Comparative District Conflict And Security Assessment Report For Berbera 2012/2015
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Introduction

Since its establishment in 2009 the Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention1 (OCVP) has worked with local and international stakeholders to measure and evaluate progress in peace-building and state-building in all regions of Somaliland and Somalia. In an effort aimed at supporting evidence-led policy formulation and programming, the OCVP regularly undertakes district level data collection efforts for research publications. The District Conflict and Security Assessment (DCSA) Reports are OCVP’s flagship publications.

The DCSA is, in fact, designed to serve as a tool to regularly gather and analyse community perceptions on the providers and delivery of services related to security, justice and governance; as well as examining the drivers of local conflict in the district. These types of regular assessments are therefore critical, not only to the development and implementation of new evidence-based programmes and sound policies, but also in providing an important tool for the continued monitoring and evaluation of the relative success or failure of existing efforts at the district level.

While the continual assessment of issues regarding justice, governance and security is critical for the formulation of sound policies and interventions - equally important is the generation of data that compares year-over-year trends in order to shed light on what may be working, and what may not be working, in a particular target district. Through the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Somalia and later the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) as well, the OCVP was able to conduct district level assessments in Berbera District during the years of 2012 (Wave 1) and 2015 (Wave 2) . The purpose of this report is to compare the results of the data collected during both data collection exercises.

District Profile

Berbera is the capital of the Sahil region of Somaliland2 and is a Grade A district. It is a coastal town, located on the Gulf of Aden. The town has a port, which is a key source of income as it is the main export and import gateway into the country. It is the strategic location of Berbera that has attracted many of the ancient world powers. Having been sacked by the Portuguese in 1518, it fell under the authority of the Sharifs of Mocha in the 17th century and then the Ottoman Turks until 1875, when it underwent brief rule as an Egyptian protectorate. Berbera later served as the capital of the British Somaliland Protectorate from 1884 to 1941, when Hargeisa replaced it. After World War II, Berbera saw increases in trade as a result of improved port facilities influenced by the Soviet. However, between 1970 and 1991, warfare resulted in the destruction of much of the port and the wider infrastructure of the city. The region is now in a state of recovery, with Berbera serving as a symbol of co-existence and clan reconciliation within the country.

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1 Website: www.ocvp.org
2 One of the six regions before the creation of numerous new regions which are yet to be approved by the Parliament
Methodology and Possible Limitations

Both Wave 1 and Wave 2 assessments employed a mixed method research approach that included both quantitative (household surveys) and qualitative (focus group discussions and key informant interviews) means to collect public perception on the state of security, justice, governance as well as general stability of the district. However, it is worth mentioning that the Wave 2 assessment was carried out with the use of a number of improved research tools and techniques that included:

a) A scientific sampling formula that determined representative sample size for the district was applied in Wave 2 assessment, hence, a total of 200 respondents were randomly surveyed. During the research activity for the Wave 1 assessment no such scientific sampling formula was employed. Instead, the research team randomly surveyed 80 respondents.

b) Updated questionnaires that avoided some of the ambiguity and vague questions that were identified in the Wave 1 assessment were used in the Wave 2 research activities.

c) Improved research questions – for both qualitative and quantitative data were reworked to better complement each other and generate in-depth information on the topic; something that was not the case with the Wave 1 research questions.

d) Smart-phones with mobile data collection software developed using Open Data Kit (ODK) were used by the enumerators to administer the Wave 2 survey, while in Wave 1 conventional paper and pen quantitative data collection methods were employed.

While these changes resulted in an improvement in the quality of the data collected, it is essential to recognise that they are likely to have had an adverse impact on the ability and confidence with which one can compare the two datasets. With this in mind however, the data provided from Wave 1 and Wave 2 can provide some indication of potential changing trends in the areas covered.

Survey Participants

During both the Wave 1 and Wave 2 Berbera District Conflict and Security Assessments, random sampling was employed across the town neighbourhoods in order to ensure that a representative sample was collected. While a clear majority of respondents were female in the Wave 1 assessment (66% versus 34% men), during Wave 2 assessment the gender composition was more balanced with 56% being male and 44% females. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

![Figure 1: Respondents by gender](image)

Table 1: Number of participants by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ gender</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wave 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The degree of variations across the proportions of respondents among the different age groups between the two assessments was not as prominent as is the case for gender. Respondents aged 20-29 years represented the largest age group surveyed (32%) in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. There was no variation between respondents aged 30-39 years and 40-49 years. There were, however, slight differences (of no more than 5%) in the proportion of respondents aged 50-59 years as well as those below 20 years and above 60 years in both waves. (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Age distribution of the respondents

![Age distribution graph]

The marital status of respondents also showed some variation between both the Wave 1 and Wave 2 assessments. Those who reported to be married represented the majority of respondents in both assessments. The proportion of respondents in this group increased from 63% in Wave 1 to 72% in Wave 2. There were hardly any changes in the singles category between the two reporting periods, with only a marginal decrease of 1% decrease from 26% in the Wave 1 survey to 25% in the Wave 2 survey. Moreover, those who were widowed halved from 4% in Wave 1 survey to 2% in Wave 2 survey. It is notable that that there were few variations despite having increased the sample size from 80 respondents in Wave 1 to 200 respondents in Wave 2. See Figure 3.

Figure 3: Marital status of the respondents

![Marital status graph]
The observed variations in the gender, age and marital status of survey respondents may have influenced the overall perception and experience of respondents and should be considered when drawing wider conclusions between the two datasets.

**Perceived performance of Security, Justice and Governance Providers**

Both the Wave 1 and Wave 2 Berbera District Conflict and Security Assessments sought to record community perceptions of the deployment, performance, preference and perception of both formal and informal providers of security, justice, and governance, such as the police, courts, local government authorities, community elders and religious authorities. Of the assessments also sought to investigate respondents’ experience with local conflict and their perception of safety within their communities.

**Governance Providers**

There were minor variations between the two reporting periods of respondents’ opinions regarding the importance of having elected officials, whereby thirteen years (from 2002) after elected councillors took the reign of the local government, it was noted in Wave 2 that a considerable proportion (87%) of the respondents acknowledged the importance of having elected representatives. See figure 4.

Figure 4: Opinions regarding the importance of elected officials

![Figure 4: Opinions regarding the importance of elected officials](image)

The level of participation in local government consultations remained low in both waves, exhibiting only a slight increase from 6% in Wave 1 to 7% in Wave 2 (figure 5). This is despite the
fact that it is a constitutional obligation of the elected councillors to consult with and represent the local community by paying close attention and bringing community needs to the local government, creating community awareness, and facilitating consultations.\(^3\)

There was a shift in the pressing local issues identified in the two waves. While in Wave 1 poor sanitation (54%), unemployment (34%) and poor economy (28%) ranked highest among respondents’ concerns, during wave 2 shortage of electricity supply (54%), lack of infrastructure (38%) and lack of water (32%) were the most frequently cited problems. Poor sanitation (26%) and unemployment (21%), however, remained issues of notable concern in the second Wave as well (table 2).

It was also noted from the key informant interview with the Permanent Secretary of the Berbera Local Municipality that the current Berbera water system was built by the Ottoman Empire in the 1800s and since then has not undergone any substantial improvement, despite the huge expansion of the city. The challenges resulting from the current infrastructure were further exacerbated by the fact that significant numbers of livestock are annually exported from the Berbera port. The livestock, while in quarantine, are provided with large amounts of water\(^4\) and as the livestock export increases this will further deplete the already scarce water supply.

\(^3\) Article 21: Councilor’s obligations, the Regions and District Law No: 23/2002
\(^4\) Executive Secretary of the Berbera Municipality, Key Informant Interview, 15\(^{th}\) January, 2015
Table 2: Most Pressing Local Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most pressing local issues</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of water</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor sanitation</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage of electricity supply</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor economy</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor health</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Education</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal production deforestation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Based violence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad health centres</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justice Providers**

While the majority of respondents in the Wave 1 assessments indicated a low level of awareness regarding the existence of the district court, there was nevertheless a significant increase in awareness level during the Wave 2 survey (Wave 1: 31%; Wave 2: 98%), see figure 6.

Figure 6: Respondents' awareness of the existence of courts
The proportion of respondents indicating the usage of all providers, both formal and informal for the provision of justice saw a decrease in Wave 2. (See Figure 7.) The current justice system is a combination of Penal Code, Sharia and customary law, and although they often play complementary roles, the systems also contradict each other. In present day Somaliland, the role of the traditional elders, while widely accepted as the norm, has been questioned by sections of the society. In one of the Wave 2 Focus Group Discussions, participants levelled criticism at traditional justice providers for what they perceived as interference with legitimate judicial processes in instances where elders take over cases already in progress under the pretext of seeking a peaceful out of court settlement, sometimes without regard to the victims of crimes.\(^5\)

However, a close look at the qualitative discussions in both waves shows evidence of progressive judicial reform in the several ways. For instance, the extent to which informal justice providers may be involved in the adjudication of serious offences – such as rape – had been limited by the time of the Wave 2 assessment\(^6\) in contrast to a state of affairs where the prosecutor interviewed as a key informant during the Wave 1 assessment had stated that most crime-related disputes were resolved through negotiations between the clans of the victims and those of the perpetrators.\(^7\) There was also evidence of increased synergies between the formal and informal providers, for instance personal law issues and minor offences were handled by the informal justice providers while serious crimes and grave offences were handled by the courts.\(^8\) In addition, the informal justice providers relied on the courts when alternative dispute resolution failed, since they do not have the legal authority to enforce their own judgements.\(^9\)

**Figure 7: Usage of justice providers**

\(\text{Youth, Focus Group Discussion, 13}\text{th January, 2015}\)

\(\text{Religious Leader, Key Informant Interview, 14}\text{th January, 2015}\)

\(\text{Prosecutor, Key Informant Interview, 14}\text{th October, 2012}\)

\(\text{Justice providers, Focus Group Discussion, 14}\text{th January, 2015}\)

\(\text{Ibid}\)
Out of those who had used any of the justice providers in both waves, the rates of issuance and enforcement of judgements remained remarkably high, more so for the informal sector (100 % for Wave 1 and 2: Religious leaders, and 80% and 77% for Wave 1 and 2: Traditional elders). Out of those who had used the courts, there was a slight fall in the proportion of those who received judgements that were enforced from 72% in Wave 1 to 68% in Wave 2. See figure 8.

Figure 8: Enforcement of judgements

There were no significant changes in terms of the level of confidence associated with the formal justice provider, a clear majority (80%) exhibited confidence (44%: very confident and 36%: fairly confident) in Wave 1. Similarly, during Wave 2 household survey, respondents replied in similar manner (46%: very confident and 38%: fairly confident). However, 16% of the respondents during both reporting periods said they were not confident in the formal justice system. See figure 9.

Figure 9: Respondents’ level of confidence in the formal justice system

10 The graph on enforcement of judgements shows percentages drawn out of the numbers of respondents that had used the respective justice providers in each of the waves
Security Providers

The police, with some support from the Civil Committees, are the primary security provider in Berbera District with the local authorities and traditional elders playing a complementary role. This arrangement is of particular importance in communities located in the more rural and remote areas of the district where there is limited or even at times no permanent police presence. The police presence in the district was acknowledged by the majority of respondents in both waves, with an increase from 88% in Wave 1 to 93% in Wave 2 in the proportion of those who stated that the police were, in fact, present in their community (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Respondents’ awareness of police presence

The level of trust in the police as a security provider also saw a notable increase with the percentage of respondents reporting high levels of trust in the police, rising from 70% in Wave 1 to 83% in Wave 2. Conversely, there was a decline in the proportion of respondents who indicated low levels of trust towards the police, falling from 28% in Wave 1 to 18% in Wave 2 (Figure 11).
In tandem with the increase in trust for the police, the preference for reporting crimes to the police, regardless of severity, as well as civil complaints, also increased among respondents in Wave 2 in comparison to other alternative authority figures such as traditional elders and religious leaders. In particular, nearly all respondents in the Wave 2 assessment stated a preference for reporting petty and serious crimes to the police. See Figures 12, 13, and 14.
Despite the favourable perception of the police, the Berbera District Court Commissioner alluded to issues that were likely to negatively impact trust in the police; highlighting that the police are underpaid, leading to low morale and the temptation to accept bribes from the public in order to meet their basic living needs. The commissioner stated: “You can hold people accountable when you take care of them; provide them with enough salary, equipment and training.”

**Dynamics of Conflict and Violence**

Berbera district was perceived to be relatively safe compared to other major towns, and there was a decrease in the proportion of survey respondents (Wave 1: 15%; Wave 2: 7%) reporting to have personally witnessed violent conflict between clans or other groups (Figure 15). Among those who had in fact witnessed conflict, family disputes (42%), land disputes (25%) and household violence (25%) were the most cited causes in Wave 1. Land disputes (64%) and family disputes (36%) remained among the most frequently cited causes of conflict in Wave 2 (table 3).

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11 District Court Commissioner, Key Informant Interview, 15th January, 2015.
The majority of respondents during both reporting periods (Wave 1: 73%, Wave 2: 87%) indicated that they had not witnessed any crime or violence against someone outside of their household in the last twelve months. However, more than one quarter during Wave 1 (28%) and approximately one in ten respondents (11%) during Wave 2 stated that they had such an experience. See figure 16.

Despite issues such as land dispute and youth violence being cited as concerns within the district by both qualitative and quantitative respondents, there was still a majority reporting that they felt very safe and fairly safe (Wave 1: 92%, Wave 2: 91%) during both assessment periods. See figure 17.
Figure 17: Perception of safety

Wave 1:
- 78% Very safe
- 14% Rather safe
- 5% Rather unsafe
- 4% Very unsafe

Wave 2:
- 65% Very safe
- 26% Rather safe
- 9% Rather unsafe
- 1% Very unsafe
Conclusion

A longitudinal comparison of ‘District Conflict and Security Assessment’ data is important in generating data that correlates year-over-year trends and helping to understand the direction of community perception in relation to the thematic areas of study. While there have been some major methodological challenges in comparing the two DCSA assessments for Berbera Wave 1 and Wave 2 due to the different sample sizes and improved data collection tools, the comparative data generated in this report provides an indication of potential changing trends in the issues covered by the two assessments.

With regard to the governance providers and community perception towards them, it has been observed that during both reporting periods’ significant numbers of respondents acknowledge the importance of elected representatives. Furthermore, there were noted shifts in perception of the main issues of concern to the community. While during Wave 1, poor sanitation, unemployment and poor economy were most frequently identified, in Wave 2 shortage of electricity supply, lack of water and lack of infrastructure were the most frequently cited.

There was a decrease in the percentage of respondents reporting the usage of each of the recognised justice providers between the two assessments. However, while the majority of respondents in the Wave 1 assessment indicated a low level of awareness regarding the existence of district court in Berbera, there was nevertheless a significant increase in awareness level during Wave 2 survey. However, the level of confidence in the formal justice system largely remained unchanged between the two reporting periods.

Furthermore, between the reporting periods, there was an increase in the percentage of respondents reporting an awareness of the presence of the police in the district. The level of trust in the police as security providers also saw an increase, as did the likelihood of respondents stating that they would prefer to report to the police in the event of incidences of crime or civil matters.

The proportion of respondents reporting to have personally witnessed violent conflict between clans/other groups almost halved by the Wave 2 assessment. Notably, natural resources remain major triggers of conflicts in Berbera followed by family disputes. Despite cited concerns, the majority of respondents felt safe both during Wave 1 and Wave 2.