K4D | Knowledge, evidence and learning for development

Strengthening gender equality in decision-making in Somaliland

Becky Carter
Institute of Development Studies
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Question

What does the evidence tell us about barriers to and opportunities to strengthening gender equality in decision-making in Somaliland? Please include an analysis of:

- *Barriers and enabling factors for women's meaningful participation in decision-making in peacebuilding and political participation (from community to national levels)*

- *Examples of initiatives and any lessons learnt.*

Contents

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1. Summary

Women's participation in peacebuilding and political decision-making in Somaliland is very limited. A key barrier is the clan system underpinning Somaliland's political settlement. Entrenched and politicised, patriarchal clans exclude women (and other minority groups) from formal and customary leadership and decision-making roles. Other contributing factors are conservative religious attitudes and traditional gender norms. Structural inequalities – such as low levels of education, lack of funds, and high levels of violence towards women and girls – impede women's participation. Some women are more disempowered than others, such as women from minority clans and internally displaced women. However, there is increasing disillusionment with clan politicisation and a growing recognition of women's value. There are opportunities for framing gender equality in local cultural and religious terms and supporting grassroots activism.

This rapid review searched for literature on how and why women continue to struggle in Somaliland to achieve formal political representation and to take on informal decision-making roles on local peace and political matters, from community to national levels. It found a very small evidence base, with few up-to-date in-depth analyses of the barriers limiting women's participation in peacebuilding and political decision-making in Somaliland. This rapid review also looked for individual initiatives supporting women's empowerment in peacebuilding and political decision-making. It did not find detailed information on these initiatives, and very little evaluation of them. The literature found does not explore the participation of, and barriers faced by, women with disabilities.

This review's key findings are:

Situation of women

- Somaliland – a self-declared (but internationally unrecognised) independent state from Somalia since 1991 – has had "**relative peace and security** over the past two decades" (Sato, 2017: 196).
- In a context of high poverty rates driven by post-war fragility and years of drought, **women face systematic discrimination in accessing the scarce services and resources**.
- **Women are excluded from formal and informal decision-making roles**. Women's increasing economic activity and an active women's civil society has not translated into more participation in state and customary decision-making roles. Very few women are represented in government positions. Women have valuable traditional local and national peacebuilding roles, but these are supportive – not decision-making – roles.

Key barriers

- The **patriarchal clan system – and its politicisation** – is a key factor limiting women's participation in peacebuilding and political decision-making. There are concerns this is becoming more entrenched, with the clan system perceived to be the foundation of Somaliland's peace.
- Islamic principles of gender relations and nomadic pastoral traditions shape gender norms; **stereotypical views of men as decision-makers** and women in supporting roles

(and of less value to society) are still common. Women's increased economic activity (and high male unemployment) has led to some **male resistance to power sharing**.

- **Structural conditions** limiting women's participation in decision-making roles include high levels of illiteracy; low levels of education, awareness of women's rights, and self-esteem; lack of energy/time outside of economic activities; and high rates of violence against women and girls.
- **Some women face more barriers** than others: women from minority clans; internally displaced women and other migrants living in camps and informal urban settlements; poor rural pastoral women; women with disabilities; young women.
- **Limits to women's collective action:** Decades of campaigning for a quota for women's formal political representation has had slow progress, with few male supporters in leading positions. There is a perception that women's rights organisations tend to be urban and elite.

Enabling factors

- There are signs of some **disillusionment with clan politicisation and growing recognition of women's rights and value**, reflected in shifting social norms and attitudes. These trends create potential space for increased participation by women.
- There have been recent examples of **effective local women's networks** (for example, occupational associations, small entrepreneurial groups).

Lessons learned

- **Education and training**: There is a need to strengthen training for girls and young women on civic rights and practical leadership skills.
- **Dialogue and role models**: Public dialogue and debate, and media campaigns to promote powerful women, can shift gender norms.
- **Working with men and identifying male allies**: Female-only programming can lead to resentment from men, while exploration of, and support for, positive expectations of masculine roles is an important part of promoting gender equitable norms. Male allies can provide critical support.
- **Framing the discourse on gender equality**: Support local solutions by "examining the role of Islam with respect to the rights and empowerment of Somali women" (Walls et al., 2017: 71).
- **Supporting local activism**: External donors should work to foster inclusion and diversity in women's networks through support to local organisations, including by strengthening linkages between urban organisations and local rural groups.
- Strengthening gender equality in community participation requires **unpacking the dimensions of participation**: that is, understanding *what* decisions are being made, *who* (being specific about gender, age, occupation) is to participate, and *how* different actors can participate.

2. Context

Somaliland's constitution includes commitments on gender equality, but these are not achieved (NAGAAD, 2019: 11). In a context of high poverty rates driven by post-war fragility and years of drought, **women face systematic discrimination in accessing the scarce services and resources** (Walls et al., 2017). A 2019 Gender Gap Assessment found that women were "comprehensively disadvantaged compared to men in terms of economics[1], politics and education" (NAGAAD, 2019: 5). There are high levels of sexual and gender-based violence (Home Office, 2018: 6). 98 percent of women aged 15-49 were found to have had female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C) (Central Statistics Department, Ministry of Planning and National Development, Somaliland Government, 2020: xxvii). According to customary law, women cannot inherit, while the biggest constraint on women's entrepreneurship is the lack of access to finance (Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA Network), 2018: 9, 29-30; NAGAAD, 2019: 7). However, women in Somaliland are considered to play "pivotal roles" in managing households; are active in small business; and have a long history of civil society activity (Walls et al., 2017: 25).

Formal participation

Very few women occupy political positions in Somaliland. Saferworld and Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONAF) (2018: 5) reported there was one woman in parliament and none in the upper house of Elders, while only three out of 32 cabinet members were female. Likewise, there has been little progress in the last decade in representation in local government. Despite "a record number of women" standing for office in the 2012 local council elections (140 female candidates in a field of 2,368 – almost 6 per cent), only ten were successful (2.6 per cent of the 379 positions contested)[2] (Impact Initiative, 2019: 2). In 2018, all 23 district mayors, all 13 regional governors and their deputies, and all of the political party leaders were men (Gaheir & Jama, 2018: 5). In all regions men have dominated "the formal business sector, the various civil services of the regional administrations and the paid political posts, as well as police and defence forces" (El-Bushra & Gardner, 2016: 453[3]).

Customary participation

In Somaliland, **informal decision-making is arrived at through consensus among adult males** in open councils (shir); women are excluded from these (Walls, 2013: 168; Väkiparta, 2020: 106). Only men are considered the respected elders of Somaliland society (Väkiparta, 2020: 106-107).

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[1] The report found that: "Women are twice as likely as men to be unemployed but actively looking for a job (30.1% of the female labour force, compared to 16.4% among men)" (NAGAAD, 2019: 5).

[2] Reported numbers vary slightly; according to Gaheir and Jama (2018: 4-5) 135 of the candidates were women while 1,945 were men, and only 9 female candidates were elected.

[3] Based on research undertaken in 2014 in Somaliland, Puntland, South Central Somalia and Somali diaspora in Kenya (El-Bushra & Gardner, 2016: 447).

Women have played **important traditional peacebuilding roles in their communities and at the national level but are excluded from decision-making**. Women's key contributions have included: mobilising communities and elders for peace; encouraging leaders to negotiate for peace and reach agreements; acting as intermediaries ("peace envoys") between clans; providing logistical support (venues and food); the use of marriage to formalise and strengthen peace agreements (Walls et al., 2017: 23, 61; SIHA Network, 2020: 8; Horst, 2017: 394; Rayale et al., 2015: 11; Parke et al., 2017: 15). Women also "play key roles in resolving small-scale conflicts in their neighbourhoods or within households" (Moe & Simojoki, 2013: 406-407)

3. Clan system

Women's roles and position in Somaliland society are defined by the clan system and customary law, which shape individual and collective rights, and inter- and intra- clan relations (Walls et al., 2017: 21; Walls, 2013: 168).

The clan system continues to be strong today, underpinning the current political settlement in Somaliland (Walls et al., 2017[4]). A **patriarchal system prescribing subordinate roles for women, it is a key factor limiting women's participation** in Somaliland's political and peacebuilding decision-making (Walls et al., 2017; Parke et al., 2017; SIHA Network, 2018; Rayale et al., 2015). Studies identify that clan identity has been politicised, as the clan system incorporates and shapes government, from local councils to legislative, judicial and executive institutions (Walls et al., 2017: 26; Parke et al., 2017: 3, 15[5]). Clan support is key for political candidate section, and urban and rural women struggle to get clan support: there is a perception they have divided loyalties due to their dual affiliation to their father's and husband's clan (Verjee et al., 2015: 30-31; Walls et al., 2017: 26; Parke et al., 2017: 3; Walls, 2013: 17). Moreover, under the clan system deals are often made in "hidden" informal men-only spaces which women cannot access (Walls et al., 2017: 35; see also NAGAAD, 2019: 7)

Recent trends

Research suggests that **the clan system has become more entrenched**, as it is perceived to be "the foundation" to Somaliland's peace (Walls et al., 2017: 60). Moreover, women's exclusion from political decision-making roles has been **exacerbated by recent rapid urbanisation**, driven by conflict and climate change (Impact Initiative, 2019: 2 – a summary of the findings from Walls et al., 2017). The shift from pastoralist systems to a more urban and settled way of life has deprived "pastoralist women of some of the opportunities they had for political participation but has not created any new ones" (Impact Initiative, 2019: 2).

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[4] Walls et al. (2017) is a 21-month project including primary qualitative research that undertook a gendered analysis of Somaliland's political settlement.

[5] This study (Parke et al., 2017) looks at the strategies and circumstances under which Somali women have, and have not, been able to access and influence in the political space in Somalia as well as Somaliland. This was an eleven-month qualitative research project undertaken from August 2016 to June 2017. This research presented key findings that emerged as consensus from key informant interviews and group workshops in Somalia and Somaliland. Hence, the key findings highlighted from it in this review pertain to Somali women in both Somalia and Somaliland.

However, Walls et al. (2017: 8) also highlighted growing **disillusionment with clan politicisation**. NAGAAD's 2019 nationally representative household survey found "An overwhelming 85.8% of survey respondents (90.8% of women and 80.7% of men) agree that women's political participation is beneficial for society" (NAGAAD, 2019: 7). Walls et al. (2017: 8) concluded that while "potentially destabilising", this is a "time of change" that "offers room for gender-focused activism that uses greater inclusivity for women and men (as well as minority groups) to help promote peaceful transition in Somaliland".

Looking at Somalia and Somaliland, Parke et al. (2017: 9) found that progress in the participation of women in formal politics in Somaliland has been slower than Somalia's "steady, but modest" growth, "due to legal obstacles, the entrenched role of elders and more conservative ideologies". However, mitigating drivers include "the **increasing wealth, autonomy and education of some women**, factors which contributed to a record field of 140 female candidates in the 2012 local council elections" (Parke et al., 2017: 9). Parke et al. (2017: 3, 18) also found women successful in entering the political space "highlighted the ways in which they have partly overcome problems of clannism, by **leveraging supportive relationships with male clan leaders and other male power-holders** within and outside of the political system, in addition to strengthening and maintaining their support base within their communities". However, focusing on Somaliland, Walls et al. (2017: 55) found few male allies "willing to vote for laws promoting women's rights or to support them publicly, even if they privately support their case".

4. Religious attitudes and social norms

Traditional gender norms in Somaliland include the view that **a woman's role is to be supportive (not leading),** only "influencing decision-making processes behind the scenes" (NAGAAD, 2019: 7). Stereotypical notions of men as more decisive and that women are "of less value to society than men" remain widely held (Walls et al., 2017: 32). The social shift caused by women's increased economic activity (and high male unemployment) has also led to some **male resistance to power sharing**, with men holding onto "a glorified, defunct version of Somali masculinity in which males are the sole decision-makers and providers" (SIHA Network, 2018: 6; Walls, 2013: 185).

Gender roles in Somalia are influenced by "**Islamic principles of gender relations**" (Rayale et al., 2015: 8). Islam is the state religion in Somaliland, and with few exceptions most Somalis are Muslims (Väkiparta, 2020: 105). Article 36.1 of the Constitution states "the rights, freedoms and duties laid down in the Constitution are to be enjoyed by men and women, save for matters which are specifically ordained in Islamic Sharia" (Walls et al., 2017: 45). Walls et al. (2017: 45-46) found that "This tends to be commonly interpreted in such a way that women should not hold the highest positions such as president or judge, but can hold other political positions". Studies have reported that Somaliland "has become more conservative", with, among other factors, an increasing influence of Wahhabist Islam and the Salafi movement (Walls et al., 2017: 55; SIHA Network, 2018: 6). Ethnographic research by Hammond (2015: 52) noted an effect on prescribed gender roles, with a trend of women dressing and behaving more conservatively due to "increased impact of religious practice in daily life due to imported influences", and "a greater embrace of religion" to provide security where the relatively weak state cannot.

However, alongside women's increased economic activity is a growing awareness by women of their political rights (SIHA Network, 2020: 13). A significant portion of women within government,

civil society and business leadership (in Somalia and Somaliland) experienced family environments with **positive gender norms and role models** (Parke et al., 2017: 18). Walls et al. (2017: 60) pointed out that some regions (Sanaag and Sool) more often elect female councillors and members of parliament (while still at low numbers). Väkiparta (2020: 119) found in her 2016 qualitative research that some young men recognised women's income generation "strengthens family resilience", and they saw women as "now more educated and thus capable of and even 'entitled' to enter new roles". Parke et al.'s (2017: 4) research in Somalia and Somaliland found male research participants "supportive of women working in certain government sectors, including education and finance, highlighting women's higher levels of professional integrity (as compared to men)". Diaspora women returning to Somaliland can also challenge existing gender inequities and promote women's participation, by taking on new roles in their communities and drawing on resource and norms from transnational networks (Sato, 2017: 195; Parke et al., 2017: 4). However, the returnees can face hostility, while male dominance of the political arena limits their capacity to effect change (Voller, 2020: 11, 14; Hammond, 2015; Parke et al., 2017: 12).

Walls et al. (2017: 71) recommended supporting "**local solutions that frame the discourse on gender equality in Islamic terms**". Walls et al. (2017: 26) found that Somaliland's "non-inclusive political settlement" is "sometimes supported by Islamic teachings on the appropriate role of women, although at other times, Islam offers an argument for greater gender inclusivity than is permitted by the customary system".

There is a need to address men's concerns. El-Bushra and Gardner (2016: 443) described "the **core ideals of Somali manhood" as "both highly exacting and largely unachievable** in the current economic and political climate". Young men struggling to find employment and financial independence may feel alienated from their communities and resort to destructive or abusive behaviours (including violence against women and girls) (Rayale et al., 2015[6]: 21) Walls et al. (2017: 70) noted that men can resent feeling left out programming targeting women, recommending strategies that support "positive masculinities".

5. Structural conditions

Structural conditions limiting women's peacebuilding and political participation include **high levels of illiteracy and low levels of education.** The 2020 Somaliland Health and Demographic Survey found that almost one out of four (21 per cent) girls and women aged six and above have never attended school (compared to 17 percent of males, while slightly less than two-thirds of women are illiterate (Central Statistics Department, Ministry of Planning and National Development, Somaliland Government, 2020: xxvii). NAGAAD (2019: 7) found from their survey that "Only 9.5% of female respondents attended secondary school, compared to 20.1% of men". Conservative social attitudes can also lead to many Somali women's "**low levels of self-esteem**, particularly in relation to political activism" (Walls, 2013: 185). These conditions all contribute to limiting women's capacity and willingness to "engage in public debate and to understand the range of opportunities offered by constitutional, legal and religious sources" (Walls, 2013: 185).

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[6] Qualitative research undertaken in Somaliland in 2012 and in Puntland and South-Central Somalia from 2013 to 2015 (Rayale et al., 2015: 7).

Parke et al. (2017: 3) recommended strengthening grassroots leadership and civic rights training for girls and young women.

Typically, women are excluded from resource ownership, and **lack funds** for political campaigns (Walls, 2013: 185). All women competing in the 2012 local elections reported "that their experience of candidacy was negative because of the economic burden placed on them" (Verjee et al., 2015: 30). Parke et al. (2019: 4) found that regulating electoral finances is critical to support women who want to run for office but do not have access to financial resources. Moreover, many women **lack time or energy** to get involved in politics on top of their increasing productive as well as reproductive responsibilities (Walls et al., 2017: 61). Looking at Somalia, but with findings relevant to the Somaliland context, Madinah and Mohamed (2019) highlight the importance of economic empowerment in supporting women's political participation.

The **high levels of sexual and gender-based violence** against women and girls in Somaliland is likely to have an impact on how safe women feel to access political and peacebuilding spaces and take on public decision-making roles. This rapid review did not find research that looked specifically at the relationship between gender-based violence and women's participation in peacebuilding and political decision-making; this was identified by Parke et al. (2017: 25) as an area for further research.

6. Intersecting inequalities

Some women face more barriers to participation in peacebuilding and political decision-making than others:

- **Women from minority clans[7] and nomadic communities**: minority clans continue to be marginalised, with very few members in leadership positions (Rayale et al., 2015: 7; Schueller & Walls, 2017: 31; Walls et al., 2017: 23). Meanwhile the electoral system is "structured for permanent residents," which marginalises nomadic communities (The Independent Civil Society Organisations Coalition (ISCO) Somaliland, 2019: 13).

- **Internally displaced women and other migrants living in camps and informal settlements**: Women living in camps and informal settlements on the outskirts of Hargeisa are impoverished, facing high levels of violence (Rayale et al., 2015: 21). Many are divorced or abandoned by their husbands[8] (Bakonyi et al., 2019: 1, 3). Women living in settlements where there are no representatives from their own clan are further marginalised within the clan system (Rayale et al., 2015: 21).

- **Poor rural pastoral women**: Most households are rural and "increasingly marginalized by the rise of urban commercial centres" (Rayale et al., 2015: 15). Many rural women and their households are at risk of starvation due to prolonged drought and extreme climate

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[7] There are a number of geographically scattered minority clans in Somaliland collectively called 'Gabooye' (Walls et al., 2017: 22).

[8] A 2018 study found that 48% of households in sites for internally displaced persons in Somaliland reported that women had become the main breadwinner (from research conducted in January and February 2018 in 28 sites for IDPs across 10 regions in Somalia and Somaliland) (Fanning, 2018: 10).

conditions[9]; while peripheral regions (e.g. Sool and Sanag) have been "characterised by long periods of insecurity and poor government outreach" (Moe and Simokoki, 2013: 405).

- **Women with disabilities**: Five per cent of the population were estimated in 2020 to have disabilities, with forty per cent not receiving care or support for their disability in the preceding year (Central Statistics Department, Ministry of Planning and National Development, Somaliland Government, 2020: xxix-xxx). In 2012 "The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Somaliland found that women and girls with disabilities experience higher levels of violence and have greater difficulties accessing education in comparison to men or boys with disabilities" (Rohwerder, 2018: 12).
- **Young women**: "Until quite recently women, especially young women, have had very few ascribed roles in public and institutional life within the society. Nowadays there are some female public figures, but nearly all of them are older women" (Sato, 2017: 196).

7. Collective action

There have been decades of campaigning by women's rights organisations (with international NGO support) for **quotas for women in parliament and local government**, but this has had slow progress (Impact Initiative, 2019: 2; Walls et al., 2017: 45; SIHA Network, 2020). In the National Development Plan II launched in 2017, the government "committed to increasing the proportion of seats held by women in the national parliamentary to 20 per cent" (Saferworld & SONAF, 2018: 5). A 20% gender quota in 2019 was approved by the Cabinet but then rejected by the upper house of Elders (Affi, 2020: 3). A gender quota is only "a starting point" which would then require further action to achieve "meaningful influence and impact for women" (Parke et al., 2017: 4). Nevertheless, research participants in Parke et al. (2017: 3) discussed how the 30% gender quota for parliamentary female representation in Somalia (introduced in 2016) "marked a significant and important step towards women's equal political representation".

Looking at Somalia and Somaliland, Parke et al. (2017: 4) found that **women in government often had been active in civil society political and social grassroots campaigning**, and the "learning and exposure" they got from these experiences "directly helped them to enter their current positions." This study recommendations include supporting women's political leadership skills through mentorship and training in negotiation and influencing; promoting positive powerful female role models through media campaigns; creating regular and safe platforms for public dialogue and debate (Parke et al., 2017: 4-5; see also recommendations for broad leadership and organisational training and networking support in Rayale et al., 2015: 24).

However, in Somaliland, women's **ability to "organise their collective power" is still a challenge**, affected by "factors such as age, education, class, location or level of support from husbands and family" (Walls et al., 2017: 37). Women's rights organisations are perceived to be elite and urban, at times in competition with each other, and lacking partnership with rural women (Walls et al., 2017: 55; Parke et al., 2017: 19; SIHA Network, 2020: 12).

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[9] https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2021/02/meet-some-of-the-millions-of-women-who-migrated-recently-risking-everything-feature/ [Accessed 19 January 2021]

Nevertheless, in recent years there has been some instances of **effective local activism**, for example through midwife and nurse associations, small business and entrepreneurial groups, and women street vendor cooperatives (SIHA Network, 2020: 11). Rayale et al. (2015: 20) found that to avoid clan influence, women have created "networks of influence" that could link up women with varying degrees of vulnerability and capacity around occupational connections such as garment wholesalers, milk and meat exporters, journalists, nurses, and lawyers. There are calls to develop and support this type of women's activism from the grassroots, with priority to "providing spaces for women from different socio-economic backgrounds" (Rayale et al., 2015: 24; SIHA Network, 2020).

8. Initiatives and lessons learned

This rapid review found little publicly available information on initiatives directly supporting women's participation in peacebuilding and political decision-making, and few evaluations of these activities.

Somaliland National Gender Policy

Walls et al. (2017: 46-48) provided an analysis of the Somaliland National Gender Policy:

- **Process and content**: After this donor-funded document was introduced in 2009, national civil society organisations (CSOs) demanded a local consultation process including women's groups among other stakeholders. The policy has five thematic areas – one is on women's political participation and decision-making – and is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), the leading ministry on gender affairs in Somaliland. The policy was further elaborated in 2012 into a National Gender Action Plan with strategies and activities for implementation but did not include a budget.
- **Challenges**: A perceived lack of government political will to drive implementation; a lack of financial and human resources; and a lack of effective collaboration between MoLSA and CSOs.
- **Limitations**: Walls et al. (2017: 47-48) question the efficacy of a top-down approach rather than supporting local ownership through taking into account the cultural and religious context for women's rights in Somaliland.

United Nations Joint Programme (UN JP) on Women's Political Leadership, Participation and Empowerment

UK's Department for International Development (DFID) published an annual review of DFID's contribution to two programme components, one of which is the UN JP – a multi-year initiative (2016-2020) supported through a multi-donor trust fund[10] and implemented by UN-Women, the UN Development Programme and the UN's Somalia Mission (DFID, 2020: 1). The UN JP aims to increase women's voice and representation in Somali political and peacebuilding processes by creating an enabling legal and policy framework for women's participation. Part of the

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[10] https://www.so.undp.org/content/somalia/en/home/projects/joint-programme-on-womens-political-participation--leadership-an.html [Accessed 24 January 2021]

programme supports activities in Somaliland, through collaboration with the MoLSA, as the coordinating ministry on gender equality policies and programmes (DFID, 2020: 1). DFID's annual review found that in 2019 the UN JP "supported formation of a networking platform for 50 women candidates from 6 regions, representing the three political parties in Hargeisa" (DFID, 2020: 8). This dialogue "resulted in signed commitments for the inclusion of women quota by the three political parties and the parliamentary caucus" (DFID, 2020: 11).

NAGAAD

Founded in 1997 the NAGAAD Network in Somaliland brings together 46 organisations that are working towards gender equality through supporting women's education, economic empowerment, participation in decision making, reproductive rights and well-being.[11] Walls's 2013 analysis found that NAGAAD had a key role in changing attitudes in Somaliland towards women's political participation through its "strong network, credibility, and research-led advocacy" all feeding into "a successful campaign featuring progressive interpretations of women's rights in the Qur'an and the Hadiths" (Walls, 2013 summarised in O'Driscoll, 2018: 3).

Kibble and Walls (2012: 16) found that NAGAAD played "a significant and important role" in supporting female candidates in the 2012 local elections, and also "collaborating in the civic education programme, lobbying for the quota system, and documenting campaign promises in support of increased political participation for women".

NAGAAD and other women's rights organisations have been campaigning for an electoral quota guaranteeing a certain number of seats for women in parliament since 2005, but progress has been slow. NAGAAD's 2019 nationally representative household survey found that "An overwhelming 84.1% of survey respondents agreed that the introduction of a quota system would increase the number of female representatives" (NAGAAD, 2019: 7). NAGAAD (2019: 7) concluded that this "is a testament to continuous advocacy efforts by NAGAAD and others".

Ali and Noel (2020: 45) found that NAGAAD has had success in promoting the participation of women in decision-making processes. This study found that effective strategies deployed by NAGAAD included rural outreach awareness-raising radio and social media campaigns; household surveys and focus group discussions; training for political female aspirants on how to contest political elections; community civic education; support for meeting platforms with village committees to discuss problems and mobilise for action; empowerment of girls and youth through trainings, seminars and workshops in their schools (Ali & Noel, 2020).

ActionAid support to grassroots women's coalitions

ActionAid supports "53 women's coalitions of between 30 to 70 grassroots women in three regions (Maroodi Jeex, Sanaag and Togdheer) who work collectively towards improving women's livelihoods, stopping gender-based violence and advancing their leadership skills and political aspirations" (Walls et al., 2017: 49). These coalitions supported four of the ten women successful in the 2012 local elections (Walls et al., 2017: 49). One research participant commented that: "The [ActionAid] programme's biggest impact was that women understood that politics is not

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[11] https://nagaad.org/ [Accessed 19 January 2021]

forbidden from them, that they have as much at stake as men in politics" (Walls et al., 2017: 49). This rapid review did not find further information on this programme.

Hogaan iyo Nabad (Governance and Peace)

This DFID-funded (£4,519,723) Community Driven Reconstruction programme was implemented between 2012 and 2015 by Care International, Danish Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee, supporting local authorities and citizens in 60 villages in Somaliland and Puntland (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 3). One of the programme's goals was to improve the participation of excluded groups – minorities, women and youth – in village institutions (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 5). Village councils and development committees were given block grants and capacity training, while selected citizens and local government officials received training in civic education, advocacy and conflict resolution as well as general support for community dialogue and peacebuilding (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 6).

The following findings were for the whole programme, covering Puntland as well as Somaliland. The evaluation found that the Hogaan intervention did not increase the participation of women (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 73). Bakonyi et al. (2015: 73) considered that one factor behind the programme's limited impact on participation is the lack of specification about which forms of participation were envisaged. The evaluation noted that "Increased interaction between citizens and the local institutions do not necessarily give citizens more voice or affect how they assess responsiveness of these institutions or how satisfied they are with them" (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 74). Some of the evaluation's recommendations are to:

- Assess "the different types of decisions that are being or should be made, who exactly is involved in which types of decision-making, and how different stakeholders and villagers more generally could and should participate in decision-making processes" (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 83)

- Consider the social diversity of communities and be specific about who is being asked to participate in terms of gender, age and occupation. Avoid general terms such as "women" and explore the complexity of "representation": Who is representing whom? Can a representative from a women's group speak for all women? (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 84)

- Integrate elders and religious leaders in the programme, in addition to local government officials and village and District Council members. The evaluation cautions this requires "careful discussion and a conflict sensitive approach" as informal governance in Somaliland is performed through overlapping and unformalised roles and responsibilities. (Bakonyi et al., 2015: 82)

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