LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Citizen Attitudes about Peace, Governance and the Future in Somalia

Findings from Focus Groups with Men and Women in Somalia

Conducted July 2010

By Andrea L. Levy

December 6, 2010

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

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CONTENTS

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that responds to the aspirations of people around the world to live in democratic societies that recognize and promote basic human rights. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to support and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. With staff members and volunteer political practitioners from more than 100 nations, NDI brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences and expertise. Partners receive broad exposure to best practices in international democratic development that can be adapted to the needs of their own countries. NDI's multinational approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies. The Institute's work upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also promotes the development of institutionalized channels of communications among citizens, political institutions and elected officials, and strengthens their ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens. For more information about NDI, visit www.ndi.org.

PREFACE

This report explores public opinion in Somalia. Based on 38 focus group discussions with average Somali citizens[1] and 35 one-on-one interviews with traditional and religious leaders[2] conducted in June 2010, the report examines attitudes toward and perceptions of the current political landscape in Somalia and desires for the political future of the country. Specifically, the study explores attitudes toward the following issue areas:

- National identity;
- Conflict;
- Governance;
- Democracy;
- Federalism;
- The Transitional Federal Government; and
- A constitution and constitutional rights and freedoms.

Participants yearn for peace and security, but have little faith that the current government can deliver these benefits. In addition to seeking an end to the chaos around them, citizens want the government to improve their quality of life through improvements to education, healthcare, and infrastructure as well as the creation of economic opportunities. Many believe that interference from foreign countries is fueling the conflict. The public strongly supports *Shari'a* (Islamic) law, and there is some concern about wholesale adoption of Western concepts, such as democracy, federalism and a constitution, as some participants see them as threatening to Islam and Somali culture.

NDI is pleased to share the views of Somali citizens with government officials and other stakeholders as they work to create a conflict-free country.

Focus Group Results and Usage. Focus groups are semi-structured group discussions directed by a moderator and following a pre-set guideline. Unless otherwise noted, the conclusions presented here represent views commonly and repeatedly cited during the discussions. The interaction between participants in a focus group provides insight into how citizens think and feel and is often a more powerful means of understanding why those attitudes exist than interviewing people individually. Information gathered in this way reflects citizen values and needs and is critical in helping decision-makers test their assumptions and incorporate the will of the people into policy-making.
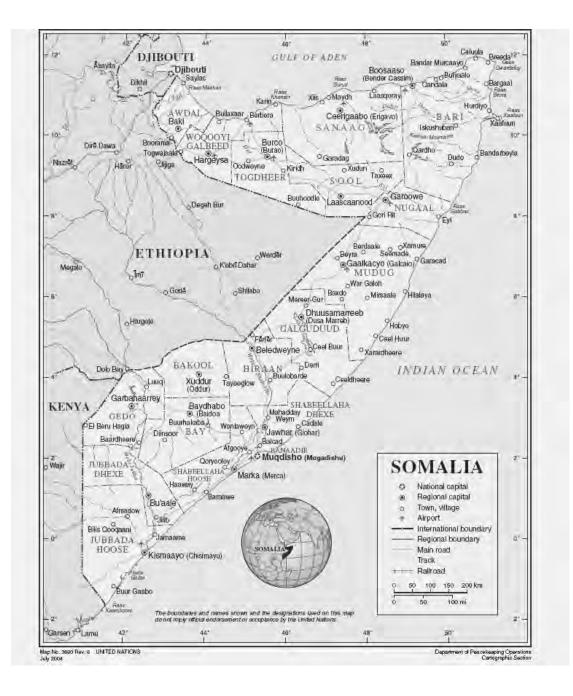
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[1] Two of the groups were held with the diaspora in Nairobi and its environs.

[2] In total, the study involved 434 participants.

A Snapshot of Public Opinion. Any public opinion research, including focus groups, is only a snapshot of opinion at the moment the research is undertaken. Public opinion is dynamic and evolves as people experience and react to major events, particularly in conflict-affected environments such as Somalia. Therefore, the conclusions of this report represent opinions only when the research was undertaken.

A Qualitative Research Tool. Focus groups are a qualitative, not a quantitative, research instrument. Although focus groups are a superior research method for understanding the meanings behind commonly held attitudes, the total number of participants in focus group research is always relatively small and thus is not statistically representative of the larger population. This report reflects the opinions of the Somali citizens who participated in this study. General terms, such as 'people' and 'citizens' may be used on occasion in this report as a convenience to represent the attitudes of those participants; however, the Focus Group Participant Demographics chart as well as the Methodology Notes appearing at the end of the report should be consulted by all readers to understand the sub-set of individuals interviewed for this study.

Participant Perceptions vs. Political Realities. The *perceptions* of participants in these focus groups do not necessarily reflect *reality*. Ordinary citizens often judge progress based on change in their own lives. Improvements in areas outside their immediate interests (although important in the greater context) are not always viewed as progress by the average person. Participants in this study often form their opinions based on inaccurate or semi-accurate readings of the world around them. Nevertheless, even if their perceptions do not represent reality, there is power in these perceptions. Citizens make decisions based on what they believe. Without knowledge of these perceptions, policy-makers and other stakeholders will not be able to address them. Thus, the goal of this research is to report the perceptions and opinions of participants, regardless of their accuracy, to Somali political and civil society leaders so they may better understand and respond to the concerns of the general populace.

THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Citizens in Somalia are eager for peace and security to prevail in their country. The quotations below reflect their recommendations for ensuring a peaceful and prosperous future for Somalia.

"We need to educate people on the importance of peace."

"Empower the society with skills so that they can get access to jobs."

"Somalis need to unite by putting aside their hunger for power and selfishness."

"Problems can be solved by applying Shari'a."

"I believe if we shared and distributed all resources, leadership of the country, and social welfare equally, this would be the end of Somali conflict."

"We need to start a grassroots-level program for forgiveness and reconciliation and have all parties of society come together."

"The international community should stop the political interference."

"We need a stable government and job creation for the vulnerable people so as to reduce poverty."

"We must open a dialogue, sit at the table together, and mend fences with each other."

"If people truly understand Islamic teachings, then tribalism will be wiped out."

"The solution to our problems is to have a strong national government."

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

National Identity and Conflict

1. Participants exhibit a strong sense of community, and clanism is therefore considered a societal affliction.

Most participants are inclined to think of the Somalis as one people, united by a single religion, language, culture and physical appearance, with religion being the strongest tie.

Therefore, clanism is considered an affront to the idea of Somali unity and is identified as the most significant source of conflict within the country. Participants say it breeds injustice (as certain clans are marginalized), causes people to focus solely on the welfare of their clan rather than society as a whole, and creates mistrust among people. Clan is considered a "*cance*r"[3] that afflicts Somali society.

> *"Somalis are the same and belong to one ethnicity, but we're split apart by clanism."* (Fisherman, Mogadishu)

> *"Clanism is the biggest factor that divides Somalia because every person in Somalia gives more importance to the interest of his tribe."* (Man, Agro-Pastoralist, Dollow Rural)

> *"In my opinion, this endless war was started by clanism."* (Traditional leader, Galkayo North)

> *"Somalia's basic conflict is clanism."* (Woman, Refugee-Returnee, Nairobi)

> *"Any struggle here is based on clanism."* (Traditional leader, Mogadishu)

Participants also commonly cite other sources of conflict:
- Quality-of-life issues (poverty, unemployment, lack of education/illiteracy);
- Lack of a functioning government (misuse of and competition for power among government officials who have only their own interests at heart);
- Foreign intervention/interference;
- Easy access to arms, which leads to violent and criminal behavior; and
- Disobedience to Allah/the Koran on the part of the government and the opposition.

> *"Poverty, low level of education, poor infrastructure."*(Businessman, Mogadishu)

> *"Lack of government. If we have a strong government, Somalis will unite."* (Businessman, Galkayo South)

> *"The system [the government] uses is not of its own making but comes from external interference."*(Businessman, Galkayo North)

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[3] Term used by a male convention refugee in Kenya.

"Poor understanding of the religion by the people fighting in the name of the religion, thus igniting theconflict."(Businessman, Dollow Rural)

"We see legislators and ministers defying the Holy Book and then getting heart attacks."(Man, IDP, Mogadishu)

2. Participants exhibit a strong desire for national reconciliation.

To solve these conflicts, first and foremost, participants want reconciliation talks between the government and the opposing forces. (However, it is important to note that none of the participants expressed a desire for *Al Shabab* to take control of the country.[4])

They also prescribe:
- Establishing a stable government with strong and effective leadership;
- Empowering society with skills and education, including instruction in good governance and the perils of clanism;
- Ridding the county of foreign interference;
- Ensuring equality with respect to sharing and distributing resources, social welfare, and leadership; and
- Being guided by Allah/*Shari'a* law.

"Organize peace talks for all Somalis." (Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

"The best solution is to educate the society and also make a peace conference." (Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Luuq Rural)

"If the international community and neighboring countries intervene in the reconciliation process, Somalia will not get any solution." (Businessman, Baledweyn)

"These problems can be solved by applying the Islamic religion [Shari'a]." (Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

Governance and Democracy

1. Stability in the country currently eclipses all other needs.

When participants are asked to list their expectations of a national government in order of importance, peace and security top the list. They note that security is the basis for any other progress. People want the government to heal the wounds in the country and unify the Somali people. Refugees want to see security improved to be able to return home. Specifically, some participants mention that they want the government to continue work on disarmament.

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[4] NDI did not ask a direct question to participants about whether they would support an *Al Shabab* take-over, and the idea did not surface spontaneously during any of the interviews.

Security was slightly less of an issue for the groups in Puntland, but the expressed desire for peace is just as strong as in the other regions in Somalia.

"The most important thing I need from a national government is to unify the people and bring peace and stability."(Woman, Luuq Rural)

"We need security to go back home because we don't need to live in a foreign country."(Woman, Refugee-Returnee, Nairobi)

Many participants also want a national government to seek justice and equality for all Somali people and protect human rights. Furthermore, they want to see improvements in education (both religious and secular), health and infrastructure. Not least, they want a national government to provide jobs and economic opportunities.

"Make sure justice is done in all aspects." (Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

"Security, health, education, and reconstruction of the roads."(Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

"Creation of jobs and protection of human rights."(Man, IDP, Bosaso)

2. **Islamic law, elections and highly capable leaders form the pillars of their ideal government.**

If they were designing their own government, Somali participants identified three key features they would want included:
- Rule by Islamic law instead of clan.
- Chosen by the people, through elections, where all Somalis are fairly represented.
- Lead by intellectuals and scholars (in other words, leaders whom they believe are highly qualified for their positions).

"I would set up Islamic Shari'a."(Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

"I would not add people who are looking for appointments; I would ask citizens who they want to be mayor of their town."(Man, IDP, Mogadishu)

"My government [would be] like a democracy and would need intellectuals or educated people."(Fisherman, Bandarbeyla Rural)

3. **Somali participants are in agreement that *Shari'a* is the best system of law for the country.**

Consistent with their belief that a desirable government has Islamic law at its core, participants are practically unanimous in their view that *Shari'a* should form the basis of Somali law. They believe it should govern all, not just family, matters. It is notable that even traditional leaders and those in the Kenya diaspora adhere to this viewpoint.

"My opinion is that all affairs must be managed by IslamicShari'a."(Housewife, Mogadishu)

"[Shari'a] should be implemented at all levels and in every department of the government."(Businessman, Bosaso)

"All the country must follow theShari'a, and each office from the President down to the family must follow it."(Traditional leader, Galkayo North)

Those holding the most extreme version of this belief say that any system that does not follow Islamic law exclusively should be considered invalid. Those with a more flexible interpretation (a very small minority) think there is also a place for *Xeer*[5]or international law. These participants are more likely to be women.

"Anything different from Islamic law does not deserve to be mentioned."(Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

"We should use Shari'a*and* Xeer.*"*(Housewife, Bandarbeyla Rural)

4. Religious leaders are considered to have an important role to play in government.

Most participants want religious leaders to play a role in a new government because they feel religious leaders are schooled in the practice of justice. Additionally, they note that the Somali culture is inextricably tied to religion, and thus it is important that religious leaders be represented. Specifically, some want religious leaders to play a leading role in the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Ministry of Justice. Others see religious leaders playing more of a consultative and educative role with the public and ministers, tasked with building understanding of good governance, justice, and the law, in general.

"Religious leaders are the nerve center of the nation and are required to teach the people the law."(Housewife, Mogadishu)

"Religious leaders have to run religious affairs."(Businessman, Galkayo North)

"The clerics' role is to build public awareness toward good governance."(Businessman, Mogadishu)

"I would spread the religion to the people. I would tell the people what is wrong and what is right."(Religious leader, Garowe)

5. The role for traditional leaders, however, is less defined.

Although most participants also envision a place for traditional leaders in the government, they are less able to articulate a specific role for them.

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[5]*Xeer* is the customary law of Somalia. Under this system, elders serve as judges and help mediate cases using precedents.

The minority of participants, who don't see a role for traditional leaders at all, claim that they are one of the root causes of the current conflict and contribute to clanism.

"The religious and traditional leaders can play a vital role in any future Somali government."(Woman, IDP, Galkayo North Rural)

"The traditional leaders and warlords are the masterminds behind the constant problems existing in Somalia. I don't believe we should give them a role in government."(Woman, Refugee-Returnee, Nairobi)

6. Participants exhibit very mixed views about democracy in general, and democracy for Somalia, in particular.

Most respondents have an idea of the meaning of "democracy." Only a small minority of respondents, mostly women, as well as some religious and traditional leaders, are unable to furnish any definition.

For most, their definitions betray their feelings toward the concept of democracy. The number of groups holding primarily positive views is roughly equal to those holding primarily negative views.

Participants with positive views of democracy have the following associations:
- People have the freedom to choose the leaders and type of government they want (including *Shari'a*).
- People have the right to freely offer their opinions.
- Democracy means good governance and the rule of law.
- Democracy is the opposite of clanism and fosters equality, as all clans will receive equal treatment.

It is notable that all the groups in Bosaso and Bandarbeyla (Puntland) have uniformly positive opinions.

"Democracy is a system that gives the citizens the power to decide their will." (Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

"Freedom."(Woman, Student, Garowe)

"Democracy is every person is free to share his ideas. For example, in this session, we answered with our own opinions – there were no forcible questions or ideas."(Businessman, Galkayo South)

"Democracy is good government." (Housewife, Dusamareb Rural)

"Above clanism."(Fisherman, Bandarbeyla Rural)

Participants whose associations with democracy are negative base their views on at least one of the following four beliefs:
- Democracy is hostile to religion and is therefore anti-Islamic.

- Democracy means an absence of rules and leads to depravity (homosexuality, drinking, and prostitution) and a perversion of the social order (women can rule the home).
- Democracy emanates from the West so is pertinent only to Western and Christian cultures and is designed to further only Western interests (notion of a hidden agenda).

"Democracy is bad things. It will allow things that are against Islam." (Businessman, Galkayo South)

"Everybody does what he or she wants, even if walking naked." (Businessman, Mogadishu)

"Something bad comes to my mind because we hear marriage of male to male, female to female, lesbians, naked people. Something that is not good for our tradition or religion, that comes to my mind." (Man, Convention Refugee, Nairobi Rural)

"When I hear democracy, my mind shows me Western culture, serving their own interests and having a hidden agenda … As well as the objective of democracy is to forget the Holy Koran." (Businessman, Baledweyn)

"I want democracy excluded."(Fisherman, Mogadishu)

Participants' feelings about democracy, in general, naturally color their perceptions about whether democracy would be a good system of government for Somalia. Slightly more than one-third of the groups think it would be a good system; slightly less than one-third of the participants express mixed views; and about one-third do not think it would be a good system for Somalia.

Participants who are positively inclined toward the idea of democracy for Somalia believe it can rescue Somalis from the current state of lawlessness and overcome the problems caused by clanism.

"It is important for Somalia to have a democratic system because this would bring order to the nation."(Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

"Yes, it will be a good system because it's the mass that makes the decision."(Traditional leader, Baidoa)

"Yes, because it based on consensus."(Businessman, Mogadishu)

"Yes, democracy is a good style to be employed in Somalia because there are people forced to stay out of their homes, eaten by wild beasts in the bushes."(Man, IDP, Mogadishu)

Some of those who are not in favor of a democratic government for Somalia feel that democracy is simply not conducive to the current situation in the country:

- In its present state of chaos, Somalia needs a government with a strong hand that can bring order.
- Democracy will only increase the turmoil as everyone will be able to do what he or she wants.

Others believe that Somalia does not need democracy as Islam and the Koran should be the only guideposts for government.

"For the current situation, we don't need a democratic government; we need only a military government."(Businessman, Galkayo South)

"No, because the Somalis are not mature, and if democracy is introduced into Somalia, everyone will do whatever he pleases."(Man, Trader, Afgoye Rural)

"I don't think that Somalia needs a democratic government because we are Muslims. The Holy Koran is our constitution and culture."(Businessman, Baledweyn)

Federalism

1. Most equate federalism with clanism.

Most participants have at least some understanding of the concept of federalism. About two-thirds of the groups hold a negative view, equating federalism with divisiveness and clanism. However, a significant minority of about one-third have a positive view of a federal type of government. They support the idea of devolving some power to individual communities as they feel this will reduce the grounds for disharmony in the country as a whole.

Views of federalism did not divide along regional lines.

"A federal system can act as a means to solve political disputes, and hence every region can have its own stability."(Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Luuq Rural)

"Federalism is a regional administration. If it's based on fair administration without abuse of power and[executed] in a judicial manner, and the elders [sultans] should council it, it will be effective."(Traditional leader, Baledweyn)

"Federalism is a good type. At this time, there is stability in those regions in Somalia that use it, like Puntland and Somaliland."(Businessman, Dollow Rural)

"Federalism is the number one problem in Somalia today."(Businessman, Mogadishu)

"It is clanism with a new shirt [face]."(Man, Trader, Nairobi)

"I know the word 'federal' as something filthy."(Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

2. **There is a strong consensus that natural resources in the country are owned by all Somalis.**

Participants overwhelmingly agree that Somalia's natural resources belong to all the Somali people rather than only the people who live in the area where the resources are located. Even the small minority who believe the resources belong to the local people say that the central government should receive some share.

"Me, I will say that the natural resources belong to all Somalis."(Businessman, Baidoa)

"If I say every region takes its own resources, then we will end up with the federalism I was rejecting. Therefore, the resources [belong to] all Somalis."(Man, IDP, Mogadishu)

"The resources found in a particular region should be owned by the people of that region. However, the centralgovernment should be entitled to receive an agreed percentage."(Man, Trader, Afgoye Rural)

Transitional Federal Government

1. **Participants are in agreement that no real government currently exists in Somalia.**

Participants are unanimous in their belief that the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) exists in name only – that its legitimacy derives only from the fact that it has international recognition. They say it has done nothing tangible, is essentially powerless, and has no internal support.

"Yes, there is a government, but it is a powerless one that can't reach the whole country and is limited to a confined area."(Man, IDP, Mogadishu)

"Yes, an internationally-recognized government exists, but it is powerless."(Man, Trader, Afgoye Rural)

"There is a government recognized by the international community that doesn't have a country and people. It'snot a functioning government."(Man, Trader, Nairobi)

2. **As such, they don't believe that the TFG truly represents them or their interests.**

Most participants feel that the TFG does no truly represent them or only represents them *de jure* because of its international recognition but not *de facto.* By way of explanation, they note that the government has failed to provide any concrete benefits for the people and is unable to get even its own house in order.

Some note wryly that the TFG essentially represents only its own interests because the leaders steal public funds, move their relatives out of the country, and give scholarships only to their children.

Those in Puntland were as negative about the TFG as those participants from other areas.

"The TFG represents only the Somali name and flag."(Fisherman, Bandarbeyla Rural)

"The federal government can't represent us at all since it just has the mandate but not the power."(Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Baidoa)

"At present, it doesn't represent me. It's unable to take care of its internal problems in Mogadishu; how can it solve mine in Galkayo?"(Traditional leader, Galkayo North)

"The TFG cannot represent us because there are no important leaders, and instead of making policies, they just play like kids."(Man, IDP, Dollow Rural)

"They take funds provided for the people. Let alone me … it doesn't represent any of the Somali people."(Fisherman, Mogadishu)

"The current government? No, it doesn't represent me. Everyone is for his/her own interests."(Woman, IDP, Afgoye Rural)

"Those in the government, ministers or legislators, represent themselves, not the people's interests."(Businessman, Mogadishu)

3. There is a general perception that the situation in the country has deteriorated under the TFG.

Participants are practically unanimous in their belief that under the TFG the situation in their area and the country as a whole has deteriorated.[6]

They note the reduction since 2008 of the geographic area under government control, increased displacement of people, lack of free movement in the country, and shelling and killing of civilians.

"It is worse than before. Abdullah's government managed to control 12 districts, but the government now doesn't even control two districts."(Businessman, Galkayo North)

"Infrastructure has been demolished. Also, villagers can't move from one place to another."(Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

"It has made the situation worse than before because the killing and shelling has increased tremendously."(Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Luuq Rural)

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[6] The groups were conducted before the escalation of violence in July-October 2010, so attitudes may have become even more strident.

4. Participants claim that the TFG has many obstacles to overcome before it can effectively lead the country.

Many participants express little faith that the government will be able to unite Somalia and bring peace and security. Even those who are more optimistic share the viewpoint with their more pessimistic counterparts that the TFG must overcome a number of obstacles to be successful, many of which are internal to the government itself, including:

- Clanism and nepotism;
- Corruption (stealing of public funds);
- Mistrust and conflict among them; and
- Lack of knowledgeable and skilled leaders.

Additionally, participants cite these other obstacles:

- Lack of financial and military resources;
- Lack of support inside the country;
- Foreign influence (interference by the international community, which has its own agenda); and
- A powerful opposition.

"The clannish structure of the government [is a main obstacle]."(Woman, Trader, Nairobi)

"Government officials and ministers are engaged in dubious activities."(Housewife, Mogadishu)

"Conflicts and misunderstanding among them [is a main obstacle]."(Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

"The main obstacle to success is external interference by the international community, which has its own objectives to achieve."(Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Luuq Rural)

"The government is less powerful than the opposition groups."(Man, Trader, Afgoye Rural)

5. Many participants' suggestions for improving the TFG involve revamping the internal functioning of the Administration.

Participants offer prescriptions for improvement of the TFG that, naturally, are tied to the problems they identified. Most of the suggestions involve fixing the internal structure:

- Select leaders based on their knowledge and end the practice of clanism.
- Increase the professionalism of the leaders.
- Attack the issue of corruption.

Additionally, as already noted, they want the government to enter into peace talks with the opposition and remove foreign troops/influence. Furthermore, some spontaneously mention discarding the 4.5 formula[7] (see next section).

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[7] The make up of the Transitional Federal Institutions is based on the so-called '4.5formula,' which is designed to balance and share representation and power in Somalia. The formula divides Somali

"The cabinet members should be selected on the basis of their knowledge, not their clan."(Businessman, Mogadishu)

"I would suggest that the TFG get officials who are educated. Otherwise, if they continue like this, it is like telling someone who is not a pilot to fly an airplane."(Man, Agro-Pastoralist, Luuq Rural)

"The solution is to send trainers to teach them how to govern."(Fisherman, Mogadishu)

"It has to reach out to the citizens and not just sit in hotels and eat up the entire budget in a scandalous and corrupt manner."(Businessman, Dollow Rural*)*

"Invite all the opposition groups for reconciliation and peace dialogue so that unity is achieved."(Woman, IDP, Afgoye Rural)

"The TFG should withdraw foreign troops from Somalia."(Woman, IDP, Galkayo North Rural*)*

6. Participants want the 4.5 formula to be eliminated.

Nearly all participants are familiar with the 4.5 power-sharing formula. It is universally disliked, and as noted earlier, participants want it discarded. They feel that it's an unjust, discriminatory system that promotes clanism. Additionally, some note that, as it's an unequal system, it goes against the tenets of Islam.

"4.5 is not a good option. People who want to divide Somalis through clanism brought this procedure."(Traditional leader, Galkayo North)

"The 4.5 formula shows lack of justice. All people should be treated equally."(Businessman, Mogadishu)

"The Banadiri community is the best community in terms of intellectualism and creativity, and the 4.5formula denied their rights to enjoy equal opportunity."(Woman, Trader, Nairobi)

"The 4.5 system is totally based in discrimination. We are Muslims. Allah did not create half a person while others are full people."(Businessman, Galkayo South)

Constitution

1. There are mixed views about the necessity for a new constitution for Somalia.

Most male respondents have some understanding of a "constitution." Many women, however, are unfamiliar with the term.

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clans into four major ones (Dir, Darod, Hawiye and Rahanweyn) and condenses the five minority constituencies into the remaining '0.5.'

Participants basically divide into three groups with respect to their attitudes toward a new constitution:

- Some participants are opposed to the idea of a new constitution. They say that Somalia already has a body of laws handed down by Allah in the Koran.
- Some support a new constitution, but say that it must be based on Islamic law.
- Some support a new constitution without any reservations or stipulations. They favor the idea because they think it will bring law and order, and therefore peace.

It is notable that all the groups in Bosaso and Bandarbeyla (Puntland) support the constitution for the latter reason.

"Our constitution is Islamic Shari'a. The remaining thing is nothing."(Businessman, Baledweyn)

"A constitution is something against the religion so I believe it is not good for Somalia."(Man, Trader, Nairobi)

"Yes [it would be a good thing for Somalia to have a new constitution], but it should be based on the Holy Koran."(Religious leader, Garowe*)*

"[A constitution] can help bring stability to Somalia." (Man, IDP, Bosaso)

2. **Participants want *Shari'a*, order, unity and justice to form the basis of a Somali constitution.**

When asked to identify the most important things to be included in a new constitution, participants (who supported the concept) most often mention four basic tenets:

- *Shari'a* as the foundation;
- Restoration of order;
- Promotion of Somali unity; and
- The principles of equality and justice.

When asked specifically about *freedoms and rights* that should be included, participants say:

- Security;
- Free movement;
- Education;
- Health and other social services; and
- No discrimination.

"The Islamic religion should be added to it." (Fisherman, Mogadishu)

"The most important thing that should be included in the new constitution is Shari'a law." (Man, Agro-Pastoralist, Dollow Rural)

"Disarming people."(Fisherman, Bandarbeyla Rural)

"Justice and human rights."(Businessman, Bosaso)

"Right to security."(Businessman, Dollow Rural)

"The best rights and freedoms the constitution can guarantee me are peace, health, and being able to move freely around all parts of Somalia." (Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Luuq Rural)

"No discrimination among people." (Woman, Family Provider, Bandarbeyla Rural)

3. Participants express unanimous support for a constitutional referendum.

When given a choice between ratification of a new constitution through a referendum or through meetings and discussions among government leaders, participants overwhelmingly choose the referendum option.

This attitude is consistent with their disappointment with the functioning of the TFG and their desire for the Somali people to have a voice in government.

"The best deciding factor for the draft constitution will be a referendum."(Fisherman, Bandarbeyla Rural)

"It should become a law through a referendum."(Traditional leader, Baidoa)

"Only through a people's referendum."(Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

"The best way to develop a new constitution is through a referendum."(Woman, Agro-Pastoralist, Baidoa)

4. Participants express a range of attitudes about rights to Somali citizenship.

There is no uniform opinion among participants about who is deserving of Somali citizenship. Attitudes range from:
- Anyone born in Somalia whose parents are Somali;
- Anyone whose parents are Somali (regardless of where they're born); and
- Anyone whose father is Somali.

When participants are asked specifically whether someone with a Somali mother but non-Somali father can be considered a citizen, opinions are mixed – there is no consensus.

5. Although most participants endorse equal rights for all … most support only *Shari'a* law for women.

Most participants profess to be in favor of a guarantee of equal rights for all under the law. Nevertheless, when they asked a specific question about equal rights for women, it is clear that many participants are selective.

"We don't have any disagreement with that because people are the same before the law."(Woman, Refugee-Returnee, Nairobi)

"According to Islam, all people are equal whether they are Muslim or Christian."(Businessman, Baledweyn)

Participants claim that women should have equal access to education, health care, and ability to hold public office (with the exception of the presidency).However, many participants (including many women) say that there is no need to define special rights for women as their rights are already established by and protected under Islamic law. They note that, according to Islam, men and women are not (and should not be) equal in all areas, such as *dia*[8]or inheritance. Residents in Baidoa tend to have the most conservative views on this issue.

All participants agree that women should be able to inherit property, as they do now, under the strictures of *Shari'a* law. They express no desire to alter these laws.

Only a minority of participants (principally those in Bosaso) agree that women and men should be considered equal in all areas, as well as have defined rights in the constitution over and above what Islam prescribes for them.

"For God's sake, women aren't missing any rights. All their rights are contained in the Holy Book."(Man, IDP, Mogadishu)

"The rights that the Book of Allah gave them are enough. They used to be buried alive and not given any work or learning opportunities; all that has been changed by Islamic Shari'a." (Traditional leader, Mogadishu)

"Religiously and traditionally, men and women cannot have equal rights."(Woman, IDP, Afgoye Rural)

"Women can be MPs, but she and her husband must agree on whether she will go out or stay indoors. Also, she can't be president of the country." (Businessman, Mogadishu)

"Women have rights to inherit property, but it should be according to Islamic Shari'a." (Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

"The constitution should specifically give rights to women." (Man, IDP, Bosaso)

6. **There is broad support for the right to join any organization of one's choice unless it involves a religious organization other than Islam.**

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[8] *Dia* refers to "blood-money," or the compensation paid to the family of a murdered person, traditionally a set number of camels or other livestock. The *dia* paid for the murder of a woman is less than that for a man.

Participants are supportive of the freedom to join any organization, but the one important caveat they add is that no Somali can have the right to abandon the Islamic religion. As such, they are fervently against the concept of freedom to practice one's religion of choice. They believe that as Somalia is a Muslim country, its people must practice Islam.

"Yes, everyone has the right to join the group he likes."(Man, Trader, Nairobi)

"Although there are different religions in the world, it is not acceptable to join a religion other than Islam."(Man, Trader, Afgoye Rural)

"Somalia is an Islamic state and people can only belong to the Islamic religion." (Man, Agro-Pastoralist, Dollow Rural)

7. There is widespread skepticism about full freedom of expression.

Most participants are wary of the concept of unbridled freedom of expression and thus place many caveats on this right. They say people are free to voice their beliefs publicly as long as their opinions:

- Don't cause "trouble" (undefined);
- Aren't indecent;
- Aren't contrary to Islamic teachings; and
- Aren't used to intimidate others.

Lurking behind their concerns seems to be a fear of resulting anarchy if everyone is allowed to freely express him or herself.

"It is not good for someone to tell what is indecent." (Businessman, Mogadishu)

"No one can go against the constitution." (Fisherman, Bandarbeyla Rural)

"No, I don't think people should write and say what they think since it may violate someone else's rights." (Small-scale businesswoman, Bosaso)

8. Many participants do not support offering special rights to minorities.[9]

When asked whether minorities should be guaranteed special rights, many are troubled by the concept because they see echoes of clanism. They don't accept the idea that offering special rights is actually a means of redressing the societal injustice they have earlier identified. They say that giving minorities special rights will increase divisiveness in society. Instead, they note that minorities should simply have the same rights as everyone else.

"No, there is no need to specify special rights because that will increase the problem."(Businessman, Dollow Rural*)*

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[9] This information is based on a very limited sample as many groups did not answer the question.

"Minority groups cannot have special rights; they can have the same rights of other Somalis."(Man, Farmer, Afgoye Rural)

CONCLUSIONS

1. Five broad themes emerge from the research:
   - Hatred of clanism and a yearning for justice and equality in Somali society.
   - A hunger for peace and security.
   - Extreme disappointment with the TFG.
   - A desire for a reduction in foreign influence.
   - Pride in Somali culture and religion and the desire to put the Somali imprimatur on Western concepts.

2. Participants want to create a society where clan is no longer a principal means of self-identification. They want all the clans to receive equal treatment and are thus strongly opposed to the 4.5 power-sharing formula.

3. Their wariness of federalism is tied to their concern about clanism and stoking divisions within society.

4. They are strongly supportive of reconciliation talks between the government and the opposition. They are weary of the upheaval within the country and hope for peace and stability.

5. Participants oppose the current government and have little hope that it can succeed in pulling the country out of the crisis. They want new and better leadership with the necessary skills and education to lead the country effectively.

6. They want their leadership to act in a professional and ethical manner and put the country's interests ahead of its own.

7. Specifically, they want the national government to:
   - Achieve peace;
   - Restore order;
   - Rid the country of foreign troops and reduce the role played by foreign governments; and
   - Improve their quality of life through improvements to education, healthcare, and infrastructure as well as the creation of economic opportunities.

8. They are fiercely attached to and proud of their religion. It provides an important means of identity. As such, they want a government that is based on Islamic principles.

9. Most are wary of ideas imported wholesale from the West (democracy, a constitution, federalism). Nevertheless, there is a possibility that some suspicions can be overcome if these concepts are allowed to take on a Somali flavor by importing elements of Islam and Somali culture.

10. Many of the rights that Westerners take for granted are threatening to participants:
    - Equal rights for women – because that clashes with Islamic law.
    - Full freedom of expression – because it stokes fear of conflict and anarchy.

- ▪ Full freedom of assembly … because it means that people can forsake Islam.
- ▪ Special rights set aside for minorities … because it raises the specter of clanism.

11. Ultimately, participants want to create a peaceful, just society by following a Somali-specific path.

APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

SOMALIA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Location	Gender	Age[10]	Lifestyle Type	Urban/Rural	Education	Methodology
Mogadishu	Male	Middle	Businessmen [11]	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Mogadishu	Male	Older	Businessmen	Urban	Primary	Focus Group
Mogadishu	Male	Middle	Businessmen	Urban	Primary	Focus Group
Mogadishu	Female	Middle	Family Providers	Urban	None-Primary	Focus Group
Mogadishu	Male	Younger	IDPs[12]	Urban	None-Primary	Focus Group
Mogadishu (inaccessible district)	Male	Middle	IDPs	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Mogadishu	Male	Middle	Traditional Leaders	Urban	Any	One-on-One Interviews
Mogadishu	Male	Middle	Fishermen	Urban	None-Primary	Focus Group
Dusamareb	Male	Older	Religious Leaders	Rural	Any	One-on-One Interviews
Dusamareb	Male	Younger	Pastoralists	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Dusamareb	Female	Middle	Family Providers	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Afgoye	Male	Older	Farmers	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Afgoye	Male	Middle	Traders	Rural	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Afgoye	Female	Younger	IDPs	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group

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[10] Younger refers to participants up to age 25; middle refers to participants age 26-40; older refers to participants more than 40 years old.

[11] Dealing in wholesale or imports and exports.

[12] Refers to "internally displaced persons."

SOMALIA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Location	Gender	Age	Lifestyle Type	Urban/Rural	Education	Methodology
Baledweyn	Male	Older	Traditional Leaders	Urban	Any	One-on One Interviews
Baledweyn	Male	Younger	Agro-Pastoralists	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Baledweyn	Male	Middle	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Baidoa (in Maay dialect)	Male	Younger	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Baidoa (in Maay dialect)	Female	Middle	Agro-Pastoralists	Urban	None	Focus Group
Baidoa	Male	Older	Traditional Leaders	Urban	None-Primary	One-on One Interviews
Luuq/Wajid	Male	Middle	Agro-Pastoralists	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Luuq/Wajid	Female	Middle	Agro-Pastoralists	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Dollow	Male	Younger	Businessmen	Rural	Secondary	Focus Group
Dollow	Male	Middle	Agro-Pastoralists	Rural	Primary	Focus Group
Dollow	Male	Older	IDPs	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Galkayo South	Male	Middle	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Galkayo South	Male	Middle	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Galkayo South	Male	Younger	IDPs	Rural	Primary	Focus Group
Galkayo North	Male	Older	Traditional Leaders	Urban	Any	One-on-One Interviews
GalkayoNorth	Male	Middle	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-	Focus Group

					Sec	

SOMALIA FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Location	Gender	Age	Lifestyle Type	Urban/Rural	Education	Methodology
Galkayo North	Female	Middle	IDPs	Rural	None	Focus Group
Garowe	Male	Older	Religious Leaders	Urban	Any	One-on One Interviews
Garowe	Male	Middle	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Garowe	Female	Younger	In school	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Bosaso	Male	Younger	IDPs	Urban	None-Primary	Focus Group
Bosaso	Male	Older	Businessmen	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Bosaso	Female	Younger	Small-scale business/street vendors	Urban	None-Primary	Focus Group
Bandarbeyla	Female	Older	Family Providers	Rural	None	Focus Group
Bandarbeyla	Male	Middle	Fishermen	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group
Kenya/Nairobi	Male	Middle	Traders	Urban	Sec-Univ	Focus Group
Kenya/Nairobi	Female	Younger	Traders	Urban	Primary-Sec	Focus Group
Kenya/Nairobi	Male	Older	2 Traditional Leaders 2 Religious leaders	Urban	None-Primary	One-on-One Interviews
Kenya/Nairobi	Female	Middle	Refugee-Returnees	Urban	None-Primary	Focus Group
Kenya/Rural	Male	Older	Convention Refugees	Rural	None-Primary	Focus Group

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY NOTES

Focus Group Research: Focus groups are open-ended group interviews directed by a moderator and following a pre-set guideline. The purpose of focus group research is to understand the attitudes, opinions and experiences of participants who are recruited for the exercise. Focus groups are particularly useful in gaining a deeper appreciation for the motivations, feelings and values behind participants' reactions. In addition, the group format enables respondents to participate in an exchange of ideas – thus revealing a more in-depth understanding of why opinions are held – that may not emerge in individual in-depth interviews or quantitative surveys. Focus group discussions are comprised of a small number of participants, typically 8-12 per group. However, depending on the situation, groups may be slightly smaller or larger than the ideal. For example, a women's group in a more isolated area may benefit from being larger because it is likely that one or more of the participants will refuse to speak at length, even if pressed.

Focus groups are recruited to be homogeneous – so, for example, men's and women's groups are conducted separately – to enhance the comfort level of the participants and to clarify the views of a particular sub-group. The number of groups conducted varies widely based on the goals of the research, but the total number of participants is always relatively small and cannot be considered statistically representative of the larger population. It is important to always be aware that focus groups are a qualitative, and not a quantitative, research tool.

Group Composition: The focus groups in this report were stratified by gender, age, lifestyle and education. Single clan groups were conducted where possible.

Age: Based on experience from past research in Africa, the age categories used are broadly defined as" younger," "middle" or "older." Younger refers to participants up to age 25, middle refers to participants ages 26-40,and older refers to participants over age 40. Given the difficulty of gathering participants in largely rural areas and since some people in Somalia do not know their exact age, the categories are used as a general guideline rather than as a strictly enforced criterion.

Education: Participants sampled in the groups had widely varying degrees of education, ranging from none through university. As much as possible, the groups were stratified by educational background. We did not attempt to stratify by education when we were recruiting special groups, such as traditional leaders, since in that case the category of participant was the more important criterion.

Leadership Roles: Groups are conducted separately with area leaders and ordinary citizens to prevent undue influence. In addition, traditional authorities and government officials are not allowed to sit in on discussions with ordinary citizens, even as observers. On the rare occasion when an area leader demands to be part of a group in which he was not meant to participate, that data is either excluded from the analysis or compared to the data from other groups to note any variance.

Logistics and Staffing: The logistical challenges of conducting research in a war-torn country such as Somalia are immense. NDI worked in partnership with a group of five (5) Somali CSOs that are active in Puntland and South Central as well as one that works among the Diaspora in Kenya.[13] To carry out the research, these organizations were able to use the strong relationships forged in the regions in which they work. Two (2) of the CSOs conducted the research in *Al Shabab*-controlled regions and performed enhanced due diligence to ensure the security of staff and financials.

Group Locations: The 38 focus groups outlined in this report were conducted in 13 locations throughout Somalia. (See the map at the beginning of this report and Appendix A for a list of focus group locations.)

Facilities: In more rural areas, there are few structures appropriate for focus group discussions. As a result, groups were sometimes conducted in open-air settings, although this reduces the privacy of the group.

Outside Influence: In some cases, local authorities are informed of the research activities before they begin. However, every effort is made to ensure there is no undue influence exerted on the participants in the groups. The focus group guidelines are not shared with local authorities prior to the meeting, except in the rare cases when disclosure is required to proceed with the research. Also, in the majority of instances, the participants are gathered in some random fashion. In this study, there was no case in which the findings from one or more groups differed radically from findings in the groups overall, which suggests that any local influence that may have occurred did not impact the research.

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[13] In consideration of the security of its local partners, NDI will not disclose the names of the organizations.

APPENDIX C: MODERATOR'S GUIDELINES

Focus Groups

I. INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is _____, and I am trying to learn more about what citizens in the different regions of Somalia think about the important issues. I am neutral and do <u>not</u> represent any political party or government office. I work for a non-governmental organization (NGO), and I am just here to collect information so that others can understand your situation here in [NAME OF VILLAGE/TOWN] better. I am the facilitator for today's discussion.

I want everyone to know that:

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Everyone's opinion is equally important. We want everyone to speak.
- If you disagree with someone, that is okay.
- This discussion is only between those of us here.
- I have this recorder to help me when I write the report. Your name will not be used in the report. The report will only say a [woman/man] from [location] said this or that. [DEMONSTRATE RECORDER IF NECESSARY]
- The person here is taking notes to help with the report.
- Please speak loudly so the recorder can pick up your voice.

Thank you. <u>Any questions before we begin</u>? Now let us begin.

II. NATIONAL IDENTITY AND CONFLICT

1. Do you think of people living in Somalia as one people or are there a lot of different peoples living in Somalia? Explain your answer.

2. What are the things that bind us as people living in Somalia?

   a. What are the things that divide us as people living in Somalia?

   b. Which is greater – the things that unite us or those that divide us?

3. Name all the reasons for the conflict in Somalia that you can think of.

4. Of all the type of conflicts you have mentioned, which <u>two</u> are the most worrisome for you and why?

   a. What is the solution for these two types of conflict?

III. GOVERNANCE & DEMOCRACY

1. Do you think having a unified national government would be a good thing OR not a good thing?

2. What are the most important things you want from a national government? [PROMPTS IF NEEDED: Security, peace and stability? Protection of human rights? Regulation of commerce?)

3. If you could set up your own government tomorrow, what would it be like?

    a. What would be the most important parts of your government?

4. What role would you want traditional and religious leaders to play in a new government?

5. When I say the word 'democracy,' what do you think of?

6. Do you think democracy would be a good system of government for Somalia? Why or why not? What is the reason for your answer?

IV. FEDERALISM

1. What does the word 'federalism' or the phrase 'federal system of government' mean to you?

2. A federal system of government means that each area of the country has some powers of its own but there is still a national government that has certain powers over the whole of the country. What do you think of this type of government?

3. Where would you want most of the power to be in a new Somalia government – in the national capital or in the other regions? Or some combination? Please describe.

4. If you were creating a government for Somalia, what things would you want the national government to have power over?

    a. What things would you want the regional government to have power over?

    [PROMPTS IF NEEDED: Who should have power over defense? Security? Foreign affairs? Education? Health? Taxation? Foreign Investment? Natural Resources?]

5. Do the natural resources of Somalia belong to all Somalis or only to the people in the area they are found?

V. TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Is there a government in Somalia now? Please describe.

2. Is the government making things better or worse in this area than they were in 2008? How has the situation changed?

3. What do you think is the most important work the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) can do? Please explain.

4. Do you think that the TFG represents you and your interests? Please explain.

5. Do you think the TFG will be able to unite Somalia and bring peace and security to Somalis? Please explain.

6. What do you see as the major obstacles to TFG success?

7. Do you think the TFG treats all citizens of Somalia equally? Please explain.

8. Have you heard of the "4.5 power-sharing formula"?

    [IF YES:] Do you think this arrangement is good for Somalia? Why or why not?

9. How do you suggest the TFG can improve?

VI. CONSTITUTION AND CONSTITUTION-MAKING

1. What does the word 'constitution' mean to you?

    [IF UNKNOWN, PROVIDE THIS DEFINITION:]
    A constitution is a set of rules for government. It defines what kind of government there will be and what powers a government will have. A constitution also defines limits to a government's powers. A constitution can also guarantee certain rights and freedoms to the people who are governed. A constitution is the strongest law in the country and everyone must follow it, from the ordinary people of Somalia to the leaders of government to the traditional and religious leaders.

    a. After hearing that description, do you think it would be a good thing or not a good thing for Somalia to have a new constitution? Please explain.

2. Can a new constitution help bring stability to Somalia? Please explain.

3. If a new constitution for Somalia is developed, it will come from a process that includes participation from the people of Somalia. What would be the best way for you to participate in a new Somalia constitution?

4. What groups of people is it important to include in discussions about a new constitution?

5. What do you think are the most important things that should be included in a new constitution for Somalia?

6. What would be the best way for a draft constitution to become the law for Somalia – through a referendum of the Somali people or through meetings and decisions of leaders of government?

7. In the past, has development been distributed fairly throughout the country? Explain your answer.

   a. Will it important or not important for the new Somalia constitution to state that all regions will be developed equally? Why?

VII. CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

1. Who should have the right to be a citizen of Somalia?

   a. Should a person whose mother is a citizen of Somalia, and whose father is not, be entitled to Somali citizenship?

2. A constitution can say that everyone – whatever their ethnicity, race, clan, religion, language, political views or gender – is equal before the law. Is this a good thing?

3. A constitution can say that people are free to join any kind of organization they want, for example a political, religious, labor, or social group or organization. What do you think of this?

4. Should everyone have the freedom to say or write whatever they want to express?

5. Should the media – radio stations, newspapers and television - be allowed to report truthfully without censorship on any matter they choose?

6. Should a new constitution allow everyone to practice the religion of his/her choice?

7. How can a new constitution guarantee rights to Somali women?

   a. Should women's rights be the same as rights that men have or is it better to define special rights for women?

   b. What do you think about women's right to inherit property? Please explain.

8. How can a constitution guarantee rights to minority communities in Somalia?

   a. Is it necessary to define special rights for minority communities? Please explain.

9. What do you think are the most important rights and freedoms a constitution can guarantee to you?

VIII. JUSTICE

1. Describe how disputes or other issues relating to law are handled currently.

2. What would be the best system of law for Somalia – should it be the local form of *Xeer*, OR *Shari'a* OR laws passed according to international standards OR some combination of these systems of law? Please explain.

3. If *Shari'a* law is applied in Somalia, how should it be applied– should it apply only to family matters OR as the law that governs all matters?

One-on-One Interviews

I. INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is _____, and I am trying to learn more about what citizens in the different regions of Somalia think about the important issues. I am neutral and do <u>not</u> represent any political party or government office. I work for a non-governmental organization (NGO), and I am just here to collect information so that others can understand your situation here in [NAME OF VILLAGE/TOWN] better.

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- This discussion is only between us here.
- I have this recorder to help me when I write the report. Your name will not be used in the report. The report will only say a [woman/man] from [location] said this or that. [DEMONSTRATE RECORDER IF NECESSARY]
- Please speak loudly so the recorder can pick up your voice.

Thank you. <u>Any questions before we begin</u>? Now let us begin.

II. NATIONAL IDENTITY AND CONFLICT

1. What are the things that bind us as people living in Somalia?

    a. What are the things that divide us as people living in Somalia?

    b. Which is greater – the things that unite us or those that divide us?

2. Name all the reasons for the conflict in Somalia that you can think of.

3. What do you suggest is the best way to solve the conflict in Somalia?

III. GOVERNANCE & DEMOCRACY

1. If you could set up your own government tomorrow, what would it be like?

    a. What would be the most important parts of your government?

2. When I say the word 'democracy,' what do you think of?

3. Do you think democracy would be a good system of government for Somalia? Why or why not?

4. What role should you as a [traditional leader or religious leader] play in government?

IV. FEDERALISM

1. If you were creating a government for Somalia, what things would you want the national government to have power over?

    a. What things would you want the regional government to have power over?

    [PROMPTS IF NEEDED: Who should have power over defense? Security? Foreign affairs? Education ?Health? Taxation? Foreign Investment? Natural Resources?]

2. Do the natural resources of Somalia belong to all Somalis or only to the people in the area they are found?

V. TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Do you think that the current government in Somalia, the Transitional Federal Government, will be able to unite Somalia and bring peace and security to Somalis? Please explain.

2. Do you think the TFG represents you and your interests? Please explain.

3. Do you think the 4.5 power-sharing formula is a good arrangement for Somalia? Why or why not?

4. How do you suggest the TFG can improve?

VI. CONSTITUTION AND CONSTITUTION-MAKING

1. What does the word 'constitution' mean to you?

    [IF UNKNOWN, PROVIDE THIS DEFINITION:]
    A constitution is a set of rules for government. It defines what kind of government there will be and what powers a government will have. A constitution also defines limits to a government's powers. A constitution can also guarantee certain rights and freedoms to the people who are governed. A constitution is the strongest law in the country and everyone must follow it, from the ordinary people of Somalia to the leaders of government to the traditional and religious leaders.

    a. After hearing that description, do you think it would be a good thing or not a good thing for Somalia to have a new constitution? Please explain.

2. If a new constitution for Somalia is developed, it will come from a process that includes participation from the people of Somalia. As a [traditional leader or religious leader, what should your role be in helping create a new Somalia constitution?

3. What do you think are the most important things that should be included in a new constitution for Somalia?

4. What would be the best way for a draft constitution to become the law for Somalia – through a referendum [vote] of the Somali people or through meetings and decisions of leaders of government?

VII. CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

1. A constitution can say that everyone – whatever their ethnicity, race, clan, religion, language, political views or gender – is equal before the law. Is this a good thing?

2. Should a new constitution allow everyone to practice the religion of his/her choice?

3. How can a new constitution guarantee rights to Somali women?

   a. Should women's rights be the same as rights that men have or is it better to define special rights for women?

   b. What do you think about women's right to inherit property? Please explain.

4. What do you think are the most important rights and freedoms a constitution can guarantee to you?

VIII. JUSTICE

1. What would be the best system of law for Somalia – should it be the local form of *Xeer*, OR *Shari'a* OR laws passed according to international standards OR some combination of these systems of law? Please explain.

2. If *Shari'a* law is applied, how should it be applied in Somalia – should it apply only to family matters OR as the law that governs all matters?

APPENDIX D: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrea L. Levy is the Interim Program Manager for the National Democratic Institute's public opinion research programs in Sudan and Somalia. Ms. Levy has worked in the research field for 19 years and managed a research study for NDI in Burundi.Her international research experience includes projects implemented for the governments of the Bahamas, Bolivia, Colombia, Indonesia, Poland and Wales. Previous to working with NDI, Ms. Levy was senior vice president and director of research at SS+K in New York, where she managed and conducted opinion research for Fortune 500 companies from a variety of industries. She holds a master's degree in international relations from Georgetown University.