Comparative District Conflict and Security Assessment Report For Burao 2012/2013/2015

OBSERVATORY OF CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION
Comparative District Conflict and Security Assessment Report for Burao District 2012/2013/2015
**Introduction**

Since its establishment in 2009 the Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention\(^1\) (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 enquiries 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 and dynamics 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 Burao District during the years of 2012, 2013 and 2015 (Waves 1-3 respectively). The purpose of this report is to compare key results of the assessments conducted during the three periods.

**District Profile**

Burao is the capital of the Togdheer region and is the second largest city in Somaliland. The district holds the largest livestock population and is the centre of the livestock market in Somaliland, Somalia and Eastern Ethiopia. Remittances from the Diaspora in Western regions, the Middle East and other countries are also a major contributor to the district’s economy. In addition, there are a number of small and medium size businesses in telecommunications, mineral water production, hospitality, detergent-manufacturing and other industries.

Much of the district was destroyed and several persons displaced during the prolonged civil war in the 1980s. Most of the residents were forced to flee for their lives in 1988 and many ended up in refugee camps in Ethiopia. Rehabilitation commenced in 1991, when people started to return to the city, but was interrupted by local conflict in 1992 and 1994. The process was also negatively impacted by a ban on livestock exports to the Middle East in 2000. Following a prolonged period of peace, the environment is now more conducive to investment and regeneration.

Social services in Burao are provided by several agencies, including the government, local NGOs, international organisations, the private sector and other community-based organisations. The Diaspora has also contributed to several social and development activities including the construction of bridges, hospitals, a modern shopping centre, and the University of Burao. The district is among the districts in Somaliland that benefits from the UN Joint Programme on Governance and Decentralised Service Delivery, which aims to strengthen local governance and enhance decentralised services in Somaliland and other regions of Somalia.

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\(^1\) Website: [www.ocvp.org](http://www.ocvp.org)
Methodology and Possible Limitations

The Wave 3 assessment for Burao was conducted in April 2015, while the Wave 1 and Wave 2 assessments were conducted in 2012 and 2013 respectively. The three 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 should be noted that the Wave 2 and Wave 3 assessments were carried out employing improved research tools and techniques that included:

a) A scientific sampling formula that determined a representative sample size for the district, which resulted in an increase in the number of questionnaires collected from 80 in Wave 1 to 240 in Wave 2 and Wave 3.

b) An updated questionnaire that avoided some of the ambiguity and vague questions that were identified during the analysis in Wave 1.

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

d) The use of smart-phones with mobile data collection software developed by Open Data Kit (ODK) in the Wave 3 assessment, a departure from the conventional pen and paper data collection methods of the Wave 1 and Wave 2 assessments.

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 three datasets. With this in mind, the data obtained in the three assessments can provide some indication of potential changing trends in the thematic areas covered.

Survey Participants

The Wave 2 and Wave 3 assessments each comprised a sample of 240 respondents for the household survey, whereas the Wave 1 assessment comprised a sample of 80 respondents. The following presents an overview of the demographic profile of respondents for each assessment.

- Gender

The gender distribution was similar for the Wave 2 and Wave 3 assessments, with approximately 55% of survey participants being female and males accounting for 45% of the sample in each case. However, there was greater variation between the genders in the Wave 1 assessment, with males accounting for a little less than two-thirds (63%) of the sample during this period. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

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**Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wave 3</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 2</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 1</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Number of participants by gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ gender</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
<th>Wave 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>79²</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Gender was not stated for one respondent
**Age**

The age distribution of the survey respondents in Wave 3 closely mirrored that of the breakdown in Wave 2, with the differences in the proportion of respondents in all but the 20 – 29 year age categories being within 2%. There were more notable variations in the age distribution of respondents when the breakdown for Waves 2 and 3 were compared with Wave 1. During Wave 1, the 30-39 year age group was the dominant age category (35%), followed by the 40 – 49 year age group (24%). The 20 – 29 year age category was, however, the most dominant during Waves 2 and 3 (31% and 35% respectively). Figure 2 illustrates the age distribution of respondents for the three assessments.

**Figure 2: Age distribution of respondents**

![Age distribution of respondents](image)

**Marital Status**

The majority of survey respondents in all three assessments were married. However, in Waves 2 and 3, single respondents comprised the second largest group (24% each), whereas divorced respondents comprised the second largest group in Wave 1 (21%). Similar to the observations with respect to age and gender, there was comparatively little variation in respondents’ marital status between the Wave 2 and 3 assessments. Figure 3 illustrates.

**Figure 3: Marital status of the respondents**

![Marital status of the respondents](image)
The differences in the sample composition, particularly the demographic profile of respondents between Wave 1 and Waves 2 and 3 may have had an impact on the overall perception and experience and should be considered when drawing wider comparative conclusions from the three datasets.

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

The three 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. The assessments also sought to investigate respondents’ experience with local conflict and their perception of safety within their communities.

**Governance Providers**

In keeping with its status as a Grade A district in Somaliland, the Local Council in Burao comprises twenty-one councillors. These councillors represent the various clans and communities in the district. The current council was elected and instated in December 2012 for a five year term.

- **Awareness of the Local Council**

  During the Wave 1 assessment, there was a relatively low level of awareness of the Local Council among respondents, with less than one-half of the respondents (43%) acknowledging the council’s presence. The level of awareness improved during the subsequent waves. However, while nearly all the respondents in Wave 2 acknowledged the council’s presence (99%), this was reduced to 90% in Wave 3. (See Figure 4.) The decline in the level of awareness between Wave 2 and Wave 3 could possibly have been impacted by the timing of the local government elections in relation to the surveys, as in Wave 3 more time had elapsed since the elections. Elections were conducted after the Wave 1 assessment in 2012.

  **Figure 4: Awareness of the Local Council**

- **Participation in Local Government Consultations**

  Indeed, there was a steady decline in the reported level of participation in local government consultations. Despite the lowest level of awareness of the Council during Wave 1, participation was highest during this
period with more than one in every ten respondents (13%) having participated in local government consultations within the year leading up to the assessment. This proportion fell to 8% in the Wave 2 assessment, and even further to 5% in Wave 3. Figure 5 illustrates.

Figure 5: Participation in local government consultations in the last 12 months*

- Importance of having Elected Representatives

The majority of respondents in all three assessments maintained that it is important to have elected representatives. Agreement with the importance of having elected representatives was highest among respondents in Wave 2 (86%), while similar proportions of 81% and 82% of respondents in Wave 1 and Wave 3 respectively also agreed. Figure 6 illustrates the responses given by respondents when asked whether they believe that it is important to have elected representatives.

A few discussants criticised the influence of clannism on the electoral process, stating that the electorate was inclined to vote on the basis of clan rather than merit. There was also concern that, given the state of the economy, 21 councillors who required remuneration and other benefits created an added financial. However, the Mayor maintained that, “It is important for people to elect their representatives and hold them accountable.” In support of this, he noted that having more responsive councillors was one of the advantages of electing representatives. Nonetheless, he also pointed out that whenever a system was new there were likely to be challenges and hiccups as “can be seen in the local councils.”

Figure 6: Importance of having elected representatives

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3 Burao Justice Providers, Focus Group Discussion, April 2015
4 Burao District Mayor, Key Informant Interview, April 2015
5 Ibid
Justice Providers

In Burao, as is commonplace in most Somali regions, the formal justice system - in which laws are set and enforced by state institutions including the courts, police and the judiciary - co-exists with an informal system, based on customary and Shari’ah laws mainly enforced by elders and religious leaders. In keeping with its status as a regional capital, Burao has three courts: a district court, a regional court, and a court of appeal. There is also a military court.

- **Awareness of the Court**

  Awareness of the court was high in all three assessments. There was a 6% increase in the proportion of respondents who stated that there were functional courts in the district between Wave 1 and Wave 2. In Wave 2, nearly all respondents (100% due to rounding) stated that there are functional courts compared with 94% in Wave 1. However, although awareness of the court remained high in Wave 3, the proportion of respondents who acknowledged the presence of functional courts fell to 93%. Figure 7 illustrates.

![Figure 7: Respondents' awareness of the existence of courts](image)

- **Use of Justice Providers**

  The court was consistently identified by respondents in the household survey as the entity that had been most frequently used to settle issues of justice (Figure 8). However, during both Waves 1 and 2, the combined usage of informal justice providers (i.e. elders and religious leaders) was greater than that of the court. Focus group discussants in Wave 2 noted that elders, family members and even the formal courts would refer conflicting parties to Sharia offices (religious elders). In other cases, the formal courts would ask the clients to come to court with their elders. Elders also assisted Sharia offices by referencing customary laws between clans. For example, if the Sharia court issued a fine of five camels, then the elders would refer to the customary laws of the concerned parties to determine the monetary value. These laws vary one clan to the other.

  The quantitative data also indicates that there was a decline in the use of both the formal and informal justice providers between Waves 1 and 3. However, in Wave 3, reported usage of the courts surpassed that of the combined usage of the informal providers. Justice providers’ group discussants pointed out that despite some of the negative perceptions regarding the court, “people still use [the court] because it is the government and has enforcement power.” Elders also referred matters which they considered to be “serious and appropriate

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6 Burao Women, Focus Group Discussion, November 2013
7 Burao Elders, Focus Group Discussion, November 2013
8 Justice Providers Focus Group Discussion, April 2015
for the government” to the court. Figure 8 illustrates respondents’ indication of the entities to which they had referred an issue of justice in the year leading up to each assessment.

Figure 8: Usage of justice providers

- Enforcement of Judgements

During the 2012 assessment, the court had the highest rate of issuance and enforcement of judgments, with 89% of respondents who had used the court indicating that they received a judgment which was enforced. This declined to 65% in Wave 2, and again to 57% in Wave 3. Indeed, participants in the governance providers’ group discussion in Wave 3 identified the lack of enforcement of judgments as one of the main challenges facing the justice sector. They noted that court judgments and conflict resolution rulings tend to fail in the enforcement stage and warned of the danger of the lack of enforcement of rulings.

In contrast to the observations that were made with respect to the court, there was an increase in the issuance and enforcement of judgments among those who had used elders and religious leaders over the three waves. In Wave 1, 53% of those who used elders indicated that they received a judgment that was enforced. There was an increase in this proportion to 74% in Wave 2, and further to 100% in Wave 3. In the case of those who had used religious leaders, the proportion who stated that they received a judgment that was enforced rose from 60% in Wave 1 to 68% in Wave 2, and 100% in Wave 3. It should be considered, however, that the court was utilised more frequently than the elders or religious leaders for matters of justice in each of the three waves. Table 2 illustrates the proportion of respondents who stated that they received judgments which were enforced for each entity that was contacted for a matter of justice.

Table 2: Issuance and enforcement of judgments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entities that were consulted on matters of justice</th>
<th>Judgments issued and enforced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Elders</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Leaders</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 Burao Community Elder, Key Informant Interview, April 2015
10 Burao Governance Providers, Focus Group Discussion, April, 2015
- **Most Trusted Justice Provider**

Respondents in the Wave 2 and Wave 3 assessments were asked to identify the entity that they trusted most to solve cases. (This question was not asked during Wave 1.) The court was most frequently mentioned during both periods. Nonetheless, there was a decline in the proportion of respondents who stated that they trust the court most, falling from 51% in Wave 2 to 41% in Wave 3. In addition, there was also a shift in favour of the traditional system, as a combined 59% of respondents identified elders or religious leaders as the entity that they trusted most to resolve cases in Wave 2 compared with 49% in Wave 3. See figure 9.

**Figure 9: Most trusted justice providers**

- **Reasons for Choice of Most Trusted Justice Provider**

When asked to state reasons for their choice of most trusted justice provider, those who selected the courts in both Wave 2 and Wave 3, cited its fast decisions (45% and 50%) and fair judgments (41% and 28%) as the main factors influencing their choice. Receiving a fair judgment was also the main reason for the selection of religious leaders during both these assessments, with the majority of respondents stating this as the reason for their choice (80% and 79% respectively). There was more notable variation in the reasons given for selection of traditional elders during both waves. In Wave 2, ease of access was most frequently cited (42%), followed by fair judgments and independence from politics (18% each). However, in Wave 3, there was a decline in the proportion of respondents who noted accessibility as the reason for their choice of elders (10%). Instead, independence from politics (30%) and fast decisions (25%) were the main reasons for trust in elders ahead of the court and religious leaders. Table 3 illustrates respondents’ reasons for their choice of most trusted justice provider.
Table 3: Reasons for choice of most trusted justice provider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fast decisions</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair judgments</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence from politics</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less costly</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of access</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More reliable</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
<td><strong>99</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Level of Confidence in the Formal Justice System**

There was a fairly high level of confidence in the formal justice system among respondents in all three assessments, with the majority indicating very or fairly high levels of confidence. The level of confidence was observed to be highest in Wave 2 wherein more than one half of respondents (52%) stated that they had a very high level of confidence in the formal justice system, rising from 45% in the previous assessment (Wave 1). However, between Wave 2 and Wave 3, there was decline in the proportion of respondents who professed this level of confidence (42% in Wave 3). Furthermore, the proportion of respondents who expressed outright lack of confidence in the formal justice system has continuously trended upwards from 13% in Wave 1 to 17% in Wave 3, albeit increasing only marginally by 2% between each wave. See figure 10.

During Wave 3, several discussants voiced their concern about the perceived susceptibility of the formal justice system to corruption and bribery. This was said to be influenced by the payment of low and inconsistent salaries to members of the judiciary. The Court Commissioner felt that such circumstances resulted in low morale among the staff and increased the temptation to accept offers from people wanting to pay money to influence or change court decisions. In addition to this, people also tried to sway judgements through clan or family connections.¹¹

**Figure 10: Level of confidence in the formal justice system**

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¹¹ Burao District Court Commissioner, Key Informant Interview, April 2015
Security Providers

The city of Burao has five (5) police stations, as well as a number of police posts, including one at the Local Authority. However, several participants in the Wave 2 assessment stated that the number of police officers is inadequate to meet the needs of the local population. This encouraged the use of private security guards to help protect neighbourhoods and businesses,\(^{12,13}\) especially during the night. This trend continued into Wave 3, during which the Police Commissioner concurred that the city did not have sufficient police officers. He pointed out that this was not unique to Burao, but added that the problem was further compounded by the deployment of police officers to other areas or regions outside of the district.

- Awareness of the Police

Despite the reported shortage of police officers, the police presence was widely acknowledged by respondents in Wave 2 and Wave 3 (100% and 98% respectively). This represents a notable improvement in awareness of the police presence when compared with results from Wave 1 in which approximately one half of the respondents (51%) had acknowledged the presence of the police in the district. (Figure 11.)

Figure 11: Awareness of the police presence

- Preference for Reporting of Civil Matters, Petty Crimes and Serious Crimes

There has seen a steady improvement in respondents’ confidence in the police relative to other security providers since the 2012 (Wave 1) assessment. In Wave 3, more than 95% of respondents identified the police as their preferred choice for reporting petty and serious crimes, up from 85% in Wave 2. This was more notable when compared with results from Wave 1 in which 58% and 40% of respondents stated that the police was their preferred choice for responding to petty and serious crimes respectively. Further to this, while only 19% of respondents noted that they would prefer to report civil matters to the police in Wave 1, this proportion rose to 46% in Wave 2 and further to 84% in Wave 3. Notably, other preferences included the court, the Local Authority, traditional elders and religious leaders. Figure 12, 13, and 14 illustrate respondents’ stated preference for reporting civil matters, petty crimes and serious crimes.

\(^{12}\) Burao Elders, Focus Group Discussion, November 2013

\(^{13}\) Religious Leaders, Focus Group Discussions, October 2013
Figure 12: Reporting preference for civil matters

Figure 13: Reporting preference for petty crimes

Figure 14: Reporting preference for serious crimes
Most Trusted Security Provider

The police remained the most trusted security provider for responding to crime and violence in both the Wave 2 and Wave 3 assessments. (Respondents were not asked to identify their most trusted security provider during Wave 1.) There was also a notable increase in the proportion of respondents who identified the police as their preferred security from 60% in Wave 2 to 93% in Wave 3. While 13% of respondents identified the court as their most trusted security provider in Wave 2, none of the respondents mentioned the court in Wave 3. Figure 15 illustrates.

Figure 15: Most trusted security provider

Reasons for choice of most trusted security provider

In the 2013 assessment, a fast response was the reason that was most frequently cited by respondents for their choice of each entity, with the exception of the court, that was selected as their most trusted security provider. A similar proportion of those who had selected the local authority (33%; n = 6) also mentioned respect as the reason they trusted them most. During the 2015 assessment, response remained the most popular reason for selecting the police and elders as the most trusted security provider, while unbiased enforcement was the leading reason for selecting religious leaders and the local authority. Table 4 illustrates.

Table 4: Reasons for choice of most trusted justice provider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for choice of most trusted security provider</th>
<th>The Police</th>
<th>The Court</th>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Traditional Elders</th>
<th>Religious Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fast response</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbiased enforcement</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are respected</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of access</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>143</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level of Trust in the Police

The majority of respondents stated that they had high levels of trust in the police in Wave 3 (59%). This, however, represents a decline when compared with the results from Wave 2 (84%) and an even greater decline when compared with Wave 1 (90%). Further to this, more than one-half of respondents indicated very high levels of trust in the police in Wave 1 and Wave 2, while the proportion sharing a similar opinion fell to 21% in Wave 3. Although most of those who identified the police as their most trusted security provider attributed this to their “fast response,” the speed of the police response was the main complaint levelled against them in Wave 3. Participants in the women’s focus group discussion also suggested that the police sometimes demonstrated biases depending on the victims’ level of influence and standing within the community. Figure 12 illustrates respondents’ level of trust in the police.

Figure 16: Level of trust in the police response to crime and violence

Dynamics of Conflict and Violence

Experience with Conflict

The proportion of respondents who stated that they had witnessed conflict between clans or other groups fell significantly between Waves 1 and 3. During Waves 1 and 2, close to one quarter of respondents stated that they had witnessed such conflict, with a slight decline from 26% in Wave 1 to 23% in Wave 2. This proportion was greatly reduced to 8% in Wave 3. Figure 17 illustrates.

14 Burao Women, Focus Group Discussion, April 2015
Figure 17: Account of witnessing conflict between clans or groups (last 12 months)

- **Reasons for Conflicts that were Observed**

Respondents were asked to state the reasons for the conflicts that they had witnessed. Family disputes, crime, and resources were identified as factors which influenced conflicts during all three waves. In particular, family disputes were the main reasons for the conflicts that were witnessed in Wave 1. However, youth disputes, which emerged as a contributing factor in Wave 2, superseded family disputes as the main reason for conflicts that were witnessed in both Waves 2 and 3. The proportion of respondents who attributed the conflicts that they had witnessed to youth disputes also increased from 36% to 74% between the two waves. Nevertheless, it should be taken into account that there was a sizeable decrease in the proportion of respondents who had witnessed conflict during Wave 3. Therefore, these results do not signify an overall increase in youth violence, but instead speaks to its role as a contributing factor to the incidence of conflict in the district.

Notably, food aid distribution and revenge were mentioned as reasons for conflict only in Wave 1. Similarly, rape was mentioned only in Wave 2, while power and cultural struggles which were mentioned in Waves 1 and 2 were not mentioned in Wave 3. However, specific reference was made to business disputes as a contributing factor to the conflicts that were witnessed for the first time in Wave 3. Table 5 illustrates reasons cited by respondents for the conflicts that they witnessed.

**Table 5: Reasons for the conflicts that were witnessed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Conflict</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
<th>Wave 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Disputes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Disputes</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Aid/Distribution</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Cultural Struggle</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenge</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Disputes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experience with Crime and Violence

The prevalence of crime and violence was fairly high in Wave 1 and Wave 2, with 23% and 31% respectively of respondents stating that they had witnessed crime or violence against someone outside of their households in the past twelve months preceding each assessment. This incidence was, however, greatly reduced in Wave 3, during which 5% of respondents stated that they had witnessed crime or violence in the year leading up to the assessment. Figure 18 illustrates.

Figure 18: Account of witnessing crime and violence (last 12 months)

Causes of Insecurity

During the 2012 assessment (Wave 1), rape, domestic violence and murder were identified as the main reasons for safety concerns among residents. In the subsequent Wave 2 assessment, rape remained one of the main issues of concern, while there was no specific mention of domestic violence; and robbery, which was said to be committed mostly by the youth, emerged as one of the main causes of insecurity in the district. The then Police Commissioner also mentioned that there had been approximately eight murders in the wider Togdheer region within the twelve months leading up to the Wave 2 assessment. By 2015 (Wave 3), however, the sitting Police Commissioner, in his Key Informant Interview, stated that there were no major insecurities in the district. He added that there were land disputes and other skirmishes between families but that these were issues which were likely to occur in any major city. Despite this, other discussants raised a number of issues. Youth-based violence, family disputes, and rape, although said all to have declined, remained some of the main causes of insecurity within the district.  

With respect to youth violence, which was the most dominant concern, an effort was undertaken in 2014 to combat the problem by arresting a number of youth who were affiliated with groups that were suspected of involvement in acts of violence and criminal activity. The arrested youth were warned of the consequences of future arrests and the police also sought to engage their parents. The Police Commissioner felt that this had been impactful in the decline in youth violence in the district. In addition to this, the employment of several youth as security guards was also thought to be beneficial as it provided an avenue for employment and scarcity of jobs was perceived as being one of the most significant drivers of youth violence. However, this was also regarded as a potential risk, as there was no regulation of these security officers. Some residents stated that they felt obligated to use the services for fear of being robbed or targeted if they should discontinue.

15 Burao Police Commissioner, Key Informant Interview, April 2015
16 Ibid
17 Burao Elders, Focus Group Discussion, November 2013
18 Burao Youth, Focus Group Discussion, April 2015
Perception of Safety

Despite the reduction in the proportion of respondents who had witnessed conflict or violence between Wave 2 and Wave 3, there was a decline in the perception of safety during that period, with 78% of respondents stating that they felt safe in Wave 3. Figure 19 illustrates respondents’ perception of safety in the Wave 1, 2 and 3 assessments.

**Figure 19: Perception of safety**

Wave 1:
- Very safe: 38%
- Rather safe: 40%
- Unsafe: 23%

Wave 2:
- Very safe: 54%
- Rather safe: 35%
- Unsafe: 4%

Wave 3:
- Very safe: 45%
- Rather safe: 19%
- Unsafe: 30%

Legend:
- Very safe
- Rather safe
- Unsafe
- Very Unsafe
- Don’t Know
Conclusion

A comparative analysis of the results of the District Conflict and Security Assessments is useful in helping to understand the direction of community perception in relation to the thematic areas of study, namely governance; security; justice; conflict and violence. While there have been methodological challenges in comparing the three waves of DCSAs for Burao (Wave 1: 2012; Wave 2: 2013; Wave 3: 2015) due to the different sample sizes and changes to data collection tools, the information presented in this report provides an indication of potential changing trends in the issues covered in the three assessments.

Overall, residents in Burao had little experience with major incidents of crime and violence in recent times. There was significant awareness of the formal governance, security and justice systems among respondents. However, traditional systems continued to play a role in these areas. In the case of governance, representatives were elected based on clan and therefore meant that respective clans still held considerable influence in related matters. Additionally, traditional leaders were often consulted regarding matters of justice and even more trusted than the courts. Security provision was the only area in which the formal system was clearly dominant, with the police being regarded as the most trusted entity to respond to various security issues. Even so, respondents felt that the police force was not adequate to meet the needs of the local population and, in addition to the traditional systems, found alternative means of obtaining security through the engagement of private security guards.

The data indicates that there was a downward trend in respondents’ exposure to conflict and violence between the wave 1 and wave 3 assessments, albeit an increase in the proportion of survey respondents who reported having witnessed incidents of crime and violence between wave 1 and wave 2. There was widespread acknowledgement of the downturn among discussants in wave 3. The police was noted to have played an active role in contributing to the decline in youth-related incidents of crime and violence, through active patrolling and detainment of suspected individuals. However, several participants still shared concerns about issues such as youth-based violence, family disputes, and rape.

Most respondents in wave 3 were aware of the local council in the district. However, while there was a marked increase in awareness of the council between wave 1 and wave 2, a decline in awareness was observed in wave 3. There was also a steady decline in the proportion of respondents who had participated in consultations with the local government between wave 1 and wave 3. Nonetheless, respondents maintained that it is important to have elected representatives. This was in spite of criticisms levelled against the election process, chief of which was that councillors are elected on the basis of clan, rather than merit. It was suggested that this resulted in having representatives who were not necessarily best suited for the role.

There was a significant increase in respondents’ acknowledgement of the police presence between wave 1 and wave 3, accompanied by an increase in preference for reporting matters such as civil issues, petty and serious crimes to the police. Several discussants, including the Police Commissioner argued that the number of police was inadequate to meet the needs of the district. This was compounded by the deployment of local police officers to other areas outside of the district. As a result, during wave 2 it was observed that many residents turned to private security guards to help protect their neighbourhoods and businesses. This had the added advantage of providing employment, especially for youth who may otherwise have been more inclined to engage in illicit activities. Even so, there was concern about negative consequences associated with this practice, which had continued into wave 3. Discussants, including the police commissioner, pointed out that
the lack of regulation and oversight meant that these security guards presented a risk, whereby residents felt obligated to use their services for fear of being robbed if they should discontinue the service.

Traditional leaders, including elders and sheikhs (religious leaders) also assisted in providing security services and were mentioned among respondents’ preferred choices for reporting of various matters along with other government entities, such as the court and the local authority. Nonetheless, very few respondents in wave 3 stated that they would prefer to report any of the various types of security matters to these entities. In addition, an overwhelming majority of respondents identified the police as their preferred security provider, increasing considerably between wave 2 and wave 3. Despite this, overall trust in the police was noted to have declined overtime between wave 1 and wave 3. The police was both commended and criticised for the speed of their response. There were also allegations of biases being exhibited by the police.

With respect to justice provision, there was a high level of awareness of the courts in all three assessments. Respondents also indicated a high level of trust in the formal justice system, although there had been a slight decline between wave 2 and wave 3. Nonetheless, there was continued reliance on the informal justice system. Usage of both the formal and informal justice systems declined between wave 1 and wave 3. However, in contrast to the wave 1 and 2 assessments in which it was observed that combined use of the informal justice providers surpassed that of the court, usage of the court in wave 3 was greater than that of the informal system. In spite of this, regard for the informal system remained high and even showed improvement in wave 3 when compared with results from wave 2. While the court was identified as respondents’ most trusted justice provider during both wave 2 and 3, the combined proportion of respondents who stated a preference for informal justice providers was greater than the proportion that stated a preference for the court. Notably, the informal system was regarded as being more effective with respect to the issuance and enforcement of judgments. There was also a perception that court officials were susceptible to bribery.