somaliland. As such, concrete measures need to be taken to address this issue, including passing the Sexual Offences Bill, strengthening the justice system, increasing the evidence base on GBV, focusing on job creation and creating inclusive economies, ensuring sustainable resources for the GBV sector, developing spaces for positive masculinities, and working with key allies across communities to address GBV from the grassroots.

Warbixintani waxay soo bandhigaysaa natiijooyinka cilmi baadhis ay qabatey Progressio ismarkaana ay maalgalisay hayada Amplify for Change iyada oo la kashanaysa isbaahaysiga laba iyo toban ururada bulshada rayidka ah ee Somaliland.

Ujeeddada Cilmi baadhistani waxay tahay in si qoto dheer loo fahmo tacadiyada jinsiga ah ee ka jira somaliland iyo caadooyinka bulshada ee xoojiya dhaqankan.

Cilmi-baadhistan waxa hagaayay afar su’aalood cilmi-badhiseed:

- Waa maxay wax yaabaha sababay iyo cawaaqibka ka dashta tacdiyaada jinsiga ee Somaliland?
- Waa Maxay Sheekooyinka, Fikiradaha iyo waxa ay ka aamiin san yihiin bulshadu tacadiyada ku salaysan jiinsiga ee ka jira Somaliland?
- Waa maxay waayo aragnimada nololeed ee dhibanaayaasha iyo kuwa ka badbaaday Tacadiyaada jinsiga ee Somaliland ku nool?
- Waa maxay waxyaabaha ay ka aaminsan yihiin ragga iyo inimadu Somaliland tacadiyaaada ka dhan ka ah jinsiga?

Daraasadan wax loogu talagalay in lagu war-galiyo ururadda bulshada fahankooda tacadiyaada ka dhanka ah jinsiga iyo sidii loo soo sameyn lahaa barnaamiyo ku salaysan xaqiiqda dhacdooyinka jira.

Waxa kale oo ujeeddadiisu tahay in loo isticmaalo xogta la ururiyay si ay u tageeraan awooddaha hay’adaha dawaladda iyo sidoo kale in lagu doodo isbedelka siyaasadda iyo sharciga ku aadan tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga ee ka jira Somaliland.

Hababka loo marey soo ururinta xogtu waa habka tayada (qualitative Methods) oo ay ku jiraan waraysiyo kali kali ah (interview) iyo wareysi kooxeedyo (focus group discussion) ayaa laga qabtay lix goobood oo ku yaalla Gobolka Marodijeex iyo Togdheer. Xogtan waxa la soo ururiyey bilawgii bishi September ilaa bishi November sanadkii 2016, Iyada oo ay kasoo qayb galeen tiro dhan 254 qof oo ka turjumaysa bulshada ku nool degaanada lagu sameeyay cilmi baadhistan.

Kooxda Cilmi baadhistu waxa ay ka koob-nayeen 24 cilmi baadhe Somaali ah, waxa ay dhamantood ka socdeen ururadda bulshada rayidka ah. Xubnaha isbahaysiga waxa ay ku lug lahayen kana qayb galeen dhinacyada. Qaabaynta, ururinta xogta iyo falanqaynta darasadda, kaas oo ay u fududaysay la taliyaha dhinaca cilmi baadhista ee hayaada Progressio.

Aragtida ah in Somaliland tahay mid nabada, marka la barbar dhigo konfurta iyo badhtamaha Somalia waa wax cad hadana. Haweenka iyo Gabadhaha waxa ay la kulmaan noocyo badan oo ka mid ah sinnaan la’aanta iyo tacadiyo. Cilmi baadhistaan ayaa muujinaysa in tacadiyada jinsiga ka dhanka ah ay ku salaysan yihiin fikirada ah doorka masuuliyada kala gedisan ee jinsiga (lab iyo dhedig).

Inkastoo haweenka Somaliland ay kaalin muq leh ka qaateen caqaabada ay keeneen dagaaladu iyo iyo xalaada dhaqan-dhaqaale sida ka shaqaynta nabadda iyo quudinta qoyska,

haddana doorka jinsiga ee is isbedeley waxa uu keeney cadaawad iyo gadood ay raggu ku ilaashanayaan awooda ragganimo.

Sida ay soo sheegeen ka qayb galayaasha cilmi baadhista, waxaa jira noocyo tiro badan oo ku saabsan tacdiyaada ku saleysan jiinsiga ee ka jira Somaliland. Noocyada ugu caansan ee la soo sheegay ee ka jira dhamaan goobaha darasadan laga sameeyay waxa ka mida ah tacadiyada amaba khilaafka ka dhex dhaca lamanaaha, kufsi, kufsi wadareedka, gudniinka, guurka khasabka ah, dhaqaalaha oo la xakameeyo, iyo takoorka guud. Inkastoo tacadiyaasi ay ka jiraan degaanada oo dhan haddana waxay ay muujineysaa in dadka qaarkood ay saameyn dheeraad ah ku leedahay sida dadka ku nool barakacayaasha iyo xeryaha qaxootiga, haweenka dhallinyarada ah iyo dhallinyarada, kooxaha laga tirada badan yahay, dadka naafada ah, iyo dumarku xaasleyda ee raggoodu awooda ku saleysan kala sareynta isticmaalo.

Dhibaatooyinka ka dhasha a tacdiyada ka dhanka jinsiga waxa ay leeyihiin heerar kala duwan, oo ay ka mid yihiin shaqsiyaad, bulshada, iyo iyo kuwo ay keenaan nidaamku. Kuwaasi wax aka dhasha waxa ka mida ah dhawaacyada, xanuunka, diiqaada iyo cidhiidhiga, burburka qoyska, furniinka, isku dhaca qaabilada iyo khilaafadka bulshada, burburinta qiyamka bulshada, iyo samaynta taban ee ku dhaqan-dhaqaale ee bulshada.

Sababaha keena tacadiga ee waa qaar isku xidhan. Marka la badhayay tacadiyada lamaanaha, ama rabashadaha qoyska, la waraystayaashuhu waxaa ay tilmaameen xidhiidhka u dhexeeya is badalka ku dhacay kaalinta ragga iyo haweenka, dayacaada raggu dayaceen masuuliyadooda iyo khilaafka la xidhiidha dhaqalaha qoyska. Shaqo la'aanta baahsan ee sii kordhaysa, isticmaalka qaadka, rag badan ayaa la arkay in ay dayaceen masuuliyadkii dhaqalaha guriga. sidaa darteed dumarku ay ay u buuxiyaan masuuliyada gurigga, khilaafadkaas ka dhashay is badalka masuuliyada, ayaa waxa ay keentay dhacdooyinka gacan ka hadal, Kufisga, iyo diiqaada nafsiga ah ee ka jirta guryaha dhexdooda.

La waraystayaashu waxa ay tilmameen in kufsiga iyo kufsi wadareedka ay gaystaan dad badani ay soo kordhaayso, guud ahaan magaalooyinka Somaliland. Waxaa iyaguna soo kordhay dhalinyarada budhcadka wadooyinka jooga, shaqo la'aanta, jiritaan la'aanta goobo bulshada dhilinyada u gaar aha oo ay ku kulmaan, qodobaad la soo sheegay ayaa la odhan Kara waxa ay sabab u yihiin in ay dhacan rabashadaha iyo danbiyadu Ogalaanshaha bulshada ee falalka tacadiga ah iyo takoorida la xidhiidhidha ba waxa ay keentay in dhalinyarada budhcad ahi cidina waxba ka qaban taasoo keentay in ay caadeystaan kufsi iyagoo isku haleyn ku qaba.

Dhacdooyinka war-bixinta waxa ku jira budhcad afduubtay, kadiba ka sameeyay kufsi meelaha ka baxsan Magalada ama xaafadaha, sidoo kale kufsi wadareedka waxa soo qorsheeya oo soo agasimaa qof dhibanaha la kufsaday ay aqoon isu leeyihiin. Tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jiinsiga waxa waxa la ceebeyaa dhibanaha isla markaana waa jirta, takoorid iyo aamuusnaan amaba qarsi dhibkii la qarsanayo dhamaan goobaha daraasadda laga sameeyay. Ayey la jirtaa arrintaasi lagu eedayo dhibaanaha iyo in bulshadu si guud u aqbasho qaar ka mida tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jiinsiga.

Ku dhaqanka nidaamka sharciyada kala duwan ayaa waxa ay fudedeysay in sharci cad loo waayo danbiyada ka dhasha tacdiya ka dhanka ah jinsiga. Xeerka dhaqanka ayaa ah ka ay isticmaalan bulshadu, kaasoo ku saleysan hab-dhaqanka bulshada isla markaana ah a loogu kalsoonida badan, uguna dhakhso badan hirgalintiisu. Dhinaca kale wuxuu dhaawac ku yahay xeerku qof ka dhibanaha ah taaso dhacda in qofka la siiyo magdhow ama loo guuriyo ninkii dambiilaha ahaa ee falk geystay si arinkaas xal loogu helo.

In kasta uu garsoorka maxkammaddu yahay ka ugu dhow ee leh xukun ciqaab ah isla markaana yareyn kara falal dambe oo dhaca lakiin hiragalinta sharciga waxa hortaagan dhaqala daro, awood hirgalinta oo yar iyo kalsooni bulshada ee nidaamkaan oo aad u yar.

Hab dhismeedka hey'adaha dawliga ee Somaliland ka jira waa mid dabacsan waxaan a jira, sharciyo iyo siyaasado kooban oo ku saabsan tacdiyaada ka dhanka ah Jinsiga. Tacdiyaada Jinsiga uma muuqato mid muhiim ah marka la eego baahiyaha mudan ee qaranka, taasina waxa ay u baahna tahay in dadaal laga sameeyo si loogu daro waxqabadka horumarinta qaranka. In kastoo ururada bulshada ee rayidka ahi ay ka go'an tahay, iskuna hawlaan wax ka qabadka arrintan, haddana waxa jira caqabado ay la kulmaan sida, awooda dhaqaale oo yar, joogteynta waxqabadka iyo iyo isku xidh la'aanta qeybaha kala gedisan a shaqeeya arrimahan.

Sida ay cilmi baadhistani soo bandhigayso, tacadiyada ka dhanka ah Jinsigu waa dareen dhab ah kaas oo saameyay bulshada somalilaand dhamantood. Sida oo kale, waxaa ay u baahan tahay in tallaabooyin la taaban karto laga qaado si wax looga qaabto arintan, sida ansixinta iyo hirgalinta xeerka lagu maaraynayo danbiyada ka dhasha kufsiga, xoojinta nidaamka caddalada, soo bandhigista xaqiiqooyinka jira saldhigana u ah tacdiyaada ka dhanka ah Jinsiga, waana in diirada la saraa si dii shaqo abuur loo samaynlahaa, iyo abuurida fursado dhaqaale oo loo dhan yahay, hubinta helida dhaqaale ku filan la dagaalanka tacadiyada ka dhanka ah Jinsi iyo wadasahqeynta dhinacyada kale duwan ee a kooban tahay bulshadu si si waxa looga qabto tacdiyada ka dhanka Jinsiyada.

# 1.INTRODUCTION AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

The trajectory of Somaliland is dynamic and complex. Juxtaposing a history of armed conflict against its current system of modernization, Somaliland has managed to create a developing and democratic state out of its turbulent past. Against the backdrop of these recent events are the stories of women and girls, who occupy a central role in Somaliland society.

Somaliland has its beginnings in the Somali civil war of the 1980s and 1990s. Based in the northern regions of the country, or what is now Somaliland, the Somali National Movement (SNM) launched attacks against the government of Siad Barre, after years of marginalization by the state apparatus against the north.<sup>1</sup> This led to a brutal crackdown by government forces, with mass violence conducted against northern cities such as Hargeisa and Burao.<sup>2</sup>

By 1991, government forces had been driven out of the north, and the area was declared independent, as the Republic of Somaliland. Internal armed conflicts continued until 1996, however by 2002, it had held its first democratic elections and became a multi-party democracy. Since then, Somaliland has focused on peace, security and a course of national development.

Women and girls have played a pivotal role in the peace-building process, and have been instrumental in the creation of a Somaliland state. Since the declaration of independence however, they have remained marginalized and excluded from many national development gains. Currently, gender inequality is deeply rooted across Somaliland, with general male dominance over women across public and private spaces.<sup>3</sup> Given the basis of society upon a traditional clan system of patriarchal lineage, women face widespread discrimination across a number of socio-economic factors. They are currently excluded from most political or decision-making structures, face disparity in education and employment opportunities, have limited access to basic services, and are subject to a wide range of violence and abuse.<sup>4</sup> While Somaliland women are known for their strength and resiliency, taking up important positions as the providers for their families, traders, income-generators or businesswomen, their opportunities are usually within informal and small-scale sectors. As such, they have limited engagement with traditional power structures. These inequalities are particularly felt across minority populations, such as minority clans, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons and refugee populations. There is an urgent need to address gender equality, not just as a women's issue, but as a key concern for overall national development.

When examining the broader context of women's rights, gender-based violence stands out as a pervasive human rights violation that heavily impacts women and girls across the Horn of Africa. Although often referred to as an 'island of peace' in comparison to its neighbour

Somalia,<sup>5</sup> the perspective that Somaliland is safe and secure is a distinctly un-gendered one. In reality, women and girls face multiple forms of abuse and violence, such as rape, assault, domestic violence, FGM/C, or forced marriage.<sup>6</sup> The impacts of GBV can be felt across communities, causing health consequences, loss of economic output, weakening social ties, and cycles of poverty and violence. These impacts seriously restrict the ability of women and girls to reach their full potential, and thereby hinder Somaliland from reaching its development goals.

Although violence against women and girls is a widespread problem, the current GBV space in Somaliland is a fledgling one, and lacks strong support. While there are local civil society organizations working to address GBV at the community level, the sector is small and often overlooked for other issues, such as the national security agenda or peace and stability concerns. Many continue to deny that GBV is occurring, with very little attention, resources, or support being channelled towards these issues.

Overall, there is a culture of silence surrounding GBV in Somaliland, which has resulted in there being very little knowledge on the problem. There is a lack of understanding on the social norms underlying GBV, the consequences it is having at the community level, and a lack of understanding regarding what works to prevent violence. Due to this dearth of information, evidence based programming and policies are few and far between.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND KEY CONCEPTS

In order to address these gaps in knowledge, this study has been undertaken to explore and deepen the understanding on GBV in Somaliland. Funded by Amplify Change, the research has been conducted through a partnership between Progressio Somaliland and a coalition of 12 Somaliland civil society organizations (Annex 8.1). A research advisor from Progressio facilitated the study, with 24 members from the coalition assisting with data collection and analysis. In addition to facilitating the study, the research advisor mentored and provided research training to all coalition organizations, to strengthen and improve existing capacity on conducting gender-based violence research in Somaliland.

### 2.1 Study Objectives and Questions

The objectives of the study included:

- To deepen and expand the knowledge base on GBV in Somaliland
- To improve partner organizations understanding of GBV for policy and programming
- To use the collected data to improve GBV advocacy capacity of civil society organizations in Somaliland
- To use collected data to support the capacity of state institutions and key ministries to advocate for policy change and legislation on GBV
- To increase the capacity of coalition members in conducting research for evidence based advocacy and programming

Four overarching research questions were used to guide the study:

- What are the causes and consequences of GBV across Somaliland?
- What are the existing narratives, perceptions and social beliefs about GBV in Somaliland?
- What are the lived experiences of survivors of GBV across Somaliland?
- What are perceptions of men and boys on GBV in Somaliland?

## **2.2 Approach**

To address these questions, the research team used a qualitative approach, integrating aspects of participatory action research. Qualitative methods were chosen to dig deeper into the social narratives surrounding gender violence. Currently, there are very few studies examining GBV in Somaliland. What does exist is fragmented, anecdotal, and lacks any in-depth documentation of the issues. There is also a lack of stories from community members themselves, with the voices of regular citizens distinctly missing from much of the current literature. Accordingly, the research team decided to focus on understanding the perceptions of GBV at the community level, emphasizing the stories of women, girls, men and boys.

In addition to deepening an understanding of GBV, the study aimed to address some of the barriers in traditional research methods, namely the extractive nature of researcher/participant relationship that often centers on an outside or foreign researcher directing the process. To do this, the research team worked to ensure that the study was as holistic as possible. A research partnership was developed amongst a coalition of 12 Somaliland civil society and women’s rights organizations. The organizations in the coalition all work closely with communities across Somaliland and offered valuable representation of local concerns. The team consisted of 24 different CSO members, activists, and women’s rights organizers, all of whom participated in numerous trainings on methods, data collection, analysis and learning and reflection workshops. This was done to ensure that civil society was involved in all steps of the study.

## **2.3 Methods and Data Collection**

Data collection was undertaken through a combination of key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and a desk review. The study took place from September to November 2016. Data was collected across six case study sites in the regions of Maroodijeeh and Togdheer. Stratified purposive sampling was used to capture a wide range of information from diverse participants, selected across factors such as age, gender, location, and occupation.

**Figure 1: Research methodology per case study location**

No.	Method	Hargeisa	Baligubadle	Burao	Yirowe	Ali Hussein Camp	Qoyta Camp	TOTAL
1	FGDs	11	7	9	8	4	5	44
2	KIIs	19	8	9	9	8	2	55
	Total	30	15	18	17	12	7	99

Case study locations included two urban settings (Hargeisa, Burao), two rural settings (Baligubadle, Yirowe), and 2 IDP settings (Ali-Hussein camp, Qoyta camp). Originally, only 1 IDP location was selected, however, due to field challenges, the data collection team had to change locations and finish the research in a second site.

In each location FGDs and KIIs were conducted with a diverse range of community members, including men, women, traditional and religious leaders, and survivors of violence. While the study primarily focused on community perceptions, interviews were also conducted with civil society organizations, service providers, legal professionals, and government representatives.

Overall, 44 FGDs and 54 interviews were conducted across all five locations, with an overall sample size of 254 participants. Before undertaking the research, a pilot study was conducted consisting of 11 interviews and 13 FGDs. As the quality of transcripts from the pilot research was high, some of these have been included in the overall analysis.

**Figure 2: Case study locations**

No.	Case Study Site	Region	Description
1	Hargeisa	Marodijeer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital city of Somaliland</li> <li>Population 760,000</li> <li>Main economic hub and government centre</li> </ul>
2	Baligubadle	Marodijeer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural community approximately 65 km from Hargeisa</li> <li>Primary activities of livestock, farming</li> </ul>
3	Burao	Togdheer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital of Togdheer region</li> <li>Urban and economic center for Togdheer</li> <li>Population of approximately 288, 200</li> </ul>
4	Yirowe	Togdheer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural community outside of Burao (approximately 20 km)</li> <li>Primary activities include livestock, farming</li> </ul>
5	Ali Hussein IDP camp	Togdheer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Camp for internally displaced persons near Burao</li> </ul>
6.	Qoyta IDP camp	Togdheer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Camp for internally displaced persons near Burao</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis used a thematic and grounded theory approach, using the constant comparative method.<sup>7</sup> A computer assisted qualitative data analysis program, DEDOOSE, was used to code transcripts and analyse for key themes. Several workshops were held with the civil society coalition, to ensure their feedback into the overall analysis. Data was then triangulated between multiple points, including KIIs, FGDs, desk review, and researcher field reflections.

## **2.5 Ethics and Limitations**

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, the study team was extensively trained on how to conduct GBV research safely and responsibly. This included training on how to discuss sensitive issues, how to minimize emotional trauma, strategies for minimizing risks to participants, and techniques for dealing with potential vicarious trauma to the research team.

Each research team obtained acceptance by community leaders before beginning data collection. An on-going verbal informed consent process was employed with each participant. Researchers ensured the comfort level of participants by checking in several times throughout the interviews.

In order to adequately respond to any survivors who were identified over the course of the research, the research team partnered with a CSO who provided GBV response services. During data collection, if any respondent requested services for GBV, they were referred to the CSO partner who provided medical, legal, psychosocial and economic assistance to survivors.

While the majority of communities were welcoming to the research teams, certain difficulties arose in IDP locations. Although camp leaders had originally granted the research team access, halfway through data collection the community became hostile towards the researchers. They expressed frustration at NGOs for coming to do research, but failing to provide adequate services to the population. The team had to abandon data collection in this location, and continue in a second IDP location.

Additionally, because of the sensitivity of the topics, the research teams faced limitations in the type of information they could access. Due to the continued stigma associated with GBV, few participants disclosed personal stories of experience or perpetration. Instead, participants would discuss their general knowledge of GBV at the community level, and would talk about cases of rape or family violence which had happened to their neighbours or friends. Although a few survivor interviews were conducted in Hargeisa, difficulties in obtaining direct testimony demonstrate the on-going stigma against speaking openly on GBV.

Finally, although the research aimed to understand gender-based violence holistically, very few examples of violence against men and boys were discussed. GBV against men is an especially taboo subject in Somaliland, and therefore was unable to be extensively addressed during the study.

## **2.6 Key Concepts and Definitions**

This research defines gender-based violence as any harmful act perpetrated against a person's will that is based on socially prescribed gender differences between males and females.<sup>8</sup> This

includes any act that causes physical, sexual, or mental harm to the victim, including threats of an act, the use of coercion, or the use of force, occurring in either public or private spaces.<sup>9</sup>

Translating definitions of GBV from international standards into local interpretations can be difficult. For example, the research team used the recognized term intimate partner violence (IPV) to describe any behaviour by a partner or ex-partner that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm.<sup>10</sup> When discussing this terminology from a Somaliland perspective, the research team needed to use different phrases such as family violence, as this was familiar in the local context and adhered to religious interpretations (which views partnerships as only occurring between married spouses). When there are noticeable discrepancies between recognized definitions of GBV and their local interpretations, these have been noted in the text.

The research operates under the assumption that all violence is gendered. Although violence against women and girls are the most common forms of GBV, the research also recognizes that there are forms of gendered violence that impact men and boys as well.

Finally, the research takes the position that power is a central component in the occurrence of violence, and that any understanding of GBV must be based in an understanding of power dynamics. Violent acts, which are inherently gendered, are used to obtain or maintain power. These intersect across a continuum, along individual, relational, community, or structural levels. For example, individual beliefs around gender roles may cause male dominance in the household, leading to violence to maintain power within relationships. Or, drivers of violence can interact on community and structural levels, where patriarchal norms consolidate power across socio-economic and political positions. As such, the manifestation of GBV is construed along these intersecting drivers. The following analysis is underpinned by this gendered construction of violence and power.

## 3. NORMS, ATTITUDES, AND GENDER IDENTITIES

Gender roles and responsibilities have traditionally centered on a strict division of labor between men and women in Somaliland

These roles shifted during the war. Women took up key positions as breadwinners as well as contributing to the peace process. These gains were also met with backlash, as men felt hostile to changing roles. This led to increased conservatism and incidents of violence.

Today, unemployment and neglect of family responsibilities by men are creating a double burden on women, across work and home roles. Backlash to these changing norms underlies cases of violence against women.

Doorarka iyo mas'uuliyadaha Lamaanaha waxa ay leeyihiin xudun dhaqmeed u kala qaybisa shaqada ka dhaxaysa ragga iyo dumarku Somaliland.

Masuuliyadina way is badashay intii lagu gudo Jiray dagalaada. Dumarku waxa ay noqdeen kuwo qaada musaailiyadda quudinta qoyska sidoo kalena qabeyqaateen geedi socodka Nabadda.

Kaalinta cusub haweenku waxa ay kala kulmeen cadaawada kaga timid in kor u kacaa tacadiga iyo qacan ka hadalka. Shaqo la'aan'ta iyo dayaca qoysasku ee maanta jirta ee raggu waxa ay keentay in korodhka culeyska dumarka ee shaqadda iyo guriga gudihisa. Doorarka is badalay waxa ay sabab u noqotay in la arko cadaaymo badan oo ku salaysan tacadiya ay la kulmaan haweenku.

### 3.1 Gender Identities and Somali Tradition

Women and girls in Somaliland have experienced multiple forms of gender identities. Fluctuating between rigid definitions of what it means to be a woman, to changing norms in response to broader socio-economic patterns, the situation of gender throughout Somaliland's history has been, and continues to be, a dynamic process. In order to understand how GBV manifest in Somaliland today, it is critical to have an understanding of both traditional and changing notions of gender roles and responsibilities.

Traditionally, there has been a substantial divide between the roles that men and women occupy in Somaliland. In a strong patriarchal culture, men are primarily responsible for public roles related to the economy, politics, religion and society.<sup>11</sup> This includes holding the majority of decision-making positions. Men are also seen as responsible for the overall financial prosperity of the family. Women's roles have generally centered on domestic tasks and

providing for the household, including child rearing, preparing the food, and keeping the home in order.<sup>12</sup> Although some scholars note that Somali women have always held a certain degree of economic independence, such as engaging in small scale business or livestock keeping,<sup>13</sup> overall, gender relations have been centered on this strict division of labour between male and female duties.

*Women are the presidents of their homes, so if she goes out for job she will not be aware of what is going on in her family, and therefore a conflict can happen. A man has already accepted the responsibility of the woman (since they got engaged), so she must care for her children and her family as a whole.*

-- Male interview participant, Yirowe

In the FGDs and KIIs, many respondents described how they believed traditional roles should be constructed. These roles centered on men in charge of financial responsibilities for the family, as well as occupying the majority of decision-making positions, in business and politics. Women were described as primarily responsible for the family. As one respondent described, "Women do many activities, they go to the market when the man is sleeping....she [pays] the bills of the family, she goes early to the market...then she comes back home and [prepares] food and the children."<sup>14</sup>

Several respondents held the perception that any upset to these roles would bring insecurity and risk. For example, if a woman started going out of the house and engaging in public spaces, some respondents described how she would be putting herself at risk of violence, and as such, she should stay in the home instead.

### **3.2. Changing Roles During Conflict and Unrest**

Under the Barre regime, some effort was made towards addressing unequal power relations between men and women. The implementation of the Family Law in 1975 assured women equal rights to men, in regards to marriage, divorce, and inheritance.<sup>15</sup> Although these laws were controversial and caused some pushback, generally women enjoyed a more progressive environment, with greater acceptance in public life. Despite these gains, many forms of violence remained entrenched, such as the continuation of FGM/C and practices of forced marriage.<sup>16</sup>

The war in the 1980s and 1990s brought about significant change to traditional divisions between gender roles. With men facing problems such as militarization, unemployment, displacement, and injury or death, women had to step in to fill the breadwinner positions.<sup>17</sup> Women took on a variety of activities to secure their livelihoods, such as in business or as traders, increasing their visibility in public spaces as well as their economic capital. Additionally, women played a large role in the peace-building process, using non-violent strategies to pressure warring sides to end the fighting.<sup>18</sup>

Although the war provided new spaces for women and girls, the breakdown in social protection structures, such as the clan and clan relationships, also led to systematic violence. As one participant stated, "the collapse of the Barre regime resulted in families breaking up, it

caused low income due to unemployment of the husbands, most of the men passed away during the war, and women and children were left neglected....these results of the war affected the standard of life in the communities.”<sup>19</sup> Incidents of GBV during the war have been documented by numerous reports,<sup>20</sup> and include specific forms of violence such as rape, assault, unlawful arrest and torture, forced marriage, sexual hostage taking, and alleged incidents of mass rape by government forces.

In addition to experiencing violence, women were faced with growing hostility to their shifting roles and responsibilities. Even though women were filling critical economic gaps, men still felt that they should control the majority of decision-making.<sup>21</sup> This often led to a backlash against women, at times taken out through abuse or violence. As the conflict came to an end, many of the modern state structures of the Barre regime were replaced by an increasing religious and conservative environment, curtailing the previous shifts women had experienced and solidifying a more repressive environment.<sup>22</sup> As these examples demonstrate, shifts in gender relations have not been a linear progression throughout Somaliland’s history, but instead have been fluctuating patterns of change and resistance.

### **3.3 Present Day Somaliland: Fluctuating Responsibilities**

In present day Somaliland, participants describe on-going changes to gender roles, and the impact this has on society. Male respondents discussed challenges such as rising unemployment, an increase in substance abuse such as khat, and a growing inability to provide for their families. To compensate for these challenges, women often stepped in to fill breadwinner roles, similar to how they had during conflict times. This has led to a ‘double burden’ for women, who are responsible for both domestic duties as well as providing financially for their families.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of these shifts in social roles and the increased presence of women in the economic space, gender inequality and male dominance over traditional power structures remain entrenched. Women very rarely occupy central positions of power, and their economic capital is still mostly confined to informal or small-scale spaces. Mirroring patterns seen in the war, there is a great deal of hostility towards these changing gender identities, as women are seen as taking up men’s positions. As will be described in section 5, it is often this backlash to gender norms that is a driving force behind GBV and a rise in violence.

Over the course of Somaliland history, gender-based violence has been a common pattern, across pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict environments. The manifestation of this violence is often linked to gender identities, with GBV inextricably connected to the how gender is conceptualized and enacted. As the next sections will demonstrate, men often resort to violence when their masculinities are put into question or there is a general inability for either genders to meet the roles that they are expected to fulfil.

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘double burden’ was commonly used by respondents to describe female responsibilities across both home and work environments.

## 4. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

Gender-based violence is a common experience for women and girls across Somaliland. Incidents include intimate-partner violence or family violence, rape, gang rape, sexual assault, FGM/C, forced marriage, denial of resources and general discrimination against women and girls.

Although GBV occurs across all communities, certain populations are more vulnerable to violence, including refugees and IDPs, young women and adolescents, minority groups, and women with spouses who have gender inequitable attitudes.

Consequences of GBV include individual impacts, such as severe injuries; relationship level impacts such as divorce and family breakups; community impacts such as conflict and discrimination; and larger structural impacts, such as poor socio-economic development.

Tacadiyadda ku salaysan jiinsiga waxa uu inta badan ku dhacaaa haweenka iyo hablaha Somaliland, Dhacdooyinka waxaa ka mid ah gacan ka hadalka ka dhex dhaca qoyska, kufsigu, kufsi wadareedka, iyo , gudniinka fircooniga ah, guurka qasabka ah, quudin la'aanta qoyska iyo takoorida.

In kasta oo tacadiyada ay ka dhex dhacaan dhamaan bulshoyiinka oo dhan, haddana dadka qaar ayaa r si aad ugu nugul dhibaataada, waxana kamida dadka qooxontiga, dadka ku nool barakacayaasha, dhalinyarda haweenka ah iyo hablaha qaan gaadhka, dadka laga tiro badan yahay, iyo dumarku la qabo ay la kulman khilafadka guriigu

Caqabadaha le ka dhasha tacdiyada jinsiga aha waxaa ka mida ah samaynta uu ku yeesho shaqsinimo, sida dhawacyo khatar ah oo soo gaadha, samaynta uu ku yeesho xidhiidhka qoyska sida furninka iyo burbur ku yimada qoyska, samaynta uu ku yeesho bulshada sida colladaha iyo istakoorida, samaynta uu ku yeesho nidaamka guud sida ka kobaca dhaqan-dhaqaale

The previous section has provided an overview of gender in Somaliland, and how patterns of change and resistance to gender identities have been enacted in recent history. These gender identities are linked to the occurrence of GBV, with violence against women and girls a common pattern in Somaliland's past. The next section will examine current experiences of gender-based violence and the consequences that this can have across society.

## **4.1 Experiences of Gender-Based Violence in Somaliland**

The experiences of GBV in Somaliland occur along a spectrum of violence. Respondents in all case study sites reported a wide range of incidents, from intimate partner violence (physical, emotional and sexual), to cases of rape and sexual assault, to incidents of FGM/C and forced marriage. Respondents described severe incidents such as multiple perpetrator sexual assault, or gang rape, as well as more entrenched forms of violence, such as discrimination or denial of economic resources. Incidents of violence occur across the life-span of a woman, with discrimination starting at birth (through practices like son preference), continuing through childhood (FGM/C or lack of education), young adulthood (vulnerability of to rape), and onwards into her married life (incidents of IPV and family violence). As one female participant stated, 'Nobody likes women except God.'

Some of the most common types of violence described by respondents were the occurrence of IPV or family violence. Respondents primarily discussed physical incidents, such as choking, beating, hitting, slapping, pulling hair, and other physical abuse against a spouse. Often these led to extensive injuries. For example, as one respondent described, "there was a woman in our village, a young girl who was married and became pregnant. Her husband was beating her, and one night he threw her on the bed and damaged her where the baby was. When they took her to the hospital...they said she would never be pregnant again."<sup>23</sup>

Reports of emotional and psychological violence included verbal insults, threats, controlling behaviour and neglect of responsibilities such as men refusing to provide financial resources for his family. Few cases of sexual violence between spouses were reported, however this is likely due to the social norm that a husband is entitled to have sex unless the wife is sick or injured.

Rape was described by participants as a particularly heinous problem across Somaliland. Although rape is not a new phenomenon, there is a growing perception that an increase in multiple perpetrator sexual violence (or gang rape) in urban centers has become prolific. Over the past several years, this trend has also been noted by the government and different civil society organizations. In a statement to local news sources, the Director of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs estimated that 5000 rape cases had taken place in Somaliland for 2012, up from 4000 cases in 2011.<sup>24</sup> Although it remains unclear if these numbers accurately reflect an increase in cases, rather than just an increase in reporting, the perception that rape and gang rape are a burgeoning problem across urban spaces was held by the majority of respondents.

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*One day a woman, who is old and has children, she [went] out to look for sheep...and while she was looking for her sheep a young boy who was around 25 years came after her. The young boy caught and raped her. After that her daughter made a noise for...help for her mom and we all ran to see what happened. We did the best to take the case to the court directly, but unfortunately the elders took the case out of court and solved it by the traditional way.*

-- Female interview participant, Ali Hussein camp

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Traditional harmful practices, such as FGM/C and forced marriages, were other forms of violence described by participants. These types of GBV are sensitive issues, as they are often not viewed as violence but as sanctioned cultural norms. The first traditional practice described, female genital mutilation and/or cutting, involves either the partial or total elimination of external female genitalia.<sup>25</sup> The most common form of FGM/C carried out in Somaliland is infibulation, where the clitoris, labia minora, and parts of the labia majora are removed, with the remaining area sewn together so all that remains is a small opening for urination and menstruation. In Somaliland, this is known as Pharonic type, and is the most common form practiced. A recent study from the NAFIS network estimates that up to 99% of women undergo FGM/C in Somaliland, with Pharonic practiced in approximately 80% of cases.<sup>26</sup> A less severe form, called Sunnah type, is also practiced. Sunnah can range from the symbolic prick of genitalia, to the removal of the clitoris and parts of the labia minora or labia majora. There is a general trend toward acceptance of Sunnah type rather than full infibulation. Most respondents described how Pharonic FGM/C was a violation of women and girls; however less severe forms like Sunnah type were not necessarily seen as violence, but as markers of womanhood, dignity, and suitability for marriage. Participants also described the health consequences of FGM/C, such as severe pain and bleeding, infections, shock, urinary and vaginal problems, difficulties with sex, and complications during childbirth.

Several participants described forced marriage. Early or child marriage was not seen as a form of GBV, as it is not contrary to Islamic law. However, forms of forced marriage, such as coercion by parents or marriage of rape victims to their perpetrators, were described as harmful.

Respondents viewed general discrimination toward women and denial of resources as a form of violence. For example, several participants described how discrimination against girls would keep them out of school in favour of boys, decreasing their educational opportunities. Other participants described harassment and abuse faced at the workplace, and how women were seen as ‘taking up male spaces’ when engaging in activities such as business or in government employment. This general discrimination toward women, especially in public or decision-making spaces, was seen as an entrenched form of violence that may not be as physical as other forms of GBV, but that had just as damaging consequences for longer term development.

There were only a few cases of violence against men reported by participants. Where cases were reported, they mostly concerned sexual violence against young men or vulnerable children (such as street children). Some men described cases of spousal abuse, such as wives pouring oil or boiling water on their husbands. Cases of female to male spousal abuse were rare however, and should not be seen as structurally entrenched as male perpetrated forms of IPV.

## **4.2 Vulnerability to Violence**

The occurrence of gender-based violence was discussed widely across all case studies by all types of participants, including men, women, youth, elders, and religious and traditional leaders. As such, it can be seen that experiences of GBV are not stratified across class, clan, or

socio-economic lines. Although cases of gender violence were common across the population, several factors did heighten vulnerability to GBV.

In Somaliland, IDPs, asylum seekers and refugees occupy some of the most vulnerable positions of society. They are often excluded from the types of social security nets that regular citizens have (such as clan networks, family, or strong community ties), and live in precarious positions that prevent access to employment, education, health and other resources. This vulnerability and social exclusion of IDPs and refugees increases their risk of gender-based violence, with participants describing high cases of GBV in IDP or refugee settings. For example, IDP participants described how they lacked any security forces or police presence in their camps, which gave perpetrators free reign to rape without consequence. IDP women describe their vulnerability to violence such as rape when they were undertaking activities like tending animals or collecting firewood. Respondents describe how refugee or IDP populations will not report their cases, as they feel vulnerable due to their precarious legal status and do not feel that they have options for formal redress or complaint.

Although rape was reported across the majority of urban respondents, there were several participants who described the vulnerability to gang rape of young women with male friends, boyfriends or who spend time with young men outside of marriage. As Somali culture has strict guidelines that forbid the interaction between male and females before marriage, male-female interactions are often seen as taboo or kept hidden.<sup>ii</sup> Participants described how some perpetrators of gang rape would be close to the victim, such as the boyfriend or friend of a girl. He would organize his friends to commit violence against her. Sometimes this occurred after a young man had been rejected by a potential wife or girlfriend, and wanted revenge. In other cases, the young man would lure their girlfriends into a gang rape scenario by pretending that he wanted to talk alone about their future. When the woman would arrive to meet him, she would find a group of men waiting for her, who would then proceed with gang rape.

.....  
*A 13 year old girl had been raped by 10 gang members together. They caused severe physical injuries. This girl was not only raped, but she encountered bad injuries...I remember how the girl was unkindly cut with a knife.*

-- Female FGD participant, Burao  
.....

Family violence was described by the majority of respondents, regardless of case study location or socio-economic background. However, perpetrators of IPV often held more traditional views of gender norms, such as the primacy of women in domestic responsibilities and the home, the dominance of male power, and beliefs of inequality between genders. When these views were challenged and traditional norms threatened (such as when a woman would go to work in the market), this would often cause violent backlash. As such, women in marriages where the spouse held traditional views of gender roles, or rigid beliefs on male power in relationships, can be seen as more susceptible

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<sup>ii</sup> Even though male-female relationships outside of marriage are forbidden in Somali culture, and many people deny that these types of relationships occur, it should be noted that stories of violence between boyfriends and girlfriends were very common across participants.

to violence. Additionally, some respondents described younger marriages as being more vulnerable to violence, as younger couples were still working out how to peacefully coexist and had not yet developed conflict-resolution mechanisms.

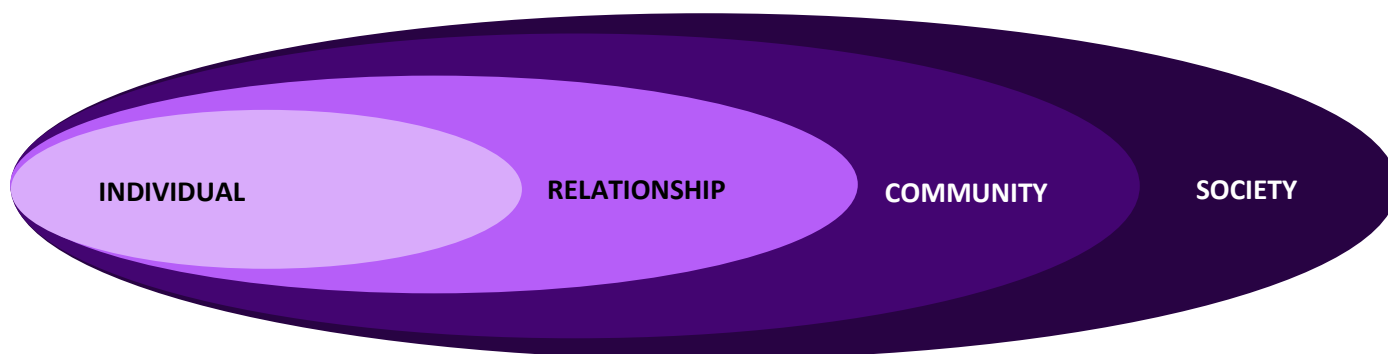
Other factors that participants described as heightening vulnerability to GBV include belonging to a minority clan, having a disability, economic disenfranchisement, street children, or living in areas with a lack of police and security presence.

### **4.3 Consequences and Impacts of GBV**

The consequences of GBV described across case study sites are dynamic and multifaceted. Using a four level social-ecological model (SEM) for a better understanding of violence,<sup>27</sup> the impacts of GBV can be mapped along individual, relationship, community, and structural levels.

Respondents described a variety of individual impacts of GBV. These included physical injuries, from smaller-scale incidents such as bruising or pain, to the breaking of bones or stab wounds, to severe injuries such coma or death. Other consequences described included the spread of STIs, including HIV/AIDS, and longer term issues of chronic pain, gynaecological problems, and general poor health.

**Figure 3: Socio-ecological model**



In addition to physical impacts, respondents described the mental toll of GBV cases. These included psychological issues such as increased anxiety and fear, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and self-harm or suicide.

When examining relationship level impacts of GBV, participants described the breakdown of relations between spouses as the main consequence of violence. Divorce and family breakups<sup>iii</sup> were common, with participants describing related challenges such as neglect of the children and the inability to provide a strong family home.

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<sup>iii</sup> Family breakup was a common phrase used by participants to describe divorce or separation after violence.

Community level impacts were often the wider result of relationship level breakdowns. Respondents described how the impacts of GBV led to the disintegration of social ties between people in the community. Divorce and child neglect were viewed as contributing to negative social phenomenon such as street children and the cycle of poverty. Respondents also discussed how cases of GBV could cause fighting between families, and in several cases, could spark conflict between clans or communities themselves.

### **Box 1. Survivor testimony**

Before coming to this place, my husband started many family conflicts. When two people start a conflict, there is a lack of confidence between them. My husband's mom was also doing wrong to me, and [she forced] me to do everything she wanted. I have young son and I didn't have a place to raise him. After my husband started [these] conflicts, he left me to go to Europe through illegal immigration.

When my husband left, he didn't give me a divorce, and he went for illegal immigration. After that, I had conflict with his family. The community contacted this organization (WAAPO) to cover all the needs of me and my baby. I was the only person to cover my life and my son, after my husband [abandoned us]. I didn't have any work to provide for my baby. But now everything is completed.

[At that time when I experienced violence] I was sick. I had headaches, and I was depressed and disappointed before staying here. I was traumatized, felt painful, and was depressed. My memory repeated many times and I was worried in my mind. I had a lot of problems and a rough road [in life]. I also faced moral damage and pain. But at this time, staying here, I don't feel anything because I was removed from all of those problems. I have learned how to tailor and take care of my baby, so I am happy.

My family did not give me anything and they did not tell me any advice. But the community referred me to these organizations such as CCBRS and WAAPO. They said to be patient. I give advice [to other survivors] to be patient. Second I say please search how to get your rights. Also I advise to go to the justice system such as the courts, and to other places where she can get services such as organizations like CCBRS and WAAPO.

Several respondents drew connections between GBV, the broader institutions of Somaliland and larger socio-economic impacts. Women make up a large majority of the informal business sector, yet when they experience GBV, they are often forced to stay home due to their injuries. As has been noted in other studies examining the effects of GBV,<sup>28</sup> gender violence can hinder economic development through the loss of income, loss of productivity (both outside and inside the home), and direct costs borne by victims such as health or justice payments. As one participant stated, "This issue is a multi-dimensional problem. FGM and sexual assault and the combination of these [types of] violence hinder the development of the society, in terms of technology, in terms of the economy, and all other leadership qualities. This will lead to discrimination and poverty." Other participants drew connection between the strength of a nation and the strength of families. As a traditional leader in Ali Hussein IDP camp noted, "Family is a nation, and if the family disappears, the nation will disappear."<sup>29</sup> Participants held the perception that if families start to disintegrate and break apart due to violence, then Somaliland itself cannot develop to its full potential.

## 5. CAUSES, PERCEPTIONS, AND SOCIAL NARRATIVES OF VIOLENCE

IPV and family violence are driven by the combination of changing gender roles, male neglect, and financial conflicts. Women are taking over breadwinner roles due to rising unemployment and neglect by their husbands. Conflict over financial responsibilities and hostility towards these changing roles manifests through violence in the household.

Respondents describe a rise in rape and gang rape. With an increase in youth gangs and lack of social integration for young men, combined with a culture of impunity, incidents of multiple perpetrator rape are common in urban areas.

There are slight changes in FGM/C. Respondents recognize the health dangers, and describe shifts towards less severe forms of cutting. Community norms on marriage still keep the practice entrenched.

Overall, GBV is met with shame, stigma, and silence. There are high rates of victim blaming and justification for GBV. This has created an environment where violence has become normalized.

Gacan ka hadalka ama dagaalka ka dhex dhaca qoyska waxay ka dhashaan dhamaan tood isbadal ku dhaca doorka lamaanaha, dayacaad ka timaada ninka, kuwo la xidhiidha dhaqaale. Haweenka oo qaata in ka badan doorka masuuliyadeed ee ka dhalatay shaqo la'aanta iyo dayacaada ka timaada nimankooda wax ka dhashey. Iska horimaadka lamaanaha iyo ismaandhaafka la xidhiidha masuuliyada maliyadeed ee qoyska.

Dadka Su'aalaha la waydi'yay waxa ay tilmaamen in uu soo kordhaayo kufsiyadu iyo kufsi wadareed. Tirada sii badanaysa ee budhcad dhalinayareed, is is-dhex galka la'aanta dhalinyarada dhaqanka aqaab la'aanta danbiilaha waxa ay sii kordhisay, dhacdooyinka kufsigu ee ka dhaca magaalooyinka .

Waxa jira is badal yar oo ku dhacay marka la eego dhinaca gudniinka fircooniga ah. Dadka su'aalaha la waydiyay waxa ay xaqiiqsadeen khatarta cafimaad, sidoo kale waxa ay tilmaameen in isbadal yar ku yimid xaga jarida amaba goynta. Dhaqamada guurka bulshadu waali waa mid si xididaysanaya .

Guud ahaan, tacadiyada ka dhanka jiinsiga waxa lagala kulmaa ceeb, takoorid iyo qarsashada dhibka ka soo gaadhay dhibanaha. Waxa jira heer aad u sareeya kaas oo qof ka dhibanaha ah lagu dhaleeceeyo qiilna loo sameeyo tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga. Taasoo ka dhigtey tacdiyadda ka dhanka jinsiga wax caadi ah.

The previous section has shown how GBV in Somaliland manifests across a diverse range of experiences. Consequences of GBV are wide-ranging, including individual impacts such as injuries, relationship impacts such as marital strain and divorce, community impacts through weakening social ties, and structural impacts such as negative socio-economic effects. In this section, we examine different narratives of violence, including a discussion on the causes, social norms, and overarching perceptions of GBV that exist at the community level.

## **5.1 Financial Strain and Gendered Backlash: Drivers of Family Violence**

As mentioned in section 3, participants (often male) would describe their ideal construction of gender roles and responsibilities. Men were viewed as in charge of all financial matters such as providing for the home, as well as any public or decision-making roles, such as engaging in business or political office. Women were seen as taking on responsibilities for the home, child rearing, and domestic duties.

Changing social and economic circumstances are causing upset to these rigid definitions of gender norms. Respondents described particular challenges, such as rising unemployment and economic insecurity. Due to these problems, men are facing an inability to meet their financial obligations within the household. Khat<sup>iv</sup> chewing was also seen as a specific problem, with respondents describing how Somali men would spend both significant amounts of time and money on khat, instead of using those resources to fulfil their family duties. In order to make up the financial responsibilities that men were now seen as neglecting, women described taking on the roles of both genders. Respondents described how women are now responsible for finding income-based employment, as well as continuing with their domestic and child-rearing duties. Women described how this has led to a double burden between work and the home, with more and more of their time spent fulfilling financial obligations. This has led to women's greater involvement in public spaces, such as engaging in trade, agriculture, or small-scale business.

These contrasting gender discourses – between traditional views on the role of women versus the movement of women into economic roles – were described by respondents as causing both emotional and financial strain on households. This gender role stress, taken as a threat towards masculinity, was often the spark needed to start gender violence within the home.<sup>30</sup> When combined with financial conflict at the household level, usually connected to the inability to fulfil financial responsibilities, men lashed out and committed violence against their wives.

The exact pathway for this type IPV or family violence can occur in several different ways. Many respondents discussed how instead of bringing home income for their family, men would instead spend their earnings on khat, cigarettes, or other substances. When a man would arrive home, his spouse would question him on what he had done with the money, and a conflict would ensue, resulting in physical violence. As one participant noted, "A husband [in our village] is a helper and his fee is 40,000...he spends 20,000 to buy khat, and 20,000 thousand for

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<sup>iv</sup> Khat is a plant native to the Horn of Africa. It has mild narcotic properties, and is used widely across Somaliland.

cigarettes, lunch and tea during his time of chewing the khat...finally when he finishes chewing khat, he goes to his family without money. When the woman asks him for the bills for his family, eventually conflict erupts, and that results in abuse to his wife or even hurting her."<sup>31</sup>

Other respondents described how when a woman would go to the market to earn income for her family, the husband would expect her to give him her earnings at the end of the day. He would also expect her to have all of the domestic duties done. If she failed to do either one of these things, a conflict would erupt, with respondents describing multiple cases of IPV being driven by these financial reasons. As these examples demonstrate, conflicts over financial insecurity combined with a backlash against changing gender roles, could be a deadly combination for women in the home.

## **Box 2. Male Frustrations**

*In the last decade most of the men faced great unemployment that impacts their daily life and also their responsibilities... we know when women work in order to generate household income, [they] think men become weak and that he is useless...that is why men become aggressive and sometimes hit his wife, because women think they are responsible for the family and they push their husbands.*

Many male participants described the frustrations facing men in current society. Specific challenges included rising unemployment, a sense of declining responsibilities (due to changing gender roles), and substance abuse such as khat chewing. These challenges were seen as a threat to traditional notions of masculinity and what it means to be a man in Somaliland. Several respondents described how they felt less valued in society, and that women now saw them as 'weak' or 'useless' since they could not adequately fulfil their provider roles. Across male respondents, there was a general feeling of frustration and confusion on how to demonstrate masculinity in constructive ways (for an in-depth look at masculinities in Somalia/Somaliland, see 'The impact of war on Somali men: An inception study,' Rift Valley Institute, 2015).

A few respondents took out their frustration by blaming NGOs for a perceived focus solely on women. When asked about GBV, a few respondents suggested that this problem was either 1) exaggerated by international organizations or 2) a problem that was created by NGOs through women's empowerment programs. Male participants exclaimed that empowerment programs were causing women to challenge men, and therefore, organizations should only be consulting with men when working with local communities.

Although it is important to emphasize that NGOs are not exaggerating the extent of GBV, and that it is a pervasive issue across Somaliland, the broader notion that men feel overlooked and undervalued in society is an important perspective that is not being adequately addressed. These dynamics point to the need for a more holistic understanding of gendered concerns across Somaliland, to ensure that men feel valued and are having their challenges responded to. If not, a growing sense of male frustration may continue to manifest through violent episodes, such as family violence, rape or sexual assault.

One of the most worrying trends described by respondents was the perceived rise in gang rape across Somaliland. Especially in urban areas, gang rape is viewed as a growing and specific threat. These sentiments have also been echoed by NGOs,<sup>32</sup> and the government.<sup>33</sup> Although it is difficult to assess the exact causes behind gang rape, stories from participants give us some insight into why these types of violence may be occurring.

Young men in Somaliland face several distinct challenges. With a burgeoning youth population, young people have difficulty finding adequate education and employment opportunities.<sup>34</sup> Due to these economic challenges and insecurity about the future, young men in particular feel a sense of frustration and lack of belonging. This marginalization of young males is compounded by few positive social spaces, and few opportunities for social integration. Recreation programs, sports clubs, extra-curricular activities, or even spaces such as a cinema or youth centers are almost non-existent in Somaliland.

The combination of these factors – marginalization of young men, few opportunities, and lack of positive social spaces – has led to a rise of youth gangs in urban areas.<sup>35</sup> These gangs are made up of primarily young men, belong to a geographically demarcated space (such as a particular neighbourhood), and engage in activities ranging from stealing mobile phones, to assault, robbery and rape. As investigated in a 2015 report by the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), young men have been generally excluded from traditional power structures, such as clan or political positions, with these roles held by elders and the older generations. General frustration over this lack of opportunity and disenfranchisement from traditional power networks has led to young men forming alternative spaces of control. This has been a driving factor behind the influx of gangs, where youth are the ones in charge. In a society where there are few other opportunities for power and advancement, gangs offer a space for young men to exert their own influence and feel a sense of belonging.

A majority of respondents draw the connection between the rise of youth gangs and the perceived rise of gang rape in urban spaces. Respondents describe how multiple perpetrator sexual assaults (gang rape) have not historically been a common form of GBV, and have only become a serious problem over the last several years. Although a few cases of mass rape were recorded during the war, multiple perpetrator assault is not a form of GBV that has been extensively documented outside of conflict periods.

There are several forms of gang rape that were described by respondents in the FGDs and KIIs. A common story told by respondents was that a young woman would be in an isolated space, or lured into an isolated space, such as getting into a taxi or walking to a shop at night. A group of young men would then kidnap her, take her to a more isolated area (such as outside of Hargeisa), and proceed to gang rape her. A common feature of these stories was the use of extreme violence, such as causing severe bodily injuries, cutting up the victim with a knife, or causing extensive internal injuries. Another common feature was the duration and intensity of the event, with the rapes occurring repeatedly for several hours. One of the most well-known cases of gang rape occurred in July 2013, when a group of 21 young men kidnapped two young

girls from the New Hargeisa Street Mosque and proceeded to gang rape both of them for several hours.<sup>36</sup> These should not be seen as one-off incidents, as the majority of respondents in urban areas had stories of gang rape happening to someone they knew in their neighbourhood.

Literature on gang rape often focuses on the socialization aspect of multiple perpetrator sexual assault, with the perpetrators (mostly young men) using group rape as a social cohesion tool or group bonding mechanism.<sup>37</sup> Other literature describes the interplay of individual factors, such as deviant sexual behaviour or cognitive distortions, with social factors, such as hyper-masculinity, male dominance, de-individuation and male bonding.<sup>38</sup> During the course of the research, we were unable to access many stories from perpetrators themselves, and as such there is limited understanding of interaction between personal motivations and group dynamics as applied to gang rape in a Somali context. As it is likely that multiple perpetrator assault will continue to be an extreme form of violence present across Somaliland, a deeper investigation into the causes of gang rape is pertinent for future GBV prevention programming.

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*There was a man who said to a girl 'Will you come out with me tonight' and then he prepared about ten other boys. He said to the boys 'When she is looking at me, hold me and bind my arms with rope, [so she thinks] I am not to blame.' When they were raping her, she said to him 'Please help me,' and he said 'My arms are bound what I can do for you?' ...When they raped her, they tried to murder her and threw her in a cactus near to them.*

-- Female focus group participant, Hargeisa

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Another set of stories told by participants were forms of dating rape, or rape perpetrated by a boyfriend or male friend. Somali society has strict guidelines between the sexes, with religious interpretations forbidding the interaction between men and women before marriage. However, in reality, participants described how the younger generation often broke these norms, with relationships occurring between men and women (even if these were unsanctioned or forbidden). A common story told by participants was how it was often a boyfriend or male friend who would organize the gang rape of the victim. Some of these stories centered on revenge. For example, if a woman rejected a man's advances or marriage proposal, some men described how this would be grounds to rape that woman.

Other stories did not appear to have revenge as a motivating factor, and it is unclear the exact reasons for perpetration. In these stories, a young man would often lure a girl to an isolated area by telling her he wanted to discuss their future plans together, such as marriage. Some men even went as far as to pretend to want to show off their future marriage home to his girlfriend. When the woman would show up to meet him, he would have organized his friends to be there waiting to gang rape her. Sometimes the boyfriend himself would participate. Other times, he would pretend to be held back by the group, while watching the gang rape from the side.

*One night we came to each other to talk about our future...when we were done it was late and he said to me I am close to your home so come with me....there were two men [with my friend and I] and when we were in the middle of the road where nobody was around, they tried to rape us. Unfortunately they raped me while my friend escaped. The guard rescued me when they had [finished] what they did.*

-- Female focus group participant, Hargeisa

Although the exact mechanisms behind group rapes are unclear, there are several contributing factors common across all narratives. The first common factor is power and control. While always a motivating factor in any type sexual assault, forms of power, control and hyper-masculinity are overtly exhibited in these types of multiple perpetrator rapes. Perpetrators operate in systems of intersecting power structures that give rise to their dominance, including a general environment of control over women, as well as the use of criminality and violence by street gangs as a tool for domination. These forms of power and control, which are already entrenched in society, act as both a motivating factor as well as an outcome that becomes increasingly solidified during the act of rape or gang rape.

Related to this factor is the theme of impunity. As is discussed in section 6, current justice mechanisms available to deal with GBV lack the capacity to properly punish perpetrators. This has created a situation where the majority of rape cases go unpunished, and the majority of victims remain silent. Impunity for GBV crimes is heightened for cases of gang rape, where culpability is split across multiple perpetrators. Gangs know that there is a very low chance that they will be punished for their actions, giving no disincentives for why they should not commit group acts of violence. Even if perpetrators are punished, consequences are weak or inadequate. For example, since the common form of redress in customary law is compensation, the economic cost of rape is actually lower for gang rape, as compensation is split across multiple perpetrators rather than just one.

Other factors that were mentioned as contributing to the perpetration of gang rape include the lack of education opportunities, normalization of violence across society, male frustration, and a general discriminatory environment preferring boys over girls. Participants particularly stressed the amount of young men out of school as a contributing factor. If young men's time was not being taken up by schooling, then they often joined youth gangs as a main form of peer social interactions. Additionally, some respondents described how young men learned moral values in the school system, and therefore those who had more education were less likely to commit violence or rape.

### **5.3 FGM/C: Changing Trends and Community Norms**

The issue of FGM/C in Somaliland is one that has been extensively studied and documented. There are several high profile figures (such as renowned activist Edna Adan) as well as local and international NGOs (such as NAFIS Network or Action Aid), currently working on issues

of FGM/C. As the majority of research on GBV in Somaliland to date has focused heavily on FGM/C,<sup>39</sup> this study only included a brief module on the issue, to complement, not duplicate, existing research.

Across all case study sites, participants had extremely high knowledge on FGM/C, as well as the detailed knowledge of the health consequences associated with it. All participants described harms associated with the practice, such as menstrual complications, gynaecological and urinary infections, problems with intercourse, and complications during childbirth. Although it is usually women who are responsible for ensuring the practice is done to their daughters, men, traditional leaders, and religious leaders all demonstrated high knowledge on the practice and the health consequences associated with it.

### **Box 3. Rape and FGM/C**

A worrying trend seen in the research is the increasing justification of FGM/C to prevent rape, especially in areas where there is a perceived rise of gang rape. Several respondents described how FGM/C should be used to protect women from these new threats. As one participant stated, "if someone tries to rape her, it is difficult and it takes time for him to open up her sex organ... the communities will hear and come to her." It should be noted that there is no correlation between the presence of FGM/C and a decrease in rape. Instead, cases of rape that did occur to women who had undergone FGM/C, particularly Pharonic, were described as more violent, as women were often cut open with knives by the perpetrator.

Participants gave several different reasons for why FGM/C was done to women in Somaliland. The first reason centered on the protection of dignity for women and girls, with FGM/C used to ensure that their honour was not tarnished through having sex before marriage. Related to this narrative were descriptions of how only girls who had undergone FGM/C would be suitable for marriage. It was seen as a necessary practice if a woman expected to find a husband and secure her future. Several respondents described the need to limit women's sexuality by cutting off the parts of their genitalia so that they would not derive pleasure from sex and refrain from acting promiscuous. Finally, some respondents described how FGM/C was deemed necessary by their religion, although there were diverse interpretations across participants on this issue, depending on specific interpretations of Islam.

The majority of respondents described a cultural shift currently on-going between acceptable forms of FGM/C. Pharonic type, or types of infibulation, was described by participants as declining. Participants noted that the most severe health consequences were associated with Pharonic FGM/C. Certain participants described how Pharonic FGM/C was not a religious necessity, but an engrained cultural practice that was harmful towards women and girls. Most participants stated that they supported Sunnah type, or less severe types of FGM/C that did not result in full infibulation. Sunnah was described as less harmful towards women, causing fewer health consequences while still ensuring protection, dignity, and marriage acceptability. It was also described by several participants as meeting religious obligations without compromising

the health of girls. Although the majority of participants described their support for this form of FGM, very few demonstrated support for complete eradication of the practice.<sup>v</sup>

Although participants did demonstrate shifting social norms around less severe forms of FGM/C, community attitudes toward the practice still remain entrenched. In FGDs and KIIs, participants were asked if they would marry a girl who had not undergone FGM/C (for male participants) or if they would marry their son to a girl who had not undergone FGM/C (for female participants). The majority of respondents noted that this would not be allowed, and the marriage would be deemed unacceptable by the community. Marriage to a woman who had not undergone FGM/C was considered extremely shameful, with participants noting that the best option was to marry a girl who had undergone Sunnah type, as she would still fit community social norms yet not face the severe health consequences of Pharonic FGM/C.

It is important to note that while the majority of participants describe a shift from Pharonic to Sunnah types of FGM/C, there may be a gap between what is being said and the types of FGM/C occurring in practice. As documented in several other studies,<sup>40</sup> often there is a discrepancy between what people describe and what they practice. For example, as noted by NAFIS Network and International Alert, while community members described using Sunnah type, in reality, more severe forms of FGM/C were still being practiced, with merely a different name given to the same type of cutting. Although there seems to be broad support towards less severe forms, it is important to ensure that this is translating into tangible changes at the community level, and not just a different way of describing on-going harmful practices.

#### **5.4 Silence, Stigma and Shame: Overarching Narratives on Gender Violence**

Across all case study sites, participants described in detail the stigma and shame associated with GBV. When it became known that someone had experienced violence, such as an assault or rape, she was often shamed and ridiculed, by both family and community members. Participants described how victims were insulted, ostracized and faced discrimination. Victims were viewed as bringing dishonour to their families and shame to their communities. In cases of rape, women were seen as unsuitable for marriage, as they were no longer considered pure and dignified. Since social norms place the value of women very strongly on marriage and creating a family, the ineligibility to undertake these key social roles was seen as destroying her standing in the community. Given this scope of shame and stigma around GBV, and the consequences associated with disclosing a case, the majority of women decide to keep silent rather than discuss what had happened to them.

When asked about social norms around GBV, the majority of participants described a strong belief that sexual assault was the woman’s own fault. These widespread attitudes of victim

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<sup>v</sup> It is important to note that less severe forms of FGM/C, such as Sunnah, still result in health dangers and harmful consequences. See WHO, 2016, ‘Female genital mutilation.’

blaming centered on three questions: 1) What was a victim wearing? 2) Who was the victim with? 3) What was the victim doing? Respondents believed that if a victim was dressed wrong, was in the wrong place, or acted inappropriately then she was to blame for the rape. For example, one participant described how a young woman was gang raped by a group of men when she was out buying soda. When she went back and told her family, they blamed her for being in a dangerous area, and told her that she had caused her own rape. Some respondents also described how the family was responsible for cases of GBV, with blame put on the mother for not guarding her daughter's dignity. In general, the victim was seen as bringing the incident onto herself, with the community shaming them for their perceived behaviour.

Victim blaming was not as common when discussing family violence and IPV. When asked if a husband had the right to harm his wife, the majority of participants, both male and female, noted that they did not have this right. Participants described this belief as being grounded in their religion, noting that as 'Islam was peace,' men only had the right to advise their wives and not cause them any physical harm. Some participants described how a husband did have the right to harm his wife, but only for discipline purposes and that this could not result in any injuries or physical marks. As a traditional leader interviewed in Qoyta camp stated, "Sometimes men have the right to beat their wives, but only for discipline. Because the husband is responsible for all of his family, he should care for them....but if a woman disobeys, men have the right to discipline his wife."<sup>41</sup> Differing beliefs on this point often came down to varying interpretations of Islam, with traditional and religious leaders across case studies citing slightly different reasons for why or why not a man could beat his wife for discipline purposes.

*Our practice is our religion, [in that] men do not have the right to beat and harm his wife either physically or emotionally. Our guidelines and practice should be like our Prophet...he was a merciful person who always helped his wives, he even worked and helped his wives at making the meals...so we should have practices like him. Men have no right to harm their wives.*

**--Male FGD participant, Ali Hussein IDP camp**

Although the majority of respondents described how family violence was unlawful according to their religion, this is in contrast to high rates of IPV reported across participants. Across each case study cite, the majority of respondents knew someone who had experienced family violence or described cases of IPV that were currently occurring in their community. According to the organization WAAPO, a Somaliland NGO that runs the only GBV shelter in Hargeisa, the majority of cases reported to them each month are family violence and IPV. As such, there is a break between perceptions on the social acceptability of family violence, and what is actually occurring in practice. It should be noted that IPV is still considered a taboo topic. Because it is perceived as a private family issue, most cases go undisclosed.

These narratives on GBV demonstrate a division between acceptable and unacceptable forms of violence. For example, if a woman is walking by herself in a deserted area at night and is raped, this would be seen as acceptable violence and she would be blamed for her assault. However,

when participants described stories such as the rape of very young girls (as young as three to five years old), this was seen as severe, breaking social norms, and an unacceptable form of violence. For cases of IPV, if a man lightly beat his spouse for the purpose of discipline, this would be viewed as a private family matter and an acceptable form of violence. If a man beat his wife to the point that she ended up with severe injuries or had to go to the hospital, this would be classified as socially unacceptable and an unsanctioned type of violence. As a police officer in Burao stated, "Domestic violence cases are taboo, as some people believe that if a man beats his wife it is acceptable. This prevents many women from reporting their cases, and this sometimes ends badly, where the victim can end up dead."

Taken together, these prevailing attitudes on GBV have created an environment where violence against women has become normalized across Somaliland. Certain types of GBV have become socially legitimate, and are either blamed on the victim, labelled as private, or are accepted as issues women just have to face. Normalization of GBV can be seen both at the personal level within individual relationships, as well as at the community level through prevailing social norms. These patterns are compounded by factors such as stigma and shame, which legitimize silence as the main coping mechanism for GBV and limit an overall discussion on GBV from occurring in communities. Because conversations on GBV are limited, the narrative that GBV is not occurring or that GBV is not an important issue is allowed to prevail. This is a driving factor on why GBV is often overlooked by government and donors as a national priority. Given the widespread normalization and silence on GBV across Somaliland, addressing the stigma and shame around these issues should be given priority in order to foster greater communication and increased knowledge on the extent and consequences of this issue.

## 6. RESPONSE SYSTEMS AND COPING MECHANISMS

Survivors address GBV cases in many different ways. Although most choose not to disclose their case, family, sexual assault centers, and GBV response organizations provide mechanisms to help survivors cope.

There are overlapping systems of justice used to respond to GBV. Customary law is the most common mechanism, but can be detrimental to victim's rights by using compensation or marriage to the perpetrator as redress. A strong judicial sector is key to ending impunity, but faces challenges like a lack of resources, high access cost, and a lack of trust by communities that it can deliver justice.

Overall, GBV is not seen as a national priority. There is a weak institutional framework and little data and information sharing. GBV is generally overlooked by the government

CSOs are critical to GBV response, as they are committed, engaged, and trusted by the communities. They face challenges like a lack of financial resources, lack of sustainability, and little harmonization across the sector.

Dhibanahayashu waxay uga jawaab celiyaan tacdiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga siyaabo badan oo kala duwan. Inkastaa oo ay doorbidaan'n aanay daah furin dhibkooda hadana reerka iyo xarumaha ka shaqeeya arrimahan ayaa siiya talo bixin habka loo caawin karo dadka dhibanaha aamba badbadayaasha tacdiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga.

Waxa jira nidaamyo caddaladeed oo ku aadan tacdiyada ka dhanka ah jiinsiga. Xeer dhaqmeedku waa mid ka ugu badan ee la istimaalo, laakiin wuxu noqon karaa mid dhawaacaya xuquuqda dhibanaha gaar ahaamagta ama in loo guuriyo dembiilaha si xal loogu raadiyo.

Waax gaarsoorka xoogan oo kaliya ayaa noqon kara furaha kaliye ee lagu soo afjarayo la xisaabtan la'aanta, laakin waxa jira caqabaado badan oo soo wajaha, sida jiri taan la'aanta dhaqaale yo kalsooni darro ka timada dhibanaha. Guud ahaan, tacdiyada ka dhanka jiinsiga, looma arko mudnaanta qaranka, Qaabka Ha'yadda Jira oo ah Mid aad u dici'fa, xogta jirta oo ah mid yar, iyo iyadoo la wadaagin macluumaadka ku saabsan tacdiyada ka dhanka ah Jinsiga. Tacdiyada ka dhanka ah jiinsiga si guud dawladu hoos uma eegto, laakiin ururrada bulshada ee rayidka ayaa si muq leh uga fal-celiya tacdiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga, way ka go'aan tahay wayna isku hawlaan in ay ka fal-celiyaan, bulshaduna waay isku halleyaan. Lakiin iyagana waxa heysta soo wajaha caqabaado sidaa, dhaqaalo daro, iyo Jiiri taankooda oo ahayn mid waraa, iyo iyada oo ay yartay sidii laysku waafajin laha si guud qaybaha kale.

The previous sections have demonstrated how GBV in Somaliland is made up of a complex set of social factors, including changing gender roles, economic insecurity, marginalization of youth, the normalization of violence, and narratives of silence, stigma, and shame.

The next section examines the response and coping mechanisms that are currently in place to address GBV. This will include a discussion on community level interventions, intersecting justice systems, as well as institutional and state level responses to GBV.

## **6.1 Coping Mechanisms**

Communities have developed a diverse range of mechanisms to assist survivors with the experiences of GBV. As seen in section 5, silence is the most common response. Because of the stigma and shame surrounding gender violence, and the consequences that can occur if a case becomes public, women choose to hide the fact that they have been victims rather than disclose what happened and pursue follow up care. This can cause emotional harm to the survivor, as well as impede them from accessing services such as health-care or pursuing justice.

When survivors do choose to disclose that they have experienced GBV, a common coping mechanism is turning to family support systems. After a survivor has experienced violence, often families are the first point of contact. Many participants described how the family holds the decision-making power on how a case will be responded to. Some families demonstrated sympathy, care, and support, taking the survivor to access services such as health care or taking the case to the police to be investigated. Other families blamed the survivor, encouraging her to keep silent so she would not bring them shame. Others still demonstrated a combination of responses, providing care and support to survivor, but also discouraging her from taking the case to court and instead settling the matter through customary law and compensation from the perpetrator.

For survivors who choose to interact with the formal GBV response system, there are a number of avenues available in Somaliland. Baahi Koob, Somaliland’s first one-stop sexual assault referral center, is a key part of the health response to GBV. Established in 2008, with centers in Hargeisa, Burao, and Boroma, Baahi Koob centers provide medical, legal and psycho-social support to survivors. In addition to providing free-medical care, they also connect victims to services such as the Criminal Investigation Department and legal aid, which are in-house to provide holistic services for GBV victims. Respondents from the police force told the research team that if a victim reports to them, they automatically refer to Baahi Koob centers for services. Generally, Baahi Koob is accepted and welcomed in Somaliland, and is seen as a critical link in the referral pathway. It should be noted that as Baahi Koob is only available in select cities, rural communities do not have the same access to these services.

There is also a network of local civil society organizations that provide a wide range of services for GBV. Although the sector is small, local NGOs were described by participants as committed, engaged, and as having a large degree of trust at the community level. These groups undertake

a variety of prevention and anti-GBV awareness raising activities across all regions of the country. Several CSOs also provide response services, such as shelter, protection, livelihood support, psychosocial counselling, and legal aid. Participants describe CSOs as key focal points where the community knows they can get assistance on sensitive cases, especially in rural areas where access to police, justice, or health resources are limited.

## **6.2 Justice Systems in Somaliland: Competing Responses to Violence**

The legal system in Somaliland is a combination between statutory law, customary law (*Xeer*) and Sharia law. While the statutory system is mandated to uphold laws and carry out punishments, justice is often practiced through customary law, negotiated by traditional elders. These intersecting justice mechanisms are one of the most challenging aspects of addressing GBV in Somaliland, creating confusion and overlapping systems that often hinder progress towards real justice for survivors.

### ***Customary Law***

Customary law, or *Xeer*, is a set of rules and regulations used to negotiate disputes between clans and sub-clans.<sup>42</sup> Created and adjudicated by traditional elders, it is the primary justice mechanism used across Somaliland and acts as a practical conflict-resolution mechanism at the community level. Historically used for nomadic-pastoralist societies, customary law is generally framed through the exchange of resources between clans, as a form of collective responsibility for crimes.<sup>43</sup> As *Xeer* is not codified or written down, but an oral practice, it is often open to interpretation.

The primacy of customary law in Somaliland has particularly harsh consequences for women. As *Xeer* is rooted in collective responsibility taken by the clan for the actions of its members, it removes any individual criminal responsibility for crimes, such as rape and sexual assault.<sup>44</sup> The most common solutions for GBV in the customary system are either compensation of the victim's family, or marrying the victim to her perpetrator. When compensation is used as a solution, the perpetrators family will provide some type of financial remuneration to the victim's family, covering the cost for physical damages to the victim, as well as covering damages perceived against her dignity and eligibility for marriage. If a survivor is unmarried at the time of her case, she is often forced to marry her perpetrator. As survivors of rape and assault often lose their future marriage opportunities due to stigma, marrying the victim to the perpetrator ensures that the victim will be able to secure her future, and that the honour of her and her family is not destroyed.

There was a wide array of responses to solving GBV cases through traditional *Xeer* mechanisms. Some participants described how compensation was a positive way to settle the conflict and safeguard the dignity of the victim. Other participants noted that

**If a GBV case must be solved, our traditional elders they solve it....The role of elders is to solve problems within community.**

**--Male FGD participant, Baligubadle**

these practices were extremely harmful, as they took away the victim's rights and could cause long-term emotional trauma, especially in cases of marriage between victim and perpetrator. Customary law was also described as creating a climate of impunity for GBV crimes, as there was a lack of personal responsibility and punishment to act as a deterrent. Across CSOs, legal, and government representatives interviewed for this study, all respondents stated that customary law is one of the key impediments to addressing GBV in Somaliland.

Although customary law is often harmful to victims of GBV, there are several elements that make it a desirable justice tool for communities. As participants described, customary law was familiar and culturally relevant, it kept GBV cases confidential and therefore decreased the shame towards victims, and it had a lower financial cost than taking cases to court.

Participants also described how customary law was a quick process, settling cases in several days compared to the months it could take for a case to go through court. For participants in rural communities, many did not have any access to judicial services, such as police stations or legal providers. Customary solutions therefore provide one of the only options for redress.

Two key actors who play an important role in customary responses to GBV are the families of the victims and traditional leaders. When it comes to deciding what type of justice a victim will pursue, families hold the majority of decision-making power. For example, a survivor might decide to take their case to the police and begin a formal investigation. When the family hears of this, they will pressure her to drop her case and solve it through traditional leaders. Families also have a vested interest in compensation as a redress mechanism, as compensation payments go to the family as a whole, rather than the victim directly. This creates a scenario where a family will pressure the victim to use customary law, so they can collect the financial compensation. Participants describe how in many cases, this money will not be given to the victim at all, but kept solely by the male members in the family. Many families also prefer to use customary solutions as the case will remain confidential, and they will not face shame from the community. Altogether, this creates a situation where families are the ones driving the justice process, rather than the victim herself.

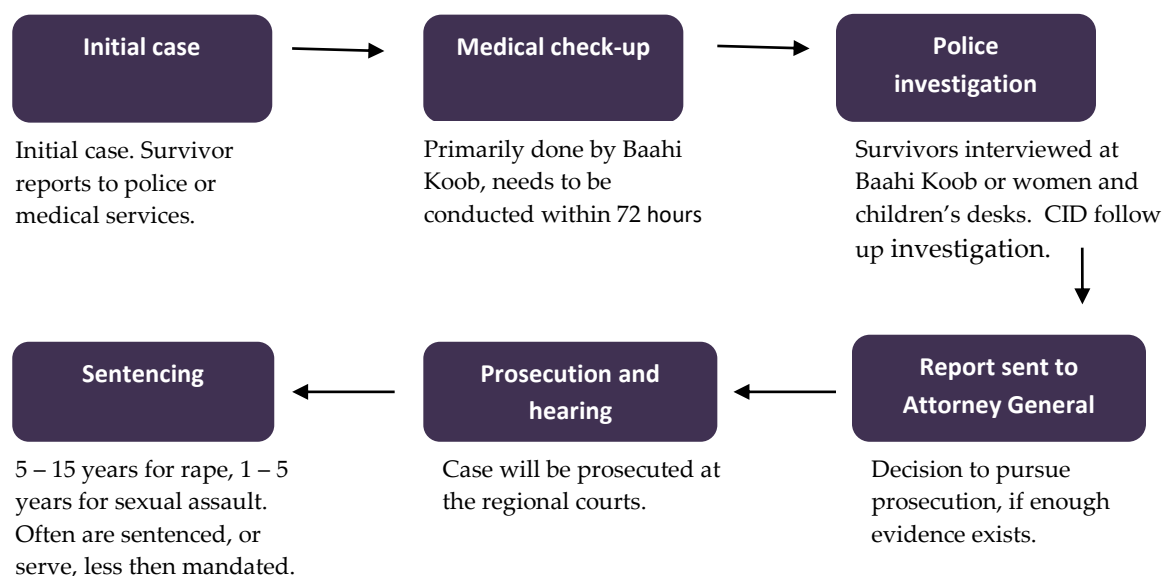
Traditional leaders are an extremely important group when it comes to understanding and addressing GBV in Somaliland. Elders hold the main decision-making power at the community level, and are seen as trusted and respected traditional authorities. When examining the role of customary law in responding to GBV, traditional leaders are critical in the continuation of this practice. Traditional leaders spoken to over the course of the research described how customary law minimized retaliation between clans, reduced the shame and stigma against victims, cost less in both time and financial resources, and was the most culturally relevant form of conflict resolution at the community level. These were given as the main reasons why they promoted customary law for resolving cases of GBV. However, there were some traditional leaders who said that they discouraged the use of customary law when responding to GBV. For example, in 2006 an Elders Declaration was issued, calling for the cases affecting women and children, including GBV, to be referred to formal courts. Several traditional leaders that participated in

FGDs and KIIs described how customary law did not provide long-term solutions for GBV, could often create more conflict between the families of the victim and perpetrator, and was not always an adequate solution for domestic violence. Future research should examine why some traditional leaders discourage the use of customary law for GBV, and organizations should work alongside these elders to advocate for the discontinuation of Xeer for GBV cases.

### ***Statutory Law and the Somaliland Judicial System***

The judicial system in Somaliland consists of four levels: The Supreme Court, regional appeals court, regional courts, and district courts. Statutory laws were introduced to Somaliland during the colonial period, and the 1962 Penal System is still the main branch of legislation that is used to address GBV. Articles 398 – 401 are the relevant provisions dealing with sexual attacks and crimes of morals and decency.<sup>45</sup>

The majority of GBV cases never are reported, and therefore do not come in contact with the formal justice system. If a case is reported, there are several steps along the justice chain it is expected to go through.



Article 398 of the Penal Code stipulates that rape convictions should be 5 – 15 years in jail, with 1 – 5 years for attempted sexual assault.<sup>46</sup> However, in practice, very few cases are tried, and those that are very rarely serve the stipulated sentences. This is due to several weak points within the justice sector that have prevented a strong response to GBV crimes.

The first main challenge facing the justice sector in Somaliland is a lack of capacity to address GBV. There is a lack of trained legal professionals who have the adequate knowledge to try GBV cases. There are very little resources devoted to these crimes, and those who do have proper training are insufficient to provide an adequate and holistic justice sector response to GBV across Somaliland. Additionally, there are often problems with investigatory capacity and collection of evidence. Although Baahi Koob provides medical documentation of assault, often

women show up after the 72 hour window available to preserve forensic material, making it extremely difficult to collect enough evidence for a conviction.

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*Cases take time for investigation because there is not a good system to investigate... cases need a strong justification and need medical [evidence] to become strong cases... a rape case can take more than 2 months when it is in the formal court but the traditional way takes 3-4 days. There is also fear that the case will drop out halfway, that the court will not believe [the victim] and they may consider her as the instigator of the case. This all adds up to the survivors lack of trust towards the court system, as she does not want to be publicly humiliated.*

-- Lawyer, Hargeisa

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Other challenges of the justice system are logistical and financial constraints. In comparison to the customary system, taking a case through the formal courts can take months to resolve. Survivors who want a quick resolution of their case often become frustrated with the process and decide to use the customary system instead. The judicial system also comes with high financial obligations for victims, such as costs for legal representation, transportation to hearings, costs for the processing of documents, and other related fees. Several participants described cases of corruption and bribery, where perpetrators families

would pay off the police to drop an investigation. If the victim could not afford the same payments, a case would no longer be followed. Finally, in rural communities, there is very limited access to the formal justice system itself. Respondents from rural case study sites described a lack of police presence, courts, and legal aid, making it nearly impossible for survivors in rural areas to take cases through the formal justice system.

Overall, participants describe a lack of trust in the formal justice system when it comes to addressing GBV. Respondents did not trust the judicial system to handle their cases quickly and confidentially. In comparison to customary law, which was seen as guarding the victim's identity, a case in the judicial system was not seen as confidential. Respondents spoke of how this increased their stigma, and made it difficult to take their case through the courts.

Taken together, all of these factors create a weak judicial response to GBV. Many respondents described how these challenges were being addressed through the dual application of judicial and customary systems. For example, in several case study sites (such as Burao), a case would be referred to the police and an investigation would begin. Before going to court, the family of the victim or traditional elders would negotiate a solution using customary law, and the case would be dropped before proceeding any further. In other case study sites (such as Yirowe and Baligubadle), customary law would be the first system used, and if this was unable to bring about a resolution, or the GBV case was extremely severe (such as a gang rape or rape of a young child), the case would then be referred to the formal justice system.

Regardless of the flaws, the need for a strong justice system was described by the majority of respondents as a critical part of GBV response. In FGDs and KIIs with survivors, participants described the need to have mandated punishments in place to deter future perpetrators and

break the cycle of impunity. As one male participant in Ali Hussein IDP camp stated, "Justice is the only thing that can reduce and stop the problem. Women have been raped, gangs are increasing and so is family violence. The only thing we need is a good legal service."<sup>47</sup> Across the CSOs, legal professionals, and government representatives interviewed during the study, all discussed the need for justice system strengthening in order for GBV cases to be adequately addressed, instead of being resolved through customary law.

#### **Box 4. Survivor testimony**

There were some problems in my life and conflict with my husband. He loved his child, but he was chewing khat. He often used to beat me, slap, kick me. He became aggressive chewing khat all morning. When I asked him about our bills, he would get angry. I left him, but he wanted to take my child from me, saying to the neighbours that I am a bad mom. I felt very upset and started fighting with him again.

The committee arrested him for a few days but then he was released. After he was arrested, he became more physically violent. I left my house and went to find a safe place. I found CCBRS and they referred me to the WAAPO shelter and took care of my basic needs as I don't have finances to cover my life.

This was so bad on my health, because I had physical injuries and emotional damage. I had headaches, and was upset before I came here, but at this time I don't feel anything because my problems are removed and I am learning tailoring at the center.

When the problems were happening, I thought I must live in this place and not tell anyone. But the IDP committee gave me advice and referred me to CCBRS. They gave me medical check-ups and referred me to the shelter. After that I came here.

#### ***Sharia Law***

Sharia is the third legal branch present in Somaliland. As set out in the constitution, the laws of Somaliland should be grounded on and not contrary to Sharia.<sup>48</sup> For practical matters however, Sharia often is only applied to family concerns, such as marriage, divorce, or inheritance. There are no specific Sharia courts currently operating in Somaliland.

The majority of GBV cases in Somaliland are addressed using a combination of customary or judicial systems. However, some respondents described that due to their frustrations with customary law, and the lack of adequate punishment for perpetrators, Sharia should be used to try gender violence crimes. As discussed in the SIHA 2015 report, this line of reasoning could have positive or negative effects.<sup>49</sup> As noted by respondents, many Islamic scholars believe that GBV has no basis in Islam. However, other interpretations open up space for some forms of GBV to be accepted, such as when interpreting religious passages on FGM/C or the right to physically discipline a spouse. Overall, respondent discussions on the possibility of using Sharia for GBV cases demonstrates the current frustration with customary and judicial law, and the desire for a stronger response system that can deliver adequate punishment.

## **6.3 Institutional Responses to GBV**

### ***Government Response***

The institutional framework and state response to GBV in Somaliland is limited. Current legislation on GBV is out-dated and provides a weak framework for prosecuting gender crimes. While there are several policies and bills that have been put forward to the government, many of these have been met with low levels of enthusiasm and several are currently stalled.

As of the time of writing, the Sexual Offences Bill had been tabled by parliament. The draft bill aims to update the current legislation on sexual assault and GBV, including a clearer definition on gender-based crimes, stronger punishments, and in general, a more comprehensive legislative framework on GBV. However, the bill has been met with weak support in parliament, and at the time of writing, was currently stalled. Other policies relating to GBV that are in draft form but not yet approved include the FGM policy and the GBV policy. There is a National Gender Policy, however it is only partially implemented.

There are some key ministries that show strong support and government action on GBV, such as the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. They undertake activities such as chairing the GBV national working group, collecting data on GBV cases, and working across national and international partners on prevention and response programming.

Across the national government, however, GBV is not viewed as a priority and is allocated very few resources. KIIs undertaken with government representatives demonstrate how GBV is side-lined next to other national issues. As Somaliland has a heavy focus on state-building and its national security agenda, GBV is viewed as a soft issue, one that either is exaggerated by international organizations or not seen as important for national development.

Some respondents argued for a reframing of this issue. As has been documented across numerous studies, gender violence and gender inequality play a huge role in the socio-economic development of a country, with high rates of violence negatively impacting factors such as poverty, food security, the economy, and overall social integration.<sup>50</sup> As one Member of Parliament described, "The government is not playing a responsible role in the implementation of [GBV] activities. The civil organizations are doing well but they need a good interpretation of policies implemented by the government...the parliament is busy planning and implementing those policies regarding peace building and development, and this is wrong because these rape cases and violence against women is silently increasing."<sup>51</sup> The government cannot solely focus on security and stability, as these issues will never be fully addressed as long as violence against women continues to hinder national development. As such, it is critical that GBV is viewed as a country-wide priority, and necessary to address if the longer term development goals of Somaliland are to be reached.

Another challenge facing the government is a lack of information and information sharing on GBV. There is a general lack of regularly collected data on GBV across Somaliland. What data is

collected is rarely shared or disseminated, creating silos of information across government actors and NGOs. This lack of data makes it difficult to convince policy-makers that GBV is a critical issue, as well as hindering programs from being built upon a strong evidence base.

#### **Box 5. Data sharing on GBV in Somaliland**

There is very little data and information that exists on GBV in Somaliland. What information does exist is not widely shared, and is rarely used outside a small subset of GBV organizations.

Currently, the government is rolling out a system called GBV Information Management System, or GBVIMS. Coordinated by the United Nations, GBVIMS is used to collate GBV cases across service-delivery organizations in Somaliland. For example, each month, cases are reported to different organizations such as Baahi Koob, legal aid, or CSOs such as WAAPO or CCBRS. These organizations will then upload their cases into the GBVIMS system, which the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs then collects. It is not an accurate reflection of prevalence, as not every organization is trained on GBVIMS and only a small number of cases are actually reported, however the usage of GBVIMS is a key step the government has taken to ensure the collection and coordination of GBV data across stakeholders.

However, as this program was originally developed by humanitarian partners, it is not designed as a government wide sharing platform. As such, there are capacity gaps in distributing and sharing information. Only the organizations who contribute to GBVIMS, which are few, have access to monthly and annual reporting. Recorded case counts and data on GBV trends are not shared, not even to other women’s rights organizations that could benefit from access to this information.

While it is important to ensure that confidentiality is maintained and the identity of victims are secure, the broader purpose of collecting GBV information must be to share collected data with key development partners, government agencies, and the wider community. If data and statistics are collected without being shared, then there is almost no point in collecting them at all. Access to relevant data is critical for evidence based programming, and must be used to break the silence on GBV.

#### ***Civil Society Response***

Overall, Somaliland has a small, but strong, civil society presence working on GBV. Respondents across all case study sites described positive relationships with local CSOs. With a strong presence at the community level, there is a high degree of trust and support between communities and civil society groups. These organizations undertake a variety of GBV awareness, prevention, and response activities, and have a presence in most regions across Somaliland.

Despite these positive findings, during KIIs several respondents described the challenges that CSOs are facing within the GBV sector. Firstly, many organizations have a lack of resources, both technical and financial. Local organizations face budget constraints, a lack of trained staff, and limited training opportunities. Additionally, several respondents described the disparity between the types of activities that are implemented. Across GBV organizations, there is a

disproportionate focus on awareness and prevention activities (such as anti-FGM campaigns or community dialogues) versus response activities (such as providing shelter and protection, counselling, or livelihood support for victims), leaving a gap in terms of responding to survivor needs. Finally, respondents also described a lack of harmonization and coordination across the sector. As most funding for local CSOs is project based, GBV programs are fragmented, dependent on donor trends, and lacked long term sustainability. Respondents described how this has created an environment with high duplication of projects, and a lack of general harmonization and vision across the sector as a whole.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The overall aim of this study is to deepen and enrich the knowledge of GBV in Somaliland. As the findings demonstrate, gender-based violence is embedded in social norms and traditions across the country. Participants describe a wide spectrum of violence, ranging from private incidents such as IPV and family abuse, to public forms such as gang rape. The consequences of these acts range from individual health consequences, to the destruction of the family unit, to the larger breakdown in community relations and negative socio-economic impacts.

To fully understand the challenges facing Somaliland, a gendered perspective is needed. Although it is a post-conflict country, the perception that Somaliland is safe or stable is a distinctly un-gendered view. Changing gender relations have solidified women's important roles as breadwinners, peacemakers, human rights activists, home-makers, and key income generators. However, these changing roles have also been met by backlash, hostility and violence. As such, GBV in Somaliland can be seen as a reaction to the both the gains and setbacks facing women.

These competing gendered discourses are intimately connected to the types of GBV reported across all case studies. As women take over the role of income generation in the family, they describe backlash at the household level in the form of family violence and IPV.

A striking finding of the research is the perceived rise in rape and gang rape in urban areas. As gang-rape of these proportions is uncommon in places where there is relative amounts of peace and stability, this particular form of violence is a worrying trend. Further analysis on youth gangs, criminality, and the causes behind multiple perpetrator sexual assault is needed.

The overarching narrative across the study is one of shame, stigma, and silence on GBV. Forms of gender-violence have become normalized and socially accepted, giving rise to a widespread phenomenon, which impacts many but is discussed by few.

The institutional space to address GBV in Somaliland is weak. Competing legal systems make it difficult to provide real justice for victims. There are few laws and policies on GBV, and those that do exist are only partially implemented. Although some government actors are trying to push this agenda, overall gender violence is not seen as a national priority. This is compounded by a lack of data and evidence, and the effective silencing of survivors.

Gender-based violence is a serious concern that impacts the wellbeing and resiliency of communities across Somaliland. Addressing GBV and gender inequality needs to be taken as a national priority, one that impacts the development of Somaliland as a whole. Given the research findings, the following recommendations are put forward as ways to strengthen the response to and prevention of GBV in Somaliland:

- **Strengthen laws and policies:** Urge the government to pass the Sexual Offences Bill, FGM policy, and other related laws, to develop the institutional framework against GBV. Ensure that national laws are in line with international legal standards, and that new policies are disseminated, shared, and implemented.
- **Increase evidence base on GBV:** There needs to be stronger evidence to demonstrate to government, donors, and other stakeholders that GBV is a priority. The government should take an active role in data collection, including the sharing of regularly collected statistics. MOLSA should take an active role in ensuring communication across local and federal authorities on issues relating to GBV.
- **Job creation and building inclusive economies:** This research has shown the link between unemployment, economic insecurity, and GBV. There needs to be an emphasis on building stronger and inclusive economies, for both men and women, to mitigate the financial drivers of gender violence. MOLSA should work with relevant partner agencies to ensure that gendered concerns are mainstreamed into economic plans and programming.
- **Strengthen the justice system:** The judicial system must have the capacity to respond to GBV, in both rural and urban environments. This includes building up trust in the sector, and finding ways to ensure confidentiality of survivors using the justice system. A unit within the Attorney General and prosecutor's office should be established to specifically deal with gender crimes. Additionally, GBV training should be streamlined across police units, the prosecutor's office, and the Ministry of Justice.
- **Advocate for the elimination of using customary law for GBV:** Work with traditional leaders to reduce the use of customary law to respond to GBV. Enforce the Elders Declaration of 2006, to ensure that cases involving GBV are referred to the courts.
- **Sustainable resources:** Resources on GBV in Somaliland are currently limited. There needs to be an increase in dedicated resources, including financial resources, capacity building of staff, forensic capacity, technical support, etc. The UN, donors, and government agencies should ensure regular and sustainable resource allocations are being channelled to GBV activities as a part of national development programming. All future legislation and policies on GBV should include concrete resource allocations.

- **Awareness raising at the community level:** Continue raising awareness on GBV, the rights of survivors, and to work with communities to develop context specific and culturally relevant solutions to GBV. This should include CSO programming, as well as increased engagement by government actors outside of urban areas and at the community level.
- **Utilize key advocates and allies for ending GBV:** Men, youth, community leaders, traditional leaders, and religious leaders all spoke about the role they could play on ending violence in their communities. GBV actors should engage these key allies and make sure programs and advocacy are inclusive of all relevant community members. This should include dialogues to increase communication on GBV in these key groups, as well as engaging men as ‘champions for change.’
- **Ensure holistic gender programming that addresses positive masculinities:** CSOs should ensure that their programs and messaging are inclusive of male concerns. This should include providing spaces for the social integration of youth, as well as working with men to develop positive masculinities and gender-equitable attitudes in relation to changing gender roles.
- **Speak with one voice on GBV:** CSOs should continue their commitment to ending GBV. This includes harmonizing their message, ensuring that GBV programs are evidence based, and finding innovative ways to engage communities. Continue to support holistic and safe GBV services in Somaliland, including prevention and response activities.

Ujeeddada guud ee darasaddani waxaa ay ahayd in si qoto dheer loo kobciyo aqoonta ku aadan tacadiyada ka jira Somaliland. Sida ay muujineyso warbixintu, tacaddiyada ku saleysan jiinsiga waxaa gundhig u ah cadooyinka bulshada iyo hab dhaqanka dadka. Ka qaybgalayashu waxay tilmaameen heerka u taagan yahay tacadiga gaar ahaan kuwo ka dhex dhaca qoyska ilaa Kuwa ka dhex dhaca dadwaynaha dhexdooda sida kufsiga wadareedka oo kale. Cawaaqibka ka dhasha falalkan waxa ay samayn ku yeelata cafimaadka shakhsinimo, burburka unugga qoyska, burburka ugu waynina waxa uu ku yimada xidhiidhka bulshada, iyo samaynta ay ku yeelato arrimaha dhaqan-dhaqaale ee bulshada.

Si aad u buuxda si loogu fahmo caqabadaha haysta Somaliland, waxa loo baahan yahay aragti ku saleysan jiinsiga. Aragtida ah in Somaliland tahay dal kasoo kabanayaa dagaaladii hore oo oo amaana ah oo nabadoon waa mid dhinac ah oo ka madhan arragtida lamaanaha. Is bedelka ku dhacay xidhiidhka lamaanaha waxa keentay in haweenku door mihiim ah ka qaatan arrimo muhiim ah sida hormuudka, nabadda, dhaqdhaqaaqa xuquuqda aadanaha, wax soo saarka guriga, iyo furaha dakhli abuurka. Si kastaba ha ahaate, is badalkan ku yimid doorka lamaanaha waxa ay keentay cadawaad iyo qalaalaase sida oo kale tacadiyada ka dhanka ah

jiinsiga Somaliland waxa loo arka dareen celin labadaba guulaha iyo dib udhacyo soo wajaha haweenka.

Ccilmi baadhistu waxaa ay muujineysaa in ay jirto korodh ka kufsigu iyo kufsi wadareedka magalooyinka ah. Kufsi wadareedku inta badan kama dhaco meelaha ay ka jirto nabadda iyo xaasiloonidu, laakiin jiritaanka noociisu waxa ay abuurtsay saa walaac. Waxaa loo baahan yahay baadhitaan dheerada oo ku saabsan budhcad dhalinyareedka, danbiyada, iyo wax yabaha ka danbeeya ee sababta u ah kufsi wadareedka.

Guud ahaan daraasadan waa soo saartey ceebeynta, takoorida iyo qarsa-shada la xidhiidha tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga ama lamaanaha. Noocyada tacadiyadan ayaa noqday mid iska caadiya oo bulshadu aqbashay, kordhka iyo baahsanaantiisu waxa ay noqotay mid samayn weyn ku leh dadka inta badan, lakiin in kooban oo qudhi ay ka hadasho.

Awooda hayadaha Wax ka qaban laha tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga ee Somaliland waa mid diciifa. Ku dhaqanka nidaamka sharciyada badana ayaana ka dhigtay mid aad u adag in dhibanayaasha helaan caddaladii dhabta ah, Waxa jira sharciyo iyo siyaasado dhawr ah oo ku saabsan tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga, kuwaaa jirana waa qaar qayb ahaan la fuliyay. In kastoo qaar ka mid jilayasha dawladda ay isku dayeen in ay riixan sidii loo ansaxin laha qorshahan, laakiin guud ahaan tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga maaha qaar la siiyo mudnaanta qaranka. Waxaana arrinatan sii murugtey xog la’aan baahsan oon la cadeyn karin iyo ka aamusnaanta dhibanaha ama kuwo ka kabtey dhibahan.

Tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga waa mid walaac halis ah abuuraysa, kaas oo samayn ku leh amaanka bulshada Somaliland. Wax ka qabashada sinaan la’aanta jinsiga iyo tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga waa mid u baahan in laga daro mudnaanta baahiyaha qaranka, taasoo saamayna ku yeelan karta horumarka Somaliland oo guud ahaan. Cilmi baadhistu, waxa ay soo jeedineysaa tallooyinkan soo socda oo ku saabsan sidii loo xoojin laha ka fal-celinta, wax ka qabashada iyo ka hortaga tacadiyada ka dhaca Somaliland.

- **Xoojinta sharciyada iyo siyaasadaha:** Dawladdu waa in ay ansixisaa xeerka kufsigu, Siyaasada gudniinka fircooniga ah, iyo sharciyada kale ee la xidhiidha, in la horumariyo qaab dhismeedka hay’adaha ka shaqeeya ah tacadiyada. Waa in la hubiyaa in sharciyada wadanku la jaanqaadi karaan sharciyada caalamiga ah, iyo in siyaadaha cusub la na faafiyo, lana hubiyo dhaqan galkooda.
- **In la kordhiyo cadaymaha ama macluumaadka tacadiyada jira (GBV):** Waxa loo baahan yahay warbixino cadaynaya jiritaankiisa si loogu muujiyo hogaanka jilayaasha dawladda, qaadhan-bixiyaasha, iyo daneeyayaasha kale in tacadiyada ka dhanka jinsiga in lagu daro ay tahay mudnaanta. Xukumaddu waa in ay door firfircoon ka qaadataa xog ururinta, lana wadaagto ururinta tirokoobka si joogta ah. Wasaradda shaqadda iyo Arrimaha Bulshadu waa in ay door firfircoon ka qaadata xaqiijinta xidhiidhka ka

dhexeyaa degaanada iyo dawladda dhexe ee la xidhiidha la tacadiyada ka dhanka ah Jinsiga.

- **Shaqo abuuris iyo dhisme dhaqaale oo loo dhan yahay:** Cilmi baadhista ayaa muujinaysa xidhiidhka ka dhexeeya shaqo la'aanta, dhaqaale yarida, iyo tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga. Waxaa loo baahan yahay in diiradda la saaro sidii loo heli lahaa kobaca ilaha dhaqaale oo ku filan ragg iyo dumarba, si loo yareeyo tacadiyada gaar ahaan kuwa ay keenaan dhaqaale yaridu. Wasaradda Shaqaalaha iyo Arrimaha Bulshadu waa in ay la shaqaysa hay'adaha wada shaqayntu ka dhaxayso, si loo hubiyo in arrimaha la xidhiidha lamaanaha amaba jinsiga in lagu daray qorshaha dhaqaalaha iyo barnaamijyada horumarinta.
- **Xoojinta Nidaamka Caddaalada:** Nidaamka garsoorku waa in uu leeyahay awooda ay wax qaban karaan tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga ee ka jira deegaanada miyiga iyo magaladaba. Tani waxaa ka mid ah dhisid waax sharci oo laysku halayn karo, iyo sidii loo heli lahaa hab lagu hubiyo xafidaada sirta qof ka dhibanaha ah iyada oo loo marayo hab sharci ah. Waa in la abuuraan unug ama qayb ku dhex taala xeer-ilaaliyaha guud iyo xafiska xeer ilaaliyaha oo si gaar shaqeeya dambiyada jinsiga la xidhiidha. Waa in lagu tababaraa booliska, xafiiska xeer ilaaliya iyo wasaaradda cadaaladda tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga.
- **Waa in loo dooda sidii loo baabiin lahaa ku xalinta xeer dhaqameedka ee tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga:** Waa in lala shaqeeya hoogamiye dhaqmeed si loo yareeyo isticmaalka xeer dhaqmeed lagu xaliyo tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga. Waa in la dhaqaan galiya baaqi cuqaasha ee 2006, si loo hubiyo in kiiiska ku lug leh tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga loo gudbin lahaa maxkamaddaha.
- **Waa in kor loo qaado kobaca dhaqaale:** Kharashaadka loogu talo galay tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga ee Somaliland waa qaar xadidan. Waxa loo baahan yahay in la kordhiyo kharashadka ku baxa kor-qaadida aqoonta shaqalaha, taageerida farsamo, iwm. Qaramada Midoobay iyo qaadhaan bixiyeyaashu iyo hay'adaha dawladda waa in ay hubiyaan in la joogteeyo kharashaadka maaliyadeed ee loo qoondeyey si wax laga qabto hawalaha iyo tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga isla markaana laga dhigo qayb ka mid ah barnaamijyada horumarineed ee qaranka. Dhamaan sharciyada mustaqbalka ama siyaasadaha ku salaysan tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga waa in ay la socotaa misaaniyad loogu tallogaley.
- **Wacyi-galinta Bulshada:** Waxa loo baahan yahay in la sii wado wacyi galinta ku salaysan tacadiyada ka dhanka ah jinsiga, xuquuqda u leeyahay qof ka dhibanaha ah, waa in lala shaqeeya bulshada si loo horumariyo macnaha xal u gaara ah oo dhaqan ahaan ku habboon tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga. Tani waxa ka mid ah barnaamijyada ururadda bulshada rayidka ah, iyo sidoo kale waa in la kordhiya hawl-gelinta jilayaasha dawladda ee ka hawl gala meelaha Magalada ka baxsan ilaa heer bulsho.

- **In la adeegsadaa u doodayaasha muhiimka ah iyo xulufadooda si loo dabarjaro tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga:** Ragga, dhalinyarta, hogamiyaasha bulshada, hogamiyasha dhaqanka, iyo hoogamiyaasha diinta, dhamantooda way ka hadleen doorka ay ka ciyaarayaan sidii loo tirtiri laha rabshadaha ka jira bulshadooda. Dadka ka shaqeeya ka hortaga tacadiya ku salaysan jinsiga waa in ay hawl galiyaan kooxahan muhiimka ah, si loo hubiyo in barnaamijyada iyo u doodda ay yihiin dhamaantood qaar xubnaha bulshada khuseeya. Waa in jiraan doodo si loo kordhiyo falanqaynta ku saabsan tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga, iyaga oo ay kasoo qayb galayaan kooxaha ugu muhiimsan, sidoo kale waa in la hawl galiyo in ay raggu nooqdan ka wax badalayaan.
- **Waa in la hubiya in barnaamijyada ku salaysan lamaanaha si togana loogu isticmaalo ragganimada:** Ururadda bulshada rayidka ahi waa in ay hubiyaan in barnaamijyadooda iyo fariimahodu ay ku jiraan baahiyaha ragga isla markaana waa in ay qayb ka noqotaa is dhexgalka bulshada iyo dhalinyarada si loo helo xidhiidh oo ku saleysan isbedalka ku dhacay doorka lamaanaha.
- **Waa in mideeyo codka ka dhanka ah tacadiyada ku salaysan Jinsiga:** Ururdda bulshada rayida ah waa in ay sii wadaan sida ay uga go'antahay soo afjarida tacadiya ka dhanka ah jinsiga. Waa in la sameeyo fariin loo dhan yahay lana hubiyaa barnaamijyada tacadiyada ku salaysan jinsiga in ay yihin qaar xaqiidoodu cadahay . Waxaa loo baahan yahay in la sameeyo fikrado cusub oo lagu hawlgaliyo bulshada .waa in la sii wadaa tageero siinta bixinta adeegyada tacadiyada ka dhanka jiinsiga ka jira laguna daro ka hortaga iyo wax ka qabashada hawlahaan.

## 8. ANNEXES

### 8.1 Coalition Members

Members of the civil society coalition that participated in all elements of research design, data collection, analysis and dissemination of the study.

No.	Organization	Description
1	Women Rehabilitation and Development Association (WORDA)	Works to develop Somaliland communities, focusing on women, children, and human rights
2	Network for FGM/C in Somaliland (NAFIS Network)	Advocates against the use of FGM/C across Somaliland
3	Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation in Somaliland (CCBRIS)	Works to improve lives of vulnerable people through community based approaches
4	Somaliland National Youth Organization (SONYO)	Umbrella youth organization working to empower young people across Somaliland
5	Initiative for Research and Development Action (IRADA)	Professional Somali led research organization
6	General Assistance and Voluntary Organization (GAVO)	Voluntary development activities to alleviate stress, poverty, and suffering
7	Voice of Somaliland of Minority Women Organization (VOSOMO)	Advocates for the rights of minorities and disadvantaged groups
8	Somaliland Women Lawyers Association (SWLA)	Legal professional organization advocating for women in the justice sector
9	Somaliland Family Health Association (SOFHA)	Provides family planning services to Somaliland women
10	Women Action for Advocacy and Progress Organization (WAAPO)	Advocacy, empowerment programming and service provision for women in Somaliland
11	NAGAAD Network	Works to empower Somali women through advocacy and capacity building
12	Y-Peer Network	Youth empowerment and leadership

### 8.2 Methodology

A mix of qualitative methods - KIIs, FGDs, and desk review – was used to explore and understand GBV in Somaliland. The research team undertook data collection in 6 case study locations. A team of 24 researchers, made up of coalition members, collected data in Somali, facilitated by a research advisor from Progressio. This was followed by transcription into English. A sample of 254 people was collected, across 44 FGDs and 54 KIIs. The age range of participants was from 18 – 75. The following charts break down collected data by case site.

*Total FGDs by case study location*

No	FGD Group	Total	Hargeisa	Bali-gubadle	Burao	Yirowe	Ali Hussein	Qoyta
1	Married Women	11	2	2	2	2	2	1
2	Unmarried Women/Youth	6	1	1	1	2	0	1
3	Married Men	10	2	2	2	2	1	1
4	Unmarried Men/Youth	5	1	1	1	1	0	1
5	Traditional and Religious Leaders	7	2	1	1	1	1	1
6	Mixed Men and Women (Married)	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
7	Mixed Men and Women(Unmarried/ Youth)	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
8	Other	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

*Total KIIs by case study location*

No	FGD Group	Total	Hargeisa	Bali-gubadle	Burao	Yirowe	Ali Hussein	Qoyta
1	Married Women	7	1	1	2	1	1	1
2	Unmarried Women/Youth	6	1	1	1	2	1	0
3	Married Men	5	1	1	1	1	1	0
4	Unmarried Men/Youth	6	1	1	1	2	1	0
5	Traditional and Religious Leaders	6	1	1	1	1	2	0
6	CSO/Service provider	11	3	3	2	2	1	0
7	Police	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
8	Legal service providers	4	3	0	0	0	1	0
9	Government representatives	5	5	0	0	0	0	0
10	Survivor	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

## 8.3 Endnotes

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