
Good Governance in the Somalia Context
Supporting Local governance where there is no government: UNDP's Experience
by Ali S. Hassan (UNDP/Somalia), September 1998

Table of Contents

Part 1

1. Background
2. Pre-Crisis: UNDP Country Programme
3. During Crisis: **Governance** Issues at Local Levels
4. **Governance** Issues: National Level
5. Lessons Learned: Pre-Crisis/Crisis Response
- 5.1 Pre-Crisis

Part 2

6. Post Crisis Response
- 6.1 Political
- 6.2 Financial
- 6.3 Economic
- 6.5 Social
7. Role of Bi-Lateral and Multi-Lateral Aid to Destabilize Countries

Part 3

8. Current UNDP **Somalia** Strategy
- 8.1 Civic Education and Warn Torn Societies Projects
- 8.2 **Somalia** Rehabilitation Programme
- 8.3 **Somalia** Civil Protection Programme
- 8.4 United Nations Development Office for **Somalia** (UNDOS)

Part 4

9. Lessons Learned: Post Crisis
- 9.1 The Role of the Private Sector
- 9.2 Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and Community Based Organizations (CBO)
- 10 Conclusions

Part 1

1. Background

Presently, there is no single **Somalia**. Following the collapse of Siyad Barre's regime in 1991, a political vacuum emerged in **Somalia**. All public institutions disintegrated. Virtually all political, economic and social activity underwent a process of extreme decentralization. In several parts of the former Somali Republic, new entities of **governance** have since appeared, but their emergence has been uneven and the most advanced among them remain relatively weak. Apart from formal administrative structures, a range of entities of the civil society at large - elders, Islamic courts, business groups, women associations, local NGOs, etc have emerged to play a variety of roles in defining community priorities and making resource allocation decisions.

Parts of Southern **Somalia** remain in conflict and crisis while others in the North have established relative peace and stability and are experiencing some social and economic recovery. Large parts of the country,

however, are in transition, somewhere between crisis and recovery. Throughout **Somalia** the population remains heavily armed and the security situation is very volatile. Armed conflict and - to an increasing extent - acts of lawlessness continue to disrupt the relief and development operations of the eclectic and diminishing representation of the international aid community which the humanitarian crisis of 1992/93 left behind.

Somalia's economy is crippled by civil war, destruction of physical infrastructure, lack of investment and rampant unemployment. Currently, **Somalia** is a Least Developed Country (LDC) which ranked 172 out of 174 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) in 1996. Due to the lack of relevant statistical data, it has dropped out of 1997 HDI reporting altogether. It remains an economy in which the short-term and uncontrolled interests of a few and pressure of the population struggling to extract a living from marginal lands and coastal waters have led to widespread poverty and environmental degradation. The striking feature of the eight-year old complex emergency of **Somalia**, however, remains the absence of an overall peace accord, sound **governance** framework, and a legislative national government.

On this **context**, establishment of administrative structures is one of the most complex challenges facing the Somali people: as mechanisms for power and resource sharing, public institutions are potential causes of, and solutions to, conflict.

Previous attempts to re-introduce government to **Somalia**, particularly in the UNOSOM period, have tended to reflect external priorities and not necessarily the explicit choices of the Somali people, leading to untenable administrative arrangements. Where local authorities have emerged, they tend to be hampered by lack of experience, expertise, organization, and resources.

2. Pre-Crisis: UNDP Country Programme

UNDP has a long history in **Somalia** which dates back since 1963, only three years after the country gained its independence in July 1960. Since then, UNDP programmes and resources grew to be the second highest in the Arab Region before the civil war erupted in **Somalia** in 1991. However, UNDP's resources did not come close to bi-lateral and multi-lateral assistance that poured into **Somalia** during the Cold War. Furthermore, since UNDP has not concentrated on particular areas where it could have made an impact, its programmes were so widely scattered that there was very little impact if at all.

The bulk of UNDP's projects followed the pattern of technical assistance in the form of assisting line government ministries in training, building their capacities and providing them with some equipment. Other projects in the production sector (agriculture, fishery, poultry and livestock) provided assistance on ways to increase production and improve quality. However, the real contribution of these projects to enhance both the technical ability of the line ministries and the improvement of production was hampered by the overall state of the country's economy. A situation where government machinery was corrupt, less efficient and lacked a clear economic policy and direction.

Other United Nations Agencies such as FAO, UNICEF and UNHCR have raised more resources than UNDP and attracted both bi-lateral and multi-lateral funding. Their projects were more visible, known to the Somalis and donors and had made some impact to the communities. These projects include: FAO, (assistance to small farmers for seed multiplication, building feeder roads, extension programmes, cross fertilization, assistance), UNICEF, (to primary education and curriculum improvement, teacher training programmes, immunization of mothers and children, improving water and sanitation), and, for UNHCR, assisting a large number of refugees and reintegration of thousands of these refugees back to their communities. None of the above mentioned projects have survived during the civil war.

3. During Crisis: Governance Issues at Local Levels

During this period (1993-present), UNDP and other UN agencies had put emphasis on assisting local authorities at village, district and regional levels in some parts of **Somalia**, particularly, the North, to

establish local **governance** structures and build capacities. This has enabled communities to consolidate peace, control militia activities, and organize themselves to undertake some rehabilitation work and to dialogue with aid agencies and donor countries to jump-start the following areas which they have prioritized.

1. Training of local authorities in participatory **governance**, consensus building among the different interest groups, and organization of local municipal elections.
2. Training locally appointed authorities in identifying priorities, collecting taxes and establishing mechanisms for Transparent public expenditures.
3. Training local police, the judiciary, and relevant civic leaders to work together to maintain law and order, protect human rights and contain disturbances and violence before it erupts into major conflicts.
4. Providing assistance in the rehabilitation of office premises for local authorities, basic office tools and support to local law enforcement authorities for uniforms and communication equipment.

4. Governance issues: National Level

The scenario gets more complex in addressing **governance** issues at the national level. The fact that some regions have already established their own regional administrations and made their intentions to participate a federal future government known is both positive and negative. On the positive side, these regions have put their acts together and established their own local authorities. Therefore, their position in organized negotiations for power sharing at the national level will be enhanced and strengthened.

On the negative side, existing differences among those regional leaders will resurface once national power sharing is put on the table and it could erupt into major disputes and disagreements which could further delay the discussions at the macro (national) level. This could lead, for example, to a divided leadership representing one region or regions that could weaken their bargaining position.

Once and if a national government is agreed by the different groups in **Somalia**, other big challenges still lay ahead. **Governance** issues at the national level include:

1. Drafting a national constitution that spells out clearly the type of national government (federal, confederate, etc.) Somalis need.
2. Formation of an inclusive national government.
3. Demobilization of all existing militia and the formation of civilian police force.
4. Organization of free and fair elections, preceded by voter registration and education.
5. Taking the task of rebuilding the public institutions.
6. Rebuilding the trust and confidence among the Somali people

5. Lessons learned: Pre-Crisis/Crisis Response

5.1 Pre-Crisis

1. At the start of the crisis in **Somalia** in 1988, UNDP was not in a position to avert the looming crisis due to its mandate that did not allow it to intervene in any country's internal affairs and that left it with limited leverage. Further, UNDP did not take the initiative to send alarming signals to its headquarters to recommend discussions of the **Somalia** situation at the UN Security Council level. The Council could have appointed an international mediator to facilitate discussions and call the opposition groups and the government at the time to engage in peaceful dialogue. Only the United States Congress raised the issue of human rights abuse in the country and had suspended the shipment of armies to the Siad Barre government.

However, their embassy in Mogadishu remained open. Other countries in the Security Council made no protests about the deteriorating situation in **Somalia**.

2. Neither UNDP nor any other organization had anticipated the extent of damage, destruction, looting and uprising that destroyed the country. Everybody was caught by surprise because there was no established system within the UN to analyze and try to prevent the crisis.

3. UNDP's leverage for a dialogue with the government was minimal and there was no coordinated UN system that could take one common position. UN agencies were more concerned with their relationship with the government than addressing the issues at hand.

4. Human rights violations that had occurred in the past were not raised by UNDP. These include the massacre, detention without trial and disappearance of innocent civilians in Hargeisa in 1985-90, in the Central Regions in 1987-90, and Mogadishu in 1989 where about forty young university students were rounded up and killed outside the capital. It happened that the only survivor of the massacre was a brother of a UNDP staff member and UNDP was therefore obliged to report this incident to the UN.

5. Perhaps the whole world was a different place in 1990 when the civil war started in **Somalia**. Only after Iraqi forces occupied Kuwait and the United States-led UN intervention in **Somalia** failed, followed by the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, was the international community awakened.

UNDP, other UN agencies and the international community have helped to lay down a foundation for basic local **governance**, promotion of peaceful co-existence and economic recovery in some regions. However, as other parts of the country emerge from insecurity and lawlessness and start rebuilding their communities, they expect a share of the peace dividend. In this regard, UNDP, other UN agencies and the international community at large are expected to help these newly emerging communities establish local administrative structures that can provide social services in health, education and water.

Furthermore, as the country is moving toward reconciliation and the formation of a national government, many questions remain unanswered about what form of a government **Somalia** will have. Past and recent experiences discourage a centralized form of government that was corrupt, marginalized regional development in favour of the capital. Some regions of the country have already formed local administrations that they want to be part of a future "federal" **Somalia**.

In the past, UNDP's mandate did not include holding dialogue with host governments and discuss issues of human rights, transparency of public expenditure, improving the living conditions and granting freedom of speech, association and press to its citizens. The changing geo-politics of the world and the many recent crisis around the globe and Africa in particular created an opportunity where the UN and UNDP could voice their concerns.

Today, this has changed. UNDP is called upon by member states to provide assistance to address **governance** issues. Furthermore, national governments are learning themselves and trying to meet the challenges of the twentieth century. These countries are now more receptive to new ideas, have institutionalized multi-party systems, held elections, decentralized government structures, privatized public entities, and are becoming more responsible in respecting human rights, press freedoms, etc.

Part 2

6. Post Crisis Response

The UNOSOM intervention of 1992-95 has created high levels of expectation in which Somalis tend to believe that the United Nations has unlimited funds and resources and that it can and must provide everything. During this period, many people were able to secure employment, serve as money exchange

dealers, and perform sub-contracting tasks. Others were contracted to perform logistics for humanitarian and relief distribution, and to provide local security. In this regard, a lot of money was put into circulation that had either direct or indirect effect of the whole population. The withdrawal of American troops and the closure of UN operations in **Somalia** brought to a halt a period of economic boom.

In the future, UNDP will be asked to assist the future government both with financial and technical assistance. In the following paragraphs, I will try to underline the areas that UNDP's assistance will be needed. And even though UN agencies have tried to address the issue of lack of resources and donor fatigue to their Somali partners, the message is not well received as yet.

6.1 Political

Somali interests at regional and international organizations have not been represented for the past eight years. Regional organizations such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Arab League, the Non Aligned Movement and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) of which **Somalia** was an active and, in some cases, a founding member, underwent reorganization and overhaul.

The end of the cold war, globalization and the need for active and stronger regional organizations necessitated these changes. Today, **Somalia**'s seat in all these organizations including the United Nations General Assembly remain vacant. Any future government will find it difficult to have representations in all these forums due to lack of resources, and skilled manpower.

UNDP's role during the post crisis stage will be to train Somalis to fill these positions, provide technical assistance and experienced short term consultants to advise the Somalis meet the challenges of the changing world.

6.2 Financial

Imagine a country with no central bank, several different bank notes in circulation, no hard currency reserves and no means to access international lending institutions. The latter is due to arrears not paid to the WB and IMF but expected without giving due consideration to the realities existing in **Somalia** today that will most likely prevail in the near future.

Furthermore, since all public institutions were completely destroyed, the financial resources required to restore and rehabilitate these institutions to a minimum basic standard will be enormous and hard to find.

UNDP's role in this regard will be to provide material and technical support to the government to enable the authorities negotiate with donors and other financial institutions for quick financial support. In this regard, the expectations of the future government will be so high that whatever UNDP provides might not be enough, given the dire situation that the country will be facing.

6.3 Economic

The Somali economy is mainly based on livestock, agriculture and marine resources. All economic infrastructure such as ports, airports, telecommunications, power, road network, and irrigation systems have been destroyed or looted. Saudi Arabia, the main importer of Somali livestock, has recently imposed a ban on the livestock due to "Rift Valley Fever", an endemic disease that could cause human fatality.

Both the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agricultural Organizations (FAO) of the UN have cleared **Somalia** of such a disease, but the Saudi government is yet to reverse its earlier decision. The ban came at the height of the main Haj (pilgrimage) export season. This has denied the Somali livestock

traders and the population at large millions of dollars of revenue. The other two main export items are hampered by poor infrastructure, lack of handling, processing, packaging and cooling systems.

UNDP through its ongoing projects is providing limited assistance for the revival of the economy through ports and airport rehabilitation, and creation of revenue-generating activities. UNDP's projects also collect basic economic data for dissemination to UN bodies, donors and to be used by the future Somali government. In this regard, UNDP will be among the first organizations to be called by any Somali government to provide assistance in drafting national economic and sectoral plans, to provide extensive training and financial assistance in the rehabilitation and furnishing of some government line ministries.

6.5 Social

The social fabric of the Somali nation has disintegrated. Because of the civil war, thousands of people have moved back to their traditional places for safety. The new safe haven could not cope with the needs of the new urban people, in housing, water, health facilities, education, and employment opportunities. In fact, they became a burden to already fragile communities.

Following these large displacements of people, a whole generation of young people does not have access to proper schooling and health facilities. In this respect, previously contained diseases such as malaria and cholera have become endemic and recurrent in **Somalia** and have taken away the lives of many people, among them many children.

In this **context**, the private sector moved in to provide some basic services in water, primary education, limited power supply, and has established communication (telephone, airlines and money transfer) systems to other parts of the country and to the outside world. The task of rebuilding the social sector will need enormous resources and will take some time before **Somalia** is able to provide basic social services to its citizens.

However, UNDP and other UN agencies such as UNICEF will be expected to come up with additional resources and innovative ideas of how to cope with a situation such as the one in **Somalia**. The traditional role of UNDP will be challenged by the severity of the problem the country will be facing for some time to come. UNDP should be prepared to deal with these situations in advance and advise both the donor community and UNDP headquarters on ways and means to handle the growing needs. The situation will be different from the current state of affairs where there is no government and UNDP's resources are used at the discretion of Resident Representative. The hostility that existed between the UN and the Somalis during the intervention of UN in 1992 could reappear and once again call into question UNDP's ability to respond at times of great need, if UNDP fails to provide urgent material and technical support.

7. Role of Bi-lateral and Multi-lateral aid to destabilize countries

International aid to developing countries without a clear process to monitor, report, audit and assess its impact to the people is subject to misuse and diversion to foreign accounts. **Somalia** was no exception. Because of its strategic location in the Horn of Africa, the country attracted millions of dollars of aid from the rich Arab Gulf countries and both from the Western and Eastern blocs. Some of this money went into fictitious projects, while a lot of it was misused to enrich the clique in power and subsequently their clansmen. The perception and the view widely held in **Somalia**, and in many other developing countries is that the clan who controls the power of the regime, controls also the resources of the country. This includes the appointment to higher government positions, foreign missions, key financial institutions and donor liaisons, licensing of import and export of lucrative businesses and taking charge of all security apparatus to suppress opposing opinions.

In this regard, power and whatever is associated with it becomes an expensive commodity that is closely and carefully guarded and defended from others who attempt to question and seek to have it. This creates a

situation whereby people become so desperate and exhaust all other possible avenues to change governments peacefully. Holding democratic elections, decentralizing government authority and empowering other branches of government such as judiciary and legislature to make checks and balances was always seen by the supporters of the government as giving away its power.

More often, as was the case in **Somalia**, strong and well connected interest groups within the system establish themselves and resist any dialogue with other groups and try to manipulate the government policy for their continued advantage at the expense of the majority of the population. This creates resentment towards and ruling class that could develop into armed resistance against the regime in power.

The Italian aid to **Somalia** since the country gained its independence is a case in point. Part of these funds ended up in Swiss Banks for Italian political leaders and the Political Parties that supported the aid package and the Somali politicians. Unresolved cases in the Italian courts today indicate that former Italian Prime Minister Mr. Carxi and his Somali counterparts diverted huge sums of money intended for **Somalia** to foreign accounts.

Part 3

8. Current UNDP Somalia Strategy

UNDP has identified "**governance**" as a key area of intervention, because of the lessons from the past and recent experience including the intervention of United Nations to impose a government has failed. This has convinced UNDP that it must address **governance** issues first before moving to other areas. **Governance** is defined by UNDP as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a society's affairs. Somali people firmly believe that the problems facing **Somalia** today relate mainly to **governance**. The policies of the failed and corrupt government of 1991 has led to the destruction of all institutions, disintegration of the people and has reinforced the need for a broad based (federal, confederate, etc.) government with a system of checks and balances. This could be achieved through impartial support to civil society, local emerging administrations, civic education, and propagation of a culture of non-violence.

Building on past experience, both positive and negative, in collaboration with local partners and other external actors, UNDP aims to assist Somalis in restoring the mutual respect and trust required both for the establishment of new, viable public and private institutions. At the same time UNDP aims to enhance the capacity of civil society and emerging authorities, where appropriate, to consolidate progress towards the restoration of peace, security, the rule of law and public administration, thereby completing the transition from conflict resolution and transformation, through peace-building, to **good governance**.

The situation with respect to Local Administrative Structures and civil society is not expected to dramatically change overnight due to the gravity of the socio-economic situation of the country and the destruction that took place. While a major change in administrative capacities and long term sustainability can hardly be expected in such a short period, there are encouraging signs of an appreciation of the preconditions for "**good**" **governance**. Several initiatives for reconciliation and consolidation of stability have taken place recently with varying degrees of success. There has been a general dissipation of tension in several areas, providing entry points for a **governance** programme to be initiated.

In particular, the following UNDP projects have been put in place, mostly in the North of the country to promote **good governance** and peace-building in **Somalia**:

8.1 Civic Education and War Torn Societies Projects

Promotion of dialogue, awareness and consensus around issues pertaining to reconciliation, peace-building, public administration and **good governance**. This is done mainly through a programme of civic education and the War Torn Societies research activities on priority issues affecting communities, contributing

indirectly, through public examination of these issues, to the prospects for reconciliation and durable peace in **Somalia**;

8.2 Somalia Rehabilitation Programme

Help foster conditions for political reconciliation, economic recovery and sustainable human development, through promotion of the practice of **good governance** at all levels and in particular among civil society and Somali NGOs. In Gedo region, a Development Management Groups has been designed to identify local priorities and manage revolving funds from UNDP funded **Somalia** Rehabilitation Project to meet local needs.

8.3 Somalia Civil Protection Programme

A major programme for civil protection, which has three components; assistance to law enforcement, mine action programme and reintegration of former militia has been launched in November 1997 in both Hargeisa in the Northwest and Buroa in Togdeer Region. Its purpose is to strengthen local capacities in civil protection through a holistic approach involving activities in mine clearance, reintegration of ex-militia in their communities of origin and the establishment of well trained civilian police forces to promote a socially and culturally relevant human rights agenda consistent with UN charters and other instruments pertaining to local customs, Islamic religion and human rights. The de-mining of the Buroa town made possible the return of thousands of refugees assisted by UNHCR to their communities from camps in Ethiopia.

8.4 United Nations Development Office for Somalia (UNDOS)

Collect, analyze and disseminate socio-economic data relevant to planning needs of Somali users and the international community; finalize a poverty and human development profile for **Somalia**. Enhance the capacity of local administrative structures (particularly at district and council levels), to plan and provide vital public services in accordance with the essential role of government. UNDOS have taken the lead in the collection and dissemination of socio economic data, mapping and analysis to be used by UN agencies, donor community and by the Somali authorities.

Detailed assessments have been made of Local Administrative Structures (LAS) in Hiran, Bari, Mudug, Awdal, Lower Shabelle and Nugal regions. LAS training and capacity building has taken place in Middle and Lower Shabelle, Awdal and Bari regions. Local administrations in several regions have been supported in development of systems and procedures in planning, budgeting, project identification, preparation of manuals, bookkeeping and accounting. Demographic data and profiles of **Somalia** have been reviewed and firm estimates made of population by region, sex and age group with the involvement of UNFPA.

1. Civil Aviation Caretaker Authority (CACAS)

Rehabilitation of major airports particularly in the Northwest and Northeast, training a cadre of Somali civil aviation staff to run and manage these airports, providing technical assistance as well as equipment for air traffic controllers, and most important of all making the Somali skies safer by providing navigation to aircraft flying over **Somalia**. Eighty percent of the project cost is covered by money collected from services rendered to aircrafts flying over **Somalia**

2. Somali Ports and Trade Project (UNCTAD)

Providing technical support to two major ports in the North of the country and training Somalis in port management, handling cargo and servicing ships. The project is also supporting local business people to diversify and improve the quality of their exports.

3. HABITAT

The project has shown visible impact in the field of urban planning and management and has provided technical assistance to Hargeisa and Borama municipalities in the Northwest. It has improved the zoning and mapping of some residential areas in Hargeisa, which would have otherwise created tension among returning refugees. Initiatives for urban renewal in Berbera, Burao and Bosasso are under implementation.

Part 4

9. Lessons Learned: Post Crisis

As the past attempts of power sharing in **Somalia** negotiated by the UN, neighboring countries and regional organizations failed due to disagreements among the political factions on how to share power, some regions, namely, the Northwest (Somaliland) in 1993 and recently Northeast (Puntland) formed their own local administrations. While Northwest claims to be an independent country, unrecognized by the international community, Northeast, on the other hand, wants to be a part of future federal Somali government.

Recent reports also indicate that the faction leaders in the South and Mogadishu in particular have agreed to form a local administration in the Benadir region and open the airport and seaport which remained closed since the United Nations withdrew its forces from Mogadishu in 1995. If this latest attempt of reconciliation succeeds a main stumbling block for the formation of a national government will be removed. There could be light at the end of the tunnel.

In this regard, since UNDP resources were concentrated in the northern regions, which acted earlier and formed their local administrations, UNDP will be in a difficult position to extend further assistance to the new regional administration in Benadir, the capital and other regional administrations to be formed. This could strain the uneasy relations between UNDP and the leaders in the South who had not received prior assistance from UNDP and other UN agencies due to their failure to organize their areas. Therefore, UNDP will require additional resources to support the new administrations to be established.

Donor countries such as Italy, the former colonial power of **Somalia**, have shown some interest in assisting any local administration that is formed in Mogadishu but are reluctant to work with and fund UNDP projects at this moment.

The role of UN agencies and that of UNDP has been changed by the reality. The changes that are taking place globally and within the UN have put new impetus to the work of the UN in the future. The role expected from the UN and UNDP reflecting the new world reality includes:

- A. To raise and discuss issues of human rights abuse by member states. The cases of these abuses in Rwanda and former Zaire are classical examples. The human rights situations in many other countries around the world are alarming and should be taken seriously before it explodes into another **Somalia** and Rwanda. The creation of the Human Rights High Commission is a step forward. In this regard, UNDP **Somalia** is currently in the process of incorporating Human Rights issues to relevant project documents of the CO programmes.
- B. The involvement of UNDP in electoral reforms and election monitoring is a new mandate, which should be strengthened. Any future government in **Somalia** will be counting on UNDP for similar assistance. Also, elections open the way for other UNDP entry points for **governance** supports i.e. parliament, local government authorities, decentralization, civil society, private sector, etc.
- C. The whole concept of **good governance**, transparency, respect for the rule of law and support to decentralization process in developing countries is a process in the right direction and a commendable one. UNDP **Somalia** is moving into this direction by allocating more resources to UNDP **governance** projects.

- D. War torn countries like **Somalia** which are counting on UNDP, other UN agencies and the donor community for assistance should be assisted subject to that all aspects of **good governance** be put in place before such assistance is provided.
- E. The international community irrespective of their individual interests in a given country must support the UN/UNDP efforts of aggressive but meaningful and constructive dialogue in dealing with **governance** issues.

9.1 The Role of the Private Sector

One of the positive attributes of post crisis in **Somalia** is the birth of a private sector led economy. The private sector has contributed significantly for the slow but steady recovery of the Somali economy. It has created jobs, provided badly needed services in water, power, telecommunication in airlines, and telephones, money transfers and banking. It continues to grow and venture into areas that need investment in small industries and joint ventures with foreign companies.

After realizing the importance of this sector for the future development and the rebuilding of the country, UNDP **Somalia** sponsored a two day Private Sector and Trade Development Workshop in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in May 1998. The purpose of the workshop was to give the Somali business community the possibility to come together in a neutral place and discuss among themselves on ways to improve their businesses. The workshop commissioned international consultants who discussed with Somali business people on how to access international markets; financial institutions and other import and export companies

Over 200 Somali business people and their foreign associates attended the meeting and exchanged ideas and thoughts on the improvement of Somali businesses. Currently, UNDP is following up on the recommendations from the workshop and has already identified international consultants who will advise the Somali business community on several important issues such as legal frameworks for establishment of banks, trade and airline associations.

9.2 Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and Community Based Organizations (CBO)

The need for CSOs came at the start of the civil war. Prior to that, there were very few government controlled CSOs that were used by the authorities to support government programmes and policies. During the civil war, hundreds of international NGOs, UN agencies and other regional organizations came to **Somalia** to help the victims of the war and provide assistance to thousands of displaced people who were in desperate need of food, medicine and water. These international bodies needed local partners to help them with the distribution of humanitarian aid and arrange local security and logistics. In this **context**, hundreds of so-called NGOs, CSOs were formed in a matter of days to meet the increased demand for local partners.

As time passed and the intervention from the international community diminished, very few of these NGOs, CSOs survived and were transformed into genuine partners for development and promoters of peace and reconciliation. UN agencies and some international NGOs have supported and strengthened the capacities of these local organizations that survived at the end of the interventions. Today, there is a handful of such organizations that assist their local communities meet some of their basic needs. Women groups became real partner with the international community and are mostly in charge of these local organizations.

10. Conclusions

The terrible civil war in **Somalia** in 1991 and its aftermath has changed the socio-economic situation of the country for **good**. Absence of a recognized national government for the past eight years, mass displacement of people inside **Somalia**, migration to neighboring and other countries around the world, the destruction and looting of all public institutions and the proliferation of armies, and the list goes on. However, not all of what has happened was bad, but in fact, many things that would have taken for years to change have been altered. I will try to outline some of positive attributes from the civil war in **Somalia**.

- Weakened authority of faction and political leaders due to their inability to overcome and solve their differences.
- End to civil war drama created by the factions and the existence of relative peace now in **Somalia**
- Strong support by the Somalis for a decentralized system of any future government in **Somalia**.
- Establishment of a well-developed private sector, civil society and community based organizations that will have strong leading role in the future.
- Privatizing by virtue of government absence in the telecommunication, banking, airline and marine transport sectors.
- Recognition by the majority of the Somalis of the need for an inclusive, democratic and transparent government.
- Increased levels of remittances by the Somali Diaspora and immigrants to their families and relatives in **Somalia** during these difficult times.
- The immigration exposure of Somalis throughout the world and the knowledge and experience gained
- The reduction of levels of hostility among Somalis and their understanding now that they can live peacefully together.
- The disappearance of illusions of faction leaders to rule the country by force.
- The likelihood that **Somalia** will never ever have another civil war for centuries to come.
- Feeling a sense of nationhood and nationalism.
- Rebuilding regions and districts neglected since independence in 1960.
- New opportunities for women as they became the heads of their families and the main breadwinners in the society.