

Programme evaluated	<i>Hogaan Iyo Nabad</i> : Strengthening Governance and Peacebuilding in Somalia
Evaluators	Durham University: Dr Jutta Bakonyi, Principal Investigator Dr Gidon Cohen Lead, Quantitative Dr Pierre-Oliver Bédard
Consortium members	Danish Refugee Council, CARE, International Rescue Committee
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After twenty years of conflict, Somalia has been classified as one of the world's most fragile state¹ and worst humanitarian crises in the world.² Beyond these classifications, Somalia is experiencing enormous social transformations. Somaliland, which became a self-declared independent state in 1991, and Puntland, which was established in 1998 as an autonomous sub-national state administration within the future Somalia federation, are more stable than the rest of Somalia. They have structures of governance at the central, regional and district levels. Village councils (VCs) are established by law to function as a local government institution.³ The VCs have the potential to contribute to improved local services and representation of village needs.

It is in this context that the Governance and Peacebuilding Consortium, composed of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), CARE, and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) worked towards strengthening local governance and management at the village level. *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* was a UK Aid-funded, governance-focused community-driven programme which aimed to stimulate citizen participation and strengthen village institutions in their ability to plan, manage and advocate for community priorities (see *Box 1 below*). The programme was implemented

between December 2012 and September 2015 in three districts: Erigavo in Somaliland, and North Galkayo and Burtinle in Puntland, covering a total of 60 villages⁴. Every village received two block grants of USD \$17,000 each for community projects.

Evaluation Significance

The evaluation of *Hogaan Iyo Nabad*, conducted by Durham University⁵, is likely the first study of its kind for a Community Driven Development (CDD) programme in Somalia. Globally, a small but growing number of impact evaluations of CDD interventions have been carried out. The findings are mixed, ranging from zero evidence of impact⁶ to modest impact on specific outcomes.⁷ There remains a large evidence gap to better understand how CDD can realistically and effectively improve governance and social cohesion.⁸

The evaluation of the *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* programme robustly measured its progress towards achievement of its intended outcomes. In addition, it provided insights into local governance and participatory processes as well as community contributions in locations where there is a dearth of even basic information on village location and composition, let alone governance processes.

¹ Between 2012 and 2015, Somalia was consistently one of the top two countries ranked in the Failed State Index.

² Adapted from the *Results Analysis: Somalia Governance & Peacebuilding Programme* April 2010 – January 2011 carried out by the Law and Development Partnership for DFID Somalia.

³ Village Councils are also called Village Committees or local authorities. The word in Somali is "gudi".

⁴ Twenty villages per district.

⁵ The full report can be found under <https://www.dur.ac.uk/dgsi/cdgsomalia/>

⁶ Humphreys, Macartan, Raul Sanchez de la Sierra, and Peter van der Windt. 2011. *Tuungane 1: Outcomes and Data Sources*.

⁷ Fearon, James D., Macartan Humphreys, and Jeremy Weinstein. 2008. *Community-Driven Reconstruction in Lofa County: Impact Assessment*. New York: Stanford & Columbia Universities; Beath, Andrew, Christia, Fotini and Enikolopov, Ruben (2013). *Randomized Impact Evaluation of Afghanistan's National Solidarity Programme*. Final Report.

⁸ Bennett, S., & D'Onofrio, A. (2015). *Community-Driven? Concepts, Clarity and Choices for CDD in Conflict-Affected Contexts*.

Evaluation Objectives and Methods

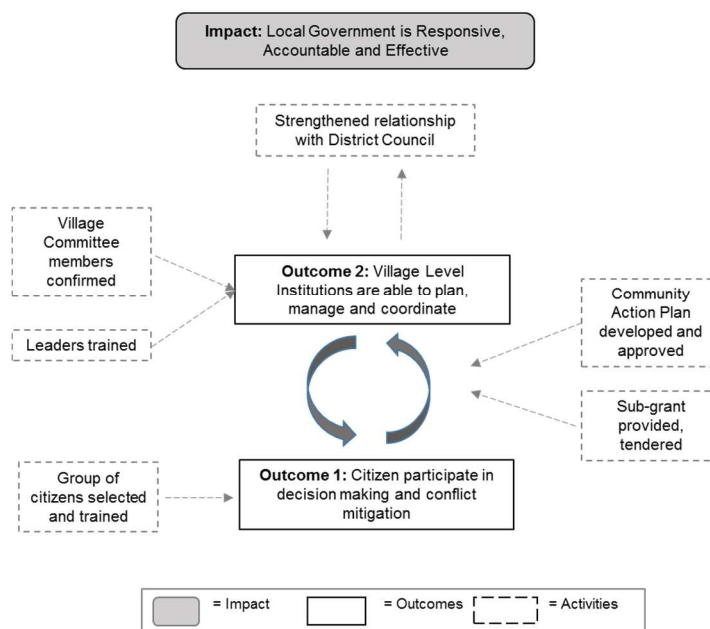
The evaluation team used mixed methods to:

- 1) Unpack some of the concepts and assumptions underlying community based approaches and change hypothesis
- 2) Collect data to measure *Hogaan Iyo Nabad*'s performance against its two main outcomes⁹.

Box 2: Evaluation sample size and methods

- Rapid ethnographic assessments based in 12 villages
- 79 Key Informant Interviews (KII)
- 47 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
- Household surveys, surveys for leaders collected in 57¹ of the 60 *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* implementation sites and in 13 non-implementation villages
- A total of 1,604 survey respondents at the household level and 347 community leaders.

Box 1: Hogaan Iyo Nabad Programme



While robust, there are limitations to the findings. The evaluation was conducted at the tail end of the *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* programme and measured immediate programme outcomes, not longer-term outcomes or sustainability. In addition, the evaluation team was required to change their initial evaluation design because of unexpected challenges with a baseline conducted by another team. The evaluation team used comparison village data in non-implementation areas rather than a baseline of the implementation villages.

Evaluation Findings

The evaluation measured change in the expected outcomes of the programme, as well as tested the effects of trainings – a key *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* activity.

The findings can be read as follows. Numerical results in the parentheses next to each of the bulleted findings represent the differences in results between *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* and non-implementation villages. The numbers are effect sizes of regressions, which can be read as percentages. For example, the first bullet below "Trainings" has a positive number (indicated by the "+" sign), which means that the evaluation found that individuals who participated in *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* training attended *more* community meetings than those in villages that have not received the *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* programme. How much more? Between 18% to 37% *more*.

⁹ **Outcome 1:** Citizen participate in decision making and conflict mitigation; **Outcome 2:** Village Level Institutions are able to plan, manage and coordinate.

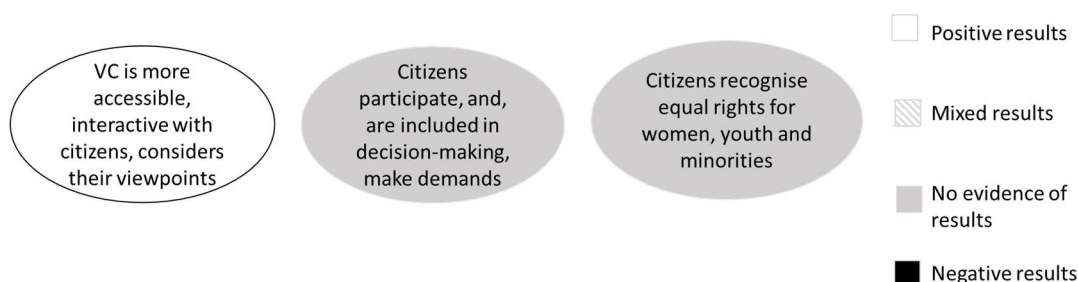
Effects of Trainings

Training participants included 40 to 50 citizens per village (members of the VC and sub-committees and selected community members) who were chosen to represent a cross-section of the village. Those selected were likely those who were most motivated and already involved in village decision-making. Those who received trainings:

- Attended more community meetings (+18-37%)¹⁰
- Attended village council meetings this year (+13-17%)¹¹
- Were more involved in village planning (+13-30%)¹²
- Interacted more with the village council (+30%)
- Were more satisfied with service delivery (+9%) and management capacity (+14-23%)¹³ of village councils and district councils.

Outcome 1 - Citizen participate in decision making and conflict mitigation

Quick view: Results for Outcome 1, Participation



The evaluation team found that, compared to villages where *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* is not implemented:

- There are positive improvements of the village councils' role in supporting more participation in village decision-making:
 - Citizens reported that village councils have more interaction with them (+18%).
 - Citizens considered the village council to be more accessible (+5%).
 - Citizens felt that the village councils took their view point into considerations (+5%).
 - Leaders were more sensitive to barriers to women's participation (+22%).
- However, even though there is a clear relationship between participation and Hogaan training (see above), there are no clear results on outcomes related to increased participation of the general population:
 - Citizens overall did not participate more in community meetings.
 - Citizens overall were not more involved in village planning.
 - Citizens did not make more requests of their government.

¹⁰ Various trainings were conducted by the project. The evaluation team measured the impact of all these trainings. The impact was positive and the percentage provided here reflects the range of effect for the different trainings. Community Action Planning (CAP) trainings had the highest impact.

¹¹ *Ibid*

¹² *Ibid*

¹³ The percentage represents a range of positive results for different variables including project management, transparent and accountable financial management.

One implication of this finding is that, at least at this point in time, there is no indication that the effects of the training are “trickling down” to those who did not participate in training. In the *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* programme, there was no explicit assumptions of the presence or absence for such “trickle-down” effects. However, for future programmes, it would be helpful to clarify who is expected to benefit from trainings and to develop hypotheses about how these effects may extend beyond the trainees.

It is also notable that in both implementation and non-implementation villages, respondents define « participation » as being informed and validating decisions made by local leaders. Based on this definition, a large majority respondents in both *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* and non-implementation villages reported that they *already* participate in community decision-making¹⁴. An interpretation is that the *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* programme reinforced existing participation mechanisms (communication and validation of decisions) but did not necessarily create new participation mechanisms that are currently uncommon in the villages (make requests of their village councils, demand accountability).

Hogaan Iyo Nabad had an emphasis on women, youth and minority groups, although inclusion was not a specific aim for this pilot programme. The findings on women, youth and minority groups are interesting for their future programming implications:

- Women attended more community meetings in *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* villages (+9%).
- Women (+13%) and youth (+15%) perceived that they are participating more in planning processes. However, there is no difference in reported participation of women and youth in implementation and non-implementation villages. It is not clear why they *perceived* an increase in participation where they themselves did not participate more.
- Women and youth did *not* feel that their specific point of view is taken into consideration, nor their household' point of view.
- Women and youth did *not* find the village council members to be more accessible.
- Minority clans (individuals from numerically smaller clans) reported participating *more* in village council meeting (+14%) and being more involved in community planning (+17%). The gap between participation of majority and minority clan members also decreased.
- While the outcasts groups (occupational castes) are too small in number to draw a comparison, the evaluation findings confirmed that they participated much less in community decision-making.
- Citizens perceived that women and youth issues are considered during conflict resolution (+9%).

The evaluation findings on women, youth and minority groups report some encouraging findings, but also confirm that inclusion of these groups, particularly the outcasts, would require concerted, specific programming activities.

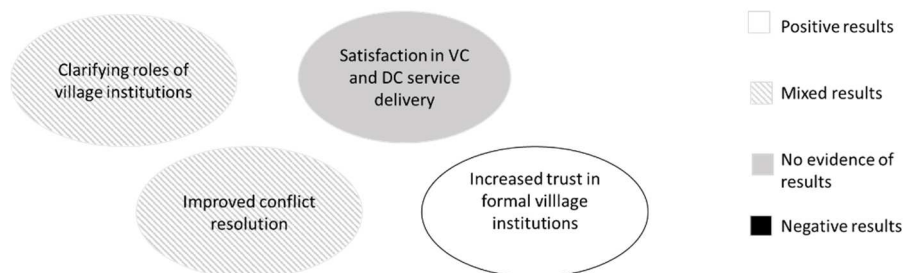
Finally, a very large majority of respondents in both *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* villages and non-implementation villages agree that women and youth should be protected under law¹⁵. As to whether women should have the same rights as men, a little over half of respondents agree. The findings are not significantly different between implementation and non-implementation villages. A surprising finding is that respondents in *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* villages are more likely to disagree with the view that youth should have the same rights as older people (9% more disagree than in non-implementation villages). It is not clear why this is the case. This question could be the topic of a future inquiry.

¹⁴ For example, 84% of respondents in *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* villages reported participating in a village council meeting while 82% reported the same in non-implementation villages.

¹⁵ For women's rights, 98% of respondents agree in both implementation and non-implementation villages. For youth, that number is 97% and 96%, respectively.

Outcome 2 - Village Level Institutions are able to plan, manage and coordinate.

Quick view: Results for Outcome 2, Governance



The evaluation team found that, compared to villages where *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* is not implemented:

- There were changes in governance processes and roles, including:
 - Citizens assigned more roles to VCs: social services (+14%), security (+18%), resource management (+11%) and the provision of clean water (+14%). In each case there was an equivalent reduction in the assignment of roles to the DC.
 - Citizens were more likely to see the VC as protecting the rights to equality (+14%), education (+12%), health (+13%), consultation (+14%) and free speech (+11%).
 - Citizens said the relationship between VCs and the DCs improved (+37%).
 - Citizens reported that conflicts are resolved more peacefully (+5%)
 - Citizens reported that there is more effective resolution of leadership conflicts (+10%).
 - Citizens have more trust in the village councils (+9%).
 - Youth were more satisfied with services delivered by the VC and DC than older respondents (+6-8%).
- However, there are no clear results on:
 - Village leaders assigning more roles to the village council.
 - Citizen satisfaction of services provided by the village and district councils.
 - Change in assigning roles between customary to formal institutions.
 - Resolution of specific conflict issues (clan, water, grazing, land, etc).

The results indicate that *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* strengthened the VCs and their relationships with the DCs. The assignment of roles to the VC came at the expense of the DC. It is not clear why leaders do not assign more roles to the village council. A surprising finding is that satisfaction in the village councils' service provision did not increase, despite increased trust in the VC and a sub-grant provided by *Hogaan Iyo Nabad* for a community project. The reasons behind this are not clear and could be a topic for further exploration.

Overall Recommendations on the Theory of Change

1. Be context specific: The programme made some assumptions about current practices and expectations in Somali communities that could have been better researched and understood to improve the strength of the theory of change. Future programmes should incorporate a detailed understanding of context in all three components of the ToC: the objectives (participation, inclusion, good governance), the mechanisms (participation, learning by doing and training) and the target group (communities, women, youth, minorities).

2. Enhance clarity through specificity: The programme could have been more specific about what forms of participation it wanted to see more of, and how these would improve governance. In future participatory programming, implementers should clarify what participation means: 1) the kind of participation 2) the question of who is supposed to participate and 3) how participation is supposed to occur (on which level, direct or indirect). Also, specify the expected effects of participation.

Reflections on the Findings and Implications for Future Programming:

Findings	Implications for Future Programming
Participation	
Citizens defined participation as being informed of, and validating, decisions already made by local leaders. Increased citizen participation does not automatically increase the citizens' perception that their specific needs and priorities are taken into considered.	Be clear on what type of participation the programme wants to promote, and also when measuring the results of the programme. If more « active » participation is the expected outcome, this needs to be made more explicit and more clearly targeted.
Villagers do not automatically feel entitled to participate in meetings/trainings, but wait to be invited by leaders.	Work with local leaders to facilitate a broad representation of participants in activities.
Youth are more satisfied than elders with the services delivered by the VC and the DC, and feel that village institution are more accessible.	Design age-sensitive programming, including acknowledging that elders' satisfaction is lower than youth.
There is limited evidence of increased participation of women and youth in meetings or planning	Design specific interventions targeting women and youth. Caste groups are highly marginalised, and their inclusion in decision-making may require stand-alone programming.
Governance	
Citizens in both implementation and non-implementation villages feel that they participate in decision-making processes (both formal and informal) and that conflict resolution mechanisms are effective.	Conduct a deeper contextual analysis, including existing interactions with formal and informal institutions, and expectations of their roles.
Local governance is hybrid in nature, as customary leaders are often also part of formal institutions.	Interpret programming learning and results with the lens of hybridity (e.g. strengthening of the VCs is not done in exclusion of the customary leaders).
Pastoralism and migration are common. For example, approx. half of villages at survey time had fewer than the minimum number of households as defined by the programme (70), presumably partly due to migration.	Governance programming in Somalia should consider the patterns of migration and their impact on the formalisation of governance structures.
Trust in formal institutions can increase even if satisfaction in service delivery does not.	Unpack the meaning of trust towards formal institutions and the expectations of governance.
Citizens assign more roles to the VC, and fewer roles to the DC	While this finding has positive implications, programmes should also consider the risk of focusing on local institutions when governance in Somalia is already highly localised.
Community contributions	
Community contribution modalities (who organises them, etc) differ according to the objective. People contribute more to development projects if they trust their VCs and DCs.	Consider how community contributions are organised. Explore who is not contributing and why. Consider how contributions may influence social cohesion. Different types of contributions may be more or less likely to be sustainable mechanisms to support local development.
Trainings	
Having a selected group of citizens in trainings does not lead to outcomes in the broader population.	In programme theories of change, be precise about who you plausibly expect to influence through activities.
Village Council Meetings	
Meetings on development projects do not regularly occur in communities, and are associated with international organisations rather than village institutions	For sustainability, emphasise that villages institutions are leading processes on development projects
Subgrant size	
The subgrant size per village remained the same, even when there were many fewer households.	Should the sub-grant size be based on village size? Considering migration patterns, when should household numbers be counted?