

Intra-Clan Conflict between *Ida’gale* and *Habaryonis* and the Role of Traditional Leaders in Pastoral Conflict Resolution in Aware District, Somali Region of Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT— *Traditional leaders are still very important in trying to understand conflict in pastoral areas of Somali Regional state. Such leadership can be used to resolve conflicts if they would have the chance to obtain the support and respect of the Federal, Regional as well as the local administration. The pastoral communities have great respect and trust on the traditional way of pastoral conflict resolution rather than the modern state lead conflict resolution. As a result all most all cases of intra-clan conflicts in the pastoral areas of Somali Region are resolved in a traditional way conflict resolution. The central Traditional methods of conflict resolution are the tradition of forgiveness, respect for elders and the transfer of resources as Mag or diya compensation payments. Informants who represent the pastoralists and elders of the District prefer traditional over modern institutions for resolving their disputes. It is conspicuous that many people opt for the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms as they have faith in them. Conflict resolution by the modern administration is not as such relevant because the District authorities do not reach out to pastoralists in remote kebeles. Another weakness of institutions like the court or the police is that they tend to delay decisions over pending conflict cases. Another important issue is pastoralists prefer decisions on the basis of group consensus rather than a decision by an individual such as the judge. The study recommend to conduct training on conflict prevention, management and resolution for elders, traditional leaders, District administration officials and other stakeholders who involved in conflict resolution to harmonize the traditional and modern state-lead conflict resolution.*

Keywords— Resource based conflict, Customary Law, Traditional Leaders, intra-clan Conflict, state lead conflict resolution.

1. INTRODUCTION

The customary law (Xeer) of the clan was the main political and legal instrument by which interclan and intra-clan issues addressed, conflicts resolved and resources managed (Shuke, 2005 p 3). Traditional leadership institutions are still very important in trying to understand conflict in arid and semi-arid areas of the Horn of Africa. Traditional institutions express themselves in the form of traditional kings (Isimo), chiefs (Aqilo), elders other (Guurti) and clergy (ulimo). Societal management was based on invisible, ad hoc, constantly changing and multi-centered structures of these institutions that would operate at different levels of the socio-territorial dimension (World Bank, 2005). Such institutions can be used to resolve conflicts if indigenous knowledge and cultural practices are recognized and respected by national, regional and district administrations. Traditionally, Somali societies were dominated by elders who were responsible for the governance of the community. Somali communities had structures for conflict resolution through councils of elders, traditional courts and peer or age-group supervision, where each individual or group had to meet certain social expectations (Getachew Kassa, 1996, p 6). A range of different conflict management strategies is applied in response to the numerous conflicts sparked by land enclosures. In accordance with Somali custom, elders are the key actors in ending hostilities and negotiating agreements between dispute parties (Hangman T, 2003, P 12).

“Conflict is defined here as the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals” (Hardin,1968; Hrskovits, 1926). The wearing down of the traditional leadership institutions among the pastoralist communities has rendered the ability of the *Guurti* to control conflict more effective. In recent years, customary traditional governance institutions have been eroded partly due to the

failure of the national, regional and district administrations to recognize the role of the traditional leaders in the resolution of resource based pastoral conflicts.

Most of Most of the conflicts in Horn of Africa are authored by social anthropologists. Recently, pastoral conflicts have also shifted into the focus of the “peace building” community (Mkutu 2001; MSI 2002). Conflicts in pastoral areas can be differentiated according to their intensity ranging from “competition” to “violent conflict” as well as a number of other criteria according to the outcomes, actors, level or scale, duration or the issues involved in conflict. Violence is only one possible outcome of *conflicts of interest* that are portrayed as “consensual conflicts” involving competition over tangible resources or rewards (Druckman 1993; Jabri 1996). Physical violence occurs in different intensity forms ranging from cattle raiding to large-scale armed conflict between resource user groups. The rivalry between actors competing for goods and services derived from renewable resources is at the centre of this research (Knoepfel, Kissling-Näf, and Varone 2001).

Tobias Hagmann (2003) proposed a simplified taxonomy classifying conflicts according to the conflict parties and the disputed resource uses implicated. Three ideal type resource conflicts can be distinguished for the drylands of the Horn of Africa, namely “herder-herder”, “herder-farmer”, and “multiple resource users” conflicts.

There is an increasing scarcity of resources often leads to open conflicts that disrupt social, political and economic relations. One major effect of resource-based conflicts is to shift the cost structure that the parties in conflict are facing. This shift of the cost structure may call for new institutional arrangements. Conflicts appear when perceived competition between parties is more important than cooperative behavior between the same parties. The outcomes of conflicts can be measured by the level of cooperation that can be established between the parties in conflict during the conflict. If cooperation is impeded, the outcome of these conflicts may be destructive and the adaptation of the institutional environment to the growing resource scarcity may be stalled (Karim Hussein, 1998).

The level of conflict management will depend on the level of reciprocity or cooperation and competing relationships that exists between the parties (clans) in conflict and the strength or constraints of the clans and formal (District and Regional) conflict management institutions and practices. Somali pastoral community traditional leaders play an important role in resolving intra- clan conflicts among the pastoralists in the Region.

“Traditional authorities are usually defined as the leaders of traditional communities with reference to historic roots of leadership, which legitimizes their execution of power. Hence, such definitions refer primarily to the socio-political and politico -religious structures that are rooted in the pre-colonial period, rather than in the creation of the colonial and post- colonial states. In contrast, modern socio-political structures are often seen to be based on democratic principles manifested in democratic elections” (Gundel, 2006, p7).

As a result the elected members carry out the power given by the community and formulate legislation. While the traditional leadership is still very important tool in handling and resolving intra-clan conflicts between the pastoral communities entirely.

On the other hand

‘the legitimacy of traditional leaders is often juxtaposed to modern structures, and hence defined as not being rooted in constitution and electoral processes, but in inheritance or other historical mechanisms of leadership selection. This too is flawed when applied to Somali pastoral society, because here, traditional leaders are just as often elected as other leaders though they may not be directly elected in ballots by the entire population, but they are elected most often by all the adult male members of the clans’ (Gundel, 2006).

According to one of the traditional leader in interview revealed that in Somali community there are two main ways in solving conflicts between pastoral resource based and intra-clan conflicts, the first way is to resolve through traditional method while the second way is to resolve through modern state-lead conflict resolution. Pastoral communities in the Somali Regional State prefer to use the first option which is the traditional method of conflict resolution. Solving conflicts through court to settle pastoral conflicts is in principal open to the pastoral communities, but all most all cases of intra-clan and natural resource based conflicts in pastoral areas of Somali Region are solved using the traditional way of conflict resolution. Traditional method of pastoral conflict resolution is less rigid manner compared to the modern state-lead, it encourages negotiation and mediation it’s also facilitate the transformation of compensation payments or *mag* when someone killed or resource damaged during the conflict between two separate pastoral sub clans. There is traditional Somali institution encouraging traditional mediation in conflict resolution based to the indigenous method of conflict resolution.

Resolutions by local mediators may take the form of negotiation or arbitration and are generally reached with reference to Somali norms and values. In theory, proceedings of mediation may be subject to manipulation by the different parties, including the arbitrators. In practice, however, such manipulations seem severely constrained by the elaborate and

meticulous provisions of Somali customary law (*xeer*) particularly in an inter-clan context. As soon as guilt is proven, the customary law provides guidelines for the amount of compensation or fine to be paid.

It is conspicuous in inter-clan conflicts that once the proceedings for dispute settlement by the indigenous system commence, possibilities for referring the case to the state court become minimal. In general, the state itself does not seem eager to be involved in intra- clan disputes. The only instances of state intervention thus are confined to situations of escalated inter-clan Conflicts involving reprisal killing and counter-raiding of herds. Even in such intervention, the state seems to target restoration of relative peace in order to enable the traditional leaders to resolve the conflict through customary law (*xeer*). Thus the state apparatus may find it imperative to intervene only when the two or a party disagrees to the decision reached by the traditional leaders. This paper attempts to analyze the role of traditional leaders in pastoral conflict resolution the case of intra- clan conflict between *Ida'gale* and *Habaryonis* of *Issaq* sub clans in Aware District, Somali Region of Ethiopia.

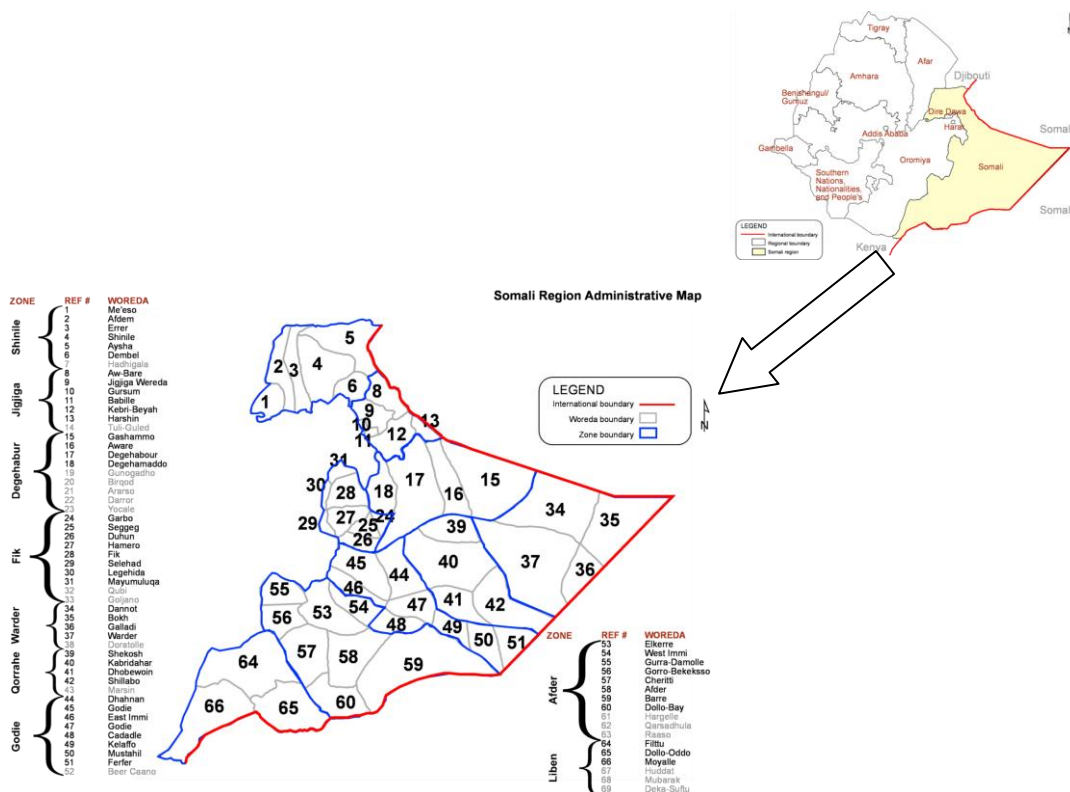
1.1 The Objectives of the Study

This paper assesses the pastoral intra-clan conflict resolution between *Ida'gale* and *Habaryonis* in Aware district and the role of traditional leaders in the Somali region of Ethiopia. The main purpose of this paper is to identify the cause of conflicts in pastoral societies to find out the role of the traditional leadership 'Guurti' systems and their strategies in resolving conflicts and to examine the effects of intra clan conflicts in Aware districts, Somali National Regional State Ethiopia

1.2 The Study Area: The Aware District

The Aware District located in Degahbour zone in Somali region of Ethiopia. Aware is bordered on the south by the Gunagado District on the west by Degahbour District on the north west by the Hatsgin District, north east by Somaliland and on the east by Gashamo District.

The District has an estimated population of 132,149, of whom 61,685 were male and 70,464 were female living in 70 villages. The dominant clan in the district is *Issaq*, which has sub clans including *Ida'gale* sub clan which is inhabited *Abokor*, *Rabaso*, and *Daror* Villages of the district and *Habaryonis* sub clan which is inhabited in *Daror*, and eastwards of the districts (Central Statistical Authority, 2007).



Source: <http://www.aidatasolutions.com/snrs/bofed/srs.htm>

Aware District has a poor transport and communication infrastructures, and lacks many social services like education and healthcare. Perhaps the primary contributor to the area's poverty has been the ban on the livestock export since 1998 by Arab countries; this has paralyzed the District economy. Drought, famine, livestock disease, land degradation, erosion (wind or water), influxes of IDPs and refugees have plagued the District. As a survival strategy most of the people in the District depend on livestock sector, while the others are involved in petty trades, daily labor, selling of *Birka* water and remittances from relatives abroad (Hope for the Horn-NGO, 2006).

2. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research design was employed to this purpose, and both primary and secondary sources of data were collected from different sources. Primary sources of data were collected through interview with traditional leaders, personal observation during the study and focus group discussion conducted with representative of the civil community. Besides this, the secondary type of data collected from unpublished documents and policies, on this subject. The overall sample includes selected traditional leaders, District administration officials and representative of the civil community. The collected data were analyzed by using qualitative methods of data analysis and interpret collected information. Author summarized the qualitative data and interpreted.

3. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 Conflict setting

Most conflicts involve value differences and power disparities, whereas misperception and miscommunication play an important role in the evolution of adversarial relationships (Ho-Wan Jeong, 2008, p 15). As one of the traditional leaders revealed in interview, in May 2006, there was serious confrontation between two communities namely *Yonis* and *Sugule*. *Yonis* is a sub-sub-clan of *Ida'gale* while *Sugule* belongs to *Habaryonis* sub-clan. *Ida'gale* and *Habaryonis* belong to the same clan of *Garhajis*. Armed clashes took place in and around Daror town (290 KMs from Jigjiga, capital of Somali region, Ethiopia) of Aware District and continued for about three days. 118 people were killed and more than 150 injured. Even though the clashes occurred in and around Daror town the conflict was triggered by a dispute over pasture in a place called *Ayqaada*. The disputed place is located on the boundary between Aware and Gashamo Districts. As the representatives of community pointed out that there was no previous conflict at least for the last 150 years between the two groups, and the news of the armed clashes was a totally surprised the all stakeholders. The conflict occurred when one of the groups decided to establish a village with water birkas on the pastoral common land and the other group retaliated by planning their own village on the same site. The lack of a definite boundary line between the two Districts (Gashamo and Aware Districts) contributed to the aggravation of the dispute between the groups. Each group approached their respective District administration in order to officially start the village. A serious misunderstanding was created after both Districts knowingly or unknowingly wrote the letter for their group to go ahead in establishing the *Ayqaada Kebele*. Each group claimed to have the right to establish the village/*kebele*. In the beginning, the dispute was localized and there were local attempts by neutral groups to contain the conflict.

In late May 2006 one group opened fire and the other group retaliated. When the regional government learned about the incident, the confrontation was already so fierce and spread instantly in all directions. Opposing militias were mobilized around Daror town. *Yonis* called for support from other *Ida'gale* groups while *Sugule* sought the support of *Habaryonis*. The request of both groups was heeded and fighters were mobilized within a short period of time.

The two groups forgot about *Ayqaada* and started to fight over Daror town. Each group believed that whoever controls Daror would control the pastoral lands that fall under Daror administration. Only 12 people died at *Ayqaada*, whereas 106 men died in and around Daror town. A lot of people were displaced especially women and children who are easily affected in such confrontations. The displaced were estimated at 1500 families (Hope for the Horn, NGO, 2007).

When the shooting occurred at *Ayqaada*, many delegations were mobilized from the regional capital, Jigjiga as well as from neighboring Districts and from within Aware and Gashamo Districts themselves. Other delegations from both sub-clans arrived from Somali Land in order to contain the fighting so that the violence will cross the border since both sub-clans are inhabited large territory in Somali Land. The fighting stopped after interference of traditional leaders. A ceasefire was negotiated by the clan *suldans*, and it was agreed that both groups withdraw their militia outside of Daror by 12 KMS. *Habaryonis* militia withdrew to the east, and *Ida'gale* militia withdrew to the west (Regional Security Bureau, 2007).

3.2 The Role of Traditional Leaders in Conflict Resolution

According to elders of traditional council the traditional institutions resolve conflicts between pastoralists. Members of this institution are selected by the community on the basis of their cultural knowledge, ability of speech (*cod kar*), honesty and experience. These traditional institutions are characterized by minimal government interference. They are also unique in the way they administer conflicts. The traditional conflict resolving mechanisms gives the disputant the right to request the involvement of other elders or increment of the number of elders if they are not satisfied with the first decision passed by the elders (Gedi, 2005). Aware District, as in other parts of the Somali region, the traditional method of conflict resolution is a widely accepted practice.

3.3 Process of Conflict resolving practices

Further the traditional leaders revealed that after the fighting, peace making process started along traditional lines. A grand *Guurti* (council of elders) from neutral groups was organized with regional government officials as observers. Then both sides were asked to select 25 elders who would represent them for negotiation. Both groups appointed their negotiators and fifty of them were brought together for making peace on behalf of their groups to present their cases; they were sworn in to respect the final decision of the grand *Guurti* that would be binding on the two sides.

The grand *Guurti* of 40 representatives facilitated a very tough process of dialogue and negotiation by the 50 delegates from the two sub-clans. This process continued for about 45 days. The grand *Guurti* passed a decision which was binding on both sides. Both sides accepted the verdict that included the following points:

- *Ida'gale* was asked to pay 2100 camel in compensation while *Habaryonis* had to pay 1000 camel as blood money *Diya* or *Mag*.
- Daror shall remain *Garhajis* town; neither group can claim to own the town at the cost of the other group.
- *Ayqaada* shall remain pure grazing land that is common to both groups.
- Two *kebele* administrations who were found to be involved in the fighting had to be changed in total and the regional government was requested to take immediate actions to change the officials of the two *kebeles* namely Daror in Aware and Moholin in Gashamo.
- The two sub-clans were requested to resolve their differences and start living together peacefully.
- Any party that violates this agreement would be fined 100,000 Birr.

3.4 Re-escalation and termination of resolutions

The two groups accepted the verdict of the grand *Guurti*. They discussed and agreed on the formalities pertaining to the collection of camels. *Habaryonis* requested the other side to pay only the excess camels which is 1100. They started to discuss the change of Daror administration. The two parties could not agree on this issue. The *Habaryonis* accused the *Ida'gale* side of failing to cooperate in changing the *kebele* administration and, therefore, they suspended all sorts of negotiations with their counter-parts. They evacuated their members from Daror town. This was interpreted as a sign of renewed conflict and tension. They camped at *Lanqayrta kebele* around 40 KMs to the east of Daror. A young man from *Ida'gale* clan who was traveling with *chat* land-cruiser was killed by camel herders from *Habaryonis* clan. *Ida'gale* became very angry with this attack and the youth mobilized themselves for fighting with their counter-part. *Ida'gale* elders did not agree with their youth and fighting was avoided. *Habaryonis* was accused of violating the agreement that was made by the grand *Guurti*. *Habaryonis*, in turn, accused the *Ida'gale* of violating the agreement by failing to change Daror administration. A situation of push-and-pull ensued.

Again neutral groups tried their best to bring the two sides together in order to avert further bloodshed. *Habaryonis* adamantly refused to come back to Daror as long as the existing administration is not changed by *Ida'gale*. The regional government sent a group of parliamentarians from neutral groups to change Daror and Moholin administrations with a letter from the regional president as per the decision of the grand *Guurti*. They informed official representatives of Aware and Gashamo Districts. Gashamo almost immediately complied by changing Moholin *kebele* administration. Aware District officials were reluctant to change Daror administration due to pressure from *kebele* officials and their supporters. In light of this, it was impossible to bring the two groups to the negotiating table.

The team from the regional government faced a deadlock. They could neither change Daror administration since it was backed by armed militia nor could they bring the two sides back to the negotiating table.

3.5 Traditional Leaders Intervention Strategy

The traditional leaders decided to bring on board all the elders who represent the two communities in the previous peace deal so that everybody is clear about the background of the current conflict. They also invited several influential elders from both groups in an equal proportion. They made a negotiating team of 60 people then traveled to Daror. This team was meeting regularly to work out a win-win situation that satisfies both sides and brings them together for lasting peace. However, only 28 people (composed of traditional leaders, and elders from the neutral groups) were involved in the separate discussions with the two groups. However, this was not possible since the two groups refused to

come together for face to face discussions until their conditions were met. The team was, therefore, forced to proceed with separate negotiations with the two groups. After two days, the following decisions were reached:

- The mediating traditional leaders inform the aware District to change Daror administration;
- A penalty of 100,000 Birr was imposed on the *Habaryonis* as per the previous grand *Guurti* decision.
- Immediate return to the negotiating table;

The team started shuttling between Daror and Lanqarta. This was a complicated process that had to be undertaken in a tense atmosphere on both sides. The team hoped that they would get support from the *Ida'gale* elders that would enforce their decisions especially with regard to the change of *Daror* administration. When they could not get the required support, it became necessary to implement the decision through the support of traditional leaders.

The traditional leaders sought assistance from the elders from the neutral groups as well as elders from the conflicting parties who worked very hard to convince both sides to accept the decisions. After seven days of intensive bargaining, the conflicting parties showed signs of softening their positions. The *Habaryonis* accepted the fine of 100,000 Birr and the *Ida'gale* accepted the change of *Daror* administration.

Simultaneously, sub-groups within the two main groups started their own peace negotiations and separate peace deals. After 10 days in *Daror*, the negotiation team was confident of having successfully resolved the conflict. The representatives from the neutral clans promised to complete the circle by bringing the two sides together so that they can live peacefully with assistance from the clan elders and the traditional leaders of both clans.

In the view of traditional leaders, who lead the clan and they traditionally elected leaders, conflict resolution by the modern administration is not as such relevant because the district authorities do not reach out to pastoralists in remote *kebeles*. Another weakness of institutions like the court or the police is that they tend to delay decisions over pending conflict cases. Sometimes these institutions demand the payment of bribes when processing cases. In addition, pastoralists prefer decisions on the basis of group consensus rather than a decision by an individual such as the judge. To summarize this section, the great majority of representatives of pastoralists from both sides who represent the pastoralists and elders of the District prefer traditional over modern institutions for resolving their disputes. It is conspicuous that many people opt for the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms as they have faith in them.

3.6 Effects of intra-clan Conflict

Diverse conflict ending processes manifest themselves in their different outcomes with implications for the future sustainability of relationships between adversaries (Ho-Wan Jeong, 2008, p 237). The conflict was resources based particularly over land, water and pasture and claimed 118 lives. Heavy intervention by Traditional leaders, religious leaders, and government officials brought the situation under control. HFH (hope for the horn) local NGO operating in the area also organized one resource based conflict (RBC) conference in the area in order to contribute to sustainable solution of the conflict. This actually helped to prevent further bloodshed. Traditional leaders from neutral sub-clan tried very hard to cement peaceful co-existence between the two clans that clashed.

Although the conflict have been resolved after tremendous efforts made by the elders and the traditional leaders of the two conflicting clans the conflict left political, economic, social and cultural effects on the community living in the District.

3.6.1 Political effect

The civil society was pointing its fingers at local District level politicians for their negative role in the conflict. In the medium term, these politicians might lose their positions. Whether such consequence would be beneficial for the local population or not cannot be determined at the moment. Even the District level parliamentary councils are accused of inaction; the leadership of these institutions may suffer if they do not take immediate steps to address the concerns of their electorate.

The lack of practicing good governance such as transparency, democracy, the District and *kebele* officials in the area seem to have forgotten the public interest (peace being the most important public interest) and instead they are allegedly concerned with their own political interests. The other political issue was lack of harmonization of the traditional leadership structures and the conventional political system. This problem was an issue throughout the pastoralist areas in Ethiopia. There are other attempts in other pastoralist regions of Ethiopia towards harmonization of the two systems and the Somali Region needs to draw lessons from these regions in order to smoothen the relationship between the two systems.

3.6.2 Economic effect

If the conflict drags on for some time, then there is going to be an impact on the free movement of people across the region. This restricted movement has impact on trade and business in negative manner. This impact would be in the short term only, since the conflict itself cannot be expected to be long lasting.

Economic issues in these conflicts were to control over grazing lands, ownership of Daror town itself, and access to food aid. Both clans were claiming ownership rights over the pastoral land that come under Daror *kebele*. They were also disputing the ownership of Daror town itself. The control of Daror *kebele* gives them the control of the grazing land and common water points that come under it. Another interesting issue was access to food aid. Food aid has become an important source of cash for the *kebele* leaders in the area. Food aid (mainly USAID wheat) is supposed to be given freely to house-holds affected by droughts. The wheat is however, usually converted into cash and sold to private traders. Competition for *kebele* chairmanship has, therefore, become very tough since it means control of food aid and related revenue. This economic factor is believed to be playing negative role in this conflict.

3.6.3 Socio-cultural effect

The conflict might affect access to social services like education and sharing of common water and pasture resources. The conflict has affected the education process in the concerned *kebele*. The students in Daror *kebele* missed the final school exams. They may be forced to lose their right to be promoted to the next grade. Displacement of many families into nearby villages caused diseases like diarrhea to children as a result of poor hygienic conditions.

The conflict might weaken the role of the traditional leadership among these pastoralist communities. Some traditional leaders have been accused of actively campaigning for the continuation of the conflict. If they find guilty of such offence, the concerned clan and sub-clan may lose confidence in the traditional leadership institution. In such eventuality, it would take considerable time before this institution regains the lost confidence and trust of the community.

3.7 Impact of Clan Conflict on Development in Aware District

A stereo-typical presumption about conflict is that all conflicts have harmful impacts on development and livelihoods. However, some conflicts could be instrumental in improving communication, mutual understanding of common goals and transform relationship towards more developed and desirable one. For instance, after resolving the conflict through traditional practices the clans improve communication, relationship, exchange their sons and daughters through wedding, and harmony will be prevailed. The impacts of conflicts we are discussing here have had specific disastrous consequences as process and as an outcome. Accordingly, the researcher has identified the following development impediments of the escalating violent conflict in Aware District.

3.8 Cost of Human Live and Destruction of property

Violent clan conflicts in the District have been observed to have incurred huge human casualties in the form of deaths and permanent as well as temporary disabilities. The most severe consequence of this outcome is the fact that the casualties of these violent conflicts are those productive and active labor forces or the youth section of the society. The violent conflicts also demolish infrastructure facilities and resulted loss of livestock and destruction of pastoral production inputs and facilities like water *birkas* etc.

3.9 Failure of Local Development Planning and Implementation

Development in clan conflict prone areas is highly complicated and difficult. On the one hand it is difficult to get consensus and common mindset of the local communities on the priorities and types of development undertakings to be planned and implemented. On the other hand practical obstacles including disputes between and among clans impede the availability of planning and implementing development plans. As a result one notices the absence of the crucial precondition which is peace. According to Aware woreda administration, more than 50% of the district development budget was diverted to security and conflict resolution as well as emergency response, which will lead to retarded growth and development in Aware localities and even the zone as well as affecting the whole region's development performance of the year.

3.10 Halting Development Intervention

All development efforts both by the regional government and non-government actors at grass-root level have suffered the consequences of discontinuation and destruction. With this added are the withdrawal of development resources and skilled man power of both local and expatriate origins. As a result a number of local as well as international NGOs working in the area responded to the situation by stopping their humanitarian as well as the development intervention in the area due to the security tension.

3.11 Internal Displacement

Internal displacements were one of the observed outcomes of violent clan conflict in the District. According to Aware woreda administration around 4500 families were displaced internally. Internal displacements lead to the consequences of incurring massive human losses and clan population disasters due to the severe wraths of widespread malnutrition, epidemics and conflicts with host communities etc.

In generally traditional method of pastoral conflict resolution is very important tool to solve natural resources based conflicts in the pastoral areas of Somali Regional State. The pastoralists in the Region have great trust and respect on the traditional methods of conflict resolution. The traditional conflict resolution in this case, is less costly, less adversarial, and more conducive to the sustainability of peace and stability in the pastoral areas of the Region.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study reveals that the role of traditional leaders in pastoral conflict resolution: focusing on intra-clan conflict between *Ida'gale* and *habaryonis* in Aware District, Somali Region of Ethiopia. Traditional leaders are still very important to understand conflict in pastoral areas and the leadership role of the traditional leaders can be used to resolve conflicts if they would have the chance to obtain the support and respect of the Federal, Regional as well as the local administration in Somali Region. The pastoral communities have great respect and trust in the traditional way of pastoral conflict resolution rather than the modern, state lead conflict resolution method, thus conflicts are resolved in a traditional way conflict resolution. The Somali pastoral communities generally tend to channel disputes to local mediation where conflicts are addressed in a less rigid manner, compared to the modern state-lead way of conflict resolution. The central Traditional methods of conflict resolution are the tradition of forgiveness, respect for elders (because of their symbolic authority to enforce decisions) and the transfer of resources as *Mag* or *diya* compensation payments.

According to the informants conflict resolution by the modern administration is not as such relevant because the District authorities do not reach out to pastoralists in remote *kebeles*. Another weakness of institutions like the court or the police is that they tend to delay decisions over pending conflict cases. Sometimes some corrupted people in these institutions demand the payment as a bribe when processing cases. In addition, pastoralists prefer decisions on the basis of group consensus rather than a decision by an individual such as the judge. Therefore, all most all of the informants who represent the pastoralists and elders of the District prefer traditional over modern institutions for resolving their disputes. It is conspicuous that many people opt for the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms as they have faith in them.

Traditionally, Somali pastoral communities are ruled by elders and have structures for conflict mediation, transformation and resolution through councils of elders *Guurti*. In recent years, customary traditional power has been worn partly due to the failure of the national, regional and district administrations to recognize the positive role of the traditional leaders in the resolution of resource based pastoral conflicts.

Historically the communities in the District are pastoralists where as land is communally owned and used. Gradually, with the prevailing of drought and famine, pastoralists in the area had lost their livestock assets especially cattle, and started to earn their livelihood with some sheep and goats, enclosures of small plots of lands for crop production and grass selling. The diminishing of natural resources and expansion of desertification had stimulated the concentration of livestock on limited areas, which results not only overgrazing but also spread of livestock diseases and minor conflicts over scarce resource.

During the conflict the two conflicting clans were very busy to control over grazing land and the ownership of Daror *kebele*. They were supposed that the control of Daror *kebele* gives them the control of the grazing land and common water points that come under it. Both clans were claiming ownership rights over the pastoral land that come under Daror *kebele*. Another interesting issue is access to food aid. Food aid has become an important source of cash for the *kebele* leaders in the area. Food aid is supposed to be given freely to house-holds affected by droughts. The wheat is however, usually converted into cash and sold to private traders. As a result competition for *kebele* chairmanship has, therefore, become very tough since it means control of food aid and related revenue in the *kebele*. This factor is strongly believed to be playing negative role in this conflict.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into consideration the above conclusions, the following recommendations can be formulated.

- The traditional institution of conflict prevention, management and resolution should be given due recognition by Regional government and strengthened.
- First and the most important point is to conduct training on conflict prevention, management and resolution for elders, traditional leaders District administration officials and other stakeholders

who involve in conflict resolution.

- The objective of the training should be to harmonize the traditional and modern methods of pastoral conflict resolution.
- Second, development programs like water, education and health facilities that contribute to the peaceful coexistence among the various pastoral communities in the area must be planned and implemented very soon.
- Third, the two Districts (Gashamo and Aware Districts) should co-operate in coordinated way and keeping the law and order, to manage cross-border violent pastoral conflicts, along the Districts border.
- Fourth, empower women in decision-making and participating in public affairs so as to take in active part in community conflict resolution.
- Finally, further research needs to be conducted into the role of traditional leaders in pastoral conflict resolution in the Somali Region and elsewhere in the pastoral lowlands of the Horn of Africa.

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