

Key Barriers to Democratization in Somalia: Corruption, Clan Affiliation, Climate Change, and Human Capital Constraints

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Abstract: *Since gaining independence Somalia has struggled to establish a governance system based on the rule of law. As we all know in our history Somalia has faced numerous challenges in its democratization journey since gaining independence in 1960 & this study examines four critical obstacles: corruption, entrenched clan affiliations, climate change, and human capital constraints. Corruption erodes trust in democratic institutions, while clan-based politics fragments governance. Climate change exacerbates socio-economic vulnerabilities, and limited human capital development hinders civic engagement. This paper argues that overcoming these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including institutional reforms, climate resilience strategies, and investments in education. The study highlights the role of both domestic efforts and international partnerships in fostering sustainable democratic governance in Somalia. Corruption: Widespread corruption undermines democratic institutions, hinders the rule of law, and erodes public trust in the democratization process of our Country/Somalia. Clan Affiliation: Deep-rooted clan affiliations often supersede national identity, leading to political fragmentation, conflicts and difficulties in building a cohesive & inclusive democratic system in Somalia. The democratization improvement in Somalia faces significant hurdles in the form of corruption, climate change, limited human capital capacity, and entrenched clan affiliations. Overcoming these obstacles requires concerted efforts from both domestic and international stakeholders to foster transparency, resilience, capacity-building, and inclusive governance structures. Climate Changes: Environmental challenges, such as droughts and other climate-related issues, contribute to resource scarcity, exacerbate existing tensions, and pose obstacles to sustainable development and political stability. Human Capitals constraints: Limited education and skills development hinder the capacity of the population to actively engage in democratic processes, creating challenges for the establishment of a well-informed and participatory citizenry.*

Keywords: Democratization, Somalia, Corruption, Clan Politics, Climate Change, Human Capital.

1. Introduction

The democratization processes in Somalia face formidable challenges rooted in corruption, hindering the establishment of transparent and accountable governance. Climate changes including recurrent droughts exacerbate resource scarcity and strain the nation's ability to achieve sustainable development. Insufficient investment in the capacity of human capital, marked by limited education and skills, impedes active citizen participation. Additionally, the deeply entrenched clan affiliations overshadowing national identity pose a significant barrier to building a cohesive and inclusive democratic system in Somalia, therefore: this paper aims to analyze the key barriers hindering Somalia's democratization process and explore potential strategies to overcome these obstacles & through understanding these obstacles is essential for policymakers, researchers, and development agencies working towards Somalia's democratic transition but also by addressing these issues can contribute to political stability, economic development, and social cohesion in our future progress.

Corruption

Somalia has consistently ranked among the most corrupt countries in Africa and globally, a trend that has persisted for years. Somalia has faced persistent challenges related to corruption, which has significantly hindered the country's political stability, economic development, and overall social well-being. Corruption in Somalia is deeply rooted and manifests in various forms, including bribery, embezzlement,

nepotism and other forms of mismanagement of public funds. The absence of a strong central government for extended periods has allowed corruption to flourish & continue all the time, with different factions and authorities exploiting their positions for personal gain. This has contributed to a lack of essential services to the public, weak institutions for decades and most importantly a sense of mistrust among the population. International efforts to address this issue of corruption in Somalia have almost failed by facing lot of obstacles due to the complex political and security situation, making it a persistent challenge for the country's progress. There were number of writers who wrote reports & research about the issue of corruption in Somalia including:

Leslie, M. (2014). Engaging Corrupt Somalia (Thesis, Master of Social Sciences (MSocSc)). University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/10289/9213.....> "Consequently, this thesis examines corruption in Somalia, and its presence in international aid based upon three key factors - adverse clan self-interest, international geo-political self-interest, and lack of effective state building support."

This part about the corruption of international aid of Somalia was questioned many time since it has been provoked the dignity of Somalis generally & dismantled to found the strong governing system of Somalia for decades. This jeopardize was participated from various governments including the region & outside the continent but it was strongly participated through international Aid organizations who was directly corrupting

those government officials as well as other none government organization in Somalia just for one purpose & that is avoiding strong & transparency government institutions for the Somalis so that this crime can continue as much as they can.

Corruption in Somalia is a pervasive and deeply entrenched problem that permeates various aspects of society and governance. Here's a summary highlighting key points:

- 1) **Systemic Corruption:** Corruption is systemic in Somalia, affecting government institutions, businesses, and daily interactions. It is fueled by weak governance structures, lack of transparency, and limited accountability mechanisms.
- 2) **Political Patronage:** Political patronage and nepotism play a significant role in perpetuating corruption, with government positions often used to reward loyalty rather than merit. This undermines the effectiveness of public institutions and erodes public trust in the government.
- 3) **Informal Economy:** Somalia's largely informal economy provides fertile ground for corruption to thrive. Illicit activities such as smuggling, illegal trade, and extortion contribute to a culture of corruption and impunity.
- 4) **Resource Mismanagement:** Mismanagement of natural resources, particularly in the context of Somalia's valuable marine resources and potential oil reserves, has been associated with corruption and lack of transparency in licensing and revenue distribution.
- 5) **Impact on Development:** Corruption hampers development efforts by diverting resources away from essential services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. It undermines economic growth, impedes investment, and exacerbates poverty and inequality.
- 6) **Security Implications:** Corruption undermines security and stability in Somalia by weakening state institutions, fostering grievances, and fueling conflict dynamics. It can also facilitate the activities of extremist groups and criminal networks.
- 7) **International Concerns:** The pervasiveness of corruption in Somalia is a matter of international concern, particularly for donors and **investors**. Efforts to provide assistance and support development initiatives are often hindered by concerns about corruption and the risk of funds being misappropriated.

And we can say in generally addressing corruption in Somalia requires comprehensive reforms aimed at strengthening governance, promoting transparency and accountability, and building institutional capacity. This includes measures such as enhancing legal frameworks, improving public financial management systems, empowering anti-corruption agencies, and fostering a culture of integrity and ethical leadership. International support and cooperation are also crucial in efforts to combat corruption and promote sustainable development in Somalia.

2. Clan Affiliation

Clan affiliation in Somalia is a significant aspect of social and political identity. Somali society is traditionally organized into clan basis which are large kinship groups mostly.

Clans play a crucial role in Somali society, shaping social relationships, governance structures, and political dynamics. They influence various aspects of life generally, including resource distribution, conflict resolution, and political alliances. Clan affiliations often play crucial role in determining political representation and power dynamics, both at the local and national levels. However, it's essential to note that while clans hold cultural and historical importance, efforts have been made to foster national unity and move towards a more inclusive political system in Somalia. & there is no doubt that Somalia still needs to go long way to exit this dominated clan affiliated life & to become democratic & transparent societies that contributes lot not only in Somali Nation but also to the rest of the world at large.

Transitioning away from clan affiliation of life, Somalia involves promoting national unity, fostering inclusive governance, and emphasizing individual identity and citizenship over clan identity. This shift requires strengthening institutions that serve the entire population, irrespective of clan, and implementing policies that discourage discrimination based on clan affiliations. Encouraging education, economic opportunities, and cross-clan collaborations can contribute to a more unified and inclusive Somali society. It's a gradual process that involves building trust, promoting equality, and emphasizing shared national values.

Clan affiliation is a central aspect of social organization in Somalia, deeply ingrained in its culture and identity. Here's a comprehensive explanation:

- 1) **Clan Structure:** Somali society is traditionally organized along clan lines, with clans forming the primary social units. Clans are large kinship groups tracing their ancestry to a common ancestor, and they often consist of sub-clans, lineages, and extended families.
- 2) **Importance of Lineage:** Lineage "Qabiil" in Somali, is critical in determining one's clan affiliation. Individuals typically identify strongly with their lineage, which influences various aspects of their lives, including social interactions, marriage arrangements, and access to resources.
- 3) **Social Cohesion:** Clans provide a sense of identity, belonging, and security for their members. They serve as social support networks, offering assistance in times of need and providing a mechanism for resolving disputes and conflicts.
- 4) **Political Dynamics:** Clan affiliation plays a significant role in Somali politics, where power-sharing arrangements often involve around clan representation. Clan elders, known as traditional leaders or "guurti," hold considerable influence and are involved in decision-making processes at the local, regional, and national levels.

- 5) **Conflict and Cooperation:** While clan dynamics can foster solidarity and cooperation within and between clans, they can also lead to competition and conflict, particularly in contexts of resource scarcity, political competition, and territorial disputes.
 - 6) **Economic Implications:** Clan networks often extend into economic activities, with clans controlling access to land, livestock, and other resources. Clan-based business networks facilitate trade and entrepreneurship, but they can also limit economic opportunities for individuals outside of influential clans.
 - 7) **Contemporary Relevance:** Clan affiliation remains a salient aspect of Somali identity, shaping social interactions, political alliances, and economic opportunities. Despite efforts to promote national unity and state-building, clan loyalties continue to influence perceptions of belonging and allegiance.
 - 8) **Challenges and Opportunities:** While clan affiliation can provide social cohesion and support, it also poses challenges to state-building and governance in Somalia. Efforts to establish a unified national identity and promote inclusive politics often face resistance from entrenched clan interests. However, recognizing and engaging with clan dynamics can also offer opportunities for fostering reconciliation, building consensus, and promoting peace and stability.
- Climate change**
- Climate change is affecting our continent in various ways. Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events are observed. These shifts impact ecosystems, water resources, agriculture, and human health. Sea level rise poses a threat to coastal areas, and vulnerable communities face increased risks of displacement and food insecurity. Adaptation and mitigation efforts are crucial to address the wide-ranging impacts of climate change on our continent.
- Somalia, with its arid to semi-arid climate, is experiencing climate change impacts such as rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, increased frequency of droughts, and sea level rise along its coastline. These changes adversely affect agriculture, water resources and livelihoods but also it contributes to food insecurity, displacement, and humanitarian challenges in the region. Ongoing efforts are needed to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change in Somalia.
- By addressing these challenges, Somalia can work towards building resilience, reducing vulnerabilities, and contributing to global efforts to combat climate change so to mitigate and adapt to this climate change in Somalia the following points should be considered:
- 1) **Water Management:** Implement sustainable water management practices to address water scarcity, including rainwater harvesting, efficient irrigation techniques, and the development of water storage infrastructure.
 - 2) **Agricultural Resilience:** Promote climate-resilient agricultural practices, crop diversification, and the use of drought-resistant crops to enhance food security and reduce vulnerability to changing climate conditions.
 - 3) **Renewable Energy:** Invest in renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and improve energy access in rural areas.
 - 4) **Ecosystem Conservation:** Protect and restore ecosystems, including forests and mangroves, which play a crucial role in carbon sequestration and maintaining biodiversity. This can also help prevent soil erosion and desertification.
 - 5) **Early Warning Systems:** Establish and enhance early warning systems for extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, to enable timely evacuation and preparedness measures, reducing the impact on communities.
 - 6) **Infrastructure Resilience:** Build climate-resilient infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events, including floods and cyclones, and ensure that urban planning takes climate change into account to minimize risks.
 - 7) **Community Engagement:** Involve local communities in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, incorporating traditional knowledge and practices. This fosters community resilience and ensures the effectiveness of interventions.
 - 8) **Education and Awareness:** Increase public awareness and education about climate change impacts and adaptation measures, empowering communities to take proactive steps in reducing their carbon footprint and adapting to changing conditions.
 - 9) **Government Policies:** Develop and enforce policies that promote sustainable development, reduce deforestation, and incentivize businesses and individuals to adopt eco-friendly practices.
 - 10) **International Collaboration:** Collaborate with international organizations and neighboring countries to share knowledge, resources, and technology for effective climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Human capital constraints.

The human capital situation in Somalia is deeply influenced by a complex interplay of historical, social, economic, and political factors, which have contributed to its current state of underdevelopment and fragility.

In addressing the poor human capacity in Somalia it requires a comprehensive approach including conflict resolution, investment in education and healthcare infrastructure as well as sustainable economic development for all. International assistance and collaboration with local and national authorities are essential to improving the overall well-being and capacity of the Somali population so the employment rates can improve which will definitely lead the economic improvement of the country & independent of Somalia at large to import skilled people from abroad including East African Community block which Somalia have joined recently & the key issues that is contributing to these crisis includes:

- 1) **Conflict and Instability:** Decades of conflict and political instability have disrupted the normal functioning of society, leading to displacement, destruction of infrastructure, and a breakdown of essential services.
- 2) **Limited Access to Education:** The conflict has severely impacted the education system, resulting in the closure of schools and limited access to formal education. Many children are deprived of learning opportunities, hindering the development of human capital.
- 3) **Healthcare Challenges:** Ongoing conflict and economic difficulties have weakened the healthcare system, making it challenging for the population to access essential medical services. This contributes to a higher prevalence of health issues and a lower overall well-being.
- 4) **Economic Constraints:** High levels of unemployment, poverty, and lack of economic opportunities hinder the development of skills and overall economic prosperity. The economic challenges further exacerbate the difficulties faced by the population.
- 5) **Youth Unemployment:** A significant portion of the population consists of young people facing high levels of unemployment. This not only limits opportunities for skill development but also contributes to social and economic instability.
- 6) **Humanitarian Crises:** Recurring humanitarian crises, including droughts and famines, have exacerbated the challenges faced by the population, leading to food shortages, water scarcity, and increased vulnerability.
- 7) **Internal Displacement:** Prolonged conflict has resulted in widespread internal displacement, with many people forced to leave their homes. Displaced populations often face increased difficulties in accessing basic services and rebuilding their lives

3. Conclusion

Somalia's democratization process is significantly hindered by corruption, entrenched clan affiliations, climate change, and human capital limitations. Addressing these challenges requires institutional reforms, anti-corruption measures, climate adaptation policies, and investments in education and capacity-building. Both domestic and international efforts are necessary to foster a transparent, inclusive, and sustainable democratic system in Somalia & through addressing these challenges correctly, Somalia can move closer through achieving more stable and democratic society for its people.

4. Recommendation

To address the major obstacles hindering the democratization process in Somalia, several recommendations are crucial:

- 1) **Corruption:** Implement robust anti-corruption measures, including strengthening institutions, enhancing transparency in government operations, and enforcing accountability mechanisms to combat corruption at all levels.
- 2) **Clan Affiliation:** Foster inclusive political dialogue and reconciliation processes to mitigate the influence of clan

affiliations on governance structures, promote national unity, and build consensus across diverse communities.

- 3) **Climate Change:** Develop and implement climate adaptation strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change, including investing in sustainable resource management practices, enhancing disaster preparedness, and promoting community resilience.
- 4) **Capacity of Human Capital:** Prioritize investments in education, vocational training, and skill development programs to build a capable workforce capable of supporting effective governance and democratic participation.

By addressing these recommendations comprehensively, Somalia can overcome the major obstacles to its democratization process and progress towards a more stable, inclusive, and democratic society for its future.

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