

Making Democracy Work

TOOLS, THEORIES AND TEMPLATES OF *VERNACULAR*
DEMOCRACY IN SOMALIA'S REBUILDING

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Abstract

Responding to the problem of increased state failure, donors have shifted from a top-down donor driven to a bottom-up inclusive approach. Based on six months of fieldwork in Nairobi, Kenya, this thesis explores how despite the shift, the donors still 'govern at a distance' by promoting notions of 'democracy' and 'good governance'. Democracy promotion, examined in this thesis, has emerged as the dominant philosophy in rebuilding post-conflict societies. Strengthening democracy especially in African states is assumed to be a therapeutic solution to the global threat posed by fragile states. Working in an international NGO engaged in democracy promotion, I employ discursive and actor oriented approaches to understand the effects of knowledge transfer projects in promoting liberal western democracy. I analyse from a donor perspective how policies are formed and practiced. I show how aid is now directed to policy reform rather to the conventional investment in neoliberal economic projects that dominated in the 1980's and 1990's. This change in aims has been accompanied by a different modus operandi: in what is described as the '*new aid architecture*'. Legitimacy is gained by reframing donor-recipient relations in the language of partnership, participation and ownership. In this thesis I will explore in particular how an artificial power sharing formula that is created to promote democracy and stability, is manipulated by locals using their agency, to create new identities. I look at how the term 'democracy' shifts meaning from the concept of being the will of the people to being conditioned through kinship principles. This conditionality of 'democracy' creates phantom identities like the state and civil society. I show how the convergence and interface of the two forms of knowledge, western and Somali, have exclusion and inclusion effects, including the 'phantom' identities that are created to facilitate democracy promotion excluding the women, the youth and the minorities.

For my beautiful flower whose fragrance lies embedded in my memory and senses. My inspiration, My Hope, My Yasmin

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Tools, Theories and Templates of Vernacular Democracy in Somalia's Rebuilding

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Somalia Hanolaato (Long Live Somalia)

Nimmo Osman Elmi

Abbreviations

NDI.....	National Democratic Institute
CSO.....	Civil Society Organisation
US.....	United States
UN.....	United Nations
UNDP.....	United Nations Development Program
UK.....	United Kingdom
NGO.....	Non-Governmental Organisation
CBO.....	Community Based Organisation
MP.....	Member of Parliament
RoP.....	Rules of Procedure
SFG.....	Somali Federal Government
TNG.....	Transitional National Government
TFG.....	Transitional Federal Government
USAID.....	United States Agency for International Development
NORAD.....	Norwegian Agency for Development Corporation
DFID.....	Department For International Development
IBRIP.....	Indo British Rainfield Farming Project
SYL.....	Somali Youth League
SWDO.....	Somali Women Development Organisation
ADESSO.....	African Development Solutions
ARDA.....	Arid Relief Development Agency
MCA.....	Marginalized Community Advocates.
UAE.....	United Arab Emirates

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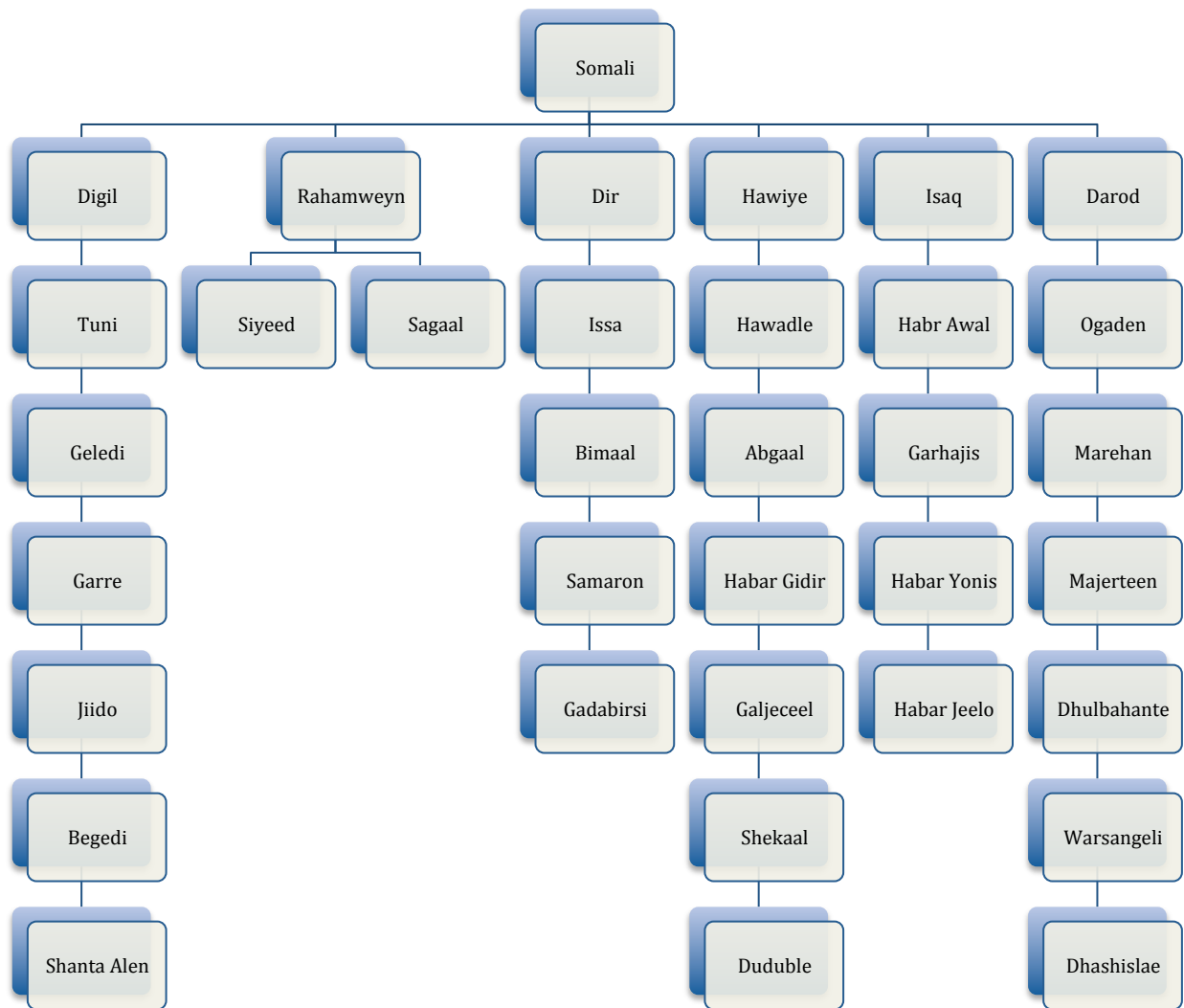
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Map Of Somalia



Oh, my land!
I didn't leave you as a tourist
No paradise on earth can replace you
In my body and soul
In my head and heart
Why am I roaming about in foreign countries?
Why am I obliged to beg and hold my hands up for strangers?
Why did I choose to live like a damned stateless person?
Why is it in my interest to opt for the status of a cursed refugee?
Oh, my land!
When clans and factions attacked each other
When relatives, friends and neighbours
Stabbed each other in the back and belly
When peace was denied and denigrated
When elders were not spared
When children were sent to the front
When all it belched was concentrated poison
That is when I had no choice
But to cross the borders
To seek a safe haven
To save my life
Fadumo Qassim

Somali Clan Structure



Chapter 1: Paradoxes of democracy

'Qof Buka Boqol Baa U Talisa'

A sick person many advisors (Somali proverb)

Mr Abdi "Who do you think created the power-sharing formula? Somalia had a democratic government after independence. Yet the international community decided that they were going to create a 4.5 formula of clan power sharing. Who are the people who will be excluded and included?" My informant, Abdi², a Somali Member of Parliament (MP) in the newly re-established state of Somalia, passionately expresses his dismay about the convergence of clan politics and western models of democracy. The '4.5', an artificial power sharing formula was created in Djibouti as a peace building mechanism to address the rifts within the Somali clans who were at war with each other. According to Abdi, the artificial clan sharing formula, created to 'make democracy work' instead widened the rifts. The Somali Canadian MP returned to Somalia in 2009 leaving his family back in Canada as many Somali diaspora³ had done. After rescheduling our meeting several times since he was commuting back and forth from Mogadishu to Nairobi, where he lived, we finally met in a coffee house in a popular Nairobi mall, Westgate⁴.

The Somali government became internationally recognized in a process steered by the international community. Since the state collapse in 1991, Somalia had been in an anarchy state. During the two decades of statelessness, the *Xeer*⁵ system (customary law) was reintroduced and this contributed to peace and stability (Gundel, 2006). Abdi explained that the previous government had suppressed clan identities separating the state and the clan. The separation of powers was only in policy

² I use asterisks throughout the thesis to show that is not the real name. As I will explain in my methodology, Somali politics is very sensitive thus the need to protect informants their identity.

³ This term is used to describe immigrants who have ties to other countries. Somalis are estimated to

⁴ The same place that was allegedly attacked by the Islamic militant group Al Shabaab

⁵ X in Somali is H and its pronounced as Heer

because the president practiced nepotism and clan favouritism. The 'Xeer' (customary law) system was reinstated as the rule of law to maintain peace by solving disputes during the civil war. Abdi feels however that if Somalia is going to forge ahead into a new democratic era, the 'Xeer' system needs to re-occupy its traditional position.

Traditionally, the Somali clan system was primarily used to settle disputes within and between clans. In what he describes the '*predicament of the oday (elder) system*' quoting (Gundel, 2006) he emphasizes on the importance of reverting back to the post colonial structures or face an even worse civil war. This is because, in his view, the current power sharing formula empowers the strong (elites) in the society while marginalizing the weak. For example, one of the biggest Somali clans *Hawiye*, explains Abdi, has the mandate of occupying the president's seat. No other clan member qualified or otherwise can occupy the position according to the 4.5 model of power sharing. Their clan elders used the 4.5 principles to select the 275 members of parliament something that had never happened before in Somalia's history. He added that not only would this make clan identity more important than the national identity but also it could create identities that are hybrid.

The international community⁶, *Beesha Calamka*, he adds, recognizing the significance of the 'Xeer' system, socially engineer a power sharing formula that converges the western model of liberal democracy with the *Xeer*. This created a new role for the elders who became liable to corruption. When I inquired what he meant, he smiles at me and stops. The elder system in similarity with the state and the civil society were recreated in this 4.5 model. This, according to Mr Abdi, led to the lack of legitimacy among the Somali people. He said: "*The different candidates vying for the Member of Parliament (MP) seats were now able to "buy"*" their seats from '*kofia bacleey*' elders (*plastic hats*). The '*plastic hat*' elders he referred to are the ones who claim to be elders yet they do not represent a clan. A real elder explains Abdi wears an original hat that symbolizes his authority while those involved in Somali politics wear plastic hats. There were some rumours that some clan elders received up to USD 20000 in order to

⁶ This is the collective word for international actors and donors as it was used in my fieldwork. Throughout my thesis I will refer to them as my informants did. *Beesha Calamka* is its Somali Name
⁷ Buy is in italics to show that this is not a fact rather an informants view on the selections process.

select the members of parliament. I asked if the international community like the United Nations (UN) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) were aware of this? Abdi explained that everyone was aware but because Somalia as a failed state posed a global threat due to the growth of *Al-Shabaab* and *Al-Qaida*⁸ who use Somalia as a base. This then leads the organisations to use 'all means necessary' to rebuild Somalia transforming it into a 'NGO' rather than a sovereign state. Abdi a lawyer explains that for a state to be considered a sovereign state, it has to have control within its borders. The new Somali state is *Mogadishu centric* argues Abdi. The state functions, he adds, within a few kilometres around Mogadishu yet the international community describe the it as a Somali state. He said:

"The international community treats Somalia as it were an NGO. Its legitimacy is limited to Mogadishu. I will not accept the NGO-isation of Somalia! I worked closely with the international community in the drafting of the Somali constitution and I fought hard to keep it a Somali process for the people by the people. This was however hijacked and the Somali people adopted a constitution that does not reflect our culture".

The paradox lived by Mr Abdi is at the heart of this thesis. Abdi's case is that although he was not supportive of the new clan-based Somali state, he is a member of parliament (MP). I asked if he had paid his elders to get selected to parliament. He smiles and answers no yet his body language tells another truth. His clan elders selected him, as they did to 275 members, using a power sharing formula, the '4.5'. This socially engineered peace building mechanism, as described by Hearn (1997) has become evident in Africa especially in countries emerging from authoritarian rule (Hearn, 1997). Most conflicts, especially in Africa, are ethnic based and the standardized solution is power sharing. However, in the case of Somalia, this had a different effect in which the elites who represented the major clans dominate the peace process leaving the minority clans and women to be excluded.

[An Ethnography of Democratisation](#)

Anthropologist Julie Paley (2008) argues for the importance of ethnographic studies of democratization processes which can revealing the effects of knowledge transfer from micro and macro perspectives (Paley J., 2002). Lucia Michelluti (2008) bases her

⁸ Al Shabaab and Al-Qaida are both extremist Islamic militant terrorist groups that interrelated

ethnography on the effects of external democracy promotion in India by highlighting how a low caste northern Indian tribe, the '*yadavs*', interface between western and local modes of knowledge, vernacularizing the interventions using it to change their status and emerge as a political majority (Michelutti, 2008). This ethnography is based on six-months of multi-sited fieldwork in Nairobi, Kenya. My fieldwork was a multi-sited, qualitative research based on participant observation as an intern at an American NGO actively engaged in rebuilding and restoring democratic institutions in Somalia. Working in the agency enabled me to attain a donor perspective in the post reconstruction of Somalia. However, this limited my data on how the recipients reacted to the interventions. I had to then counter my approach with an actor-oriented approach. I then followed two CSO's in their interface with NDI. Somali Diaspora was emerging as an important tool for rebuilding Somalia. I then include them in my analysis showing how they are a preferred group by international donors and agencies as a middle ground due to their dual citizenship. However due to security limitations in Somalia, my research was primarily based in Nairobi.

My initial interest was the 'making' of the Somali civil society because of the popularity that this concept, which hardly existed earlier, had gained in 2011 and 2012. However, when I embarked on researching on this theme, I realised that the 'state' and 'civil society' were being 'made' almost simultaneously in a joint project. As ethnography of democratization processes, this thesis is thus about the effects of external promoted democracy in post conflict Somalia. The 'making' of democracy in Somalia has led to the creation of artificial identities described by Chandler (2006) as 'phantom' identities that function only through policy. These identities are accountable to the donors that support its creation rather than the subjects they represent (Chandler, 2006).

Somalia had been in total anarchy since 1991 and since then there have been several failed state rebuilding attempts. However Somali's had reverted back to their traditional kinship structure during the civil war reinstating the clan, as the source of political, social and economic organisation (Elmi, 2014) (Gundel, 2006) (Farah, 2002). However, in 2000, a UN backed peace agreement in Djibouti⁹, led to the creation of Transitional National Government (TNG) that was based on a clan power-sharing

⁹The neighboring country is a former French Colony

formula, the '4.5'. The artificial formula condensed the 6 Somali clans into 4.5 groups. This then raises the question of why the international community involved themselves in Somalia's rebuilding using of an artificial power sharing formula that neither represents the Somali clan structures nor the modern democracy? The MP, Abdi felt that his selection to parliament as a clan representative, contradicted the western model of democracy that was being propagated. He explains that the international community created an environment of confusion in Somalia, by supporting the reestablishment of a modern state built on traditional structures. I was even more confused. Did Abdi not have agency? Was he forced by his clan to be an MP or was this something that he intended to do?

In this dissertation I will argue that external democracy promotion creates 'phantom' identities in order to facilitate democracy promotion. I will argue that the 4.5 power sharing, the Somali state and the civil society were created in a western model in order to have institutions that are accountable and democratic. However, the interventions ultimately neglect the clan dynamics in Somalia resulting to the creation of new social relations that are artificial and contradict traditional Somali identity. I will that when western models are transferred to local and historical contexts, the interventions become vernacularized (Michelutti, 2007). The key questions I aim to answer in my dissertation are as follows:

- 1. What are the effects of the transfer of western models of knowledge in a post conflict state?*
- 2. How are the socially engineered subjects that are created excluded and included in these interventions creating a gap in the society?*

The Problem

Lack of a modern democratic state and civil society are viewed as the main cause of state failure, which is in turn viewed as a threat to international peace and security (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2008) (Carothers, 1999) (Hearn, 1998). Nation states are no longer viewed as sovereign in the global realm, and instead most of their powers are devolved to international agencies and donors that are viewed specialists in different global issues (Anders, 2005). In the 1980's and 1990's it was widely recognized that if sustainable development would be an end goal in the third world, then its states would have to be strengthened. Democracy promoters thus set out to recreate global

models that are designed to be stable and peaceful. By exporting western values to the post conflict states, the international community are replicating states using similar tools, theories and templates (Carothers, 1999). Democracy promotion emerged in the late 1980's and early 1990's and functioned as the antithesis of soviet communism in Latin America, Africa and Asia (Paley J., 2002). Responding to the problem of increased state failure, donors have shifted from a top-down donor driven to a bottom-up inclusive approach based on rhetoric's of partnership, participation and ownership notions (Mosse & Lewis, 2005). Due to the failure of structural adjustment programs in the 1980's and 1990's, the new approaches legitimize their activities by foreign policy making them seem organic and coextensive with the local structures and processes (Carothers, 1999, p. 27).

Despite the recent establishment of a clan-based state in 2012, the state still faces huge challenges in consolidating the Somali citizens who are severely clan divided (Kaptenjis, 2013) (Elmi, 2014). Somalia human development indicators are among the worst in the world despite two decades of humanitarian interventions (UNDP, 2012). However as, I will show in my ethnography, these interventions are still driven by foreign policy. By employing ideologies that aim to reconstruct a democratic state that is immune to collapse, fragility and failure, I show how the new approaches still command political conditionality through reinforcement of 'good governance' programs by NGO's like NDI (Harbeson J., 2000). Democracy promoters like NDI employ democracy as a preventive tool for future civil wars (Paley J., 2008) (Carothers, 1999). However, they lack an understanding of the local dynamics and how it's embedded in the local's consciousness.

External Democracy Promotion

Somalia, the worlds most failed state,¹⁰ has become a *graveyard* of international agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGO) aiming to reconstruct it (Menkhaus, 2014). During the civil war, the international community partnered with local NGO's and community based organizations (CBO) to offer state like services and occupied important political space. This has however not changed much after the election of an internationally recognized government in 2012. Through the

¹⁰This is according to the annual fund for peace failed state index. Somalia has been rated the world most failed states toping the list.

promotion of western ideologies of democracy and 'good governance', they offer a global solution of peace and stability. They aim to transform "*dysfunctional states*" into efficient and transparent entities that are accountable to the public and to the rule of law (Anders, 2005, p. 37) (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2008). However these approaches lack a clear understanding of the causes of state failure, which vary from state to state (Sen, 2008).

As the anthropologist Anna Tsing, among others, argue, in the 21st century, NGOs are identifying and solving most of the world's most global issues replacing the state as the most powerful actors in international affairs (Tsing, 2000). Tsing (2000) argues that globalization of ideologies like democracy has become as relevant as modernization was after the end of the World War II creating interconnectedness among people and places due to transnational political and cultural ties. International donors, agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGO), informed by discourses of the threat posed by failed, weak or fragile states have embarked on a global democracy promotion project. They engage international organizations like NDI to enforce their foreign democratic policies. Abdi, my informant, argued that Somalia functioned more as an NGO rather than a State. This process is described by Hearn (1998) as 'NGO-isation'. This is the process by which NGO's occupy political spaces replacing the states as the provider of services to the citizens (Hearn, 1998).

The US had long employed democracy promotion as a way of either ending tyranny or fight terrorism. As the world's largest democracy promoter, it was fighting an ideological war with communistic Soviet Union (Birch, 2007) (Huntington, 1991, p. 12). When the cold war ended the US and its allies embarked in promoting western democratic values focusing on promoting elections, strengthening civil society and good governance among state actors (Paley J., 2002). The failure of the structural adjustment programs that aimed at developing weak states like in Africa excluded the state. The promoters approach now is based on state partnership in an attempt to '*bring the state back in*' (Paley J., 2002).

NDI being an American NGO and affiliated with the democratic party of the US strongly believes in the US model of democracy. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) embarked on global democracy promotion in 1983 and in 2005 they

established the Somalia program. Based on assumptions that the US western model of democracy could be transferred in Somalia, NDI set out to 'make democracy work' by enforcing good governance and democracy projects. They maintain that programs and political systems can be replicated vastly using the knowledge gained from one country using similar tools, templates and theories (Paley J., 2008) (Carothers, 1999). However the implementers have not taken cultural conceptions and local political institutions into consideration (Paley J., 2002). This then leads to the production of new social, political and economic relationships. Michelluti (2007,2008) describes this as the vernacularization of democracy.

Democracy, good governance and accountability are viewed as qualities of a sovereign state (Hansen & Nustad, 2005). These values have thus been promoted in states that have are considered to be weak, fragile or failed. However most of the states adopt the democratic ideologies while still maintaining their traditional political structures leading to the interface of different life worlds (Spencer, 2007) (Arce & Long, 1987). Based on the poor track record of the heavily top-down structural adjustment programs instituted by the international Bretton-Woods organisations, democracy promotion employs notions of partnership and ownership gaining legitimacy among its recipients (Mosse & Lewis , 2005). However it commands 'political conditionality' in the form of 'good governance' and 'democratization projects.

During the same period the world witnessed an increase in the numbers of states claiming to be democratic (Huntington, 1991). Samuel Huntington describes this era as the *third wave*. The first wave was in 1820 in the United States, and the western triumph of Second World War ushered in the second wave. The third wave, which is witnessed in Somalia as well, occurred according to this thesis after the end of the cold war (Huntington, 1991, p. 11). Being an American agency that was created by a congress act in 1983, NDI promotes the American model of democracy that reinforces the message that all democracies share core values that is achievable by citizen participation, state accountability and free and fair elections (Carothers, 1999) (NDI, 2014). The state and peace building mechanisms employed by international agencies like NDI respond to the global threat posed by fragile, failed or weak states highlighting the shift from their engagement that emphasized on the individuals 'right to intervene' in the 1990'to 'bringing the state back in' (Chandler, 2005).

The democratization projects view rebuilding the state and civil society institutions as core policies for achieving democracy (Chandler, 2006). These projects, argues Chandler in his *six thesis on Phantom states* are the extension of 'empire' (Chandler, 2006). 'Empire' suggests Chandler is the indirect domination by the western states whereby they transfer ideologies like democracy assuming that it will lead to peace, stability and economic growth. These interventions create 'phantom' identities that are accountable to the donors rather to the citizens it represents. However, democracy, in countries like Somalia, that were fractured by civil war, bear little or no resemblance to the democracy in the states promoting it. The promoters view non-western culture, as '*sui generis*¹²' assuming that they need to be influenced by western individualistic values that are viewed as an ideal component of democracy (Ong, 2005). Ong (2005) argues that the discourses of the '*clash of civilisations*' contributed to this assumption especially after the cold war, viewing non-western culture and values as a hindrance to development and democracy (Ong, 2005, p. 48).

Liberal democracy ideology that is promoted by global democracy promoters like the National Democratic Institute (NDI) traces its heritage to the successes of enlightenment era and the industrialization revolution in which developing countries are believed to have missed out on (Weiner, 2013). Weiner (2013) argues in his book *The Rule of the Clan* that the individual's freedom is believed to be the driving force in peace and stability in 'democratic' nations while the collective identity among clan based societies, a hindrance (Weiner, 2013, pp. 1-6).

The promoters of global democracy tend to distinguish between the 'state' and the 'civil society' as separate entities that are key for democracy growth (Hansen & Nustad, 2005). However, in countries like Somalia, 'state' and the 'civil society' exist and function only in policy. I will highlight in my thesis how the creation of a Somali state and civil society by policy rather than practices created individuals that are accountable to donors and agencies like NDI rather than the Somali citizens they represent.

¹² Latin expression meaning 'one of its kind'.

Clan Democracy

The key to understanding Somali political organisation lies in its kinship structures (I.M.Lewis, 1999, p. 3). Based on agnatic patrilineal structures the clan is the individual's source of social, political and economical organizations. During and after colonization, clan affiliations were present but they were not a source of large-scale violence until 1969 when Major Siad Barre became president after a military coup (Kaptenjis, 2013, p. 3). The President was backed by the Soviet Union and imposed communistic values into the society. President Barre, a self-declared communist, paradoxically officially discouraged clan favouritism and nepotism yet he favoured members of his own sub-clan (Ssereo, 2003). Barre considered clan structures as primitive and backward during his reign supporting the ideology of comradeship (Ssereo, 2003). Siad Barre belonged to the "*Darood*" clan, one among six clans¹⁴ in Somalia. The clan benefited highly from Siad Barre's government and this created social differentiation and rivalry among the Somalis, something that sparked the civil war in 1991. Siad Barre restricted the growth of the civil society as well, leading to the total failure of Somalia (Harvey, 2003) (Elmi, 2014) (Farah, 2002). In December 1990 and January 1991, the USC (United Somali Congress), the SPM (Somali Patriotic Movement) and the SNM (Somali National Movement) captured Mogadishu and sent president Barre to exile opposing his destructive and divisive clan politics (Lyons & Samatar, 1995, p. 7). The Leaders of the USC however, adopted a policy that defined all Somalis with *Darood* descent as mortal enemies (Kaptenjis, 2013). This would then fuel the clan warfare between the major clans *Hawiye* and the *Darood* (Elmi, 2014), (Kaptenjis, 2013).

After independence, the Somali state considered itself a liberal democratic state, because it had excluded the clan structures, which president Barre considered a hindrance to development. The state therefore restricted the inclusion of clan politics in the modern state and its citizens were to adhere its liberal democratic values. However when the civil war broke out in 1991, fuelled by clan rivalry, Somalis reflexively turned to their natural source of protection, which was the clan. The clan re-emerged as the rule of law providing state like services to its Somali clan members (Elmi, 2014).

¹⁴ I will elaborate in later in the chapter about the 6 Somali clans

The international community supported a peace building conference in Arta, Djibouti in 2000. Somali clan elders and politicians attended the conference in which an artificial power sharing formula was developed. The '4.5' formula has since shaped Somali politics and democracy. Being an artificial category, the 6 Somali clans have been compressed to 4.5 groups forcing groups to forge allegiance with clans have little or no similarities with. By cross cutting all other categories the 4.5 system not only influences political, social and economical organization but it also affects how organizations like NDI, choose its participants in any activities so as to maintain a clan balance. The elites who were engaged in this power sharing formula have occupied even more powerful spaces whilst receiving international support. The minority clans received half the mandates whilst women and youth were excluded, as they are not considered as full members of the Somali clan.

There has been global governance policy for Somalia since the state collapse in 1991 (Menkhaus, 2014). After numerous failed peace talks and the creation of transitional governments, the United Kingdom (UK) government initiated a meeting on May 2012, in London, UK, where the Somali transitional federal government (TFG) was asked to end its tenure and prepare the country for elections. This was then followed by a civil society meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, where different actors from different sectors in Somalia met to discuss the role of the civil society in rebuilding Somalia. On September 2012, the world witnessed the election of a speaker and a president by a parliament selected by clan elders. For the first time in 22 years, the world recognized the fully-fledged Somali government. The 4.5 systems became embedded in the values and practice of democracy among the Somalis.

The 'Vernacularization' of Democracy In Somalia

The process of vernacularization refers to the local interpretation and adaptation of knowledge to local context (Michelutti, 2007). Lucia Michelluti (2008) in her ethnography among the '*yadav*' people in North India, uses the term to explain how western ideologies like democratization change when they enters a particular social and historical context. Michelluti shows how democracy was promoted in India creating unexpected effects within its stratified society. The caste system was transformed when the '*yadavs*', who are considered a low caste, emerged as a strong political unit (Michelutti, 2008). The '*yadavs*' used their own agency to respond to western promotion of democracy. Traditionally, they belong to a low caste but the

inclusion of the western model of democracy, that does not taken into account the local social and historical context, they were transformed to what they describe as ‘a caste of politicians’ (Michelutti, 2008). Being marginalised due to the Indian caste system, they were able to combine their own understanding of democracy to the western model, changing their status. I use the term in my dissertation to show how clan democracy was reintroduced as power sharing mechanism in 2000.

The main objective of the power sharing formula (4.5) was to distribute the power among the rival clans. However when combined with liberal western ideologies it overpowered the western ideologies creating their local understanding of democracy. The artificial power sharing formula creates new social relations and identities that neither represents traditional clan structures nor western democratic models. This is what I refer to as the vernacularization of democracy in Somalia. The Somali parliament was established in 2012 in a selection process where clan elders selected their clan representatives. Based on the 4.5 formula, each major clan has therefore 61 MP’s each and all the minority clans have 31 MP’s altogether bringing the number to 275 total. The public and private institutions have to comply with this formula that is not representative of traditional Somali kinship structures.

Tools, Theories and Templates of Democracy

Democracy promoters employ tools, theories and templates when promoting democracy abroad (Carothers, 1999). A theory of change is used by most international NGO and bilateral agencies to promoted democratic values. NDI and others posit a theory of change for how citizen participation can deepen democracy as a means of improving people’s lives. The theory underscores the idea that citizen participation is instrumental for democratization because it is through this participation that citizens develop a voice, expand political space, and foster government accountability” (NDI, 2012). NDI approach employs strategies that are designed to build democracy in fragile, failed and weak states. Citizen participation, free and fair elections and a transparent government are viewed as the characteristics of a democratic society (Carothers, 1999). NDI promotes these through as templates modelled from the US democracy based on the assumption that democracy can be developed and implemented anywhere.

However, in the case of Somalia, these interventions have managed to recreate

dependent states that are accountable to the donors. I argue that these interventions create 'phantom' identities as a by-product. The 'phantom' state and civil society that are created as a precondition to democracy, operate on a paradoxical relationship that is accountable to the donors rather than to its citizens. (Chandler, 2006). This widens the gap between the state and the society by empowering the elites whilst marginalising those who were already traditional marginalised by clan structures. Those who are excluded in these interventions, as I will show in my sixth chapter create other avenues to respond to the interventions. Women and the youth are traditionally viewed as inferior in the clan hierarchy due to the patriarchal 'oday'¹⁵ system which favours the men and in this new dynamic wealthy individuals who can buy into the

Democracy Aid

Thomas Carothers, a political scientist (2000) describes Aid as the most important tool of democracy promotion. Through trusted vehicles like non-governmental organisations (NGO) the states are required to adopt noninterventionist political approaches to rebuild their fragile institutions (Reno, 2000, p. 287). The NGO's like NDI receive bilateral funding from donors like Norway, the UK and the US. Their altruistic concern is linked to funding availability. Nothing can be implemented programmatically without the approval of the donors. The US, according to Carothers (1999) an estimated \$600-700 million in democracy promotion abroad (Carothers, 1999, p. 104) The flow of the aid goes through government agencies like the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) who then fund agencies like NDI.

The Failure of the structural adjustment programs that were based on neoliberalism led to the change of approach by the bilateral donors in what is described as '*the new aid architecture*' (Mosse & Lewis, 2005). As I show in my ethnography, the aid is still conditioned through principles of 'good governance', democracy, transparency and accountability. The donors are, despite the new approaches, in the driving seat. However, as Harbeson (2000) Mosse (2005) and Carothers (2000) argue these 'new approaches to aid' are conditioned by 'democracy promotion' and 'good governance' programmes. The aid effect here is the short-term effect of the

¹⁵ 'Oday' system refers to the elder system

interventions due to donor interests rather than the actual reality on the ground. Donors can reject proposals if they feel that it does not correspond with their policies. The states conform to the political conditionality requiring them to facilitate multi parties, strengthening of their state and civil society, reforming electoral processes (Harbeson J., 2000).

In a London conference for Somalia in 2013, the international community pooled their resources into a stability fund. The stability fund was a global attempt by the major donors from western states to architect Somalia's rebuilding. By channelling USD56 million, the fund would be used to rebuild different Somali institutions. The talks that were initiated by the UK government, gave the Somali government the platform to discuss its urgent needs. The Somali president expressed the needs of the young country recovering from the war at the conference by stating:

“As you will hear over the coming hours, however, we come to London to share with you our detailed plans to address these challenges. We are rebuilding our armed forces. We are restructuring and developing our police force. We are reforming our justice sector. And we are revolutionizing our public finance management systems. We are driving Somalia from emergency to recovery; and from recovery to development and reconstruction.”¹⁶

How does foreign policy gain legitimacy? How do these programs enrol the participants with rhetoric's of freedom, partnership, ownership or participation? (Mosse & Lewis, 2005). Are international agencies like NDI informed by bureaucracy?

Theoretical Overview: Anthropology, Democracy and Development

Democratization of Africa would have entailed the de-racialization of civil power and the detribalization of customary power (Mamdani 1996)

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/somalia-conference-2013-opening-speech>

Anthropological approaches to development have normally focused on the local effects of the macro processes of development initiatives (Mosse & Lewis , 2005). Some anthropologists view development aid, as an anti-politics machine that depoliticizes its subjects (Ferguson 1998) while others view it as an extension of colonization (Escobar 1991). My approach is to focus on the macro and micro effects of a US democracy promotion project in Somalia. Informed by the failed state discourse, the democratization project is characterized by what Mosse and Lewis (2005) describe as the “*new architecture of aid*”. These new approaches employ rhetoric’s of partnership, participation and ownership giving legitimacy to the interventions.

For Anthropologists, the latter part of the twentieth century not only changed the political situations across the world but how they would research on the changes. The dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the break up of the Soviet Union led to the domination of modernist theories that viewed democracy as a universal political form that could be applied everywhere. Some anthropologists view democracy promotion as a form of ‘governmentality’ (Lewis & Mosse, 2006). Mosse and Lewis argue that ‘governmentality’ does not function as an extension of bureaucratic or military control or as western project of development but instead through a form of “positive power” that wins legitimacy and empowers action (Mosse & Lewis , 2005). People are thus governed by rhetoric that imply that they are governed as ‘free’ social agents. (Lewis & Mosse, 2006). This positive power that Foucault describes as ‘positive power’ is a vehicle by organizations like NDI use to promote the western liberal models of democracy. By making the interventions seem organic and from the people, these channels of positive power through partnership, ownership and participation notions gains legitimacy not only from the recipients but also from the donors who commission the projects.

Democracy promotion re-emerged as the only viable political solution after the cold war. States that were viewed weak, fragile or failed would receive democracy support mostly in the form of aid and knowledge. However as Paley (2002) argues very little was done to analyse the effects it had to the local structural both pre and post colonial. Some ethnographers working in Africa studied the effects of democratic strategies like elections by analysing how it was interpreted and appropriated culturally by different native traditions (Paley J., 2002, p. 473). This

gave way to the analysis of democracy's circulation, constructiveness, discursive nature and power relations. Paley (2002) highlights the need to focus on all aspects of democracy promotion especially the need to incorporate traditional structures, a view that is shared most aid agencies and donors. However, argues Paley (2002) that traditional leaders had been engaged during pre-colonial and colonial times to brutalize, coerce and exploit the populations they represent in theory weakening their authoritative role among the people. (Ibid: 473). Paley (2002) argues that traditional leaders are inherited positions from ancestors, which is paradoxical to the core value of democracy, the will of the people. In my ethnography, I highlight how the creation of a new clan structure is incorporated in western liberal democratic values creating new social relationships and identities. The six major Somali clan are compressed to 4.5 groups changing Somali kinship structures.

The anthropological studies of development focus on two aspects: anthropology of development and development anthropology. The former is a post-structural critique of development (Escobar, 1991) (Ferguson, 2002) while the latter is the application of anthropological perspectives in development practice by contributing and critiquing development (Mosse 2005). Mosse (2005) asks, "*what if development practice is not driven by policy?*" (Mosse, 2005, p. 2). Mosse argues that policy is a metaphor and as a metaphor whether through participatory projects or good governance, is dependent on mobilization which is effective at bringing people together, providing a focus for the forging of alliances, resources and political support. (Mosse, 2005, p. 130). Mosse (2005) worked as a consultant, analysing a bilateral agricultural project, IBRFP (Indo British Rainfield Farming Project) that was established as a new approach to aid in India. Similar to NDI's democratization project in Somalia, it gained political support in order to gain legitimacy for its interventions.

The project funded by both the UK and the Indian government, was considered a failure despite all the right policies being in place (Mosse, 2005, p. 202). Through his ethnography working as a consultant Mosse demonstrates how practice sustains policy producing social relationships that constitute a development project. Mosse also shows how success and failures in projects can shift due to the nature of policies that are constructed by the institutions. He argues then that development policy is an upward focused tool that maintains and mobilizes political support rather than enhance practice. Through his case study he shows how the project went from a

success that gained a lot of praise to a total failure due to the changed landscape of the institution. Mosse concludes that policies do not shape projects because of its shifting nature conditioned by the demand for fresh ideas, conceptual frameworks, tools and models (Mosse, 2005, p. 159).

My thesis views US democracy promotion in Somalia as metaphor. By employing rhetoric's of freedom, participation and partnership these interventions gain legitimacy. However as I show in my study, the global governance policies of the US through NGO's like NDI, govern at a distance through its political policies. However as my thesis will reveal Somalis do not feel ownership over the project. In a recent evaluation by NORAD the key findings are that the Somalis who were interviewed claimed not have ownership over the process (NORAD, 2013). They felt has great connections within NDI however they did not feel included in the policy making rather with the implementation.

Discourse analysis is an important tool for revealing the hidden power structures in the new approaches to development policy, focusing on the discourse have a shortcoming ignoring the human agency in what Mosse (2005) describes as the relationships necessary for mobilizing policy metaphor (Mosse, 2005, p. 230). I thus combine discursive and actor-oriented approach to include the microanalysis in my dissertation. In addition to that I use Norman Long's interface theory to show the western conceptualization of democracy converges with clan democracy vernacularizing democracy creating new social relationships based on their cultural and social organizing principles (Michelutti, 2008). I show how the clan systems cut across all the interventions making it even more relevant than it was in the pre-colonial period. (Paley J., 2002)

Post Development Theory

I employ post development theory with an actor-oriented approach in order to fully grasp the process of rebuilding Somalia's democracy. Post development theorists draw on Michael Foucault (1970,1972) work on discourse arguing that development constructs the very problems it aims to solve (Escobar 1991, Ferguson 1994). Their views, however, ignore the human agency of local individuals. In order to include

the human agency that supports the creation of these I include an actor-oriented approach (Long, 2001). Through promotion of ideologies like good governance, democracy and civil society, the international community have shifted the approaches to aid from the direct operational activities to more distanced role funding the activities of institutions and organizations (Lie, 2011) (Mosse & Lewis, 2005) (Carothers, 1999).

By employing post development perspective, I am able to map the effects of these new approaches to state and non-state actors. This will reveal the power structures that spread democratic values as a global governance project and highlight the creation of phantom identities like a democratic Somali state and a civil society as ideal categories that can build democracy in Somalia. Lie (2008) argues that post development critics portray the subjects as a static object. (Sandes, 2008) In order to show the agency of the actors involved in the creation of the discourse and subjects, once has to include an actor-oriented approach (Long 2004). I employ Michelluti (2007,2008) theory of vernacularization of democracy in order to reveal how the creation of a new power sharing (4.5) formula that is artificial yet accepted as a real traditional category.

Post development theory approach views democracy promotion as discourses embedded in ideologies aim to solve the challenge of rebuilding states. However this approach excludes human agency in the development, implementation and sustaining of the discourse. I argue for the complementation of discursive and actor-oriented approach in studying the effects of external democracy promotion in Somalia. Actor-oriented which reveal the interface between different modes of knowledge and life worlds (Arce & Long, 1987). By focusing on the agency of the Somali actor's adaptation to the democratization process, discourse analysis reveals the top down power relations excluding bottom up approaches which use their agency to adopt to the discourses creating new social, political and economical relationships (Long, 2001).

This actor-oriented approach will highlight how the Somali actors vernacularize the interventions a create a power sharing formula that is artificial and gives more agency to the elites thus disempowering minorities and women which I discuss in chapter 6.

Democracy Discourse

The discourse of democracy views states and civil society as necessary tools, templates and theories of development thus creating these identities where lacking. However due to the unpopularity of the structural adjustment programs of the 1980's and 1990, aid has taken a new approach that social scientists have described as 'governmentality' (Carothers, 1999) (Ferguson, 2002) (Gould, 2005) (Green, 2003) (Harbeson J., 2000) (Lewis & Mosse, 2006) (Menkhaus, 2014).

I argue thus that democracy in Somalia employs rhetoric's of partnership, participation and ownership. However in order to reveal the power structures that are hidden in this rhetoric's I employ Foucault's notion of 'governing at a distance' to show how these approaches are conditioned with good governance, democracy promotion, state and peace building goals which the nations that are going to receive the funding have to sign up on.

Development theories constitute a discourse in which power and knowledge are embedded in rhetoric's that give the impression of positive changes. Development aims to understand why so many countries are underdeveloped and how this underdevelopment can be either eradicated (poverty) or strengthened (democracy) (Ferguson, 2002) (Hearn, 1997; Mosse & Lewis, 2005). For Foucault, discourses create ways of specifying knowledge and truth. He argues that:

.... Discourse must be viewed as a series of discontinuous elements whose function is neither stable nor uniform. To be more specific we must not think of a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominated discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into play in various strategies (Foucault, 1990, p. 100)

Democracy is viewed as a characteristic of western countries and is institutionalized through the creation of discourses which view failed, weak and fragile states as non democratic and in need of intervention. The rules and practices surrounding discourses create a limited field in which a particular form of knowledge like democracy can be internalized (Paley J., 2002). The western liberal democracy operates within rhetoric of partnership, ownership and participation suggesting that the process is horizontal and inclusive. However as my ethnography reveals, these notions are not as inclusive as suggested with the promoters conditioning the aid

with notions of 'good governance' accountability and western democratic principles thus governing at a distance.

Somalia, collapsed in the 1990's following the end of the cold war. (Lyons & Samatar, 1995) The collapse was linked to the breakdown of social coherence that would support the absence of the state. The Somali conflict presented a new opportunity for the international community in the post cold war era to engage in rebuilding of failed states as well as gain first hand experience in peace making (Farah, 2002). However the promotion of the western model of democracy has led to the creation of artificial power sharing formulas that have been combined as an effort to include a bottom up approach. This has thus led to the creation of new social, political and economic relationships that neither reflects the western nor the Somali clan democracy model.

The solution to Somalia's failed state was thus a creation of democratic phantom states and civil society (Chandler, 2006). This however, according to Chandler, creates categories that are only accountable to the international agencies and donors that architected its creation rather to the citizens it represents. President Siad Barre (1969-1991) viewed traditional clan structures as backward and undemocratic paradoxically he favoured his own clan members, *the darood* which eventually fuelled the civil war in 1991 (Kaptenjis, 2013). Barre, a communist feared the growth of democracy as threat to his authoritarian rule. However the collapse of his rule coincided with the end of the cold war and since then democracy has been viewed as the only viable solution to peace and stability in Somalia. Since the civil war there has been twelve major factional reconciliation conferences. This however led to the creation of transitional governments that could not even be based in Mogadishu. The international community have created networks that they re-engage in all arenas leading to the domination of this donor-supported elite. The very same actors who were engaged in previous peace talks become the same actors who attend civil society meetings and even meetings in London and Brussels making the process an exclusive process.

Michael Foucault's (1991) theory of '*governmentality*' reconciles the power effect of converging aid policy frameworks and global harmonization with liberal principle of partnership, participation and ownership. (Mosse & Lewis, 2005, p. 13). The new aid framework is described by Foucault ' as a liberal art of government' which operates through internalized frameworks in which the local actors come to assume

responsibility for externally engineered policies that extend the rule of the policy makers beyond their borders towards the recipient state's borders. Viewing aid as 'governmentality' without complimenting it with an actor-oriented approach excludes those on the receiving end of the projects and how their use their agency to respond to the interventions (Mosse & Lewis, 2005).

Interface

I employ Norman Long's interface concept in analyse the convergence of different life worlds or social field (Long, 2001) (Arce & Long, 1987). It is relevant in exploring and understanding issues of social heterogeneity and processes involving external interventions like democracy promotion. Unni Wikan (quoted in Long 2001) uses actor perspective to show the composite and complex nature of human agency. By including this in her studies among the Balinese, she was able to reveal how they cope with social situations like crisis and hardships giving a clearer understand of a people commonly understood. Arce and Long (1987) define knowledge as ways in which individuals categorize their own meanings into their experiences which varies from one society to the other (Arce & Long, 1987).

Knowledge, both scientific and non scientific, constitute levels of knowledge that are based on experience. However Arce and Long argue that that the western understanding of knowledge is viewed as being superior to non-western knowledge leading to the creation of solutions in forms of 'recipes' or 'cookery books' on how to transform and transfer knowledge. However these solutions leave little room for adjustment when their policies fail. The dynamics of the interactions argue Arce and Long (1987) are the ways they transform and reinforce each other. Interface can contribute to the analysis of these effects of the convergence of the different modes of knowledge. Interface highlights the dynamics that take place revealing how goals, perceptions, interests and relationships are reshaped. (Arce & Long, 1987). Interface is not only limited to social interactions as in the case highlighted by Unni Wikan (quoted in Arce& Long 1987) but to processes that aim to reconstruct the social order like in the case of rebuilding of Somalia.

When new ideas and modes of behaviour are introduced to existing systems like the example of their case study from Jalisco, they lead to the creation of new relations and knowledge. Arce and Long (1987) argue that the new system that was

introduced in the existing farming system in Jalisco, Mexico. The Mexican administration employed '*technicos*' (experts) to help with the farming projects that could help alleviate poverty in the region. The experts were however caught in the middle when the local peasant farmers made demands on what requirements should be met. Being local they did not trust the government and created resistance in the form of giving the experts no access to their farms and knowledge. The expert used negotiation and mediation between the government and the peasants giving both an understanding of what the project entailed. Arce and Long (1987) argue that by focusing on the interactions between the farmers and the government it gave a deeper understanding of the transfer of knowledge from a western perspective to the local context (Arce & Long, 1987). In the case of Somalia's democratization project I focus on both the actors and the stakeholders to reveal the interface of the knowledge and the human agency of the discourse of democracy.

The Actors and Stakeholders

Democracy promotion is a complex arena that has a multitude of actors all contributing from different aspects. I will discuss the different actors and stakeholders that were involved each playing a major role in the creation, implementation and evaluation of the discourse of democracy promotion.

NDI

International donors and agencies like NDI, operate with a discourse that views democratic states and civil society as the solution to weak, fragile and failed states. The international communities mandated by human rights principles or the UN Security Council resolutions, work to eliminate the threat of state failure by employing global solutions like state and civil society. State and civil society capacity building (good governance) has thus emerged as important foreign policy and most donor agencies and countries include these programs in their portfolios. Expanding global economies and shrinking states enable NGO's to step in and respond to the needs of the weak and marginalized in the society. The US congress in 1983 passed a bill, which witness the formation of NDI (National Democratic Institute). The international NGO as it's name suggests, is affiliated with the Democratic Party respectively. NDI is actively promoting democracy in 130 countries. NDI's engagement in Somalia was established in 2005's programs and is divided into two, the executive and the legislative programs. ⁱThe executive program

offers support to the executive offices of the Somali government through direct initiative and the legislative as the name suggest works with the legislative branch of the government. NDI receives funding from the UK, Norwegian Donors and US. NDI works with a theory of change and employs tools of change, which is the basis of my thesis. Making democracy work through strengthening institutions, NDI's programs in Somalia aim to strengthen the Somali government and the civil society. Shortly after I embarked on my fieldwork, The UK government outlined its role in rebuilding Somalia and when they announced on their home page what plans they had for Somalia.¹⁸ NDI Somalia program is an implementing partner and was contracted to conduct two of those tasks that included study trips to the UK and Norway and Rules of Procedure training for the government. I was involved in both of this tasks working as a note taker for the Rules of procedure training for the Parliament in Nairobi and travelling with the delegation to Oslo, Norway. I will describe in greater detail in Chapter 4 where I argue that this led to the creation of phantom identities that are accountable to the policy makers rather than the citizens they represent.

NGO's represent the interests of their own countries like NDI, created in congress to spread American democratic values abroad (Carothers, 1999). The NGO's are not elected or selected rather self-appointed trusted spaces between the state and the society. (Hearn, *THE NGO-isation of Kenya Society:USAID &the reconstruction of health care.*, 1998). Through partners like NDI, the US is able to implement similar strategies in 130 countries operating from its head office in the US capital city, Washington, DC.I argue that in the context of accountability and governance, NGO's like NDI govern the states they aim to democratize by the conditionality of their aid as well the creation of a phantom state and civil society that have legitimacy in the global space rather within the society. This process is described by Julie Hearn as *NGO-isation*, which argues that NGOs have replaced the state in its weakness or it failure to perform thus providing the necessary services needed including security.¹⁹

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/somalia-uk-to-help-build-democratic-government>

¹⁹ <http://amisom-au.org/amisom-background/>

The Somali Federal Government (SFG)

As state actors crucial to the spreading of democracy, the Somali federal government was established in 2012 after a clan selection process. The parliament made up of 275 members, a speaker, a 25-member cabinet, a prime minister and a President. The president appointed the prime minister and their roles have been conflicting seeing the prime minister who was appointed in 2012, replaced barely a year in power. Through a top down approach, NDI engages with both legislative and executive branches of government in Somalia. However my research is based to the actors in the federal parliament whom I had access to in Nairobi and in a trip to Oslo. I argue in chapter four that as an effects of the interface of western conceptualization and clan democracy creates new relations that are accountable to the donors and to the clan members they represent. I show that through a partnership for capacity building with NDI, how they travel to Norway and to Nairobi for training sessions. My ethnography I show how clan identity is more important to the state members as this was the contributing factor to their elections. I show what the predicament of combining the two forms for democracy is and how it leads both to empowerment and disempowerment of the members of the society

The Somali Civil Society

Interactions with these non- state actors involved in NDI bottom up approach. I engaged with two civil society organizations that are NDI's partners. Aisha* who is an informant and both a member of the diaspora group who meet regularly to help rebuild Somalia, worked for ARDO, one of my case study organization as their chief accountant. By being in their offices on my off days I was able to see how they prepared their paper work for application of funds to NDI and other organizations and how papers in this industry have agency. Having Somalis like Aisha* who had double citizenship helped legitimize the organizations which making it an investment for the local NGO's. In addition to their offices I travelled to the Dadaab refugee camp with NDI to monitor a focus group research conducted by ARDO on behalf of NDI. I examine how moderators that had undergone training in Djibouti translated this knowledge to local Somalia through a questionnaire that I was involved in creating. This questionnaire, I argue, was created as one model for different demographics.

MCA was an advocacy organization that I followed both through meetings in Kampala Uganda and at NDI offices. Marginalized Community Advocates (MCA) was advocating for the rights of Somali minorities who are the Bantus, marginalized by the Somalis. The director, Dr Ali expressed his concern with how their mandate was being changed according to the donors needs. I asked him why he opted to change the mandate he said that “*Some aid is better than no aid*” (extract from my notes). In one of the workshops that the group were engaged in, Dr Ali expressed that they did not feel like the civic education targeted minorities since the booklets they used pictured only regular Somalis and they, as Somali Bantus did not recognize themselves. Due to their physical features they did not resemble Somali they felt that this process did not appeal to them.

Somali Diaspora

I became close to three ladies and two gentlemen all highly educated. They had a forum that was informal. They would meet once a week in a notable restaurant. They were academics and through them I was able to meet over 20 Somali professionals in Nairobi each working for the UN, NGO’s or their respective embassies. I was indeed the only one from Norway. They were mostly from the US and the UK. The international community, a donor bilateral and multilateral engages the diaspora Somali’s in their rebuilding efforts. In my sixth chapter I discuss how this group, known as *high flyers*, are in high demand both by the international community and the Somali government. I argue that these individuals create a gap within the Somali community where the natives feel like the space to rebuild the country has been filled by other actors leaving them more marginalized than even during the civil war. The Somali natives who remained in Somalia and Kenya during the civil war feel that the Somali diaspora who have dual citizenship, have access to the best of both worlds, exclude their knowledge and expertise.

Chapter Summary

In Chapter two, I discuss and outline my methodology approaches. I show how democracy promotion is an extension of development policy in post conflict reconstruction. I show how my identity as a Norwegian Somalia shaped my methods and the data I collected. In Chapter three I show how the show how the notion of global governance is transferred to Somalia in the form of good governance and democracy. I highlight how democracy is conceptualised by the different actors in

my ethnography and how it is packaged for promotion abroad creating 'phantom' identities that are accountable to the donors rather than to the citizens it represents. I show how NGO's like NDI are viewed as legitimate vehicles of foreign policy and occupying more political spaces than the states themselves. In chapter four I focus on the state actors capacity building as a template of democracy. By highlighting how the international community through NGO's like NDI aim to strengthen the capacity of the new Somali state by taking them to Oslo for study mission and by drafting and training them on their own Rules of Parliament procedures, I argue that the assumption of the state actors as necessary tools, templates and theories of democracy, the Somali parliament, who I worked closely with, is recreated in a western model. In Chapter five, I focus on non-state actors, the Somali civil society and the Somali diaspora's engagement in the rebuilding process. Following a global trend to respond to global issues I show how the discourse of civil society creates identities that become accepted as global identities yet the reality on the ground shows individual organization using their agencies to create flexible civil societies in order to reach the multitude of donors. At the same time I show how real civil societies advocating for minority rights have their agency taken from them rendering them as non-governmental organizations that are needed by aid agencies to implement their programs due to their geographical reach.

In Chapter six, I focus on those who are excluded and included from these interventions. I show how women managed to create their own sixth clan after being excluded from the power-sharing agreement. I show how the youth who become overpowered by the clan elders are unable to participate in the rebuilding efforts leading to their radicalization. I show how militia groups like *Al-Shabaab* gain grassroots' support spreading their ideology among the weak. Lastly I show Somali diaspora's are considered buffer zones between the host and home countries thus included in the interventions. In my conclusive chapter, I summarize my overall arguments in the thesis as well as highlighting certain interest areas that if given more time I would have researched more on . Secondly I would give a recommendation to how reconstruction of Somalia, that is very urgent, should be conducted with countries like Norway that are seen as the best donors in the international community

Chapter 2: Methodological Reflections

"We must start by knowing ourselves first and only then proceed to the more exotic primitive societies" Bronislaw Malinowski²⁰

"You cannot research about Somali issues when you are far from the centre" (Informant X)

Global phenomena like democracy promotion are characterized by a multitude of actors and organisations. It therefore requires using new methods to adapt to the changing ethnographic field (Marcus 1995). My fieldwork is characterized by employing new approaches in order to reveal how policy makers like NDI operate within a theory of change that is representative of the American model of democracy rather than the Somali one. This chapter highlights the methodological approaches to my fieldwork. My methodological approaches aim to understand the metaphor of failed state rebuilding. I focus on the new social dynamics that arise due to changed nature of the state and the society. I highlight the challenges and advantages of being a Norwegian Somali researching about US democracy promotion. Since the collapse of the civil war, Somalia became proliferated with numerous organisations working to stabilize and in recent years its democratization it. However being a rather private affair with only some organization like the United Nations and NDI gaining access to the relevant Somali stakeholders, fieldwork on my own would then give me a certain angle, that would be based mostly on my informants perceptions. Working as an intern would give me an inside view of how policies are formed and structured by the donors and the recipients. Mosse and Lewis (2005) argue that anthropological studies of following a global phenomenon like democracy promotion requires an insider's view not only to track the flows of the discourse policy but also to see how it translates in practice. The new approaches employ notions like partnership and ownership, which involve interactions, and interfaces of knowledge that can be best captured ethnographically.

New Approaches, New Methods

I walked into the suburb area where the NDI offices were located. There was tight security in the luxurious building it was located in. As I took the elevator upstairs the

²⁰(Quoted in Munthali 2001)

view was breath taking. The area was serene and I had never been here despite being born in Kenya, I felt like I was on foreign ground. As I walked in, I saw how everyone sat buried in theirs desks, working. I was left wondering whether this could be considered this my field? Can the material I gather in this office be regarded to as anthropological? And what the limitations of participant observation in an office were. My view of the field as a student of anthropology was the idea of studying the 'other' going outside my comfort zone. However my fieldwork was a study of my own people and how they were on the receiving end of the development discourse. Being a Norwegian Somalia, I was constantly reflecting on my positioning in the field.

I became interested in this thematic area when I was invited to a public consultation that NDI held in Oslo, 2011. This public consultation, funded by the Norwegian government, aimed at collecting the views of the Somalis in the diaspora and incorporating them into the draft constitution. They then appealed to my Somali identity explaining that they needed us to be engaged and contribute to the nation building. I became attached to the notions of contributing to promoting democracy in Somalia. I then asked myself how the Somalis, who lived in Norway for more than two decades, contribute to the drafting process? The conclusion I arrived at is that Somalia's rebuilding was been addressed in a global arena. I then decided to conduct fieldwork in Nairobi, Kenya because it had emerged as an epicentre for Somalia during and after the civil war; due to the majority of Somali refugees live in Kenya. Due to insecurity in Somalia, most international agencies are based in Nairobi due to its close proximity as a neighbour country as well as the enclaves that have been created within that remind the aid workers of back home. Maia Green (2003) describes this as non-spaces of development aid. Green explains that international organizations create enclaves that the international community can access amenities and services that are modern and comfortable.

I applied for an intern position and got accepted in September 2012, months before my fieldwork was due to start. This was because being a mother, I had to prepare months in advance. My fieldwork started in January and lasted until 30 June 2013. I worked on different projects including an interesting study mission to Oslo with the Somali members of parliament. I also worked on rules of procedure training as well as planning, developing and implemented the filming of ten short civic education

films aimed at educating Somalis on the constitution. The short films were aired on international Somali satellite TV's²¹. These films were also aired on YouTube making it a new approach to civic engagement. In my chapter on civic engagement I will show how this civic education media campaign was a way of engaging Somalis by appealing to their love of poetry and songs. My daughter who was 7 at the time was with me and she attended the Norwegian school as I conducted my research and in the evenings when I frequented a coffee house in an upscale area to meet with diaspora Somali's, my mother babysat

Multi sited Ethnography

Anthropologists have emphasized the need to locate ethnography within a globalized world. This involves documenting the impact of large-scale processes on subjectivities and communities. This however needs to be done in a way that demonstrates the specific and evolving nature of local responses (Moore, 2005, p. 10). My methodological approaches aims to understand the metaphor of failed states. I focus on the new social dynamics that arise due to changed nature of the state and the society. My data collection was qualitative because qualitative research is not as strict as quantitative methods. The objective with qualitative is to attain an overall understanding of the problem which can even be achieved through finding a good example that can reflect your research questions on. (Fangen, 2010). Quantitative research, according to Fangen (2010) is more about statistic representation that omits the human observation in it.

My fieldwork was a multi-sited, qualitative research based on participant observation with my role as an intern with an American NGO actively engaged in rebuilding and restoring democratic institutions in Somalia. Working in the agency enabled me to attain a donor perspective in the post reconstruction of Somalia. However, this limited my data on how the recipients reacted to the interventions. I had to then counter my approach with an actor-oriented approach. I then followed two CSO's in their interface with NDI. Somali Diaspora was emerging as an important tool for rebuilding Somalia. I then include them in my analysis showing

²¹ Due to the insecurity in Somalia, Somali TV broadcast through satellite TV having their studios in places like the US and the UK

how they are a preferred group by international donors and agencies as a middle ground due to their dual citizenship.

My informants in the field were not randomly chosen. I had to find port openers to each of my interest fields. My field would encompass interacting with NDI employees, CSO's based in Nairobi, lastly with Somali citizens especially from the diaspora actively engaged in Somalia's rebuilding efforts. As Katrine Fangen explains in her book *Deltangende Observasjon*²², her research on EUMARGINS, was not single but multi-sited encompassing different actors in different fields. She conducted fieldwork in seven countries that represented the different study cases (Fangen, 2010). My fieldwork was away from Somalia, but by following the flow of knowledge from Washington to Nairobi then to Somalia. I would be able to gain an understanding of the discourse of failed state rebuilding. Following this discourse entails the employment of multi-sited ethnographical methods.

Marcus (1995) argues that due to the change in global dynamics and interconnectedness approaches to ethnography have to change. Ethnography is moving from its single-site location to a multi site of observation and participation. However, Marcus (1995) points out that multi-sited ethnography is normally critiqued as testing the limits of the fieldwork losing perspective of the subaltern (Marcus, 1995). However this need not be the case as globalization calls for the adaptation of ethnography to the changing global relations. The world is no longer viewed as having subjects rather having global subjects, whom through global interconnectedness, interface with global discourses. This thus calls for employing multi-sited ethnography. The data I collected was therefore following the flow of the discourse of state rebuilding in post conflict states. By including all the actors that are involved in the creation of the policy and practice of the discourse I was able to achieve an understanding of how these notions become not only legitimized by its practitioners but how various groups use their agency to influence to outcomes.

²² That was the name of her project at the time of writing her book *Deltangende Observasjon* (Participant Observation)

Ethnography at Home

Since 1884, Euro-American anthropologists dominated anthropology as a discipline and its development has been closely linked with colonialism and the expansion of western influence. (Jackson, 1987) (I.M. Lewis, 1973). Fieldwork was thus characterized by fieldwork in distance regions and cultures that were different from those of the anthropologist. Fieldwork, according to Alistar Muntali, is a “*rite de passage*” which transforms the student to a professional (Munthali A., 2001, p. 115). The disappearance of exotic cultures and the end of colonialism led to the belief of the death of anthropology in the 1960’s (Munthali A., 2001). It was also realized that many anthropologist knew little about their cultures and only when they conducted fieldwork at home could they identify with other cultures (Jackson 1987:8 cited by (Munthali A., 2001). Due to the connection of anthropology and colonialism many anthropologists and students of African descent are forced to study sociology when intending to understand the society. This however changed when Kenyan anthropologist and former president Jomo Kenyatta, wrote ethnography, *Facing Mount Kenya* that was praised by Malinowski. (Munthali A., 2001, p. 118) Malinowski was an advocate of conducting fieldwork at home argued that fieldwork at home could create ethnographies that are representative of the anthropologist’s interest and theoretical inclinations. They do not indicate the problems and potentials of conducting anthropological research as native insiders.

As a student of anthropology aiming to achieve an understanding of one of the most historical changes in Somalia’s history namely its reconstruction, I embarked on a journey that I had taken for granted. As a Norwegian Somali, who was born in Kenya I had mixed feelings towards returning home as a researcher. My multiple identities would become both a port opener and a restriction. It was easy because I spoke the language and this would be a port opener for me. Secondly I felt like the stakeholders involved would trust me easily if I were one of their own. However what I feared was not been taken seriously. As a Somali woman, studying in a political environment dominated by men, I feared that my data would be compromised. I feared that they would not let their guard down like they would with a man. Somalia as a traditional patriarchal society, view men as the leaders of the community and thus those I would mostly be engaging with especially the government officials were male clan elders. They would be cautious in letting their

guard down to a young educated Somali woman. This is due to the cultural codes that exist and the expectations the society has created for them. Erving Goffmann writes in his book about the “the performance of self” that the social role attached to a given status involving the performance of the roles in different occasions to different audiences:

“Defining social role as the enactment of rights and duties attached to a given status, we can say that a social role will involve one or more parts and that these different parts may be presented by the performer on a series of occasions to the same kind of audience or to an audience of the same persons.” (Goffman, 1959, p. 14).

I would then have to adjust my roles so that I would not only be viewed as a Somali woman researcher but also as a family member by using words like ‘adeer’ and ‘edho’ meaning patriarchal uncle and aunt. This would enable me to gain their trust. When I travelled to Oslo with the Somali MP’s I had reservations of how they would treat me not understanding what my role, as a researcher would be. However they gave me the title of niece. I was taken aback about this but realized that Somalis believe that they are all related due to the common ancestry belief and I would never be considered an outsider. However they were really concerned with my clan identity. I was adamant in revealing this because it would mean that I would immediately inherit relatives but found out that this was necessary as a port opener. They would never trust me if they did not know my clan. The former president Barre used the clan identity as a political resource and used it to reinforce his monopoly on power. (Kaptenjis, 2013, p. 194)

I was thus scared that their performance as my informants would be affected by their status as either the head of the civil society group or a member of government. After reading Marianne Lien article in a seminar before embarking on my fieldwork *Latter og Troverdighet* (2001) I found similarities between her work with the farmers in Hedmark, Norway and mine among my Somali people. Marianne Lien describes the complexity of conducting ethnography among her people having to ask questions that she felt were ridiculous like what is a carrot. She was however surprised that the informants were willing to share this information with her despite the understanding of the cultural codes. I was Somali and I was expected to understand the cultural codes. Lucky enough my colleagues and informants were kind enough to humour me with answers when I asked “are you loyal to your clan or to the state” they thought

that they were ridiculous questions but they all answered but they were worried that I had either lost my mind or I was really serious about researching.

One of the first comments I received prior to starting my fieldwork was a from a young Somali man, who would later become an important informant, Mohamed*, He was a colleague who explained to me that he had expected to see a blond woman from Norway when he heard that a Norwegian research student would be interning with them. Mohamed* in his mid 30's, could not hide his surprise from the boardroom meeting that was held to introduce and welcome me to NDI. "*She is Somali! You should have said she is Somali and she even wears Hijab*" he expressed loudly which I found rather hilarious. I asked him later what he really meant with this he explained that most experts and researchers that come to NDI are usually non-Somali it was rare to find a Somali researcher being employed by NDI he explained. I asked him about the country director who was a Somali American. He explained that because he was a neutral Somali he could be employed as a country director. He even explained that his wife was a non-Somali something that gave him authenticity in this rebuilding process. In my chapter about the Somali diaspora as a tool for democracy I explained in depth how the categorization of the Somalis into their host countries values gives them access to rebuilding Somalia.

I speak Somali, English, Swahili and Norwegian fluently and this enabled me to interact with all members of staff both Somali and Kenyans. The majority of the Somali program staff is primarily Somalis. Being ethnically Somali I fit into the program although I faced some limitations due to my spoken Somali. My Kenyan Somali roots were referred to as *Sijui* a Swahili word meaning those who don't know and this is what I was instantly identified as when I spoke Somali. When Somali refugees came to Kenya after the civil war, they encountered Somalis who were already living there. Those from Somalia deemed themselves as authentic Somali nationalists I was then considered to be a *sijui* in need of "*daqaan celis*" (return to culture). The junior staffs that I mostly connected to at the office were mostly my age mates and having a daughter enabled me to interact with them closely. I would be known as a sister to my age mates (*abayo or walalo*) and niece to the older ones *Adeer* (*male*) or *Edo* (*female*).

Some staff members were more than willing to show me the ropes and give me the relevant information I needed although some others viewed my presence as a threat to their positions. My manager had assigned numerous duties to me and one lady in particular as something negative viewed this. She was then very rude and my attempts to build bridges did not yield results. One of my informants at work mentioned that because she was a local they resented Somali Diaspora especially those who wish to involve themselves in developing Somalia. Many of my informants expressed this fear because there was a rise in the killings of professional Somalis. I did not experience any threat to my life and I was informed that it would happen mostly in Somalia.

Wazir Jahan Karim (quoted (Fangen, 2010, p. 150), faced resistance from her own people as a Malaysian aiming to study Malaysian aborigines. Her status as a middle class Malaysian contributed to the lack of trust. She realized that aborigines were alike Malaysians and they did not a word for hospitality. In the end she realized that the Malaysians were to be blamed for the marginalization of the aborigines and understood why they resented her. Months later they accepted her after she convinced them by showing interest in their way of life. They accepted her as a daughter. (Fangen, 2010). My fieldwork was difficult in the beginning especially working as a Somali who was born in Kenya and lived in Norway. The senior staff who were comprised of one American Somali and the rest were from the US and Europe. They embraced me at once and I was asked to freely walk into their offices when I needed help. The junior staff that was mostly Somali was sceptical to me. One explained to me that he expected to see me without a headscarf. This is because he equates Norway with modernity and my scarf made me look like a regular Somali. After a while when I was doing almost most of their work to show them that I was not superior to them I was accepted and after a while I was addressed as a sister and this was the closest relations a Somali can give one showing respect for you.

Limitations to my field: Drinking the Cool aid of development

As a participant observant I would have not achieved an understanding of this engagement if I had not become emotionally involved in the project. My understanding before setting of to the field was that post development theories about discourse in development were very relevant especially with the development of

identities like the Somali parliament and the civil society organization. By participating in nearly all their day-to-day activities, I became emotionally attached to NDI's work and as most of the work we conducted appealed to our consciousness. I started to feel connected to the notion of *making democracy work*. I then had to re-evaluate my role and the boundaries I had set for myself. I had drunk *the cool aid* of development. I then read Unni Wikan's notion on empathy and resonance and realized that if I was to gain an understanding of how these discourses are embedded in policies, project documents, identities and relationships I would have to allow myself to feel what the actors associated with and see how they were all drinking the cool aid giving it more legitimacy (Wikan, 1992).

Non-Space of Development

Maia Green describes the non-space of development as the space development practitioners create for themselves in countries they operate in. These spaces are representatives of the own cultures as a way of bringing a piece of home with them. In my methodology I describe my fieldwork at NDI as a non-space connecting all NDI employees. (Green, 2003) The NDI Somalia office was based in Nairobi due to security issues in Somalia. The threat from a militia group *al Shabaab*²³ still rendered Mogadishu, Somalia's capital a war zone. Upon being confirmed as an intern, I was given an email that I was expected to use when communicating with staff and external partners. When I logged in, I had 3000 emails. I was surprised how I managed to accrue so many emails. I would later be told that there is a mechanism of sharing knowledge and experiences between all of NDI and this was one of them. One email was a sad email-bidding farewell to employees after having worked there for 3 years. Being at a distance I never felt so close with the improved lines of communication I felt like a part of the head office in the US. We were expected to share information with the team representing the horn of Africa in the US and occasionally they would visit the field office. I was worried when I embarked on my fieldwork that the distance would not enable me to follow the policy development process but through Skype, calls and emails I felt like they were sitting right across me. The NDI office in Nairobi was well equipped with fiber optic cables ensuring super fast Internet connections. Through this non-space of democracy, all NDI

²³ The name is written in italics because of its violent nature it is not considered a word

employees in 130 countries could connect across the Internet even having forums where everyone could log on and participate.

Scratch notes, Head notes and Field notes

Field notes are produced in the field but can one properly produce field notes without physically being there (Geertz cited in (Sanjek, 1990). Field notes can be produced but it a process that develops from combining all the paper work one accumulates during their fieldwork. Scratch notes, headnotes, journals, emails, reports and proposals were the basis for my field notes. Field notes are of the field but they are not necessarily produced in the field. (Sanjek, 1990)My field notes were therefore produced after I travelled to Norway. This was because there were certain things that did not really make sense to me if I wrote and analysed them right away so all I did was write either directly after a conference or a meeting or later when I was at home and could reflect on the days activities. Actors in an NGO world are always having meetings and note taking is not considered a rare thing actually it is what is expected of a professional. I noticed that in the instances when I having unstructured interviews with my informants they would really take the interview seriously If I jotted down what they said in my notebook. Although I noticed that they were really interested in seeing what I wrote and as Hutchinson (1996) did with the Nuer in Sudan, let them help me write the notes. (Hutchinson, 1996) This make them trust me more in a society where war created identities that mistrust each other and feel like someone is out to get them.

I created a short code system because working at an NGO there are buzzwords and fuzzwords that can be confusing. To be able to ask the informants about this short codes that were used at meetings, I created a short code for myself would indeed help me remember when I was compiling my field notes but they would also become my headnotes.in my notebook I have words like "govt....pol...Str...Wsp.." and later on they would translate to government, policy, strategy and workshop respectively.

Buzzword and Fuzz words

CSO, log frame, outcome, outputs, impacts, BNP, GDP, capacity building, good governance, participation, partnership, SFG, SFP, CoE, CPO and many more buzzwords and fuzz words in my fieldwork .Not only was I expected to understand them, I was expected to speak in coded language .I thought this was French asking

my colleague if we were speaking English. Mrs C*, my supervisor, who preferred to be addressed as Mrs C, after her husband's initials, gave me my first assignment, a DFID²⁴ proposal and asked me to create a work plan. I did not fully understand and a junior colleague came to my aid. When I read the proposal I asked myself if it was too late to contact my supervisor at the university and see if I could change my fieldwork. However when I read it I realised that this was the gateway to my ethnography because the core of democracy promotion was in the proposals. The proposal was created in coded language that would make outsiders like me confused. Wolfgang Sachs contends that development is much more than a socio-economic endeavour; it's a perception that models reality (Cornwall & Eade, 2010). Buzzword of development through proposals and short codes are described by Cornwall and Eade as passwords to funding and influence. The word development itself conveys the idea of a better tomorrow giving all involved the positive nature of the engagement. The buzzwords, like poverty reduction, already denote a positive perception of changing the nature of poverty and it is a much-used word in development (Cornwall & Eade, 2010, p. 2). Democracy promotion that was outlined as the main objective of the DFID proposal gave the impression those NDI interventions would indeed lead to the democratization of Somalia.

The Project Documentation

The project documents were an integral part of my study using them to analyse the policymaking, program planning and the implementation. When I first started I was asked to create a work plan from a proposal that was drafted in Nairobi, completed in Washington and approved by the DFID (Department for International Funding). They had committed to funding the civic education project that I would be primarily working on. I did not understand at first the importance of analysing these documents that the formal order of the projects were embedded in the project documents. Eduardo Archetti describes that social discourses are embedded in writing and one has to identify how documents are produced and consumed. (Archetti, 1994, p. 11) By focusing on the importance of documentation in all the stages of development I was able to understand the complexity of the discourse both by the language it uses and the projects that it is embedded in. I was asked to orient myself with a proposal that

²⁴ Department for International Development (UK)

was submitted to the UK government. In this proposal I was asked to find out what NDI had proposed and committed to do in a year time.

In this chapter I argue for the use of new approaches when conducting fieldwork in urban spaces and away from the actual reality (due to security reasons). I showed how using different approaches in a multi-sited field can yield a greater understanding of how ideologies like 'democracy' flow and how they create new modes of knowledge. In my next chapter I show the term 'democracy' is conceptualised by the use of global templates, tools and theories. I show aid flows from a 'stability fund' to NDI conditioned with foreign policy that is not informed by practice rather by policy.

Chapter 3: Democracy Conceptualised

“Somalia is a failed state that threatens British interests” (David Cameron, UK Prime minister)

This chapter is concerned about how democracy is conceptualised by the different actors, the donors, NDI, the Somali state and the civil society. As important actors in western democracy promotion, I aim to highlight how different conceptualisations of term embedded in discourses of knowledge and power aims constructs subjects that are ‘accountable’ and ‘democratic’. My ethnography shows how democracy policy by the donors is informed by failed state discourse, which assumes that weak, failed or fragile states can be strengthened by democracy promotion. I show how NDI, receives funding from these organisations showing their accountability to the donors rather than to the citizens of the countries it intervenes in. However, I argue in this chapter these interventions view and treat developing countries as emergencies that can be solved by therapeutic solution. (Rottenburg, 2009) By comparing how HIV/Aids was treated as an emergency in the 1990’s, this new era deals with ‘democracy’ as the new solution to failed, weak and fragile states. I examine how the different views of democracy interface and how aid as an important tool for democracy aid still commands conditionality by supporting programs that correspond to its policy agenda.

Democracy Discourses: The emergence of a concept

A Somali Minister met with NDI to inquire whether NDI could assist his Ministry in public consultations. The minister wished to conduct civic education on Somalia’s provisional constitution. The minister had been in Nairobi lobbying for funds from all willing donors and organisations. After meeting the senior managers and directors, the minister was informed that NDI would need to get approval from the donors before committing to such assistance. The minister affirmed that this would be much need assistance due to the nature of Somalia after the prolonged civil war. After consultation with the donors, the Somali minister was informed that the assistance should be less on public consultations with the Somali citizens and more on capacity building for the ministry. The minister’s face dropped after he received this information and I was more than certain that he would reject it. Surprisingly, he praised NDI commitment to rebuilding Somalia. I was left wondering if this process

is supposed to be based on partnership, ownership and participation then why are the donors deciding on what they would fund? Is practice then informed by policy or is policy informed by practice? (Mosse, 2005). I asked one of the managers if the minister had received the right treatment. *"They really do not care about conducting public consultations, they are more in needs of aid. The Aid we give them allows us to enforce our policies that have been designed to promote democracy."*..

The global Britannica defines democracy as rule by the people. The term is derived from the Greek *dēmokratīā*, which when divided means *dēmos* ("people") and *kratos* ("rule").²⁵ The Greeks model however does not correspond with that of modern liberal democracy (Birch, 2007, p. 109). The founders of the American constitution shared a poor view of democracy viewing it as a direct rule by the citizens. In modern times, however, the term 'democracy' is used to describe a system of representative government in which the officials were chosen by free and fair elections (Birch, 2007). There have been several definitions of democracy as a system of governance and as a way of social relationships. The Americans refer to their country as democratic and refer to their people as a democratic society yet the communists referred to their political parties as people's democracy (Birch, 2007, p. 110). The conceptualization of the term has there led to misconceptions of 'democracy' making it synonymous with modernity. Democracy discourse is the equation of democracy as a feature of modern states that then take it upon themselves to spread democracy. Using tools, theories and templates of democracy, Liberal western democracy is the status that is bestowed on the particular democracy that countries like the US are promoting (Paley J., 2008, p. 5). These models of democracy are reconfigured in particular places at particular times through institutions and power relations (Paley J., 2008).

Democracy Templates

Democracy promoters employ democracy templates when promoting democracy abroad. Elections state institutions and the civil society are considered important tools of democracy and its promoters tend to replicate it as templates using western

²⁵ <http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/157129/democracy>

models as their blue prints. With programs in more than 110 countries, NDI uses template strategies that are designed to promote democracy (Carothers, 1999). At the time of my fieldwork Somalia had already conducted an election in its headquarters in Mogadishu. The election was held in August 2012 and the UN and other international agencies supported it. In a high-level security operation at the Mogadishu airport, 275 members of Parliament were selected by their clan elders and sworn. This led to the election of a president in September that year by the clan-selected parliament. Although it was a selection process where clan elders selected the president and the parliament, the international community recognized the state applauding the win of the civil society activist President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud.

'Phantom' States

Strengthening state institutions is an important democracy template for democracy promoters. In the 1980's and 1990's the state was considered a hindrance to development focusing on individual rights and free markets. However the failure of these programs led to 'bringing the state back in' (Harbeson J., 2000). State interventions like state capacity building has gained momentum since the end of the cold war fostering the creation of states that are immune to failure and fragility. Chandler (2006) describes this process as the creation of 'phantom' states that function only in policy thus being accountable to its creators (donors) (Chandler, 2006).

Foreign governments have taken new approaches that imply partnership yet they still are exhorting their powers on the subjects. The donors are 'empires in denial' because they rule through their foreign policies. NDI has been actively engaged in strengthening the capacity of both the legislative and executive branches of government in Somalia since 2005. The Somali state works through an MOU (memorandum of understanding) which implies that there is a partnership. However as I will highlight in chapter 4 and 5 the state actors can influence foreign policy but it ultimately has to comply with the donor's requirements in order to receive the necessary funding. I worked closely with the Somali parliamentarians because the executive branch was facing some structural issues at the time of my fieldwork. I will show how they are organised by clan principles yet expected to operate in the same capacity as foreign legislators like in the case of an Oslo study mission.

Civil Society

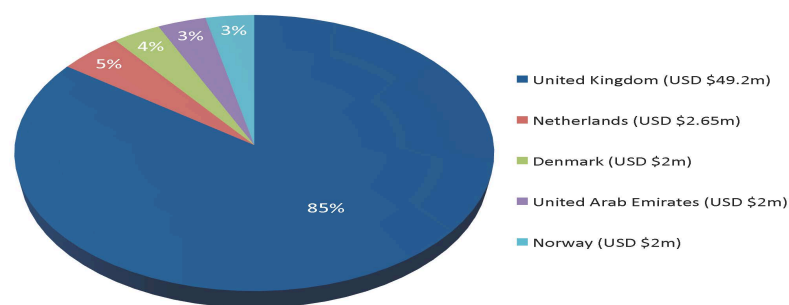
Civil society is viewed as the sector of voluntary actions with institutional forms separate from the state, family and market. Democracy promoters view civil society as a necessary tool for democracy thus using it as a template in all the countries they intervene in. NDI works closely with civil societies to strengthen their capacity.

When I was asked to create a work plan and research on the civil society engagement as a tool for democracy, I constantly came across the word CSO. Civil society organizations work closely with international and local NGO to implement policies. However, I argue in chapter four that these interventions create these categories in order to have subjects that can be developed. NDI partners with eight CSO groups although they had to bid for contracts in order to be considered partners. Unlike the members of the state who allowed NDI to intervene, the civil society had to bid for contracts in order to be considered as civil society.

Democracy Aid

The most important tool for democracy promotion is democracy aid. (Carothers, 1999, p. 8). Conferences held in London in 2012 and 2013 for Somalia led to the establishment of a stability fund that countries like the Netherlands, UK, Norway and UAE pooled their resources with the objective of rebuilding Somalia. The aid flows in channels that are only accessible to the donors and the multilateral organisations like NDI who implement foreign policy and agenda.

Stability Fund Contributions ²⁶



The international community comprised of the G7 countries as well as fragile and conflict affected countries gathered in London to decide on Somalia's fate. Prime minister David Cameron stated that Somalia posed a threat to the world's security.²⁷ David Cameron, in his opening remarks, explained that Somalia threatened British interests and he called upon the world to be engaged and rebuild Somalia.²⁸ Donors from all over the world, state leaders and Somali government stakeholders gathered and reached the conclusion that Somalia would adopt a new Constitution, end their transition government and receive a stability fund to help reconstruct the failed

²⁶ <http://stabilityfund.so/>

²⁷ <http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2012/02/23/david-cameron-somalia-speech-in-full>

²⁸ http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/2011-2012/Somalia

state.²⁹ The Somali stability fund was established by The United Kingdom, Norway, Netherlands, Denmark and the United Arab Emirates. They all pledged all their support that the would be managed by the United Kingdom. A total of \$56.85 million dollars was pledged. The money pledged by the SFS (Stability fund for Somalia) would be channelled through implementing partners like NDI.

States like the stability fund members, engage in what is described by Robert Koehane as *global governance*. Seeking to respond to governance issues around the globe, they established institutions of governance bilaterally, regionally and globally (Koehane, 2002). These institutions represent the interests of the donors who do not have the channels of contacts in order to monopolize the governance. They rely on these international institutions that are constructed to engage the global society (Koehane, 2002). DFID (UK), SIDA (Swedish), NORAD (Norwegian), USAID (US) among many other governmental institutions that are created to represent their countries interests globally regulating international aid which is the main tool for global governance. The lack of a global government then expands their rule making and power exercise into a global realm where there is no accountability to those who the interventions are intended for rather to the states they represent (Koehane, 2002). The London conference for Somalia in February 2012, followed by a Somali civil society conference in May in Istanbul, Turkey affirmed the changing dynamics of Somalia's rebuilding (Affi, 2012).

A transitional government was established in 2000 using a power sharing formula, 4.5. ³⁰The transitional government lacked international legitimacy both from the majority of the Somalis and the international community. They received minimal support from international donors and most of the western states, UK included, did not recognize it as a sovereign state. This however changed in 2012. Months after the conference, a provisional constitution was drafted by the international community was adopted and a vibrant civil society emerged as an important stakeholder in rebuilding efforts. Everything seemed centred on the availability and flexibility of the funds to rebuild Somalia. This led to the proliferation of local and international

²⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/london-conference-on-somalia-communiqué--2>

³⁰ The 4.5 catered to the five major clan groups and all the minorities sharing half mandate. This incorporation of the clan democracy in a modern power sharing formula has lasted since 2000 and was recently in the 2012 elections used to balance the Somali government members.

NGO's that received aid to intervene. Finally, President Hassan Mohamoud Sheikh was elected as the president on the 16th of September and become internationally recognized. This earned him a nickname among my informants "Hassan Soconeya" meaning the travelling Hassan because of the numerous state visits all over the world. World leaders congratulated Somalia's president and I attended a celebration at the Radisson SAS hotel in Oslo to watch Heikki Holmås, the former Norwegian foreign minister congratulate Somalia's new President via Skype. The former foreign minister, greeting the president in Somali "Galab wanagsan" (good evening) went on to tell about Norway's commitment to help Somalia rebuild itself. The stability fund and the London conference resulted to the Somali state formation.

Therapeutic Solution to Failed States

Rottenburg (2009) describes the postcolonial period in Africa as a heroic age of national independence movements and de colonization. This period was inspired by the state led initiatives to development moving from colonial administration to modern administrations. However, the enthusiasm of decolonization was gone around the 1980's due to corruption, violations of rule of law, humanitarian disasters. (Rottenburg, 2009, p. 428). Rottenburg (2009) argues that while the state structures were ailing, most of international development policies shifted their support to the states by supporting the citizens to secure their own development. He writes "bypassing of national governments in development cooperation changed from being an illicit act to being a sign of concern for the poor" (Rottenburg, 2009, p. 428). Using the example of increase of NGO's in HIV³¹ response as a humanitarian emergency in post colonial states in 1990s, Rottenburg highlights the neoliberal form of governance, was channelled through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These responses to the HIV / AIDS pandemic changed the illness to a global experiment with international intervention as its main solution. The use of social experiments, according to Rottenburg, leads to the creation of emergency identities that can only be cured by international intervention. The main instrument, structural adjustment programs, was directed to reform fiscal imbalance by state devolution, privatization, subsidies and price controls.

³¹ Human Immune Deficiency Virus

Rottenburg (2009) argues that these programs led to the process of *NGO-isation* or *projectification* seeing the emergence of corporate civil society that were expected to take over the role of project agencies from government institutions. (Rottenburg, 2009, p. 428). Rottenburg describes the structural adjustment program as a therapeutic solution aimed at curing ailing economies and states of emergencies. The promise of the cure, according to Rottenburg, would be a bright future of a well functioning global capitalist market undisturbed by political instability. The post-colonial states launched into failure in this period due to mostly ethnic clashes and fight over power and natural resources, while the states lacked the necessary institutions to negotiate the different claims and interests. The missing institutions, according to Rottenburg, were as a result of the destruction of their traditional structures during colonial and post colonial times and the badly construction of the post colonial states (Rottenburg, 2009). The structural programs and multitude interventions of the NGO`s heightened this problem witnessing an increased proliferation of NGO`s in numbers and importance. Another issue that made the NGO quite relevant, according to Rottenburg, was the *war on terror*. Rottenburg article was addressing the response to medical emergencies comparing how African states are treated as state emergencies by foreign policy makers and NGO`s.

Clan Democracy

Situated in the horn of Africa, Somalia is at the crossroads of African and Arab cultures (Kaptenjis, 2013). The population that is estimated by the UN ³² is 9.556 million and is made up of six major clan groups. *The Darood, The Hawiye, The Dir, The Isaaq, The Digil Mirifle and The Rahanweyn* (Ssereo, 2003) (Lewis M., 1994) (Kaptenjis, 2013). Nurudin Farah, a well-known award winning Somali novelist and historian, describes clans as *communities of relations* (Nurudin Farah quoted in Ssereo 2003). The clan is the social, economical and political unit of organization. Each clan has a leader and a council of elders (Ssereo, 2003, p. 26). Clan membership enables each member to trace his or her genealogy through his or her father`s side. Historically, the key to Somali politics and democracy was its kinship ties. I.M. Lewis (1999) argues that political affiliation among the Somali`s is determined by their agnatic descent and its divisions correspond to divisions among agnatic origin (I.M.Lewis, 1999, p. 1). In his

³² <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Somalia>

book, *A Pastoral Democracy* (1999), he outlines that the Somali traditional lineage system, acted more like as a 'diverse' system of traditional governance, which treated each clan/ sub-clan system or lineage, as basic "social units" in the greater Somali nation (I.M.Lewis, 1999, p. 2). I.M.Lewis (1999) equated a Somali's genealogy with an address in Europe (I.M.Lewis, 1999, p. 3). By virtue of his genealogy of birth, each individual has an exact place in the society (Ibid: 3). Political norms and cultural values are linked up with structures within the ideology of kinship creating interlinked webs of social, political and economic institutions (Lyons & Samatar, 1995). The kinship had two elements blood ties and *Heer* (*customary law*). These social units, linked by blood, had an ability to "govern" its own structures and establish relations with other similar, expandable set of systems or sub-clan. Lewis re-emphasizes this view of the contradictory national character of the Somali people in terms of common heritage and the "divisiveness" of its clan system, which is incompatible with the essence of modern state structures.

However the Somali conflict is more complex than what they global democracy promoters assume. Before the conquest of Somalia by the British and Italian colonial powers at the turn of the 19th century, Somali practiced two legal systems the Islamic and the customary law, *Xeer*, which is based on clan affiliations³³. The former is genealogical relation affirmed by patriarchal values while the latter are the formal ties that would be used to solve any disputes. Somalis are divided into 6 major clan groups and many other small groups that are considered minority. Lyons and Samatar (1995) write that these groups breakdown until the *reer* (Household) stage which is now genealogical ties. The MP Abdi, who in the introductory chapter was selected by his clan to parliament, was actually chosen by his *reer* (household). Why did the MP who lived and worked abroad for more than 20 years chosen by his clan to represent them in parliament? Traditionally the MP would have to wait until the elders die out to eventually claim a position amongst his own kin. However due to foreign policy on democracy promotion the elders were not considered an authority in Somalia. This then led to an imbalance in the clan hierarchy making the MP more powerful than the elders who chose them into power. The MP's became accountable to the donors who pay their salaries. I asked the MP what his clan meant to him and he said that his clan was his identity and that this identity was stronger than the

³³ Pronounced as Heer.X in Somali language has the same sound as H in English

notion of being a Somali. After independence of Somalia, this view was challenged by some Somali political elite as undermining the ‘Somali state’, but somewhat recent history, not only in Somalia but in many other African contexts seems to confirm that kinship can have mitigating aspects that undermines the characteristics of a national, functional state structures. Some historians and Somali political actors, argue that the Somali lineage system is inherently consistent with a distribution of power and structures in state formation and does not tolerate a centralized system of governance (Elmi, 2014) (I.M.Lewis, 1973).

The historical trajectory of Somali lineage and nationalism became somewhat distorted according to requirements of colonial systems in place in different parts of the country (protectorate, direct or indirect rule) (Farah, 2002) (Elmi, 2014). Whereas British and Italian colonial interests in today’s ‘Somaliland’³⁵ and ‘Puntland’ were in the form of protectorates allowing for some kind of ‘traditional’ self-rule in internal matters, the Italian government directly ruled the rest of the country as a ‘colony’ displacing traditional structures. The same pattern was followed by the brief British takeover during Second World War and by Somali states structures. Most Somalis somewhat agree that these different historical accidents have led to today’s different political and institutional outcomes in Somalia. Where traditional structures (*Guurti* of Elders in Somaliland, *Issimada* in Puntland) co-existed with colonial system, they were able to cope with and mitigate effects of state collapse at later stage, while in south central Somalia direct colonial rule displaced traditional structures leaving the state collapsed in over two decades. In current Somalia the objective is always to ‘re-create’ the state institutions as guarantor of individual security and rights without much analysis of the peculiar circumstances of the country. Hence the failures of the early ‘90s to re-establish a Somali state at the centre and current legitimacy questions hurled at the Somali federal institutions and its 4.5 formula for power sharing.

This is an important aspect in this ethnography showing how the traditional social contract has been reformulated in an attempt to spread democracy. The traditional Somali social contract operates structurally both in unifying and dividing clan groups. Through lineage groups, clan members can trace lineage and those closest to each other will always defend each other. For example the six clans have other classifications that unite them further. *The Dior* and the *Isaaq* are two separate clans

³⁵ Self declared state in the Northern of Somalia functioning as a ‘de facto’ state.

but due to the fact that they occupy similar regions they are politically considered as one group.

In 2012 Somalia adopted a provisional constitution in a process described by my middle aged informant Shamsa*, as being a UNDP process. *“This was never a Somali process, UNDP hijacked our constitution and the others just replicated their efforts”* Explained the informant the middle-aged woman from America was working with international agencies as a consultant. I asked her how she contributed to keeping the process a Somali one because she was working as a consultant for the international agencies. She said *“I tried to explain that this should be kept a Somali process but I realized the discourse of rebuilding Somalia has been absorbed by everyone especially the Somali citizens. They believe in the recent success and if I criticize it, I will be viewed as a spoiler”*.

Regardless of what the perceptions were of the process, an 875 civil society group met, reviewed the constitution and in August 2012 it was adopted. This led to the selection of a parliament later that month and the election of a president in September 2012. The Somali government is ruled by the clan power sharing formula 4.5. As discussed in my earlier chapter the 4.5 was formulated by the international community in 2000 as a peace initiative. The idea was that 5 of the 6 major clans would take 4 seats and the minorities would share half the seats in parliament and in government. However since its inception in 2012, the clan democracy has taken a new dimension not only with state building but also in all public offices. The inclusion of the 4.5 that was intended to create a temporary power sharing formula has emerged as an important feature of any intervention. Not only are all the institutions that have been restored complying with this formula, NDI as well other aid agencies have to include it in their approaches.

NDI as a Vehicle of change

*“NDI is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government”.*³⁶

Making Democracy Work. These words were written on a mug on the country director’s desk. I noticed it because he was drinking his tea from it. The middle aged Somali American country director, welcomed me into the office, explaining that the team would be having a weekly staff meeting. I walked into to the office space and the colours on the carpet and walls struck me, blue and white. These were the official colours of the Democratic Party in the US. I could immediately feel the atmosphere for making democracy work. The meeting was started with an introduction from the country director, *“NDI is a non-partisan, non-governmental organization. We aim to promote democracy in Somalia. We work directly with the state and non state actors in Somalia.”* During its statelessness period, Somalia received humanitarian assistance; now that Somalia’s state was reborn there was more focus on democracy, civil society and good governance. I wondered how would this new changes would affect the international communities role in Somalia? Introducing NDI theory of change to me *“Making democracy work”* (NDI, www.ndi.org, 2014) the country director, describes their work as a necessity. *“The violence and state failure has persisted for too long. Somalia needs change. That change is brought about by different strategies and different tools, the state and the civil society are the necessary change agents*

Democracy as a western model is thus considered the solution directed to the Somali members of parliament. He explains that prior to joining NDI, he was an advisor to a president. This enabled him to see the need for democratic intervention. He then joined NDI, four years ago and immediately shifted a lot of its focus on civil society and women’s participation to include state capacity building.³⁷ He understood that once the government is democratized it trickles down to the society. In another meeting, right after some infighting between the Somali president and his prime

³⁶ <http://www.ndi.org/whoweare>

³⁷ This refer to the branches of government; the Legislative branch (parliament) and the executive (the president, prime minister and the cabinet secretaries)

minister is leaked, he utters in sheer desperation that the only way Somalia will achieve democracy was to create political affiliations based on issues and not clans.

NDI was created in 1983 in the US Congress.³⁸ It works actively in 130 countries worldwide. Although, as the website suggests, NDI is non partisan and non profit, means apart from their administrative costs, all their money goes into their project work. Although they are non-partisan they have close relations with the Democratic Party in the US. This is because former democratic heavyweights like Madeline Albright, who was the former secretary of state under Bill Clinton's government, as the current chairlady of the board of NDI. Based in Washington, DC, all programmatic work including proposals and contracts has to be pre approved with head office before taking action in the respective field offices. NDI's Somalia program was established in 2005 and has actively work with the branches of government as well as the civil society.³⁹ NDI receives funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID). NDI programs include legislative and executive strengthening, civil society capacity building, civic education on the constitutional and political processes, and public opinion research to gauge Somali views on constitutional and political processes.⁴⁰

When I arrived at NDI, they had received multiple funding from the UK and the US and I was immediately asked to familiarize myself with the proposals so as to understand what NDI had committed to do for Somalia on behalf on the UK and US governments. Since NDI programs were divided in the same way most governments are executive and legislative, I worked on the both programs. The NDI executive team proposed to work closely with the ministries and the prime minister to ensure that they get capacity building. They would also work with the civil society. The NDI legislative team would assist the members of parliament draft their parliamentary rules of procedure (RoP) as well as two study missions to the UK and Norway. They would meet with their respective counterparts and experience how legislation is conducted in the various countries. NDI works through the notions of partnership, which is the feature on the new aid architecture. By signing a memorandum of

³⁸ http://www.ndi.org/about_ndi

³⁹ <http://www.ndi.org/somalia>

⁴⁰ <http://www.ndi.org/somalia>

understanding (MoU) with the Somali government, NDI would refer to as the Somali state as their partners. Without this MOU, NDI could not receive funding from the donors. When I joined NDI, the country director had after months of trying to get the document signed, came into the boardroom smiling broadly saying "*Its signed*". I was the only one not aware of what this meant and later on would understand that this document was the thin line between NDI's existence and non-existence. With money being pledged by the international community during the London conference and the MOU NDI would as my supervisor always said, "*strap up and make democracy work*".

Being a non-space of development I realised that among the NDI staff there was also some power issues especially between the expatriate and local staff .My ethnography was not only to reveal the processes involved in the democracy promotion but with the interface of the different types of knowledge. Within the NDI there existed also expert and local knowledge just as it exists between the western and local understanding of democracy. Managed and directed by expatriates who were seen as an extension of the Washington office, the dynamic at the interface of these offices was complex. It took me a week before I could see that some of the local employees were even scared of conversing with the senior expatriate staff. At the NDI office in Nairobi, there were mixed reactions from the local staff members. As the 'natives of the country that the democracy promoters wish to intervene, they felt like they were not included in policy making as they would like. They felt like they were only there as logisticians. On one particular occasion, all the senior managers were very busy with writing proposals for future programming. The local staff expected to be consulted in the program design.

Weeks later the country director announced that the proposals had been already developed with the head office in DC because they were experts in program design. Having worked with some of the programs and seeing the clear need for the involvement of the Somali staff and citizens, I was surprised. I asked my informant who was a senior staff member that had a really different outlook to the expert-local relationship. He was very popular among the locals because he would always engage them in discussions always pointing out that they were the 'real' policy makers. He told me that he was surprised that the local staff were not included in the proposal planning and design because not only did they understand Somali politics, but also that they were the experienced implementers and they knew what worked or not.

Another issue is that being local Somali staff felt like the head office in Washington, DC did not really take their expertise seriously. Whenever policy documents were shared with them there would always be feedback that made the local Somali employees feel like they work they had done was not good enough. An example was a policy document that was being developed. One of the junior local staff sent the document to the middle aged Caucasian woman who was a program officer. The document was sent back with comments totally disregarding the local Somali young lady and implying that her language needed to be improved.

Donor vs. State Accountability

I was asked to create a work plan that outlined as who we intend to engage, how we would engage them and when we would engage them. My supervisor, a lady in her mid 40's constantly reminded me to think of how we would report our activities to the donors, as we were required by the contract to deliver results. *"Remember that all we do has to be justified and we must be able to show that our interventions are creating impacts in the Somali society"*. Her words would constantly be in the back of my head as we designed the upcoming activities. Michael*, my colleague and close informant invited me to participate in the RoP training for the Somali parliament. I would be note taking giving me an opportunity to interact with the state actors. He explained that most of the members of the Somali parliament and the speaker would be attending and I would be able to observe. I was asked to help with the logistics of the workshop as well. Due to the threats by the Islamic groups, who view them as *Kufaar (infidels)*, *Al Shabaab*⁴¹, which is affiliated with *Al-Qaeda*⁴², kill many individuals who actively support the Somali government. Due to this we are asked to work extremely carefully when planning their travel logistics, which would include speaker of the Somali parliament. This is however contradicted by the informal networks they use to spread information. Somali's are an oral society and their allegiance is mostly to their clan members. The clan members have a shared concept of a common ancestry and they are inter-related through complex networks of social relationships (Ssero, 2003, p. 25). Information would therefore spread from one office to another then to a cousin or relative in Nairobi, Kenya making it public information. Once the Somalia

⁴¹ I use the name *Al Shabaab* in italics because of their nature it is not recognized as a word rather than a phrase

⁴² They were responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001 in the US. They are against a western backed government calling all those who participate in its affairs as non-believers

media house publishes it is usually not a secret. The trick, therefore as I would learn working at NDI is limit the information flow. After we were done with the logistics of the workshop we were now asked to start the participant's selection process. I would later learn that the selection process was not aimed at including the best and the brightest. The list of the 50 participants was not based on merit but on the 4.5 system of power sharing. I asked Michael who was leading the process if it was difficult to choose the members who would benefit from the training on their House rules. It would enable them to legislate properly as was written in the proposal.⁴³

"Why did you think we chosen these members?"(Michael: Extract from my notes)

"Merit, literacy levels"(Me)

"Oh my! Those who selected them into parliament have already done our work for us. We have thus invited the committee chairs, their deputies and their secretaries"(Michael).

What Michael meant with our work cut out for us is that the parliamentarians represent their clans in parliament in 4.5 system. NDI would then engage with parliamentarians and not clan representatives. This would also be better for the paperwork NDI would submit to the donors. NDI was then engaging with the MP's not because of their competencies but their clan position in parliament. When I asked the country director why we were engaging with clan representatives, he answered that this is the reason why there is still stagnation is the country months after the government was selected. He said that our work entailed strengthening their democracy, which literally meant strengthening, and capacity building for a clan based parliament leading to strengthening the divides in the parliament. The country director explained that clan democracy excludes those without the right portfolio to engage in modern politics. In the olden days, he explained, the clan would engage with other clans on a similar platform. These alliances shifted in the era of modernization and democratization making it on applicable to those who belong to clan viewed as a major clan. It would also empower you if you were a man because women and youth in a clan-based society are viewed as the weaker members. The country director explained that if Somalia was serious about rebuilding its failed structures it would then choose a system that would work for them either base it

⁴³ The proposal that I refer to in the paper are confidential documents that I was not allowed to quote directly from rather I could make references to it.

totally on a clan based structure or modernize and enforce a western model for democracy. I went on to planning for the trip realizing that interventions in Somalia were complex due to the interface between the western model and the local clan democracy. As a result the interventions became vernacularized therefore producing a parliament that served both a model for western interventions as well as fulfilling the demands of the clan system of governance enforced by the elders during the absence of the state.

The US Intervention in Somalia

The United States expanded their Latin American and East European democracy promotion programs to sub Saharan Africa especially to countries that had been caught up in the ideological war on communism with the Soviet Union like Somalia. (Carothers, 1999) (Birch, 2007). The United States declared democracy promotion as a cornerstone in foreign policy and development. (Carothers, 1999) Their USAID⁴⁴ program celebrated 50years since its enactment at congress in 1961.⁴⁵ USAID is described on their website as *“the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential”*. To avoid overlapping by the proliferation of agencies actively working in the region, NGO specialize on certain areas. NDI thus specializes in spreading democracy. Due to their establishment as by a congress act NDI is thus viewed as a legitimate partner. For the first time since the civil war broke out, the administrator of USAID travelled to Mogadishu asserting the US policy on democracy, human rights and governance was not only the smart approach but also the right approach.⁴⁶ NDI Somalia is based in Nairobi, Kenya due to security issues and most of their staff is ethnic Somalis .NDI engages with both state and non-state actors (civil society).

In my following chapters I look at how these templates for democracy are implemented in Somalia and how the uniformity of these approach ignore both local knowledge and human agency for participation in the democracy promotion. In the next chapter I show how interactions with the state actors operating with clan democracy lead to the creation of new subjects that neither represent modern state

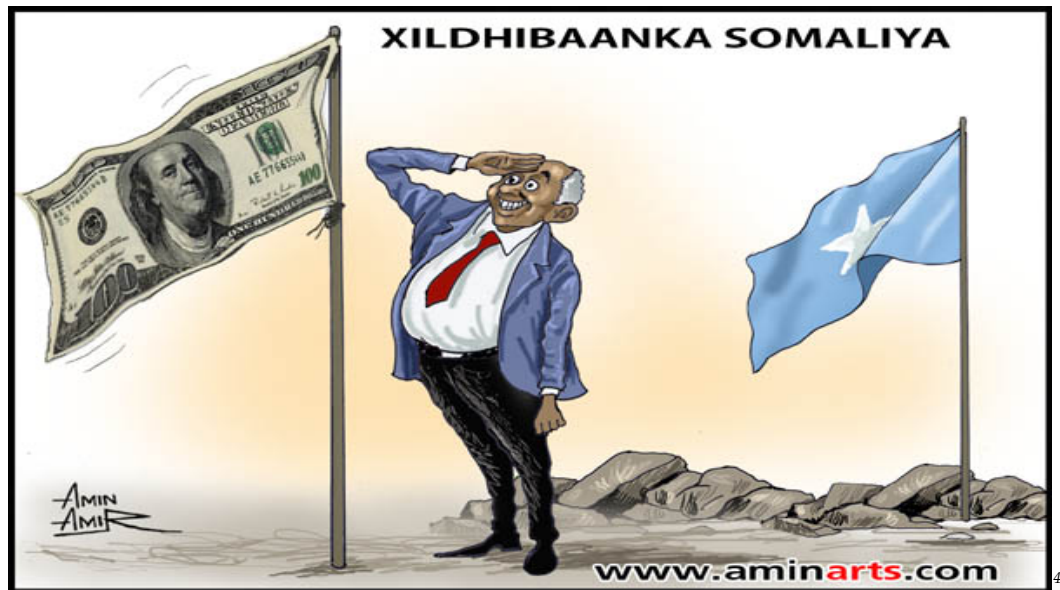
⁴⁴ United States Agency for International Development

⁴⁵ <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/usaaid-history>

⁴⁶ <http://www.usaid.gov/democracy-human-rights-and-governance-strategy>

actors as envisioned by NDI nor clan members. I show how the 4.5 system of power sharing has caused the marginalization of women and youth and how those who were chosen to parliament are faced with a paradox of accountability to the elders who selected them as well as the international community that pays their salaries.

Chapter 4: Phantom States Actors



"All the MPs we have chosen from the trip must have to have a correct 4.5 balance. I do not want complaints from the parliamentarians", explains the head of the NDI Somali program. Being unaware of the clan proportional representation in parliament, I informed him that the invite to the Oslo study mission was for the parliamentary committee chairmen had been invited. He asked if they all been invited and I answered said yes. He nodded quite pleased with the information I had presented and dismissed me. Confused at the contradicting statements, I would understand later that the reason he did not insist on the clan balance was because all members in the different committees were chosen on the '4.5' clan balance. I was left wondering why NDI was promoting democracy while the parliament was severely clan based.

The picture above is by a political artist called Amin Arts⁴⁸. It depicts a Somali member of parliament (*Xildibaan*) showing allegiance to the US dollar rather than the Somali nation. Somali state actors have achieved a reputation of being corrupt individuals. My informants especially my colleagues at NDI describe them as 'puppets' that have allegiance to the donors and international NGO's like NDI. In this Chapter argue for an important template of democracy promotion namely the state. Viewed as the top down 'tool' for democracy (Carothers, 1999) by democracy

⁴⁸ www.aminarts.com

promoters like NDI, 'Bringing back the state' has emerged as key concept for rebuilding post conflict societies. Development promotion before the cold war was based on neoliberalism focusing on market economy and empowering non-state actors as the nation state was considered a hindrance to economical development. However after the cold war and the failure of the structural neoliberal programs, there was a shift, which now viewed the state as an important tool for democracy promotion especially in post conflict states.

The democracy promoters assume that the top-down approach strengthens 'good governance' within the state would eventually trickle down to the society. The international agencies through rhetoric's of partnership, ownership and participation, 'govern at a distance' yet give the impression that the subjects are self-governing. The selection of the Somali members of parliament (MP) through a 'hybrid power sharing formula', created phantom identities that are accountable to its donors and the clan elders that selected them to power rather than the citizens that they represent (Chandler, 2006).

However I will argue in this chapter that these assumptions leads to the creation of 'phantom identities' like in the picture above where the subjects are accountable to the donors rather than to the citizens. I will show in this chapter by giving two ethnographic accounts, one of a RoP (rules of procedure training) and an Oslo study mission, to elaborate how the state actors are created through policy that is disconnected from practice.

The Creation of 'Phantom' States

I want to congratulate Somalia with a new parliament and a new speaker .For the first time for more than 20 years Somalia has a parliament. (Jonas Gahr Støre, Former Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs.⁴⁹).

I walk into a boardroom filled with Somali Members of Parliament (MP). NDI was conducting rules of procedure (RoP) training in Nairobi due to security concerns in Somalia. Fifty members of parliament, their speaker and two-deputy speakers were in attendance. The hotel that was in upscale area of Nairobi became a media sceptical where all the Somali's in Kenya came to meet their Clan MP. The training for the RoP was just referred to as the 'rules' and my manager told me that this was important, as

it would help them perform in parliament. Their roles in parliament were to legislate, address relevant issues and be the oversight for the other branches of government. The trainings were in two parallel sessions, one was for the members of the parliamentary committees and the other was for their deputies and secretaries. Two western MP's one from Belgium and the other Canadian were contracted to train the MP's on how to legislate. Two translators were hired to translate because there was an insignificant number who could speak English. The Canadian MP was a retired MP who now worked for NDI as an expert who trained the MP's in many countries on behalf of NDI. I was then working in this two and half long training session as an assistant mainly taking notes.

The first session was led by Sam*, a Canadian former MP. The majority of Somali MPs were male and they were not at first thrilled to have a woman training them but at the end they embraced her tough approach to the training. They expressed in Somali several times that they were not comfortable having a woman train them but the translator chose not to translate their concerns mostly laughing and giggling when they made comments. She looked puzzled at what they were mumbling and she would come to me asking me to translate. I would try to be objective because my role was to assist and at the end of day one, I explained to her that since this was her first time engaging with Somali MP's that were a patriarchal society and if she was to command their respect she would have to just stick to her plan and train them. At the end of each day for two weeks straight, I saw the MP's lining up to receive an allowance greatly known as "*per diem*⁵⁰". I did not understand as the participants were government officials not workshop participants. I then inquired from the manager, a middle aged man from the US, Michael ^{*51}. Michael informed me that if there were no cash initiative, no one would attend. The RoP that the MP's used was drafted with the help of NDI and a consultant. I was left wondering why would a document that is as important as their house rules, would be drafted by an NGO and not the Somali MP's. I asked a couple of MP's about the process:

"Heer Roosdkaan (RoP) waxaay ii no hagajiye NDI, meeshaan waxaan iiskuimadneeey inaan barano xeerkeena" The RoP was created by NDI and we are here to learn about our rules"(my translation).

⁵⁰ Per-Diem is a travel allowance given to employees or consultants that are travelling on behalf of a given organizations. It has however become popular to give this to even workshop participants.

This clearly shows that this process according to the Somali MP's was an external process in which the notions that are used to promote the democracy of partnership and ownership were not as visible as the participation. When I asked around I was told that there was a committee in parliament that worked closely with the NDI team to draft the rules. My initial query was if this was something that the parliamentarians needed or what is something of a standard NDI intervention. I asked Michael, my colleague, who was leading the training and he explained that Somalia needed these interventions. He compared the NDI Liberian program he worked on with the Somalia one arguing that Liberia was a failed state and NDI's interventions helped stabilize it. He admits that these interventions do not produce the same effects due to the cultural and social implications but he adds that these interventions give room for interactions that would then help stabilize weak states that are in dire need of democracy and stability.

NDI's engagement in the RoP drafting, training and implementation was funded by the USAID (United States International Development Aid) and the UK's Department of International Development (DFID). The donors gave NDI clear-cut instructions on what they would support and this led to the drafting of the proposal that led to the RoP. The country director walked past me on the second day and he stopped me asking me to follow him. We went to a gentleman who he introduced as a former minister and currently an MP. The middle-aged man who was in his late 40's was introduced to me and I was able to ask him about his views about NDI's engagement. Being a Somali diaspora from the US, I expected that he have more views about NDI's engagement in Somalia. Mr Hassan* started by telling me that NDI has been a saviour for Somalia and that the parliament needs its help. However, he adds that if NDI is serious they need to stop treating them as workshop attendees and more like state actors. Somalia, he argues is not an NGO and its rebuilding cannot be primarily be addressed by NGO's. Somalia needs to function as a state and all those who wish to intervene need to come to Somalia. The training was costly and the almost forty MP's were flown in to Nairobi, Kenya. However I was curious to know whether their literacy or illiteracy levels stood in their way for the impact of the training. The first session that I attended was on the legislative behaviour and how to introduce bills to the parliament. The former Canadian MP, Sam, opened the session by asking what is a bill. An MP who looked like he was 65 answered that those were the proposed laws of the country. Having been an MP in the two previous governments he was well informed of legislative terminologies. However

he contradicted himself when he was asked if the parliament could reject a bill. He said,

"How can we reject a bill that has been proposed by the government? That would be ridiculous. The government knows what is best for this country and our role is to assist their work by passing the bills in parliament".

This made the Canadian MP really frustrated because she had not understood the level of education that most of the MP in the Somali parliament had. She expected the same level of understanding as the Canadian parliament and clearly this was not the case. Another issue that was very evident in the training was the clan representation in parliament. Their clan elders chose all the 275 members as power sharing mechanism. This is due to the lack of political parties in Somalia. However clan identity in Somalia was the source of political, economic and social organization. Clan identity become the most important identity to Somalis especially after the civil war was now being challenged by democratic principles in a system they feel failed them. One MP told the Canadian facilitator:

"The system you propose, was adopted in 1960. All it did was divide us and create hate between clans members who lived side by side. What we need to do is to find our own way to do politics and you can come and learn our way and maybe you could learn more from us".

This was not met with a lot of enthusiasm especially from the NDI staff members who felt that all the time and energy that was devoted to the training program was wasted. I later met the MP on a tea break and made him talk about his statement. He said:

"All you western NGO`s think that the Somali people are very backward and you are going to save us. We are here because our leadership expects us to be here but we have our own plans and the international community will be shocked at what we shall do. This will be a Somali process and the international community will God willingly become spectators".

His prediction sort of became a reality when on day three of the training program, the United States International Development Agency (USAID) officials who were the main sponsors of the training session came to meet the MP's gave a clear message to NDI that would really shock the organisation. USAID, the US governments aid agency, informed NDI that they would need to be based in Mogadishu as the trend

has changed and the Somali participants no longer have time to be flown to Nairobi and they would need to be bold and do what all other international agencies have done. The MP's gave the USAID director and lady in her mid forties, a standing ovation. These were the changes that the Somali MP had indicated earlier. NDI's country director was very distraught about this saying that it was not our decision to stay in Nairobi. The head office in Washington had totally banned any travels to Mogadishu even to the airport that was considered very safe by most NGO's. This was due to the history of the black hawk down in 1993 when American operatives that aimed to help stabilize Somali were killed and their bodies dragged on the streets in Mogadishu. This made US policy for Somalia very rigid (Bowden, 1999). In conclusion the RoP opened my eyes to the changing dynamics in development aid. Although NDI still enforced its foreign policy for Somalia through the parliament, the MP's were able to use their energy to negotiate that NGO's that will be working for them, relocate to Mogadishu. Most aid agencies including the UN have set up offices in Mogadishu however in June last year the UNDP compound was attacked months after this training workshop validating NDI's security concerns and the need to intervene from a distance.

Oslo Study Mission

NDI organized a study mission for Somali MP's and as the name suggests they would the MP's would be learning for their Norwegian counterparts about the role of MP's as well as coalition building. Somali MP's had occupied their positions as MP's for seven months before going on the mission. The trip was for the head of the parliamentary committees, the deputy speaker and the speaker, who was a Norwegian Somali. In the proposal that had been submitted to DFID (Department for International Development) UK, NDI had stated that the main objective was as follows:

Objective One" Strengthen democratic practice among Somali legislators ensuring cooperation in parliament through coalition building and effective law making"⁵²

NDI received funding to coordinate and organise the Oslo study mission with the Oslo Centre for Peace and the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. (MFA). One of the major roles during my internship was organizing the Oslo trip. The study

⁵² This is an extract from a USAID proposal that supported the study mission to Norway

mission was important to my research, as new approach to state institutional building, but was as part of global responses to supporting fragile states.⁵³ The Somali MP's study was an official recognition for the Somalia state since the civil war. The civil war described as the '*Burburki*' (disintegration) rendered the state in total collapse. Norway facilitated the mission with the main objective to help the coordination within the parliament and encourage coalition building that is a feature of Norwegian politics.

I travelled with the team and worked as a facilitator, translator, and assistant even a telecommunications expert helping them acquire phone lines for their phones so that they could call their families in Somalia. Twenty members of parliament were invited for the all expense paid trip to Oslo. Only five had been to Oslo before having lived in western countries during the civil war and this included the speaker of the parliament, Mohamed Osman Jowari, a Norwegian Somali who had gone back to serve his country. The man in his late 50's lived in Trondheim and commanded a strong Trondheim dialect. When I first met him I was impressed with his commitment to Somalia and I asked him in Norwegian: "*Hvorfor er du så engasjert i Somalia?*" "*Why are you so committed to Somalia*" He answered calmly "*if we do not intervene, Somalia will end up in history books? Its territory will be occupied by the neighbouring countries and its people will become assimilated in the worlds population*" (my translation). Having left his family back in Norway, he explained to me that he really missed home. I assumed he meant Mogadishu and assured him that we would be back in ten days then he told me that he meant, Trondheim, a city in the north of Norway where he had lived for almost 20 years.

Most Somali's live in host countries due to the civil war. Being the coordinator for the Oslo trip, I worked closely with the speaker's secretary, who was based at the parliaments office in Mogadishu to ensure the smooth running of the trip. The young British Somali man had interned at NDI before moving to Somalia to work for the Somali parliament. As my boss had highlighted earlier, all of the 20 participants represented different clan groups from the 4.5 power sharing formula and no one was excluded. However in a theme that I will address in chapter six, women and minorities were at the losing end on this formula. Somali women are not considered

⁵³ According to the fund for peace. www.fundforpeace.org

full members of the patriarchal community. They either belong to their father before marriage and after marriage to their husband's clan. In traditional Somali culture this was an advantage as the woman could mediate in wars and settle dispute but the westernization of the power sharing formula as I explained in chapter three led to the vernacularization of the process.

Logisticians

One of the comments that a male colleague who had worked for NDI for almost 5 years highlighted was that NDI was a logistical organisation. I asked him what he meant and said that all the planning that went into these projects made the interventions more about logistics rather than capacity building. What he told me made me think about the planning that had gone into this trip and whether it corresponded with the practice of the members of parliament during the trip. My colleague Ali*joined me on the trip and at the end of the trip I realised that these projects were more practical in policy making arenas than in actual implementation.

Weeks and weeks of logistics, visa applications, flight scheduling, the Oslo Trip would finally take place. Hundreds of emails exchanged between my contacts at the Norwegian embassy, the Oslo Centre for Peace (*Oslo fredssenter*⁵⁴) who were co-arranging the trip, as well as the hotel in Oslo. The Norwegian ministry of foreign affairs would welcome them and engage them in high-level meetings on several occasions. The main agenda for this was to build coalition within the Somali parliament in order to enable them to work efficiently as parliamentarians. They would also meet with their counterparts from the Norwegian parliament. (*Stortinget*⁵⁵). Having convinced my boss that this trip was important to my research I was informed four days before my departure, that I would be accompanying the team and since I would not need a visa, it made it easier to give me that opportunity.

We flew the MP's in two days before the actual flight because we thought they would need to purchase winter clothes from Nairobi, as this was not possible in Somalia. They arrived on a Wednesday morning and when we went to meet them at the airport, I was shocked at how they were demanding. One asked why they were

⁵⁴ This is the Norwegian name for the center

⁵⁵ The official Norwegian name for the Norwegian parliament

picked up in shuttles they deserved to be picked up luxury cars and I was not prepared for such comments. My manager asked me just to ignore their comments, as there would be more to come from them. We gave them an orientation about how much they would receive in travel allowances and nearly all started protesting. It was the most shocking when they did not even once mention the study mission and how they would benefit from it. One female MP stood up then and was appalled at their reactions to NDI efforts reminding them that they should focus on this historical study mission. This was however not long lasting as they immediately went to back to complaining of the horrible they received staying in Nairobi and in Oslo. This is despite the expensive hotels they stayed at the staff that worked day and night to make sure they had everything they need.

Two days later, I arrived to the hotel, in the Westland's ⁵⁶ area of Nairobi, and started preparing the MP's for our 1pm flight. I had strategized with my colleague who was travelling as a translator that it would be best to travel with them from the hotel. After calling everyone downstairs and ensuring that they all had their passports, we started our one hour journey through the traffic in Nairobi. Once we arrived at the airport representatives from the Somali embassy received the MP's and they were whisked off to the VIP lounge as my colleague and I, checked them and their luggage in. Having flown in this airport several times, I had never experienced travelling with a large VIP group. Everything went smoothly and when we arrived in Doha, Qatar, Somali embassy officials picked us up. Our 8 hour stay in Doha was filled with visitors mostly from the each MP's clan member and one female MP, a lawyer by profession and very much respected introduced me as her daughter trying to limit the questions regarding my presence. This role that she gave was not only limited to my time in Doha but to the whole trip and even when we arrived back to Nairobi. Amina* became an important informant in my fieldwork and I would even call her to ask her about different issues when she returned to Somalia. When she needed reading materials, I would send her books and she would always refer to me as her *gabaarteey*" meaning my daughter. This in the Somali patriarchal system was the highest regard a person could give you.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Westland's is an upscale area in

We arrived in Oslo, on the next day tired and cold. Everyone except me was complaining how cold it was as we boarded the bus to the hotel. Two staff members from the Oslo Centre were there to meet us and an hour later we were in a hotel located on a famous street in Norway called Karl Johan Street⁵⁸. Once we arrived at the hotel, the lobby was filled with visitors and each MP was whisked to a corner where a group that introduced themselves as their relatives. Michael, my American colleague and informant, who managed the program and travelled with the team, asked me who these people were and I explained to him they were clan relatives. The first meeting between clan members who were not blood relatives would go like this: *"Ya Tahay?" (Who are you)?*

The clan member would then say any of the five major clan groups. This was however not enough to get any recognition; the lower one went with the genealogy the closer the relations.

"Ya kasitahay" (Who are you in a deeper way)

This would now encourage the members to identify and see whom they were closest with. The one who was the closest relative was expected to take care of the relative. This was application in the case of the Oslo study mission. I was asked that question several times and due to my naivety I would normally say

"Somali Baan Ahay, (I am Somali) my translation.

This would lead to the shaking of heads and sympathy as I was considered among them, the lost ones. This would however make them both trust me and mistrust. The Somali's that grew up abroad like me are normally considered 'sijui' a word that in Swahili means those who do not know. This refers to the lack of interest in clan affiliation. This then makes the 'sijui' like me be considered an ally at the same time some *sijui* have a reputation for becoming obsessed with clan affiliations when they at an older age become reintroduced to it. They however clarified that I was the least interested in clan membership and they trusted me.

The Somali gift economy

One middle aged man stood out from the crowd talking in very loud Somali. *"Xildibaan (MP)"*⁵⁹, *"I want to talk to you"!* The man, who lived in Norway for over 20 years, was trying to talk to his MP. Never having met him yet he claim he

⁵⁸ This is the most central street in Oslo, Norway and it leads straight to the castle.

⁵⁹ *Xildibaan* pronounced *hildibaan* in Somali means parliamentarian

paid a lot of money for his campaign. He had never travelled back home and needed to complain about some ill treatment his relatives faced back home. He told the MP that although the clan had selected him to represent them, he was not available for them in Mogadishu and this was a matter frustrating the elders. He came to the hotel in Oslo to advise him that although the state was backed by western state, he should never forget who brought him into power. In addition to lodging a complaint he came to pay “*Qaran*” loosely translated as gift money. He did not look too happy paying the money but he feared social exclusion from his peers and elders if he did not comply. All members of a sub clan welcome new members by giving money gifts and showering them with gifts and dinner invitations. The distribution of the gifts happen in the presence of all sub-clan members and many of the rooms at the hotel intended for meeting would be reserved for that purpose. The MP promised the man that he would look into the matter and the man did not look convinced. But this exchange of gifts and welcoming of officials was something the diaspora community prided themselves with and in this field I saw a research potential in how they are shaping politics in Somalia by contributing to the MP’s selection process. Living abroad made the Somali diaspora more attached to their culture fearing that they will assimilate to the majority ethnic group. The Somalis living in Norway thus treated the Somali MP’s arrival to Oslo, Norway not only as their government being finally recognised by the international community but also as symbolic figures in their traditional clan structures.

Coalition Building

The next morning, after a brief meeting we walked down the street to the parliament building. The MP’s would have lunch here and meet with their Norwegian counterparts. They would learn about coalition building using the Norwegian parliament as a case study and how they too could introduce this in to their parliament. Coalition building entails the presence of political parties because it required that the parliaments comprise on power relations and form allegiance in parliament. This was something that post war Somalia did not have. Been a fragile state that did not have regular elections, the Somali parliament built their coalitions on clan basis.

In a boardroom inside the Oslo centre for peace, In Oslo, Norway, the former prime minister of Norway, Kjell Magne Bondevik lectures about coalition building. One Somali MP in his late 50's and a relative newcomer in politics, asks why this is relevant in Somalia. *“Coalition building is a way of cooperating with the opposition parties in the parliament,”* answers the Norwegian Prime minister. *“In Norway all parties need to make coalitions with the parties that are closest to them in ideology”* The Somali MP answers, *“We already have clan coalitions and this coalition building works in our parliament. Although we are made up of different clan groups we cant change categories that we are already born in. political parties would be difficult to implement if we don't have political parties”*.

NDI and the Oslo peace centre organized the study mission to Norway. The main objective was to strengthen the capacity of the Somali members of parliament as well as introduce the concept of political parties. The discourse of political parties replacing clan identities was a great feature of the study mission something the MP's did not really identify with. *“If Somalia is to prosper it will have to move from clan politics to issue based politics”*, continues the former Norwegian prime minister. Talking in Somali, the MP's discussed how clan identity is something that they identify with and not something that they can just get rid of. They explained that you are born into your clan group and you could never join forces with other clans against your own. My colleague translated to the non Somali speakers but his words lost most of its meaning as *qaabil* in Somali loosely translates to clan although the Somali word is derived from the Arabic root consonant that means heart. So clan in Somali can mean something that is as close to one as their heart.

SOWPA

Faduma* walks into the boardroom dressed up in her colourful abaya⁶⁰ and beautiful pink hijab⁶¹. Today her usual smiles and winks are limited to her pacing up and down the boardroom. I was working on a work plan for an upcoming civic education program. She sighs heavily and gives me the “do not ask me what's going on look! I give her a smile and seeing that maybe she needs more than that I walk up to her and

⁶⁰ Abaya is an Islamic dress that is worn over the clothing. It is seen as being a modest piece of clothing

⁶¹This is the head covering gear for Muslim women

give her a pat on the shoulder. Faduma is the head of the women's participation programs and a feminist. She has several times expressed her dismay with the treatment of Somali women in every day life especially in Somali politics. She had just arrived back from the US where she had won a scholarship to study about women's political participation. The scholarship is given each year to women's activists who were engaged in strengthening women's participation. She left after I arrived at NDI and I did not get the chance to fully engage with her. Two months later she returned and never had I seen a lady in her mid-thirties so passionate about the position of Somali women in Somalia. Together with NDI, she established the women's parliamentary caucus, the Somali Women Parliamentarian Association (SOWPA). The new Somali constitution mandated for the inclusion of women in parliament, which was however not fully implemented. Women were to get 15% representation in parliament and they ended up with 8% with the Somali officials regarding this as a lack of competent or willing women to fill the seats. Faduma explained that this were just lies that were being told to calm women activist down. After 10 minutes, Faduma calmed down and was able to explain that the SOWPA was created by NDI although most of the members were not responsive to the association. Faduma told stories of how the women were taken to Djibouti for a training that ended up with different clan throwing chairs at each other. I asked about the objective of this interventions and she explained that women's participation in politics was key to democracy because women were 50% of the population and by excluding them from politics was excluding all women. I reminded her of an incident that happened right before she left for the US when the parliamentarians were in Nairobi, Kenya for a training session.

As I note taker, I was able to sit in on all the workshops and I could change between two parallel sessions at my own accord. I noticed that there were three women in the whole banquet hall that sat almost 50. About 40 male MP's and 3 female MP's were present. They were quiet and not responsive to the training, which annoyed the Canadian MP who was their trainer. She constantly, through her translator, urged the women to participate. As a last resort she asked me to join the training and help the women draft their notes as the male translator was not too kin to work closely with the middle aged ladies. They had the same status and power as the male MP's but they were very traditional and they would not dare raise their hand. One of the male MP's misquoted a phrase from their rule manual and instead of raising her

hand and showing her disagreement she smiled and signalled to me to come to her. She then asked me to kindly remind the trainer that that was a wrong interpretation. However I was not allowed to inform the trainer that it was she who had expressed dismay because he was her clansman and he was directly involved in selecting her to parliament. Her loyalty was therefore not to the training that NDI had invested so heavily on rather to her clansman especially if she expected to be re elected.

On the same day another female MP was having her tea outside and I was asked by the trainer to bring everyone back in after break. I asked her in a very kindly that the break was over and she could take her tea inside. She looked at me as she had seen a ghost. She went on to asking me where I had learned my manners and that one should never eat in front of men only if it is your close family or husband. She left the tea on the table. The rest of the male MP's proceeded to take their tea inside as a way of showing the real power structures in the male dominated parliament.

I have highlighted in this chapter the creation of 'phantom' states that comply with donor's requirements. However as I highlighted the convergence of knowledge functions more within policy than I practice due to the different life worlds. The Rules of Procedure training was a template policy that NDI employs in most of its programs. However as I showed the level of illiteracy coupled with clan divides creates subjects that are more receptive to interventions that have cash incentives. I highlighted how women are still the 'underdogs' in these interventions something that NDI addresses but only when conducting women's meetings. The Oslo trip highlights how the main objective of the study mission being coalition building in fact contradicted the clan principles that meant that each clan built coalition only with their own sub clan. In the next chapter I highlight as well how the creation of a civil society that is disconnected with its practice creates subjects that work with flexible mandates to accommodate the proliferation of agencies that are actively engaged in Somalia's rebuilding.

Chapter 5: The Making of the Somali 'Civil Society'

"The creation of the civil society is the achievement of the modern world"
(Hegel's philosophy of Right)

My colleague, *Mohamed, asked me to help him shortlist the CSO's (civil society organization) that would be our partners for a civic education activity. NDI would be conducting awareness about the SPC (Somali Provisional Constitution). In order to distribute the materials NDI would select eight partners who could distribute the materials. He administered a scorecard that had the following criteria:

1. Location
2. Demographic
3. Popularity
4. Past Work
5. Credibility
6. Organisation structure

With these criteria's outlined he sent me the portfolios of the organizations that had replied to NDI request for proposal (RFP). NDI has stated in its RFP that it needed CSO's that could help NDI disseminate booklets, CD and copies of constitution all over Somalia. The profiles that I had were divided in old partners who had responded to the RFP and the new clients that NDI has invited to bid. These organizations had profiles stood out as NGO (non-governmental organizations) and CBO (community based organizations). Nothing in their portfolio convinced me that they were civil society in the Gramscian tradition. My western idea of what a civil society was and the reality at NDI really confused me and I decided to work closely the organizations as a way of seeing if NDI interventions create these identities as suggested by Foucault's notion of discourse or if they indeed worked with a notion of flexible identities where their aim is to make profit rather than create a democratic space in the society. One of the organisations that I would monitor closely was named ARDA* (Arid Relief Development Agency) while the other was MCA (Marginalized Community Advocates). The former had a profile of a local NGO that had flexible mandates while the other had more of a civil society profile however when I looked at the work they had previously conducted their portfolio their work

was more humanitarian than advocacy. After days on end of choosing the best groups that had the scored the highest in the score sheet, my colleague informed them that they had been selected to become NDI's partner CSO's. They would then be flown to Kampala for training.

We travelled to Uganda, a week later and the air outside the hotel in Kampala, Uganda was hot and humid. This was my first time to the capital city of Uganda. The training was held in Kampala due to visa logistics for the Somali participants⁶². The training was held in an upscale hotel. My role in this particular training would be a facilitator, which meant that not only would I train them but I would also participate in some of their activities. I explained to my supervisor at NDI that I would need to observe how they reacted to the training. Participant observation is key in ethnography and by participating as a both a participant (civil society member) and a trainer (NDI) I would be able to see how the local knowledge (CSO) and expert knowledge (NDI) interface. My interest as a researcher was to see whether they identified themselves as civil society members or whether they were local NGO's that were simply civil societies due to foreign policy. The CSO partners quickly filled the room after having spent the night in a cheaper hotel. They had the option of staying at our hotel but it was costly and they were trying to save the '*per diem*'⁶³ money they received from NDI. As the norm with trainings or workshops in Kenya, the participants were having tea as they entered the boardroom and we all had name tags to help the familiarization process.

A young man working with one of the organisations in Mogadishu came and introduced himself. Mohamed* asked me which CSO I belonged to and I told him that I was working with NDI. He immediately changed his tone of voice telling me that he was so pleased that NDI gave him the opportunity to travel to Kampala. I asked him what they worked with primarily. He answered, "*I work for an organisation that works to improve livelihoods and democracy*". I was left wondering how were the two interconnected. The young man explained that they engage with different projects regardless of the mandate. I asked him what he thought of the democracy promotion that NDI supported and he replied, "*democracy is related to the government.*"

⁶² Kenya requires Somali citizens to have visa prior to arriving to the country while Uganda issues the visas on arrival.

⁶³ This is the travel allowance that is given to participants in order to cover food and accommodation

I feel like its necessary for peace but that is more related to politics". This highlighted the lack of understanding of what democracy is among the participants yet they were gathered in Kampala to be trained on how to promote democracy through their organizations that are considered 'civil societies'. My idea of civil society in the Norwegian context was active participation from non-state actors occupying the space between state and the society. This new form of activism where NGO's were engaged as the 'Somali civil society' did not seem organic. Especially when their organisations have flexible identities that are transformed to suit the donors needs. The training starts and NDI country director informs the CSO's that the capacity building they would receive would benefit the whole of Somalia. The room is deafened with loud applause from the participants.

This chapter is about the conceptualization of civil society from the European presumptions of their role in strengthening democracy. Through the creation of subjects through policy, the millennium ideology has been promoted by multilateral and bilateral agencies, presenting civil societies as important actors in democracy promotion. The 'making' of the civil society as a template for democracy, creates 'phantom' subjects that only exist within policy. I argue that the very subjects that are created by these interventions do not view themselves as civil society but due to availability of funding on the ground for civil societies, they accept use their agency and adopt the policy. I argue that the civic participation at workshops and supported by aid does not correspond with the gramscian /de Tocqueville and theory that defines civil society as being the voluntary space between family, the market, the state and the society. I show how organisations like NDI create CSO's through policy. The process entails the creation of CSO's who have flexible identities to fit the agenda of the donor. I show how the process excludes grassroots groups causing them to mainstream their agenda's in order to receive funding. I give an account of a workshop in Kampala, which enabled me to see the interface of liberal western democratic values and local context, which is often embedded in kinship structures.

I argue in this chapter that the Somali civil society is a category that has been created by the international community as a way to respond to the state failure. This creation that was top down is political in the clan democracy sense as most of this organizations or individuals that are engaged represent their clans or their sub clans.

My example from NDI civil society training shows how this notion is something that is policy based and its practices is based on clan representation.

The Re-Emergence of the civil society

The Somali civil society had created a buzz all over the news and social media before embarking on my fieldwork. On May 20th 2012, the Somali civil society gathered in Istanbul, Turkey for a meeting aimed at supporting nation building in Somalia⁶⁴. The meeting, initiated by the Turkey government, released a communiqué stating their objective:

“We the participants of the Istanbul Civil Society gathering, consisting of Somali traditional elders, religious scholars, academics, organized polities, activists, women, youth, business and diaspora representatives, came together to discuss and evaluate the difficult conditions and existential threats facing our nation. The main objective of this gathering is to bridge the divisions within our society and focus our efforts and energies in building a sovereign, united, just, peaceful, democratic and prosperous Somalia.”ⁱⁱⁱ

A conference in London In February followed by the civil society meeting in Turkey in May led to the consequent election and establishment of a Somali government for the first time since the state collapse in 1991. The international community has accredited the recent stability in Somalia to the civil society. On September 2012 President Hassan Mahmoud Sheikh, a civil society activist and educationalist was chosen as the president of Somalia. The international community described him as a legitimate leader because he came from the people. This historical election was conducted in Somalia’s capital city Mogadishu and was described as a peaceful and democratic process by international observers. The international community accredited the success to the efforts of the vibrant civil society. As an individual who was engaged several times to in different peace talks, Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud was viewed as an organic democratic leader. However among the Somalis featured in my ethnography he is known as an entrepreneur who was well educated and influential but certainly not representative of the Somali people. The former Norwegian foreign minister Jonas Gahr Store said the following *“I want to congratulate Somalia with a new*

⁶⁴ <http://somalikonferansi.mfa.gov.tr/the-istanbul-gathering-of-the-somali-civil-society-communication.en.mfa>

parliament and the new speaker .For the first time for more than 20 years Somalia has a government. The elections of a parliament give hope for stability and cooperation (My translation⁶⁵). Most of informants especially a man in his mid 30's, who had lived as a paperless refugee in one of Nairobi's slums described him as a 'puppet'. When I asked the young man why he said that, he answered, "They say he is a civil society activist, how can that be when we do not even have civil societies. You have to have functioning societies for that to happen .Not only is the president a puppet for the international communities agenda, but all Somali's who are buying into their concerns for Somalia"(My translation).

The Global Civil Society

The growing interconnectedness of states and the emergence of systems of global governance has led to the explosion of movements, networks and organisations that deal engage in finding global solutions to global issues (Kaldor, 2002). Civil society can be traced to Aristotle's where it was viewed as a component of the state regulated by state laws. Kaldor (2002) argues that this Aristotelian view changed in the nineteenth century where civil society was viewed as the sphere between the family and the state. This view, according to Kaldor (2002), was viewed as Hegel as an achievement of the modern world. The notion in the twentieth century transformed again by Antonio Gramsci when he defined civil society as the realm not only between the family and the state but the market as well (Kaldor, 2002). Kaldor however argues that the term since the 1990's achieved a global status with the growing interconnectedness of the world. The civil society among global democracy promoters like NDI is viewed as a necessary component for building and promoting democracy (Carothers, 1999). Strengthening the civil society has thus become a standard US and European tool kit for spreading democracy globally (Hawthorne, 2004). Hawthorne argues that in the Middle East, the notion of civil society is considered to be the solution to the lack of democracy. This has thus led to the proliferation of NGO's. This immense presence of local and international NGO's argues, Hawthorne, is interpreted to be a sign of democracy and citizen participation.

⁶⁵ http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/Nyheter-og-pressemedlinger/pressemedlinger/2012/somalia_parlamentsformann.html?id=698141

There is an assumption that the civil society is apolitical and can be engaged through aid to give citizens voices. (Hawthorne, 2004)

The globalisation of the notion of 'civil society' constitutes a discourse that presents it as a sphere that is non-state and non-governmental. However the globalization of ideas creates friction when the discourses converge local realities (Tsing, 2002). This friction creates networks of global non-partisan and non-governmental organizations that aim to bring peace, stability and democracy. Anna Tsing`s concept becomes highly relevant in my case study of Somalia, where I argue that the Somali civil society is something that is strategically created as a global response to the threat posed by its fragile state. The idea of 'civil society' is linked to the notion 'people power' movements who through their participation can promote democracy (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999). The term that was coined during the '*Enlightment*' era has several conceptualizations. The most dominant is derived from European liberal philosophy(Garland, 1999). The '*Enlightment*' tradition holds civil society to be the process by which society forges a basis for its collective political existence. Montesquieu and Tocqueville (quoted in Garland 1999) argue that civil society was important in checking the power of the liberal state. In this century, argues Garland (1999) citing the work of Jürgen Habermas (1962,1989) that civil society is defined as the potential for collective action in the public sphere. This vision has now been increasingly applied to the planetary stage in what is now theorized as the global civil society. It has been conceived as a sphere of non-state, non-economic practice and institution that can be replicated anywhere to achieve democracy. The burgeoning of non-governmental organisations (NGO) is featured in the discussions of civil societies which has revitalized the conception as the social arena which governments are accountable to the values of the people they represent (Garland, 1999, p. 72).

During the civil war, Somalia reverted to its traditional clan structures and it become responsible for providing the necessary state like services like protection, education and health. These informal associations received remittances from relatives who had resettled abroad as refugees due to the '*qaran*'⁶⁶ money that is mandatory for each clan member to pay. The reversion to clan structures led to the misconception that

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most humanitarian organisation like the UN and NDI informed their policies on. They assumed the activism of such informal organizations could be engaged to spread democracy. They created programs and projects that would then enable each community to develop from a bottom up approach. What they were either aware or unaware of was that most the informal organisations were clan based. These organisations then began operating with flexible mandates due to the proliferation of international actors who wished to capacity build for them. The precondition to receiving the aid was that most organisations do not fund individual projects. They would have to then create local organisations in order to receive the funding. There is no polling that has been done on this issue but my informants estimate that there were more organisations than there were hospitals and schools in Somalia. When NDI invited eight civil society organizations (CSO) for a moderator-training workshop I expected to see civil society organization but what I encountered were clan based informal organisations based in different regions representing people who lived there.

The Civil Society in Africa

The idea of 'civil society' has sparked social imaginations across the globe. John and Jean Comaroff (1999) argue that the global preoccupation is however plagued with Irony. They argue: "*the more the occidentals were reflected on civil society, the more convinced they were that it should be championed on a planetary scale-the less sure they became if they knew what it actually is*" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999, p. vii).

According to donors, weak, fragile or failed states are caused by the lack of a civil society. The civil society is not longer confined to borders of a territorial state (Lewis D., 2002). The term itself has multiple meanings with regards to which context it addresses and what actors that are involved in the process. Those who deploy it find themselves being criticized as conflating an analytic construct in which Comaroff and Comaroff (1999) describe as 'a new alibi' for the old style '*human imperialism*' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999, p. viii). Despite the criticism, the notion of civil society has been widely accepted and has kindled a reformist spirit. This preoccupation with the civil society they argue is caused by the transformations of the sovereign state, the meaning of citizenship and the identity of the modern subject. (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999, p. viii).

In Africa, it has been rediscovered as the 'missing link'. Africa has long been without a trace of civil society, which has contributed to the global assumption of weak nature of African democracies. Different theorists have varying arguments about the lack of democracy in Africa. Ferguson (1767) wrote, "*Africa suffers a weakness in the genius of its people*" and implied that the continent was hostile to civic development (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999). Harbeson (1994) argues that civil society is the missing key to understanding Africa's current crisis both political and socio economic. (Harbeson & Rothchild, 2000, pp. 1-2). The recent obsession of the last 15-20 years is as a result of comparing other democracies like the African model against ideal typical universal (Kafsi, 1998). However Kafsi argues that this role, especially in Africa, has been greatly overstated with the conventional view held by scholars and donors. They view 'civil society' as autonomous, interest specific and rule respecting associations that can liberalise authoritarian states and sustain democracy. Its promoters, argues Kafsi, idealise the western practices in which they borrow from overlooking the defects in the out-dated arguments they promote in Africa. They aim to create a civil society that overpowers the already weak, fragile or failed state whilst excluding ethnic and religious associations branding them uncivil (Kafsi, 1998). However this concept in Africa is not organic and barely exists alone (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999). Civil Society and its institutions were originally products of western liberal democracy that were sustained by capitalist relations (Ibid: 18). It is argued that civil societies and international aid are interrelated in developing countries with policy facilitating its practice.

Garland (1999) in her ethnography among the Ju/hoan '*Bushmen*' of the Namibian Kalahari examines the impact of the liberal discourse of civil society in an African context. The '*Bushmen*' are iconic hunters and gatherers and known in anthropology as 'ethnography classics'. What they are not famous for is their civil society argues Garland (1999 pg.75). Despite been viewed as 'bushmen' they have played a crucial role in the spread of the liberal discourse on civil society. The Ju/hoansi have not been passive in the creation of a civil society. For the last twenty years, argues Garland (1999) they have been the recipients of aid from numerous organisations devoted to their political and economic growth.

There has been the depiction of the Ju/hoansi as timeless, autonomous and stable existence in the Kalahari Desert until recent times. A film that was produced in 1980, led to the creation of an NGO. The film 'N!ai, the story of a Kung Woman, was documented by John Marshall and a colleague who later founded the Ju/hoan development (JBDF) which later became NNDFN. Their main objective was to help the Ju/hoansi claims to land and improve their economy. Marshall, the founder and film maker argued that the Ju/hoansi needed to be brought up to speed technologically and economically in order to transform their social and political lives that were seen lacking (Garland, 1999, p. 94). This led to the western perception of the Ju/hoansi as in dire need of development and a global civic movement especially on websites was established. The NGO based its policy on how to develop the bushmen by embarked on farming and cattle keeping as well as inclusion in politics, which were western notions would then increase legitimate modes of labour and land use as well as create a liberal ideal for the political society. Garland thus concludes that there is a problem in applying western concepts in the Ju/hoansi case because such a case presupposes the existence of a state that the subjects like Ju/hoansi would be conformed to by the civil society. Garland argues that it is unsuitable for groups like Ju/hoansi because of their nature, which is incompatible with conforming to the Namibian state. Because the west defined them as 'Bushmen' they attracted proliferation of individuals who contradicted their interventions. On one side you had those who would be working to preserve their identity and the other those who believed they were marginalised and needed to be included in the state. While some members of this community exploited this enthusiasm with saving the 'bushman' most of Ju/hoansi are left in a limbo state within the new relations and identities created for them. I compare this to the Somali civil society and how it had been accredited for the recent successes in Somalia.

[The Making of the Somali Civil Society](#)

The training sessions started and each CSO had a male and a female representative. A citizen participation expert was hired to help the CSO's gain an understanding of citizen participation. With the help of the Somali NDI staff and two translators, the consultant worked closely with the participants for the whole week. A Somali consultant, was hired to train some journalists, who were also viewed as the civil

society. The journalists were expected to learn how to create civic programs for the various radio stations that they represented. NDI partner CSO's would be expected to distribute the materials as well as contribute to citizen participation in this review process. NDI had created brochures and calendars based on the provisional constitution. This strategy aimed to educate the illiterate masses on the provisional constitution. The CSO organizations were then after brief introductions were divided into different groups and I was asked to join a group with two members from organizations that were based in both Kenya and Nairobi. I was introduced to the first organization by an informant *Aisha who was their financial Manager. I had met Aisha through the diaspora groups that frequent coffee shops in Nairobi. She was American Somali and was hired to give the organization an authentic portfolio by having diaspora in its staff. This was a growing trend in rebuilding Somalia. The donors viewed their own citizens who were ethnically Somalia trustworthy because of their background. The Second organization was an organization that advocated for the rights of minorities. I had met the leader at the NDI offices and it was great to have him in my group to see how minority Bantu groups that he represented reacted to such trainings. These two organizations became very relevant to me because they represent the different aspects the civil society discourse. The former is what I refer to flexible NGO's, as they are really not CSO's, they take on the identity to suit the needs of the donor. The latter on the hand, is forced due to lack of funding for advocating for minorities to become a flexible organization.

My team was then asked to discuss and present an improved drama on how one can use a tea house or a town hall meeting to spread information about the constitution especially among the illiterate and in areas that were still under *Alshabaab* rule⁷⁰. After some teams had performed where one improvised on how they could teach the public at a town hall meeting about peace and stability. My team was asked to perform what we had prepared. The team had chosen a teahouse scenario and I was assigned the role of the tea lady who was enlightened about the constitution. The role I felt was great because it enabled me to see how the new approaches to

⁷⁰ Al Shabaab is a militant terrorist group claiming to follow an extremist translation of Islam. They have occupied southern regions in Somalia and they are against foreign interventions and state reconstruction. They believe that only Islamic sharia (sharia (law) can be practiced in Somalia.

rebuilding Somalia were focusing on the bottom inclusive approach where the relevant stakeholders in the discourse were given ideas on how to engage the public.

“Dasturka waa maxaay” (what is a constitution) asked one team member who saw some copies of the Somali constitution at the teashop

“Dastuur waa xeer lagudaqmeya” (the constitution is a law that people abide by) answered a friend (who was another team member). I was then asked to say

“Dasturka waa xeer oo dadka mamuleyo. Dasturka Somaliya waa miid an ladameystir marka muadiin kasta waay in uu kaqaybgala dhib uu egista iyo dhib uu hagajista”. (The constitution is a law that governs the people, chosen by the people. it is not final document and it needs the citizens participation in its review and final approval).

Once the teams were done presenting their sketches the expert started with explaining why they had gone through that training exercise. She went into talking about using the citizen’s voice in engaging and teaching the public about the constitution. One female participant who is based in Mogadishu asked if anyone in NDI had taken account of the fact the militant group *AlShabaab* was against the state formation and everything around it. She talked about how they faced daily threats, which would make the theatre or coffee shops not possible. The consultant had not taken account of this as she worked with almost 10 different NDI programs all over Africa. She explained that she was sure that these programs work however the participants explained that they were not willing to sacrifice their lives because of this cause. Another male participant based in central Somalia agreed with the female participant about the threat of the militant group *Alshabaab* but he added that due to cultural constraints that society would not be accepting of such approaches. The consultant was surprised and once we took a break I asked her why she thought her template approach could work everywhere. She said that these approaches have worked in most countries because of the nature of human beings and how they respond to abstract ways of learning. She then asked me if as a Somali I viewed her approach as being disconnected from the Somali reality. I explained to her that the Somali participants were the best people to ask because they knew the reality on the ground better than she and I who lived in western countries disconnected from the reality. NDI’s policies could not be changed because the materials that were going to be distributed were already printed and ready for dissemination. However what this interface between the western theory of civic and the local reality revealed a gap in

practice forcing the consultant to employ other approaches. The approaches she suggested in a later session included distributing the materials during public consultation meetings in which the organisations said was very costly. The meetings proceeded and one thing that became very evident is that the gap between NDI policies and the so-called 'civil society' was widening

In my interactions with the civil society I narrowed my search my researching further on two of my groups members. These two showed the different spheres of civic engagement that existed in Somalia. One represented the majority of the CSO's In Somalia with a flexible mandate constantly changing it to suit the donor's needs. The other one is an advocacy group who are forced to change their mandate because the international agencies do not views minority rights as an issue that should receive funding.

Marginalized Community Advocates (MCA)

The participants were mostly women and they were shy. Very few had anything to contribute except the director of the minority advocacy group called MCA (Marginalised Community Advocates), Dr Abdi*, a doctor by profession and was a Somali Bantu. Majorities of the Somali's in Somalia belong to the Cushitic group of people and about 30% belong to the Bantu. The Bantu are mostly agriculturalists and they are quite marginalized due because they differed in physical appearance however they spoke and had similar cultural behaviours.

NDI distributed the calendars and booklets it had produced for distribution in Somalia. On the first page of the booklet there was a there was a picture of Somalis from different sectors of the society. Dr Ali expressed that he could not identify with these pictures because the Bantu had been excluded from the illustrations. He explained that he would not be able to distribute them without it being rejected, as the people demanded that the government include them in addressing their needs as minorities. The picture, however, caused so distress and he said:

"This booklet cannot be distributed among my people. The people illustrated in this picture do not have features that represent my people. All I see are the regular Somali's and I feel really excluded!"

The Manager at NDI, a young man in his early thirties, explained that NDI apologized but it had not wished to exclude the Somali Bantu. Dr Abdi however explained that this was a very sensitive subject for his people and he wished that he were engaged in the designing of the booklets. Dr Musa was a learned man in his late 40's and he had three wives that he proudly showed me their pictures. He explained that having one wife when you are Somali is an offence because many Somalis died during the war and the only fair thing is to repopulate the Somali's. Musa advocated for the rights of his people, the Somali Bantu. Majority of the Somali's are Cushitic making the Bantu a minority.

Later on I met with him in the lobby of the hotel and having been in a group with him he felt comfortable to discuss what he thought of such interventions. Dr Ali expressed his concern with how their mandate was being changed to suit the donor's needs. I asked him why he opted to change the mandate he said that *"Some aid is better than no aid"*⁷¹. The needs in his community were great and not only did he change his advocacy to democratization projects he is also engaged in health, education and livelihood projects. He went further to explain how NDI and other international agencies contributed to their marginalised them by supporting a government that only allocated only 31 seats to minority groups while the other 4 major clans share 244. He said the international community does not engage with the Somali bantus in their interventions because they see that they have no voice in the society. He wished and hopes that his cause for advocating for the minorities would be taken as a serious matter.

Flexible Identity CSO

I met a Somali American lady who worked for NDI's partner civil society (CSO). She had been hired because she was American and as an accountant by profession, she would ensure the CSO could source funding from not only American organizations like NDI but also international organizations. As their grants manager, Aisha* in her

⁷¹ Extract from my notes

mid-30's and had now relocated to Nairobi with frequent travel to Somalia to monitor their numerous programs. She described the organization as an NGO involved in humanitarian and governance programs and when I asked her whether they were a CSO as described in NDI partnership agreement she said that they can become one if the donor requires them to do so." *we do anything for the money"*.

One of my colleagues at work, Fatima*, expressed her concern for including such CSO in democracy projects. She explains how Somali CSO's have mastered the art of conforming to donor's needs. A few CSO's operate as civil society groups and they are least effective due to the dominance of the pseudo organizations that have well-established relationships with donors. Fatima* explains that such interventions create identities whilst it takes agency from the marginalized and minority groups. Women then take a back seat in development and she explains that women were the backbone of the Somali society throughout the civil war and these interventions ignore their role in peace building and excludes them from participation. Fatima who was born and raised in Mogadishu before the civil war explains that civil societies are not a new phenomenon they existed in the real sense during colonial times as resistance movements. Somali Youth League (SYL) was established in the late 50's and they lobbied for independence and a united Somalia.

Civic Education Media Campaign

In addition to strengthening the civil society by capacity building, NDI embarked on a civic education media campaign for Radio and TV. Having joined NDI right at its implementation stage I was then lucky enough to have contributed to the development process of the script, production and airing of 10 short films, 10 radio programs based on the Somali provisional constitution. The films and radio that are now online are based on articles of the constitution. NDI consulted with the Speaker of the parliament as well as a government officials to choose 10 articles from the 143 articles, which were considered important.⁷²Funding limitations could only support the production of 10 films. The films were produced in a town north of Kenya that has a similar topography like Somalia.

When we were developing the script there were 4 NDI staff members and the film and production team that had been contracted to produce the programs. The main

⁷² www.ndi.org/NDI/civiceducation

objective of the civic education was to strengthen Somali citizens understanding of the constitution. The approach, which included both TV and Radio aimed to reach different demographics in Somalia. NDI partnered with local radio and TV stations to air the programs.

This civic engagement I realised was based on the theories of the new 'aid architecture'. The new approaches appeared inclusive based on partnership and ownership notions in policy but in practice they donors were still in the driving seat. The films were scripted and produced by individuals who were contracted to do so including NDI staff basing their approach on a proposal. The proposal in turn was crafted to respond to the donor's foreign policy. Somalis had just adopted a constitution and the global agenda for Somalia in 2013 was awareness for the constitution. I decided to see if this strategy worked and I asked both my Somali informants living in Kenya both local and diaspora if they in any way benefited from the civic media engagement. The young group of women from the diaspora had watched some of the programs. They had not listened to the radio programs because they felt like that was 'traditional'. The films however were popular among them but they explained that if they were illiterate it would be difficult to identify with the films. Sagal, the Canadian woman explained that the films were an expression of western culture and Somalis would not identify themselves with such programs. I then asked the same question a group of young men who are featured in chapter 6. The young men living in Nairobi's Eastleigh estate also known as 'little Mogadishu' described the film as western and provocative. I was shocked because I had not envisioned the films as provocative. The leader of the youth explained that NDI created films that they can use in their reporting to their donors. They are accountable to their donors and not the Somali citizens. So his question for me was are these interventions based on altruistic concerns? Ali* continued by highlighting that the international community were able to restore the Somali state. Why did they wait until now to do so, 22 years later.

The other limitation to the approach was the insecurity in the region making evaluation of the project impossible: The radio and TV partners were able to send the airing schedules but the feedback from the public on how they interfaced with the programs was non-existent. However, NDI posted the videos on their website and they received feedback that due to media ethics I could not include those views in

my research. However my understanding of the media campaign was a donor/international organization driven thus contradicting the notion of civic engagement where the civil society is in the driving seat.

Conclusion

Fatima who was born and raised in Mogadishu before the civil war explains that civil societies are not a new phenomenon in Somalia. They existed in the real sense during colonial times as resistance movements. Somali Youth League (SYL) was established in the late 50's and they lobbied for independence and a united Somalia. I have argued in this chapter, that the notion of civil society has its roots in the 'Enlightment' era and came to become part of a global cause which is referred to as 'Global civil society'. The recent successes in Somalia were accredited to the civil society. I argue that these categories functions as a precondition to democracy promotion rather than organic groups representing a cause or a people. The donors use the term civil society in the western sense assuming that it is applicable in Somalia. This led to the creation of 'phantom' civil societies that conform to the donor's foreign policy rather than being the voluntary arena between the state and the family.

Women then take a back seat in development explains Faduma, my colleague. She explains that women were the backbone of the Somali society throughout the civil war and these democracy interventions ignore their role in peace and state building excluding them from participation. In the next chapter I will discuss the actors that are excluded in the interventions namely the youth and the women.

Chapter 6: Exclusions and Inclusions of Democracy Promotion

*"Knowledge cannot reside in a bosom that has contained milk",
Somali Proverb⁷³*

Do you know Fathumo Jibril? She is my hero" Faduma, my colleague who is a self-declared feminist, exclaims. Fathumo Jibril, a women's activist, managed to get women the 30% quota during the drafting of the Somali provisional constitution. The constitutional drafting process was to allocated 8% representation of women in government but according to Faduma, Mrs Jibril, the founder and director of a local NGO, Adesso, took a traditional Somali drum (durbaan) and played a famous tune while the men were deliberating on the women's clause. This was because the women were not included in the deliberations and as (Abu-Lughod, 1986) describes that women in nomadic communities like the Bedouin in her ethnography are in a society are culturally excluded from clan issues especially politics. This is however not the only exclusion they are excluded from expressing their sentiments in what is described as honour codes. Similar to the Bedouin women, the women use their poetry and song to express themselves. Somali women use '*buraanbuur*' (poetry) and '*Xeeso*' (songs) which Mrs Jibril used to demand women's inclusion in peace and state building efforts (Bryden, 1998, p. 34). She managed to disrupt the men who were deliberating and demanded that women be included in the negotiations. The men finally gave in to the women's demands of having a 30% quota in all governmental institutions. I then ask Faduma if the women managed to get the representation in practice and angrily she answered that there is currently only 15% representation.

This happened in 2011 and all the women I encountered in Nairobi related this incident. In Nairobi I was introduced to a group of Somali women from both the diaspora and Somalia, who were actively trying to break the barriers of women's exclusion in Somali politics. We referred to each other as '*Abayo*' meaning sister and this group of highly educated women ranged from women with PhD's to masters

⁷³ Bryden(1998)

and they were all engaged in different fields. My supervisor had introduced the Somali Canadian middle-aged lady, who worked as gender expert to me and later she became a port opener to this group. As a gender expert Sagal* was engaged by most organisations to gender mainstream their programs. Safia*, her friend worked for Oxfam was a gender expert too. Fayruz*, a Briton worked in Somalia as a health advisor in the ministry of health.

Somali women, explained Sagal, were not being taken seriously in peace building negotiations because of the traditional views of women as not full clan members. Sagal, was an activist who wished to contribute to Somalia's rebuilding however as a gender expert she was asked several times to work with gender issues. Sagal wanted to be selected as an MP however her clan chose her clan cousin, who was not only uneducated but also linked to killings during the civil war. He was rich and able to get the clan elders to sell him the seat. Sagal was furious and she told me that women will never be taken seriously especially in this artificial power sharing formula that is driven by the international community. We need to get to the one-man one-vote then women can have a fighting chance of competing with the men.

Somali women, explains Sagal who was mostly the one who dominated most discussions, tried to create their own clan. A Civil society activist, Aisha Haji Elmi, whose husband was the prime minister of Somalia, decided to take matters in her own hands and create a women's clan thus the 6th clan. She often referred to the women in the group as clan sisters although none of them belonged to the same clan. Since the power sharing formula included the five clans the women's would be the sixth and women from all clans could use this platform to push for their agenda. This display showed that the Somali women were not going to agree to be left out in the first peace building meeting that were being held in Arta, Djibouti in 2000. They rallied their own funds and attended the conference. They were very few in number compared to the men who were in attendance but that did not hinder them from using their agency. The 6th clan was thus a result of their efforts.

I highlight in this chapter the effects of external promoted democracy in Somalia. Women who are the backbone of the Somali society are excluded however I show that although some resourceful women like the founder of a large NGO, Adesso and the Prime minister's wife were able to influence the process, there is still a gap that

has taken the women back to pre colonial times and as I show in my interactions with young girls in the refugee camp during a focus group training, the young girls aged 17-24 do not feel like women should participate in politics.

The minorities groups that I highlighted in Chapter five are also excluded from this process. However the youth is my main focus in this chapter especially since there is now being recruited into Islamic militant groups like *Al-Qaida* and *Al Shabaab*. I highlight through my interactions with a youth group in Nairobi how marginalization and exclusion by the both the Kenyan and Somali government has led to their interest in joining such groups. The young men had not been recruited as yet but their views were supportive of Al-Shabaab.

This chapter then focuses on the exclusions and inclusions of democracy promotion in Somalia. I argue in the case of Somalia, women, youth and minorities have been severely excluded in Somalia's rebuilding. I show through my ethnography how when monitoring a focus group research in a refugee camp (Dadaab) girls aged 17-24 had their agency taken from them by the war giving them new roles as victims. I show how the research aimed at gauging their views about the new state was met with negative attitudes and remarks. In addition, I show through a group of young Somali refugees living in Nairobi how the exclusion by the international agencies has led to their radicalization and their mission to get rid of the '*kufaars*'.⁷⁴ The youth having either fled a refugee camp or Somalia before or during the war feel left out from the interventions that only include the educated or wealthy Somalis. By engaging with them I show how they are at risk of being recruited to extreme militant Islamic groups like *AlShabaab*. At the time of writing this thesis my initial thoughts about this subject matter do become reality as bombings in Nairobi become frequent and the terrorist cells are believed to emerge from the areas I conducted my research in.

Women, War and Peace

Conflict is a necessary tool for social transformation and change, restructuring the relationships within societies. However when it escalates to violence like in the case of Somalia, it leads to the massive loss of lives and displacement (Bryden, 1998).

⁷⁴ Kufaar means infidels. This is term that is generally used in extreme Islam to define the non-Muslims

Armed conflict has claimed noncombat among its victims especially women and children. In search for peace, rebuilding efforts have focused on the clan-based nature of the conflict, which was mainly male dominated, and with males of the two major warring clans the *darood* and the *hawiyee*. The role of the other clan especially the minorities and the women who are estimated to be more in population than the men⁷⁵ was not only disregarded by the peace initiators but with researchers as well (Bryden, 1998, p. 3).

The Somali kinship system is patrilineal while maternal ties play an important role. A woman's kinship affiliation will change at least once sometimes several times during her lifetime. She is part of her fathers lineage until she is married and once she is married she is linked to her husbands lineage, she retains her name but she 'belongs' to her husband. However despite her loyalty to her husband and children she is considered as still part of her father's lineage (Bryden, 1998, p. 26). This according to (Bryden, 1998) is the primary reason boys are valued more than girls in kinship traditions. They boy can protect the clan and even expand it when he marries. A boy's education is valued more than the girls thus the proverb explained that women and knowledge are incompatible because she would be raising children. During the existence of the Somali state, the then president Siad Barre had made efforts to promote women's inclusion in the society by the establishment of the SWDO (Somali women's development organisation). The organisation was even actively present in a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985 (Bryden, 1998). However whatever progress was made in progressing the role of the Somali women was now undone by the civil war returning women to the confines of family and tradition, which they had evolved from two generations earlier. Although the women during the war emerged as wage earners they were given roles as breadwinners, negotiators and partisans because most of the men were either lost their lives or fled, as it was easier for the men to flee.

⁷⁵ Population is estimated by the UN to be 9 million although no population census has been carried out it is difficult to quote the UN on this estimates

New Identities, New Roles

It's 4a.m in the morning, and the taxi sent by NDI stops at the Wilson airport in Nairobi. Today we would flying to the worlds largest refugee camp, Dadaab, in North Kenya and observe a focus group training. My supervisor, Mrs C*, a focus group expert, a program officer and myself would be travelling to supervise a research group that would be engaging young girls aged 17-24. NDI needed to collect the views of the Somali's all over Somalia and the refugee camps about the recent developments in the country with the election of a president and a government. The girls would be given questionnaires that were administered all over Somalia in order to collect the views of the Somalis. Dadaab is the largest refugee camp in the world and I had ideas in my head on how this would be but what awaited me shocked me. The flight departed at 7am and arrived in Dadaab at 8.30am. We were immediately whisked away to the UN compound where we received safety training in case we were kidnapped.⁷⁶

The focus group training would be conducted by one of NDI partner CSO's that were based in Dadaab. The girls were recruited from different groups within the camps. We arrived at a local school where the CSO had rented the room for the day. The girls started arriving and they were 20 in total. Being the only Somali woman who did not participate in the group research they would stare at me wondering why I was translating from my supervisor who was an African American lady and the consultant, a Caucasian from New York. After a while I introduced myself and they seemed relaxed to have me there. The moderator was a young lady who NDI had trained in Djibouti the previous week. The program officer who travelled with us was asked to step outside as the girls were shy and could not speak in front of men.

The moderator, a young lady in her 20's started administering the questionnaire and being a group research they would answer freely. *"What do you think of President Mohamoud?"* (My translation) asked the moderator. *"He is a great man"* *"They say he is good for Somalia,"* (my translation) responded the girls. The young girls who lived in the refugee camp were somewhat aware of the political changes in Somalia but because of the hardship of living in a refugee camp, it was not possible to gauge

⁷⁶ Dadaab is relatively safe although there had been some reports that some aid agencies had been kidnapped previously.

them fully. There was a question about the prime minister who at the time of my fieldwork had started losing popularity among the Somalis. The question asked about their views. One answered, *“Those who elected him must know why they did so. I accept him as my prime minister. I am glad that Somalia has finally a prime minister. I hope to return to Somalia one day and live in peace”*. I sensed the frustration the girls had with living in a refugee camp with limited access to the Kenya society. The moderator reached the most important question about the role of women in Somali politics and this highlighted how these interventions to rebuild Somalia’s state led to the marginalization of girls and women.

One answered

“Women should not be allowed to participate in politics as it goes against the religion”

Another answered *“ why should women even want to have representation? Our men can work and provide for us and we can raise the children”*.

I was totally not prepared for this conversation, as most of the Somali ladies I had met in Nairobi were activists who aimed to regain the position of the Somali women during the war. The young girls were born and raised as refugees and they are sheltered from public life due to the fear of raping’s and kidnappings. The man is viewed as a protector. I spoke to one of the girls her views of foreign intervention in Somalia and in the camp. She answered, *“No one knows we exist. We have no papers, no identity and no home. People tell me I’m Somali from Somali all I have known since I was born is that I am a refugee.”* International actors are actively working in the camps providing health, education and even resettlement assistance. However the young girl explains to me those who cannot clarify their identity are not considered refugees accessing some of the benefits but not totally. She could not for example go to school because that was only free for those registered as refugees. She described her life as hanging within branches.

The Radicalization of the Youth

The young group of men sat anxiously waiting for me to show up. Sagal, my informant had arranged the meeting quite late in my fieldwork, as I had not planned to include them in my study. Sagal insisted that if I was to understand how these interventions are excluding I would have to meet the youth who had no chance to engage in the rebuilding just as women had faced obstacles when trying to engage in

Somalia's rebuilding. The young men called Sagal mobile phone until we made it fifteen minutes late. Sagal introduced me to the men who were clearly very religious dressed in 'Khamis' which is an Islamic robe normally worn on Fridays however there are some who prefer to wear it daily. It was a Wednesday and they started by inquiring what I wanted to discuss and why I felt it was necessary as a female researcher to come to Kenya and research about Somali issues. One even inquired if I was a spy for the Norwegian government. I explained what my research was about and that I wanted to gauge their views on the recent political developments in Somalia. "The infidel government of Somalia is a disgrace to Somalia", expressed one who looked like the ringleader. The lanky man who could not have been more than 18 or 19 disregarded the state as being a sovereign state. He however went into the Internet and showed me how some regions that were occupied by *AlShabaab*; the Islamic militant group had provided stability, medical supplies and boosted the economy of those regions. He equated the state and *Alshabaab* citing the latter as being more representative of the people of Somalia. Another young man described the Somali state as being a '*beesha calamka*' state. This translates to the international community state. The ringleader wondered why the international community had legitimacy in Somalia while *AlShabaab* would not be allowed to impose Islamic policy? The group leader, who lived in Eastleigh area of Nairobi, predominately populated by Somali's, explained that the recent development in Somalia have increased the willingness of the Somali youth to fight against infidels to regain their state. I asked him if he was affiliated with the terror group seeing that he was supporting their cause. His answer shocked me "*I wish I had the courage to do so instead of sitting here unemployed and too young to be taken seriously by my clan members*". What he meant by his clan members not taking him seriously is that he wanted to be more involved in Somali politics and represent his clan. But in what Gundel (2006) describes as the predicament of the 'oday' system⁷⁷ among the Somalis, leadership is normally reserved for the elders and no youth can ever occupy it. If there is no elder within the kinship group who can take over, another elder from a close kinship group is given the mandate.

I met the group several times and the group would get more radical in their views and I shared this information with a manager at NDI. I inquired why there were not any programs directed to the marginalized group. His answer would clearly show

⁷⁷ This refers to the elder system

that democracy promotion conditioned and the participants have to fit the portfolio in order to be considered relevant for democracy. He said: "*the youth are absolutely necessary for democracy to work and prevail.*" The donors precondition the work NDI does with the proposal that that was submitted and approved. The youth are not considered a priority in the state building because they worked with state actors and civil society that is mostly dominated by older men.

The High-Flyers

They all knew each other. Sagal the Canadian, Fayruz from the UK and Mohamed from Australia were sitting across me at this high-end restaurant. The restaurant was decorated to resemble the American coffee house, Starbucks. This restaurant in the mall that was destroyed by *AlShabaab* months after my fieldwork was a favourite space for not only the Somali diaspora but also international NGO workers. This was the place to be if you wanted to network. I would sometimes go alone and would not leave because I met several informants who call me 'Norwegian'.

Working flexible jobs as consultants, most of the day was spent having lunch and strategizing on how to rebuild Somalia or how they could land jobs as Somali government advisors. Mohamed, the Australian identified himself as an advisor however as I would learn later this was a term many diaspora members used to get the attention of the donors. The diaspora had emerged as an important group in Somalia's rebuilding. Most of the international agencies including Norwegian agencies hire their citizens due to the assumption that they can bridge the gap that exists between the two cultures. The diaspora are viewed as neutral actors. The country director at NDI was a Somali American. He had close ties with the American embassy that led to his role as the country director. Previously he was an advisor to a former president. Diaspora was considered *high flyers* among the local Somalis because they had the best of both worlds. When I asked what they meant with best of both worlds, they explain that diaspora members can chose which nationality they wish to identify themselves with. Being a diaspora member myself I noticed how some local informants treated me when they realised I was from Norway. They would either become nicer feeling like I knew more than them or they could try and show me that they are do not need to be from the diaspora to be considered a *high flyer*. There were assumptions that the diaspora were immoral and many time I heard the name

'duyuspora' being used to describe the diaspora. The word was coined from the Somali word 'duyus' which means immoral. This assumption of the diaspora as a preferred group to the donors has led to the attacks in Mogadishu targeting diaspora members. Many of the diaspora members would not travel to Mogadishu unless they had sufficient security because many had lost their lives.

Conclusion

The gap between those who benefit economically from these interventions and those who are marginalised has widened creating space for groups like Al-Shabaab to offer incentives to the weak and marginalized. The youth both men and women, who join their cause not only receive a stipend for the commitment but are brain washed to believe that this cause is a noble cause which will be rewarded with sainthood. Not only are they recruiting Somali's from Somalia but recently a Norwegian Somali fell victim to these incentives and lost his life in Mogadishu fighting the 'infidels.' Interventions in clan based societies normally operate within the power structures dominated by men especially clan elders. I have argued for the effects of the marginalization of the women and the youth in these interventions. I shown that some groups are considered neutral thus included in the interventions.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Any Aid is better than No Aid (Somali Informant)

Summary of Chapters

In this chapter I summarize the key points in my dissertation as well as highlight new problem areas that I would have researched on given the time. Due to the limitation of MPhil research, I narrowed my focus to the state and non-state actors that constitute the democracy promotion discourse. In chapter one I highlighted the key arguments in my dissertation was to argue for the need for an ethnography of democratization processes. By using the term 'vernacularization' I argued for the effect of the 4.5 system in Somalia that cuts across all interventions. In chapter two, I highlighted the key advantages and disadvantages of research among one own people as well as including new approaches in fieldwork. In chapter three I discuss how democracy is conceptualised by international agencies like NDI and how their understanding of democracy shapes foreign policy not practice. In Chapter 4 and 5, I show how state actors in Somalia who are created through foreign policy are disconnected in practice due to the lack of understanding between the donors and recipients. The donors choose to converge traditional clan values into western liberal democratic values leading to the creation of 'phantom' subjects. In Chapter six I show the effects of external democracy promotion in a clan-based society, which marginalizes the weak in the society, which in the case of Somalia are the women and the youth who are not considered full members of the society

Policy vs. Practice of Democracy Promotion

In a recent attack in February 2014, *Alshabaab* militants attacked the Somali Villa Somalia.⁷⁸ President Hassan Sheikh immediately called the UN Somali

⁷⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/02/somali-presidential-hq-attacked-al-shabab-201422112586270319.html>

Representative Nicholas Kay and informed him of his safety. Nicholas Kay would then tweet and inform the Somali people that the president was unharmed. The Somali citizens reacted to this asking who controls Somalia?

George W. Bush, the former US president pledged external assisted democracy promotion to countries like Iraq that were viewed as authoritarian regimes (McFaul, 2005). 10 years later Iraq is still a failed democratic state listed on the failed state index.⁷⁹ The failure in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to the flawed views about the US reputation as the promoters of freedom and democracy in the world. The president of the Nixon Centre stated that the pursuit of universal utopia is damaging American interests (McFaul, 2005). Despite the failure of the programs in the Middle East among other countries, the interventions in Africa have taken root. The dynamics in Somalia however interface with the western values creating new identities and relations. The Rule of the clan as described by Weiner (2013) has its positive and negative aspects in which I have analysed in my dissertation. When it interfaces with other forms of governance that are backed by funding it finds innovative ways of engaging the new modes of knowledge while still maintaining its kinship political units. A recent report done to evaluate Norwegian support to NDI reveals that despite NDI efforts Somalis do not feel ownership over the institutions that NDI has helped build, the executive and legislative branches of government. (NORAD, 2013). This is a clear indicator of the failure of external assisted programs. By conducting my fieldwork between NDI and Somalis in Kenya I analysed how the new '*aid architecture*' by international agencies are embedded in notions that aim to put the Somali actors in the 'drivers seat'. However as my research, which preceded the report that was realised in August Last year, highlights that the ideals that NDI and other agencies are promoting in Somalia are not yielding the results that were predicted in their policy documents or proposals to the donors. This gap is what Mosse (2004) describes in this IBRIF project in India and asks whether policy is driven by practice? In the case of Somalia where a state and a civil society were 'made' almost simultaneously policy precedes practice, something which Arce and Long (1987) argues when citing the failure of the farming projects in Jalisco, Mexico. They argue that policy that is not informed by practice leaves no room for flexibility and adjustment once the programs fail. Most program fail because of the lack of

⁷⁹ www.fundforpeace.org

inclusion in policy making. Somalia's fate is decided in realms that normally do not include Somalia in its policy planning. After agree to the policies, they then create subjects that can be moulded in the perfect categories so as to 'make democracy work'. Citing the most famous saying I encountered during my fieldwork' *any aid is good aid*', I argue for an inclusive approach for Somalia where they can design their own policies that can is tailor made to reflect the reality on the ground.

Epilogue

A year after my fieldwork, security in Mogadishu has worsened as the Somali people have lost legitimacy to their leaders describing them as 'western puppets'. Killings and bombing are at its highest due to the high youth recruitment to the militia terrorist groups. 133 MP's have recently presented motion to impeach President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud due to incompetency but worrying enough they are all concerned that is no one in his sub clan is qualified enough to take his place as president.

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