



Clan Politics in Somalia: Genesis Mis(use) and Way forward

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February 23, 2017

*'Do not ask me about my tribe
I am not only a tribe
Ask me about my profession
I am not only a tribe'' Sahra Koshin*

Somalia is at a crossroads, and heading towards complete disintegration and the risk of being wiped out of the map of the world by two major forces: [clannish politicians whose interest is to fill their bellies and pseudo elders on one hand](#); and the external forces including countries near and far that manipulate the head and heartless clan politicians and prevent honest politicians and nationalist from accessing power by any means in the other hand. This unholy influence of the duo has so far managed to perpetuate the clan political system and keep the country in perpetual chaos. Efforts by few leaders to bring the country out of this unfortunate situation failed miserably. Hence, it's high time for all Somalis to pull out themselves from the abyss they are in or they will be finished in this heartless world. This paper attempts to understand the underlying issue and thus suggest options to address the challenge. But first how did we end up here?

How we got here?

[Clan identity was a belligerent idea](#), turned into reality in 1991, a fateful year; when the Siad Barre government was ousted from power. This brought a grim reality to many, especially those living in and around major towns of the country. Within few days, individuals lost not only their property and the lives of their dear ones but also other identities that characterized them as rational human beings – (Humanity); left with only lifesaving identity – the clan.

As a result, relocation from major cities and towns to areas where one's ancestors came from became mandatory, as protection of the individual by his/her community swiftly became the norm. This in any way does not mean that division along clan lines started following the collapse of the then government. But, the collapse of the government exposed years of sectarianism along clan lines among Somali communities. This assertion might strike us to ask one important question the reader to ponder over as they read this article: could the collapse of the government be the result of its politicization of clan (i.e. taking it out of context and made it a tool of injustice)?

This time, it was different. A new order emerged as the weak gave in to the whims of the powerful. Savage killings and other untold atrocities were perpetrated. Even those who were traditionally spared from the spear (Biri Ma Geydo), ceased to benefit from old existing norms as the cultural norms melt-down in front of their eyes. Clan identity stood out among the other identities that characterized the individual and it became a blessing and at the same

time a curse showing its two faces; like a gun which you use to protect yourself but also to kill others. A blessing because it provides security, social safety net, and sense of belonging; a curse also as you might be gunned down for the crimes you have not committed and where your only crime is belonging to the wrong clan. (This paradox of clannism never ceased to amaze me and thus we shall return to the concept shortly to see if we can benefit from it).



Years have gone by. As the saying goes, time heals all things. But this never materialized for Somalia. Reasons include: roots of conflicts were not addressed properly and people were not allowed to grieve and get over the trauma they experienced. However, through the resilience of the people coupled with the religion and social norms, normalization of relationship started to thrive at the individual and community levels. This has been strengthened to large extent by the intertwined economic, social and political relations. But the clan conflict remained

active in some areas and latent in many others as it's perpetuated by unscrupulous politicians supported by quasi-elders who came to prominence following the collapse of the social fabric of the society. You might wonder to ask what has happened to the traditional elders? In the words of Gundel "they are often more manipulated and corrupted by political faction leaders and warlords" (Gundel,2006, p.45)ⁱ.

Where are we now?

Taking a clan route is complexⁱⁱ, difficult to navigate, and nearly impossible to re-emerge from the unpredictable and endless maze of the clan. The starting point of clan groupings depends on circumstances. For example, right after the civil strife, clan groupings started from the general collective group, such as Darod, Dir, Hawiye and Digil and Mirifle. Presently, matters are quite different. There is very loose relationship between the units and the general groupings.

To a large extent, the units have drifted apart from the general groupings mainly due to incompatible needs and interests. One thing is clear, however, those who are brought together are not cohesive at best and do have competing and rivalry attitude against one another at worst. This can be explained aptly by the following Bedouin quote:" I against my brother, I and my brother against our cousin, I, my brother and our cousin against the neighbours, All of us against the foreigner". This Bedouin quote captures three important salient points. First, how the division made the kinship weaker. Secondly and most important point is that it's easier to unite the kinship/grouping as one entity in the face of the enemy. A good case in point is the Presidential election were Mohamed Abdulahi Farmajo defeated the incumbent president. The incumbent lost his second term mainly because of his alliance with foreigner(s) and their outright interference in the election process, not to mention the desire for change. Finally, it also shows the dynamism of clannism; how quickly the definition of "us" and "others" changes. This by itself is not negative, it is what individuals are willing to do for those they deem "theirs" against whom they have otherized. Lack of sense of justice and fairness define clannism.

There is tendency to support your side whether they are wronged or committing injustices. This latter idea is aptly captured by a hadith reported by Anas ibn Malik. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Support your brother whether he is an oppressor or is being oppressed." It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, we help the one being oppressed but how do we help an oppressor?" The Prophet said, "By seizing his hand."

In another narration, the Prophet said, "By restraining him or preventing him from committing injustice, for that is how you support him."ⁱⁱⁱ

In the years of Somalia's civil strife, clan based conflicts became the norm rather than the exception. Reasons include (among other things): the use of the clan as an instrument to advance the vested interests of warlords. The traditional elders were either undermined through the creation of competing elders by the warlords or manipulated and corrupted as indicated above. The internationally sponsored^{iv} peace-processes deserves special mention for recognizing the warlords and by extension undermining the genuine traditional elders and accepting self-appointed elders who sided with the warlords. To further complicate the matter, the 2000 Arta Peace Conference in Djibouti for the first time introduced the 4.5 clan formula that assigns equal representation for what it considers the four "major clans" (Darod, Dir, Hawiye, Digil and Mirifle) and assigns half of the share of one major clan to what it calls "others". Dissenting voices were quickly quashed in favour of rosy scenarios

presented by heavyweight politicians who explicitly said: “4.5 clan formula is *Xal* (solution) but not *Xaq* (right)” which will get us over with the current quagmire we are in. To the chagrin of most Somali intellectuals, a recently published report by the Addis Ababa-based, Center for Dialogue, Regional and Cooperation (CDRC)^v, a non-profit think-tank praises the 4.5 clan formula in the following words:

Even if some somali politicians and a few members of the international community have criticized the arrangement, this formula is probably the only one that will retain a semblance of fairness, legitimacy and acceptability in the eyes of the Somali communities. Utilizing even this framework requires some convincing, however, to bring all Somali leaders to the fold, so that they endorse the current arrangement.

If we must take the words of the politicians and their international backers at face value, then we can safely conclude that the clan formula was meant to prevent social friction and stabilized the power contest between Somali communities as indicated above as *Xal* (temporary solution) but not *Xaq* (right). If we become lenient on the issue, then we can view the 4.5 formula as a transition that will lead Somalia to some sort transformation eventually? As English saying goes “even a hundred years is not history”. But alas, the clan formula has further divided the groupings to their lowest unit level. Presently in Somalia everything be it political office or aid is shared by the group along the clan lines. Often time, this does not consider the need of the communities or the merit of the individuals as long as they are hailing from the right clan. To make matters worse, clan divisions has played out in unwarranted direction. For example, empirical evidence suggests (to large extent) that disenfranchised and marginalized clan inclined to support Al Shabab or ISIS. But this is not written in stone, sometimes the marginalized clans shift alliance to that of the government when they perceive the clan they are competing with is well entrenched with Al Shabab.

Why classification of Somalis into clans is harmful?

The reason for Somalis to opt for the clan formula is obvious. The simple answer is circumstances have compelled them to do so. In the absence of state as employer, protector and provider of welfare and safety net, people depend on their clan connections for survival and to acquire status and power. But is this right? The answer is an emphatic “No” as presented below. (Also remember what some of the political heavyweights have said during the Arta Peace Conference: “4.5 clan formula is *Xal* (*temporary* solution) but not *Xaq* (right)”.

First it’s vital we are clear about one thing, there is nothing wrong about clan identity. The clan identities are only convenient labels by which we may know certain differing characteristics. The concept of identity is nicely elaborated by Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen^{vi} as follows:

“The sense of identity can make an important contribution to the strength and the warmth of our relations with other, such as neighbours, or members of the same community, or fellow citizens, or followers of the same religion. Our focus on particular identities can enrich our bonds and make us do many things for each other and can help to take us beyond our self-centred lives (Sen,2007, p.2).

In same vein, the Holy Quran unequivocally place the purpose of clan identity as: *O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily,*

the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things) (Holy Quran,49:13).

Somali clans and sub-clans have coexisted, cohabited, cooperated and trusted each other. They have intermarried, established laws and land agreements among themselves for centuries. Of course, they have also fought against one another over scarce resources, such as: pasture and water. But these conflicts have not been characterized as harbouring hatred for each other's clan. If this was the case, they would not have created marriage bonds or joint businesses, as well as grazing rights for their livestock.

The danger of compartmentalizing people into clan was very much understood by the pioneer political parties in Somalia before independence, namely: Somali Youth League and Somali National League. These two parties were so anti-tribal to the extent that their members stopped asking each other their tribal lineage but asked rather metaphorically "what was your ex?" This remind us a story that has taken place in Jilib, Middle Juba, in the early 1960s. Jilib has got one seat at the national parliament. Elders from various clans met and discussed who can best represent them.

After many deliberations, they settled on one of the best educated (i.e. relative to their own education standard) person in town who happens to be also a businessman and who they thought was trustworthy even though he hails from different clan. However, in a bid to eradicate clan allegiance Siad Barre went to the extreme end and at one point banned clan loyalty. This would have been acceptable if Siad Barre "walked the talk". Instead, while clan loyalty was banned officially on the surface, he favoured his own clan lineages excluding others from important government positions, contracts and access to government aid or services^{vii}.

Banning clan loyalties, as Siad Barre's regime proved futile in the end, is not the current proposition. Clans exist and will continue to exist in the foreseeable future. However, they should not be made the single most important factor that determines who Somalis are? or what Somalia is? Suggestion made by the Noble Laureate Amartya Sen about the danger of placing people into boxes can also be applied to Somalia's clan context. Amartya said, "The increasing tendency towards seeing people in terms of one dominant "identity" ("this is your duty as an American", "you must commit these acts as a Muslim", or "as a Chinese you should give priority to this national engagement") *is not only an imposition of an external and arbitrary priority, but also the denial of an important liberty of a person who can decide on their respective loyalties to different groups (to all of which he or she belongs).* (Sen,2009: xiv)^{viii}

A trader in Galkacyo may be pressured to see himself as a Majertein/Daarood, Omar Mohamud, Reer Khalaf and incited to fight the Habargidir/Hawiye, Sa'ad, Reer Jalaf. But the fact of the matter, he is not only Majertein but also a resident of Galkacyo, a trader, a Muslim, a Somali, a poet, and most likely either has a Sa'ad wife, or brother in-law or maternal uncles. In this case the trader has three choices: (a) fight the Habergidir; (b) remain neutral; or (c) help stop the conflict. The choices open to the person mainly depends on two factors: the characteristic of the individual and the circumstances at the time.

In the past, individuals who were against fighting (due to their individual character mentioned above), were compelled to conform to the clan elders and unscrupulous politicians to fight the conflict due to the existing circumstances. The circumstances that compel the person to conform to the clan stand abound. For instances, if the person does not support the clan either

through finance or actual engagement in the conflict, he most likely incurs (a) the curse of the clan; (b) will be isolated from the clan and thus lose his social standing; and/or (c) will be given different derogatory names, such as: shisheya kalmays (ally of an enemy), qoor lugu tal (not man enough), naag la mood (unworthy to stand among men or not manly enough or cowardly – the worst attribute for a Somali man) etc. It's also worth noting that the above three strategies were used mainly when the clan fights another major clan but not within the clan groupings itself. Secondly, even when fighting another major clan, the clan can't have the right to revoke the identity of the opposing person as the clan is primordial-God given.

The type of Hutu and Tutsi conflict is unthinkable in the Somalia context. This is mainly because killing the nonconforming person only result in weakening their resolve and unity and thus they avoid it at all costs.

But now the situation has improved markedly. The two main factors, characteristic of individuals and circumstances, have improved and strengthened over the years at least to the Somali person dwelling in the town. Numerous factors can be cited but the ones that stand out from the rest are: improved movement and communication; religious education and general literacy enhancement; business relations; inter-marriage; further weakening of the major clan due to the mushrooming and assertiveness of sub-sub clans (i.e. diya paying groups) but to mention a few. Let us take the same example cited above. Presently, the guy residing in town (i.e. Galkacyo and other towns) who was coerced to support the clan fight, can now say “no” to the clan fighting and thus fear no consequence whatever due to his action. This is one of the reason the current Galkacyo conflict did not escalate to affect and engulf the whole society. A good case in point is while the conflict was raging between the two federal member states (i.e. Galmudug and Puntland) business relations were intact and individuals from both sides were not only raising their voice against the ongoing carnage sponsored by the two states but they disagreed to contribute towards the fighting. Consequently, the two federal member states were run out of finance and thus forced to settle the issue on the negotiating table. This reminds me the story of the monkey keeper. The story goes like this.

There used to live a man named Mr. Chu who used to raise monkeys. The agreement he has with the monkeys is as follow: Mr. Chu provides housing for the monkeys and in return, the monkeys bring him a certain amount of food from what they have collected in the forest each evening as they return to housing. Those who failed to bring on in the agreed quota will receive severe punishment. This trend and practice continued and passed over to the next generation of the monkeys who accepted it as a norm that must be followed in its letter and spirit. However, one morning a little monkey asked a great question that will turn the whole relationship upside down. The questions were:

Little monkey: Does this forest belongs to Mr. Chu?

Group of Monkeys: No. It belongs to no one.

Little monkey: Did Mr. Chu plant the trees in the forest?

Group of Monkeys: No. He has not planted them.

Little monkey: Do we need permission from Mr. Chu to access the forest?

Group of monkeys: No, we don't need any permission.

Little Monkey: Does the forest belong to Mr. Chu? He is neither the one who planted it nor the one to grants access, then why are we slaves to him?

Group of monkeys: said “aha” in unison, as the truth struck them. That evening they brought the food to Mr. Chu as usual. But when he retired, they closed the door against him and took all the food in the store and fled to the forest. Mr. Chu, not knowing how to survive, died of hunger.

If we are going to take any heuristic lesson from the above story is that unscrupulous Somali politicians, who use clan as an instrument to divide the people, surely but gradually, will wake up to the reality faced by Mr. Chu.

Clan organization is central to the current Somalia state building scheme. This might have helped the politicians to overcome social friction and stabilized the power contest between Somali communities for the interim period. The scar this is going to leave will be remembered for long time to come. A simplistic view of the grave effects of the clan formula can be seen from the fact that newly established federal member states are at loggerheads with the Federal Government and in reality, far more established than the FGS despite a much shorter existence. Another view can be the ever-ongoing conflicts between each Prime Minister (PM) and President among other actors.

The current clan formula unless supplanted with individual rational thinking, will deepen the existing clan rivalry and mistrust. Below are some of the dangers associated with using a clan lens for our analysis and understanding of the Somali community.

- The centrality of clan in state-building and security has entrenched female exclusion from the government. Which clan want to be represented by a woman? None. Because, women don't have a clan. If they have a clan, their clan is that of “their husband and not the one they are born with”, says the tradition.
- It's unfair for the people to be put in some rigid boxes guided by one specific criterion of categorization of clan. People do have multiple identities.
- The clan system is a symbol of division and mistrust among the political leaders. Because, if the person is brought to the political scene mainly to protect and advance the interest of his clan; then it makes no sense to expect him to advance the interest of the nation or any other interests that don't directly benefit their employer – the clan in this case. The rational question to ask is “who is there for Somalia's national interest when all are after their clan interest?” Someone would argue that personal interest comes first for the so called Somali politicians and the clan interest is used as smokescreen to conceal their vested interest. But still the question stands ‘who is there for the nation?’
- Suffice to observe the current on-going election to inform us about how the clan system is prone to corruption and poor leadership. Merit of individuals have no place in the equation.
- Minority clans who are scattered throughout Somalia are not only subjected to marginalization by the bigger clans but were systematically excluded from playing any meaningful political role in the national theatre.
- Neither Political centralization nor political decentralization will be tenable under the clan system. As for political centralization, none of the clans emerge victorious to build a Somalia state. Whilst, for political decentralization, fragmentation within the

clan coupled with persistent conflict with other and within itself will make it difficult to attain any meaningful state.

- It's after all, as the saying goes, it is insanity to repeat what has failed for the last decade and half and expect different result.

What Should be done?

Then, what should be done? Three options are open to us to deal with the clan issue and thus create legitimate and capable state for all Somalis. The below story of the pastoralists tells us more.

Once upon a time, there was a famished hyena wandering here and there. Eventually, he came at a crossroad. Undecided about what road to strike, he sits idle for some time until a caravan appeared. He approached them and enquired about where the roads would lead him. Knowing his intentions, they told him that, if he took the road on the right it would lead to "cattle". But if he took the road on the left side, it would lead to "meat". Again, he sits and starts to ponder over the two options laid in front of him. He asked himself, if I take to my right, I would get what I desire. But there are risks to be anxious about, for instance, herders guarding their cattle usually with weapons. Hence, I might get killed in the process or I might evade their surveillance and eat greedily what I longed for. On the other hand, if I take to my left, there I get meat, left over. There is no risk of danger involved the leftover food. But it is not attractive to eat what some scavenger left or a carcass, he ponders. To make long story short, this pastoralist tale concludes the story by saying that, the hyena remained up in the air and passed away without moving an inch to either direction.

Here comes the analogy to the present situation of Somalia and one must decide which way to take as indecisiveness means death which corresponds to the third and worst option. So, let us look at the remaining two options: taking the left-side road or the right -side road.

Left-Side Road: This road is not new to Somalis as they have marched on it for the last quarter of a century where they considered the 4.5 clan formula as a transition that will lead to transformation when one -person -one vote is realized. It's safe to conclude that the road is akin to evolutionary change where change occurs in a slow and incremental way. And, as such nothing significant will happen to the status quo and everyone is "safe" as the hyena reasoned. Is this going to serve as a panacea for the situation of Somalia; when what is Somalia is ailing with its lack of legitimate and capable government and divided community? Another important question to ask is how is it possible to get "legitimate and capable state" when all what Somalia is getting is mediocre and untrustworthy leaders in the highest position of the country because they fit perfectly to the clan categorization? For example, individuals with enormous intellectual capacity will lose the contest if they happen to come from the same clan as their clan is only allowed to present few candidates. Grippingly enough, the clans are not interested in partaking in the ongoing madness and most of their discussion centred around who is the most ciyaal suuq (street-smart in sense of negative) or mooriyaan (gangs) wax ka dhacsan kara Meesha (who is able to snatch his share from the scene). Please note that this is in sharp contrast with what a Somali mother encourage her son to be fierce by saying Qeerkaaga iska dhici? Qeerkaaga miyaad ka ooyi?

The example above will demonstrate how the clan system degenerated overtime and thus rather than selecting individuals with merit who can able to negotiate they will select their worst to fill their belly along with the other clan electee/selectee. Worse still, when it is vivisected and torn into pieces by clannism? This was explained aptly by Robinson and

Acemoglu (2012),^{ix} in their best-selling book “Why Nations Fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty” that Somalia will remain in the abyss and will not come out unless something else other than clan is brought into the equation.

In Somalia, if one clan created a centralized state capable of imposing order on the country, this could lead to economic benefits and make this clan richer. What stop this? The main barrier to political centralization is again a form of fear from change: any clan, group or politician attempting to centralize power in the state will also be centralizing power in their own hands, and this is likely to meet the ire of other clans, groups, and individuals, who would be the political losers of this process. Lack of political centralization means not only lack of law and order in much of a territory but also there being many actors with sufficient powers to block, or disrupt things, and the fear of their opposition and violent reaction will often deter many- would be centralizers. Political centralization is likely only when one group of people is sufficiently more powerful than others to build a state. In Somalia, power is evenly balanced, and no one clan impose its will on any other. Therefore, the lack of political centralization persists (p.87).

Right -Side Road: The lesson from the story of the hyena conveys that the road is not for spineless leaders as it requires determination and courage to lay their hands on the grand prize-cattle. It should not surprise us if we say Somalis know all along that 4.5 clan formula is only serving as a transition (Xal) but not something that should stay forever as they aspire to transcend it. However, they lost heart to march on the road that would have made them realize their ambition (i.e. transcending narrow clan divisions). Reasons for not taking the road can be summed in three broad categories: (a) unscrupulous politicians and elders want to perpetuate it to keep their status quo; (b) existence of large cohort of youth with less education that serve as the “armed hand” of these unscrupulous politician and elders; and (c) international community supporting it as “the best solution” and does not bother to entertain alternative ideas.

The right-side road argument debunks the 4.5 clan formula as unsustainable and poisonous for Somalia’s existence. This is mainly because to ignore everything other than clan identity is to destroy the reality of concerns that have moved people to assert their identities that go well beyond the clan they came to be recognized with. Hence, we should be cautious enough not to fall into the trap of considering the whole nation as a collection of isolated clans, with citizens being assigned fixed places in pre-determined clan -settings. No doubt, (as explained in the previous sections) distinction can be made along clan lines, however other ways of dividing the population of Somalia are no less relevant. But to make clan as a point of departure for everything relating to Somalis and leaving all other identities will have a far greater impact on the nation-building process as the individuals limit themselves to the clan of which they belong to.

We should acknowledge the fact that Somalia is made up of diverse identities including over 70% youth under the age of 35, women, business community, religious community, pastoralist, farmers, fishermen, professionals, poets, among others. This can at least shed light to the fact that Somalis have many identities other than clan that are also relevant for a person’s self-understanding and for the relations between citizens of diverse background within the country as well as for the nation-building. The million-dollar question that remained to be asked is how is it possible to bring shift in the mind-set of the people? The good news is that it was not so long ago when people were brought under the banner of

Soomaalinimo (Somaliness). The SYL and the recent UIC (Union of Islamic Courts) have succeeded in transcending clan either using nationalism or religion. The use of these two elements is considered as taboo by either the neighbouring countries and/or by the international community mainly because of irredentism and/or Islam. A good case in point is what has happened to UIC. If Somalia has to take this road it has to prepare itself for the wrath of many States whose action might be translated into sanction, isolation and war. But if successful, it's an appealing food -worth to live and die for. Here comes into mind the poem recited in the movie Grey that reads:

*Once more into the fray...
Into the last good fight, I 'll ever know.
Live and die on this day...
Live and die on this day...*

There is a fourth option which the hyena could not fathom out is that there was a trade-off between the two roads. What about getting the leftover to survive first and then take time to figure out how best is possible to get the cattle. To this end, here are some suggestions that should be done at all levels (government, society and individual) to support Somali individuals to realize and expand their choices through:

- Acknowledging the reality on the ground and thus give voice to individuals based on their multiple identities and not solely on clan identity.
- Reorient the way we view the clan. It should not be viewed as a tool that helps to inflict harm to others. But as a vehicle to help one another and compete in good deeds. To this end, Khalid's remarkable story holds a valuable lesson for us all as it shows how he reoriented the clan allegiance for something good. When Khalid faced the largest and most fanatical enemy force at Yamamah while fighting Musailima the liar, the Muslim regiments lacked cohesion due to the mixture of tribal contingents which were not yet accustomed to fighting side by side. Hence, Musailima gained ground gradually due to the numerical superiority he has as well as the disarray of the Muslims. Khalid immediately saw the mistake of mixing the tribal contingents and took action to regroup them alongside their tribal lines for "the clan feeling was still very strong among the Arabs". This has "added another pillar of strength to the Islamic zeal and the individual courage and skill which distinguished the Muslim army"^x. As a result, the Muslims defeated this superior enemy. In similar vein, we can reorient the clan allegiance for development. To this end, what is taking place in northern part of the country where clans vying each other to build roads, mosques should be emulated.
- Changing our departure point from taking clan as a defining discourse and explicit framework for interaction between individuals. For instance, to intervene in the Galkacyo conflict we should not limit our analysis to the two sub-sub clans fighting in town. This will result in missing the bigger picture as we ignore the other communities and individuals who also cohabit in the area. This would leave us not to get any support from other concerned citizens at best and perpetuate the position of unscrupulous politician and clan elders at worst. But in the contrary, if we seek the support of each individual and communities, our chance of success to intervene in the conflict will increase. Because, the force of the community will be brought on the aggressor. To this end, it's important to note that the link the Holy Quran made between the previous verse on page 5 and this one: "if two parties among the

believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of God; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for God loves those who are fair (and just)” (Holy Quran: 49:9)^{xi}.

- The Xeer supposed to be dynamic to accommodate and respond to the challenge of the day. But sadly enough, it remained archaic and thus become part of the problem. Elders, Sheikhs and elites of each community should revisit their Xeer and thus adjust it accordingly. What’s more important is to look at ways to establish a town Xeer where all dwellers of the town draft their own Xeer to live in peace and harmony.
- Provide civic education that place importance on the different identities the Somalis have and that of the nation other than the clan to give the children and youth of the nation who have not had much opportunity of reasoning and choice. In addition, school children should be thought the negative aspect of clannism as this saying nicely captures it “*Dugsi Maleh Qabyaaladi Waxay Dumiso Mooyaane*” (no comfort in tribalism, only destruction). To this end, giving support to the Ministry of Education for the preparation of curriculum for each school grade and a subject to be taken at the University level could be used as a vehicle. Use of media is another option worth considering.
- The need for transcending the 4.5 clan formula has been understood by all including the NLF (National Leadership Forum)^{xiii} who unanimously supported the formation of multi-party system and indicated for every Member of Parliament to affiliate with one of the established political parties within two years period or lose their seat. Accordingly, support should be rendered to both the political parties and member of parliaments. Political parties to have wider presence so as to curtail their alignment with any clan (as opposed to what happened to Somaliland whose political parties transformed to clan lines) and member of parliaments to sharpen their reasoning and choice and not to go along the clan lines.

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ⁱ Gundel, J. (2006). *The Predicament of the 'Oday': the role of traditional structures in security, rights, law and development in Somalia*. Danish Refugee Council.

ⁱⁱ Mary Harper has the following to say on the clan “clans are confusing, even to Somalis themselves, some of whom deny the significance of their role and are reluctant to disclose to which group they belong” (Harper, M. (2012). *Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, war and hope in a shattered state*) p.11.

ⁱⁱⁱ Şahîḥ al-Bukhārî 2312, Şahîḥ Muslim 2584

^{iv} Harper, M. (2012). *Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, war and hope in a shattered state*.

^v The Commotion Surrounding Somalia’s Transition. (2017, January). Retrieved from <http://cdrcehiopia.org/CDRC%20DIGEST>

^{vi} Sen, A. (2007). *Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny*. Penguin Books India.

^{vii} See Fitzgerald, N. J. (2002). *Somalia: issues, history, and bibliography*. Nova Publishers.

^{viii} Sen, A. (2011). *The idea of justice*. Harvard University Press. p. *xiv*

^{ix} Robinson, J. A., & Acemoglu, D. (2012). *Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. Crown, New York.

^x Akram, A. I. (2007). *Khalid Bin Al-Waleed, Sword of Allah: A Biographical Study of One of the Greatest Military Generals in History*. A. B. al-Mehri (Ed.).

^{xi} Ali, A. Y. (2004). *The Meaning of the Holy Qu'ran*. Amana Pubns.

^{xii} See NLF August 2016 Communique. <http://www.raxanreeb.com/2016/08/somalia-communicue-national-leadership-forum/>