Adaado is one of five districts that originally formed the Galgaguud region during the Siad Barre regime. At the time of the assessment, the region was under the jurisdiction of three separate administrations – the Himan and Heeb Administration; Ahlu Sunna Waljama’a (ASWJ); and the Galmudug Administration, which also controlled parts of the Mudug region. The district of Adaado was, however, under the direct control and serves as the administrative capital of the Himan and Heeb Administration. However, talks are underway for the formation of a larger Central Regions State, prospectively to be comprised of the three named administrations. The district’s economic mainstay is retail trade and nomadic pastoralism, which had begun to gain grounds in recent times of relative peace. Sections of the population engage in livestock trade with communities in the region, as far as Mogadishu, which is located approximately 580 kilometres to the South, and Ethiopia, approximately 40 km to the west.

The local council in Adaado was commended for its efforts at transparent and consultative governance. Avenues were put in place to obtain feedback from community stakeholders and to achieve consensus regarding matters of importance to the community. In addition to the affairs of the district, Adaado, as capital of the Himan and Heeb Administration, was also focused on facilitating negotiations towards the formation of a new federal state. Plans were underway to bring together all stakeholders for a conference in the district in order to explore the way forward with respect to reconciliation and state formation. It was believed that recognition as a federal state would have a positive impact on state-building and governance. However, this also presented some challenges due to the fears, misconceptions, and assumptions held by residents.

Survey respondents indicated that they had little experience with conflict in the year leading up to the assessment. However, crime and violence were more prevalent. Nevertheless, the mechanisms in place – both formal and informal working together - were often in a position to address these issues in spite of the many challenges faced. A police force was in place, but the police lacked resources to effectively carry out its required mandate. In addition, the police was least trusted among the various players in the provision of security,
including elders, religious leaders, the courts, and the local council. However, respondents still demonstrated a high level of trust for the police. The courts fared better than the police with respect to matters of justice, having been utilised most for matters relating to justice and also being regarded as the most trusted justice provider. However, it was noted that the courts used both statutory law and Shari’ah law. As a result, there was no clear distinction between the formal and informal justice system. Even so, respondents expressed optimism and confidence in the formal systems of governance, including the designated security and justice providers. Most noted that there had been an improvement in the performance of the relevant institutions in each of these areas over the past year. Added to this, there was a general feeling of safety within the community, with all respondents stating that they felt rather or very safe within their community.

### Security

Security is a prioritised service in the district of Adaado. The police and military, coupled with para-military police, popularly known as the *darawish*, play a lead role in security provision. However, the informal institutions – elders and sheikhs - and the general public also actively cooperate with and assist the security providers in fulfilling this mandate. The majority of survey respondents (92%) acknowledged the presence of the police in the district. More than two-thirds (68%) of those who were aware of the police presence also correctly stated that there was one police station. The only police station was situated within a block of about six rooms, which houses other government institutions including the courts of law and administrative offices. The police station itself was made up of two rooms – one which served as an office and the other which served as the prison. Discussants purported that the lone police station was inadequate, given the size and population of the district. They also suggested that there was need for more police, pointing out that the police force was not enough and members often had to work both day and night to keep the peace and security. Youth also voiced concern about the location of the police station, as it was said to be situated at the extreme end of the district in relation to other areas and therefore could not evenly serve members of the community. However, the majority of survey respondents (86%) estimated that their homes were within one hour’s walking distance of the police station.

Despite respondents’ awareness of the police, there was a strong reliance on other entities for security needs. The police was most frequently mentioned as the preferred choice for reporting of petty crimes (44%). However, both the local authority and the court (29% each) were identified ahead of the police (24%) as respondents’ preferred choice for reporting of civil matters; while the court (60%) and traditional elders (14%) were identified ahead of the police (11%) as the preferred choice for reporting of serious crimes. When asked to identify their most trusted security provider for responding to crime and violence, only 7% of respondents stated the police, with the court (44%), traditional elders (19%), religious leaders (17%), and the local authority (12%) being mentioned more frequently. Unbiased enforcement was the leading factor influencing the selection of the court and religious leaders, whereas traditional elders were most likely to be selected on account of respect. Ease of access was the most cited reason for selection of the local authority or the police.

The police was said to be hindered by various institutional deficiencies. These included not only insufficient physical facilities and manpower, but also unreliable transportation as there was only one vehicle, which was sometimes inoperative or without fuel. Other challenges included unavailability of funds for police salaries and even having no handcuffs to use at the time of an arrest. However, regardless of these challenges and
the police being least mentioned as respondents’ most trusted security provider, respondents still indicated a high level of trust in the police. Overall, a little less than three-quarters of respondents (74%) stated that they had fairly or very high levels of trust, with males indicating higher levels of trust than their female counterparts. Further to this, approximately two-thirds of respondents (66%) perceived that there had been an improvement in police performance over the past year. Only 1% of respondents stated outright that there had been a decline during this time.

**Justice**

There were three levels of courts in the district of Adaado – a district court, a regional court, and a court of appeal. The court utilised both statutory law, based on the Himan and Heeb Constitution and the Provisional Federal Constitution, and Shari’ah law. However, there were no clear provisions to cater for inconsistencies. Consequently, there were no distinct lines between formal and informal justice provision. Respondents indicated a high level of awareness of the formal courts, with 91% acknowledging the presence of the courts in the district. Notably, all three courts operated from the same building, and more specifically, the same room. Therefore, making it difficult, especially for a lay person, to recognise that there was more than one court. Only 20% of those who knew of the courts stated that there were three courts present.

When asked about their use of justice providers, a sizeable proportion of respondents (28%) indicated that they had used the courts in the past year. Traditional elders and religious leaders were also said to be consulted on matters of justice by 17% and 13% of respondents, respectively. Similar issues were referred to each of these entities. The main issues referred to the court and traditional elders were land disputes and household violence, while household violence, followed by robbery were the leading issues referred to the religious leaders.

Elders stated that the process of issuing a judgement was often consultative as there was a high level of coordination required from the various entities involved, including the police and the local administration. In addition to issuing judgments, elders and religious leaders also assisted with enforcement as a result of the institutional deficiencies facing the police. In line with this, justice providers voiced the need the creation of a rehabilitation or correctional facility as being paramount for justice delivery. Other suggestions for improvement to the formal justice system, in particular, included renovation of the courts’ offices; equipping the courts with computers; and providing proper resources for filing of documents. There was also a stated need for communication and transportation facilities for judicial officers. In addition, it was emphasised that there was need for improved salaries in the justice sector, not only for judicial staff, but also for law enforcement officers as well.

Notwithstanding the challenges faced by the courts, more than one half of respondents (56%) identified the court as the justice provider that they trust most. Traditional elders and religious leaders were most trusted by 18% and 17% of respondents, respectively, while 8% of respondents stated that they trusted the local government or the police most. When asked to state reasons for their choice, fair judgments was the main reason cited for preference of the courts and religious leaders, whereas affordability was the main reason for selection of elders. Overall, respondents expressed high levels of confidence in the courts, with the majority (83%) stating that they were very or fairly confident in the courts. Only 2% of respondents stated that they had no confidence. The general performance of the court was also positively regarded, with more than two-thirds of respondents (68%) stated that the performance of the court had improved when compared with the previous year.

**Governance**

The local council in Adaado District is comprised of 23 representative members, three of whom are female. Members of the council are from the different clans and sub-clans and are selected by a vetting committee. The selected members of the district council elect the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Executive Director who constitute the executive committee, which has various departments directly under its control. These include: finance and
administration; human resources; taxation; social affairs; public works and land; and the planning department. The majority of respondents (95%) acknowledged the presence of the local council in the district. More than two-thirds (68%) of those who acknowledged the council’s presence also indicated that they were aware of the services it provides. Sanitation was the service that most respondents were familiar with (78%), followed by security (54%), justice (37%), health (6%), and infrastructure (2%) services.

The local council was said to be highly consultative and would often seek mutual agreements in order to foster acceptance and to facilitate a good relationship with the community. Local committees, each consisting of a cluster of one hundred households, were formed after consultation with the public. The council also held consultative meetings with representatives from various segments of the society, including the youth. They noted that these meetings often involved discussions regarding matters of significance to the community and provided a forum for debate and identification of solutions to challenges or issues facing the community. Approximately 28% of the household survey respondents stated that they had participated in community consultations in the past year.

Respondents identified a number of what they considered to be pressing issues within the community. These included lack of water (81%), poor infrastructure (73%), unemployment (68%), poor access to electricity (64%), poor health (58%), poor economy (57%), and poor sanitation (51%). The council was, however hindered by a lack of financial resources. In addition, the governance providers themselves spoke of the need for enhanced training of councillors in execution of their roles and responsibilities to facilitate improvements in service delivery.

At the time of the assessment, Adaado was poised to play a lead role in the efforts towards formation of a new federal state. The proposed Central Regions State would be comprised of areas under the jurisdiction of the Himan and Heeb Administration (of which Adaado is the administrative capital); ASWJ; and the Galmudug Administration. It was believed that status as a federal state would have a positive impact on governance. However, this also presented challenges primarily on account of fears held by the residents. Land was especially an issue of contention especially owing to the pastoral lifestyle. In the past, communities would move harmoniously through distant lands for pasture and then return. Some, however, interpreted Federalism to mean that persons should return to their land and govern themselves. As a result, clans were thought to be claiming ownership of land, particularly along the coastline, which did not historically belong to them. Sensitisation was seen as vital to circumventing possible conflicts that could ensue as a result of the apprehension and assumptions within the community.

Irrespective of the pending changes and the uncertainties, a significant majority of respondents upheld their confidence in systems of governance. Approximately 94% of respondents agreed that it was important to have elected representatives. Respondents also maintained a positive perception of their local council, with 74% stating that there had been an improvement in the council’s performance when compared with the previous year.


**Conflict and Violence**

There was little account of conflict in Adaado. Discussants noted that when conflicts were observed, these were usually incited by tensions over scarce resources, primarily water and land. This was compounded by the pastoral lifestyle. Added to this, politics, corruption and revenge were also identified among the factors which led to conflict in the area. However, only 1% of survey respondents stated that they had witnessed conflict between clans or groups in the past year.

Incidences of crime and violence appeared to occur more frequently, with a little less than one in every five respondents (18%) stating that they had witnessed at least one such incident within the past year. The most prevalent crimes in the district were said to be robberies and murders. The youth were identified as the primary perpetrators of violence within the community. Lack of livelihood was considered to be one of the main contributing factors. The youth also got involved as a result of being used by the militia for political reasons, whether clan-based or otherwise. They often saw themselves as victims in this regard and noted that, as well as being highly targeted, they also faced ramifications such as missing out on formal education during periods of unrest. In addition to the youth, women and children were perceived as being particularly vulnerable in situations of conflict or violence as they were often unable to defend themselves. Women were also unable to readily leave their children and families behind.

Both the formal and informal security and justice providers played a major role in conflict resolution. Business leaders also had a vested interest in maintaining peace given that violence and instability posed a threat to their livelihoods. However, there was concern about the impact of resource constraints on police operations. This included not only resources for the police to carry out their functions, but also payment of salaries to the police. This, in itself, was regarded as a potential threat should the police choose to act out as a result. Nonetheless, performance in the area of conflict resolution was generally regarded as being positive. Discussants went on to state that Adaado was actually one of the safest areas when compared with other Somali regions. This view was supported by findings from the household survey in which none of the respondents stated that they felt unsafe. In fact, approximately seven in every ten respondents (69%) stated that they felt very safe, while the remaining respondents stated that they felt rather safe. An overwhelming majority of respondents (95%) were also of the opinion that safety in the area had improved when compared with the previous year.