Comparative District Conflict and Security Assessment Report For Baligubadle 2013/2015
Comparative District Conflict and Security Assessment Report for Baligubadle District 2013/2015
Introduction

Since its establishment in 2009 the Observatory of Conflict and Violence Prevention (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 Baligubadle District during the years of 2012 (Wave 1) and 2015 (Wave 2). The purpose of this report is to compare key results of the assessments conducted during the two periods.

District Profile

Baligubadle is a town in the northwestern part of Somaliland, approximately 65 km from the capital Hargeisa. The town was previously part of the Maroodi Jehe Region and straddles the border with Ethiopia. During the 1980s the locality served as the ground for Somali National Movement (SNM) resistance in their uprising against President Siad Barre. When former President Dahir Riyale announced the creation of seven new regions in 2008, Baligubadle was named the administrative center of one of them, the region of Hawd. Under the Somaliland Regions and Districts (Self-Management) Law, Baligubadle is classified as a Grade C District and as such, has a Local Council comprised of thirteen councillors who are elected to serve for a period of five years.
Methodology and Possible Limitations

The Waves 1 and Wave 2 assessment for Baligubadle were conducted in 2013 and 2015 respectively. The two 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 should be noted 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 a representative sample size for the district, which resulted in an increase in the number of questionnaires collected from 80 in Wave 1 to 120 in Wave 2.

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 smartphones with mobile data collection software developed by Open Data Kit (ODK) in the Wave 2 assessment, a departure from the conventional pen and paper data collection methods of the Wave 1 assessment.

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, the data obtained in the two assessments can provide some indication of potential changing trends in the areas covered.

Survey Participants

The Wave 1 assessment comprised of a sample of 80 respondents and during Wave 2 assessment 120 respondents took part in the household survey. The following presents an overview of the demographic profile of respondents for each assessment.

- Gender

The gender distribution was similar for the Wave 1 assessment, with approximately 50% of survey participants being female and males of the sample in each case. However, there was a minor variation between the genders in the Wave 2 assessment, with females accounting 52% of the sample during this period. See Figure 1 and Table 1.

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>Male</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Age

The age distributions of the survey respondents in both Waves were similar in the 40-49 year age category (15% in Wave 1 and 16% in Wave 2) and 60+ year age category (3% respectively). There were more notable variations in the age distribution of respondents in the remaining categories. During Wave 1, the 20-29 year age group was the dominant age category (40%), followed by the 30–39 year age group (21%). Although the proportion of respondents in the 20–29 year age category had decreased during Wave 2 (31%), it remained the most dominant, followed by the 30-39 year age category which saw an increase (28%). The under 20 year category saw the biggest increase, going from 1% in Wave 1 to 13% in Wave 2. Figure 2 illustrates the age distribution of respondents for the two assessments.

Figure 2: Age distribution of respondents

![Age distribution of respondents](image)

Marital Status

The majority of survey respondents in both assessments were married (69% in Wave 1 and 63% in Wave 2). However, single respondents comprised not only the second largest group in Waves 1 and 2, but increased from 20% to 30% in Wave 2, whereas there were minor changes to the divorced respondents which comprised the third largest group in Wave 1 and Wave 2 (6% and 5% respectively). There was also comparatively little variation in the proportion of respondents who were widowed (5% in Wave 1 and 2% in Wave 2). 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 Wave 2 may have had an impact on the overall perception and experience and should be considered when drawing wider comparative conclusions from the two datasets.

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

The two 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**

As a Grade C District, Baligubadle has a Local Council comprising 13 councillors. The current council was elected and instated in December 2012 for a five year term. These councillors represent the various clans and communities in the district and amongst themselves, serve on various committees such as the Finance Committee, the Social Affairs Committee and the Conflict Resolution Committee.

- **Awareness of the Local Council**

When the Wave 1 assessment was conducted in mid-2013, half a year after the installation of the current council, awareness of its presence among the residents of Baligubadle District was high with more than eight out of every ten respondents in the household survey reporting that they knew of its existence. In Wave 2, conducted nearly two years later, the level of awareness had risen further to 100% of the respondents (Fig. 4).

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

![Graph showing awareness of the Local Council](image)
Participation in Local Government Consultations

When asked whether they had participated in consultations with the local government almost two in every ten (19%) of the respondents in Wave 1 went on to state that they had. In Wave 2 the portion of respondents reporting having participated in local governance consultations within the 12 month period preceding the assessment experienced a significant drop to 5% (Fig. 5).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importance of having Elected Representatives

The proportion of respondents stating that they believed it was important for citizens to have elected representatives also saw a big drop from 96% in the first wave to 71% in the second. From qualitative discussions in the 2015 assessment, it was gathered that on the one hand the election of local government representatives was seen as a positive step towards democratization in that it had helped to reduce the effect of clan politics that had plagued the previous nomination system. On the other hand, concerns were raised that, even though conceptually, the election of representatives at the district level had been meant to promote decentralization and self-administration; however, the districts’ limited revenues was thought to have adverse effects on the performance of the local council. Furthermore, the pending recognition of the district as a region by the central government created a mismatch between the expectations of a region and the resources available to the district.

Figure 6: Importance of having elected representatives

Wave 1
- Yes: 96%
- No/Don’t Know: 4%

Wave 2
- Yes: 71%
- No/Don’t Know: 29%

---

2 Baligubadle Governance Providers, Focus Group Discussion, 22nd May 2015
3 Mayor of Baligubadle, Key Informant Interview, 24th May 2015
4 Religious Leaders and Traditional Elders, Focus Group Discussion, 22nd May 2015
Justice Providers

As with all other Somali regions, justice provision in Baligubadle is characterised by the presence of both formal and informal actors. The formal justice system relies on statutory laws as passed by the parliament and enforced by state institutions (the police, courts and the prison service) and operates alongside an informal justice system built upon Somali inter-clan customary law (Xeer) and Shari’ah law (traditional elders and religious leaders).

- Awareness of the Court

Awareness of the existence of the court was very high in both waves, with none of the respondents in the first assessment and less than 1% in the second wave reporting no-awareness (Fig. 7). Focus group discussants and interview participants further clarified that there was a District Court in Baligubadle, which had, at some point between the first and second wave, as a consequence of the declaration of Baligubadle as a regional capital, also begun serving as a Regional Court. There was however, still no Court of Appeal at the time of data collection for Wave 2 and appeals were still referred to the original regional capital, Hargeisa.5

Figure 7: Respondents' awareness of the existence of courts

- Use of Justice Providers

Analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the household surveys in both waves of the assessment showed a moderate increase in the portion of respondents reporting usage of the formal justice system (courts) in the 12 months prior to the assessment (11%: Wave 1 to 15%: Wave 2) and a significant decrease in the portions stating that they had used an informal justice provider (14% to 4% for traditional elders and 4% to zero for religious leaders).

From qualitative discussions it could also be seen that the formal justice system had become a more popular option for residents of Baligubadle. In the first wave discussants had bemoaned the length of time taken before the conclusion of cases in the formal courts as one of the reasons that contributed to members of the community opting for traditional elders, who were said to be capable of reaching a resolution in one sitting.6 During the 2015 assessment however, discussants attested to the growing popularity of the court;

5 Hawd Regional Court Commissioner, Key Informant Interview, 24th May 2015
6 Baligubadle Religious Leader, Key Informant Interview, May 2013
Trends have been changing over time: a few years back people used to have more confidence in the traditional justice system, but now people have increased trust in the formal justice system. If two people find themselves in a small disagreement they will go to the court to settle their dispute.⁷

Another factor that may have contributed to the increase in likelihood of people opting for the formal justice system was said to be the growing understanding of the formal system of government and an accompanying acceptance of its legitimacy within the community.⁸

Figure 8: Usage of justice providers

- Enforcement of Judgements

With regard to the issuance and enforcement of judgments, there was also a notable increase in the likelihood of those who had reported usage of either the court or traditional elders going on to state that they had received judgements that had been enforced. In the case of the courts the increase was from 56% in Wave 1 to 78% in Wave 2 while among those who had used traditional elders in either wave, there was an increase in the proportion reporting that they had received judgements that had been enforced from 55% to 100% (Table 2).

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>Wave 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Elders</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Leaders</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁸ Ibid
Level of Confidence in the Formal Justice System

In both waves, the majority of respondents expressed high levels of confidence in the formal justice system - 95% in Wave 1 stating that they felt either ‘very confident’ or ‘fairly confident’ and 90% in Wave 2 holding similar views. The portion of respondents stating outright that they had no confidence in the formal justice system rose slightly from 5% in Wave 1 to 8% in Wave 2 (Fig. 9).

Figure 9: Level of confidence in the formal justice system

Security Providers

Police are the main provider of security in Baligubadle. However, there are also other formal institutions, including the local authority (local council), village committees and the Governor, that also assist in ensuring security. Furthermore, informal providers such as the traditional elders and the local community work closely with the police on reporting security related issues.

The city of Baligubadle has one police station, and outside of the city there are a number of police posts. Many participants in the Wave 2 assessment were of the opinion that the number of police officers is inadequate to meet the needs of the local population. The Regional Police Commissioner however, was of the opinion that:

The number of police stations across districts and within the region is sufficient, although they are quite scattered. Every village within a district has two police officers, which would be sufficient. It is this very presence of police officers in every village that has allowed a decrease in the crime rate. Reinforcements are sent to villages only once existing police officers have proven unable to tackle the situation on their own.

Awareness of the Police

Despite the reported shortage of police officers, awareness of the police presence was consistently high in both waves 1 and 2 (96% and 99% respectively), with nearly all respondents in wave 2 acknowledging the presence of police in the district (Fig. 10).

---

9 Women, Focus Group Discussion, 21st May 2015
Figure 10: Awareness of the police presence

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

There has been a notable improvement in respondents’ confidence in the police relative to other security providers since the Wave 1 assessment. In Wave 2, more than 68% of respondents identified the police as their preferred choice for reporting petty crimes, up from 38% in Wave 1. However, Wave 1 results in which 98% and 99% of respondents stated that the police was their preferred choice for responding to petty and serious crimes respectively dropped during the Wave 2 reporting period to 83% for petty crimes and 94% for serious crimes. Further to this, while 50% of the respondents noted that they would prefer to report civil matters to the local authority in Wave 1, this proportion declined to 18% in Wave 2. On the other hand, preference for the court in dealing with civil incidents rose from 8% in Wave 1 to 14% in Wave 2. Notably, other preferences included the Local Authority, traditional elders and religious leaders. Figures 11, 12, and 13 illustrate respondents’ stated preference for reporting civil matters, petty crimes and serious crimes.

The choice of security provider also depends on the nature of the case. According to the Youth FGD participants, for example, rape and domestic issues were usually resolved by traditional elders, while theft and injuries were dealt with by the police. It appeared that murder cases were first reported to the police, then elders became involved and sometimes took over the case.11

Figure 11: Reporting preference for civil matters

---

11 *Youth*, Focus Group Discussion, 21st May 2015
Figure 12: Reporting preference for petty crimes

![Figure 12](image12)

Figure 13: Reporting preference for serious crimes

![Figure 13](image13)

- Level of Trust in the Police

Trust in the police for responding to crime and violence in both the Wave 1 and Wave 2 assessments remained high (90% vs. 92% respectively). There was also a decrease in the proportion of respondents who had a low level of trust in the police from 10% in Wave 1 to 6% in Wave 2. Figure 14 illustrates

Figure 14: Respondents’ level of trust towards police in responding to crime

![Figure 14](image14)
Focus group discussants mentioned numerous shortcomings which plagued police performance such as low numbers of police officers, limited resources, and having to deal with border related issues which the military should have been responsible for. Despite these obstacles, many participants from the focus group discussions reiterated their sense of gratitude for the police efforts. As suggested by the Women’s group participants: “…although police forces are limited in number, their work is of good quality.”

The Police’s efforts were supported by the village committee, whereby villagers themselves settle issues that take place within their area and only require police involvement if they are unable to resolve the matter. The Morality Committee, locally known as Gudiga Wanaag farista iyo xumaan reebista, which comprises a group of reputable elders and religious leaders, also played a role in supporting the police’s efforts, primarily through dealing with morality related matters such as blasphemy and alcohol consumption.

### Experience with Conflict

During Wave 1, when respondents were asked whether they had witnessed conflict between two different clans or groups, 15% stated that they had, a similar proportion stated that they were aware of the occurrence of conflict between clans in the 2015 (Wave 2) assessment although only 6% of the entire sample went on to state that they had actually witnessed this conflict (Fig. 15).

Figure 15: Account of witnessing conflict between clans or groups (last 12 months)

![Figure 15](image)

### Reasons for Conflicts that were Observed

Disputes over natural resources (mainly land), were the most commonly cited reasons for the conflicts that were observed in Wave 1, having been mentioned by close to three quarters (73%) of the respondents who had witnessed conflict. During the Wave 2 assessment, although resources remained a dominant issue at 47%, they were superseded by youth disputes which, despite not having been mentioned at all two years earlier, were the most cited in 2015 having been mentioned by 57% of the respondents who reported witnessing conflict between groups. See Table 3 for a detailed breakdown.

---

14 Religious and Traditional Elders, Focus Group Discussion, 22nd May 2015
Table 3: Reasons for the conflicts that were witnessed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Conflict</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Disputes</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Justice</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Disputes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Experience with Crime and Violence

The prevalence of crime and violence underwent a decrease between the two assessments with the portions of those stating that they had witnessed a crime or violence being committed against someone outside their homestead dropping by half from 14% in Wave 1 to 7% in Wave 2 (Fig. 16).

Figure 16: Account of witnessing crime and violence (last 12 months)

- Causes of Insecurity

From the qualitative discussions, participants pointed to several causes of conflict: issues such as rape, and land disputes (particularly fertile grazing land), along with access to scarce water sources such as *berkads* (water reservoirs) were causes of insecurity. However, discussants expressed serious concern over the districts’ location (straddling the border with Ethiopia), with limited police presence to patrol the border and thereby giving opportunity for smugglers or criminals to have a safe route from Ethiopia into Baligubadle.¹⁵

- Perception of Safety

The perception of safety within the community also increased, respondents stating that they felt either very safe or rather safe made up 99% of the Wave 2 sample, up from 95% who had had similar perceptions of safety in Wave 1. While in Wave 1, 6% of residents interviewed had claimed that they felt either unsafe or very unsafe, none of the respondents in Wave 2 expressed similar perceptions (Fig. 17).

¹⁵ *Religious and Traditional Elders, Focus Group Discussion, 22nd May 2015*
Figure 17: Perception of safety

Wave 1
- Very safe: 81%
- Rather safe: 14%
- Unsafe: 3%
- Very unsafe: 3%
- Don't know: 3%

Wave 2
- Very safe: 95%
- Rather safe: 4%
- Unsafe: 1%
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. With due consideration afforded to the methodological challenges in comparing the two waves of DCSCAs for Baligubadle (Wave 1: 2013 and Wave 2: 2015) owing 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, there was little experience of outbreaks of group conflict in Baligubadle and an indication of a reduction in crime and violence. Awareness of the formal institutions of governance, security and justice provision remained very high across the board. However, informal institutions remained relevant despite the increasing popularity of their formal counterparts. In relation to justice provision, traditional elders were said to have remained active in the resolution of disputes involving family matters such as those that involved allegations of rape or domestic violence.

The unconfirmed regional status of Baligubadle continued to pose peculiar challenges particularly in terms of resources for the formal institutions. For instance, the court, which had initially been a District Court was observed in Wave 2 to have started handling matters fit for a Regional Court without an indication of increased central government funding or staffing. Appeals arising from its decisions however, had continued being handled in Hargeisa at the Maroodi Jeex Regional Court of Appeal. The police too, had been affected when the number of police officers whose service had previously been restricted to the town, had been redistributed to cover far flung villages of the region, resulting in a thinning out of the police-to-population ratio.

The data indicates that while awareness of the local council rose to 100% between the first and second wave, participation in local governance consultations fell during the same time period. The belief that it is important to have elected representatives, while remaining popular, was expressed by a notably lesser proportion of respondents in the second wave than had been in the first.

With respect to justice provision, awareness of the presence of courts remained high across the waves and their reported usage experienced an increase, while the reported usage of informal justice providers saw a significant decline from Wave 1 to Wave 2. In particular, there was actually no reported usage of religious leaders for a matter of justice among the household survey respondents in the second wave. Among those who had used any form of justice provider, the proportion of those reporting that a judgment had been issued and enforced increased. The level of confidence in the formal justice system remained high across the two waves.

As for security provision, data shows that there was an increase in the acknowledgment of police presence within the district. The police became dominant as the preferred choice for reporting civil matters in Wave 2, replacing the local authority which had been the most mentioned in the first wave. For instances involving petty crimes or serious crimes, the police remained the most dominant choice for reporting despite slight dips in the proportions citing them in the second wave compared to the first wave. The level of confidence in the capacity of the police to respond to crime and violence also stayed high across both waves.