



BOSASO AREA BRIEF

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List of Acronyms used by the UN and NGOs in Bosaso, and in this report

Organizations	
Adeso	African Development Solutions
ADRA	Adventist Development Relief Agency
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EC Air	European Commission Air Travel
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
GRT	Gruppo per le Relazioni Transculturali
HADO	Horn of Africa Aid and Development Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MC	Mercy Corps
MDM	Medecins du Monde
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
SCI	Save the Children International
SHILCON	Shilale Rehabilitation and Ecological Concern
SRCS	Somali Red Crescent Society
TASS	Tadamun Social Society
UN-Habitat	UN Human Settlement Programme
UNOCHA	UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNHAS	UN Humanitarian Air Services
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
VSF-S	Veterinaires Sans Frontieres – Suisse
WFP	World Food Program
Humanitarian terms	
ABE	Accelerated Basic Education
BSFP	Blanket supplementary feeding programmes
CEC	Continuing Education Course
ESK	Emergency Shelter Kit
GBV	Gender Based Violence
MCH(N)	Maternal and Child Health (and Nutrition)
NFI	Non Food Items
OTP	Outpatient Therapy Program
PHC	Primary Health Care
TSFP	Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programs
TB	Tuberculosis
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. OVERVIEW

Bosaso is a vibrant commercial port on Puntland's Gulf of Aden coast. Since the civil war began in 1991, it has been relatively shielded from conflict, and therefore attracted many people from the rest of the country, especially from the Darod group. About 50,000 of these have settled as IDPs in camps in or near the city, while many others have integrated the city's social and economic tissue, contributing to the city's development. Among Somalis, Bosaso has developed a positive reputation because of its openness and prosperity.



Fig 1: Bosaso seen from above the airport. Photo posted by Gantaalo5 on www.SomaliNet.com on 05/05/2013

The city is also the Horn of Africa's major conduit for illegal migrants coming from the Horn of Africa, who head for Saudi Arabia and Europe for instance. It has also served as the back office for acts of piracy. Although Bosaso has never provided safe haven to the pirates themselves, the town seems to have benefitted substantially from investments made by pirates and for counter-piracy purposes. Nevertheless, most of the business conducted here is licit: export of livestock (goats, sheep and camels) and aromatic resins to the Gulf, and import of food, electronics and consumer goods from the Gulf, India and the Far East.

Near Bosaso is the mountain village of Galgala, known for an insurgency fueled by local grievances and linked to Al Shabaab. Because of it, and kidnappings of internationals between 1997 and 2007, Bosaso has been considered a dangerous posting for internationals. In more recent years, lethal attacks by Al Shabaab against government targets, often followed by bloody reprisals, have taken place. The authorities claim to have defeated the insurgency, but bands of Al Shabaab still roam the mountainous regions near Bosaso. Besides these clashes, in which international forces have also been implicated, many security-related incidents have taken place – in total NSP has listed almost 1000 incidents between 2010 and 2015. The international community has not, or only incidentally, been the victim of these attacks, but the UN in particular remains a likely target and has therefore severely restrained its movements in Bosaso.

Over the past decade, the international community in Bosaso has focused on the support of the IDPs and returnees, while investing very little direct support to the city or its inhabitants. But the city and the district and region of which it is the capital are riddled with many problems and dysfunctionalities, for example large gaps in the provision of basic infrastructure and social services in the fields of agriculture, education, health, WASH, etc. There is definitely scope for a much larger involvement by the international community. Yet, the city and its population feel proud of their achievements, and are set to continue their rapid development with or without outside support.

A note on spelling: Bosaso is spelt in a bewildering variety of ways: Bossaso, Bosasso, Boosaasso and any combination of these can be found. In Somali Boosaaso is the official spelling, although here again one finds many variations in practice. In this text Bosaso is the spelling used, as that is internationally the most frequent form. The tonic accent is on the second syllable: BosAso.

1.1.1. POLITICAL STATUS

Bosaso is the largest city of Puntland in terms of population and its economy, and by some accounts the third city of Somalia – after Mogadishu and Hargeisa. It is however not the capital of Puntland, which is located in the much smaller town Garowe.

Bosaso is the capital of Bari region. According to the pre-war maps which are still used by the Federal Government of Somalia and the international community, Bari spans the eastern tip ('Horn') of Africa and is the biggest region of Somalia. It is divided into six districts: Bosaso, Qandala, Caluula (or Alula), Iskushuban, Qardho and Bandarbeyla.

The government of Puntland has however redrawn the administrative map in 2013, and cut Bari into three regions: Bari itself, still centered on Bosaso; Gardafuul, with its capital at Caluula; and Karkaar, centered on Qardho. According to this new administrative division, Bari region still has six districts: Bosaso, Qandala, Iskushuban, Ufeyn, Carmo and Balidhidin. According to the authorities in Bosaso these three regions and the six districts all have functioning administrations.

Bosaso is governed by a mayor, Engineer Yasin Omar Mohamud (of the Darod/Harti/Dashishe clan). He was elected by the district council on 27 May 2015 after the President of Puntland, Abdiweli Mohamed Gaas, removed the governor of Bari and the mayor of Bosaso and disbanded the council. The district council consists of 31 members; each of these is an elder appointed by the local community in a single constituency (16 urban, 15 rural) of Bosaso district. The mayor is assisted by deputy mayor Said Garown, who was also elected by the new district council.

The other important political authority is the Governor of Bari region. The current governor, Yusuf Mohamud Wacays 'Dhedo' (Darod/Harti/Majerteen/Ali Saleban), was appointed by the president of Puntland on 27 May 2015. Apparently President Gaas was dissatisfied with the insecurity Bosaso had been experiencing over the past year – the outgoing governor, Abdisamad Mohamud Galan, had even himself been attacked three months earlier in his residence by unknown gunmen.

1.1.2. GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

Bosaso is located on a flat coastal plain along the Gulf of Aden. The city is shaped like an inverted cone, with its base along the seashore in the North (with in the middle of this base the harbor), and its tip along the road south to Garowe.



The climate of the city is arid: hot and dry, with only 19 mm of average yearly rainfall (most of it falls between October and December) and with an average temperature of 30°C. Average daily mean temperatures range from 25°C in December and January to 35°C from June to August.

Climate data for Bosaso													[hide]
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average high °C (°F)	29.0 (84.2)	30.0 (86)	31.0 (87.8)	34.0 (93.2)	37.0 (98.6)	41.0 (105.8)	41.0 (105.8)	40.0 (104)	39.0 (102.2)	33.0 (91.4)	30.0 (86)	29.0 (84.2)	35.0 (95)
Daily mean °C (°F)	25.0 (77)	25.0 (77)	26.7 (80.1)	28.8 (83.8)	31.1 (88)	35.6 (96.1)	36.1 (97)	35.6 (96.1)	33.3 (91.9)	27.8 (82)	25.6 (78.1)	25.6 (78.1)	30.0 (86)
Average low °C (°F)	20.6 (69.1)	20.6 (69.1)	21.6 (70.9)	24.4 (75.9)	26.1 (79)	30.6 (87.1)	31.7 (89.1)	30.0 (86)	28.3 (82.9)	22.2 (72)	21.1 (70)	20.0 (68)	25.0 (77)
Average rainfall mm (inches)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.04)	3 (0.12)	3 (0.12)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0.08)	7 (0.28)	3 (0.12)	19 (0.76)
Average relative humidity (%)	66	68	64	64	62	48	40	48	56	70	74	71	60.9

Source: Arab Meteorology Book^[12]

The groundwater levels under the city – and in the region of Bari, generally – are falling rapidly. There is no desalination plant (or petrol to power it) and well water in Bosaso has an unpleasant, salty, oily and mineral taste, suggesting infiltration of sea water into the groundwater.

The hinterland of Bosaso is composed of low but rugged mountains and semi-arid plains, with a rare narrow green valley. The scenery in these valleys and along the coast is beautiful, and the inhabitants of Bosaso often try to escape the hot summer months in the city by picnicking in the nearby valleys of Biyo Kulule or Baalade (behind the airport), if they don't have a home 'up country' to go to. There are a few ruins of ancient cities or monuments in Bari region, and some pleasant beaches too, which endows Bosaso, in a distant future perhaps, with an interesting tourism potential. For the time being, many of these scenic spots – such as the majestic Al Madow mountains that continue into eastern Sanaag – are made unsafe by roaming bands of bandits/pirates, disgruntled clans and Al Shabaab.



Figure 2: *Biyo Kulule valley*. Photo from www.biyokulule.com

Bosaso is connected to Puntland's capital Garowe and central/south Somalia by a paved road. The town is not well connected by road to most of its district capitals, except Qardho, Ufeyn and Carmo. A dirt track westward along the coast leads to Laas Qoorey in Sanaag. The drive to Caluula or Bandar Beyla is more than 500 kilometers and can take two days. Given the state of the roads, Puntlanders advise to travel between coastal cities by boat (from Bosaso to Qandala, Caluula, Bargaal, Xaafun and Bandar Beyla) if possible, instead of by road, but there are no regular connections and boat trips are unsafe because of lurking piracy. In practice, internationals rarely visit the district capitals of Bari.

Enough rainwater falls in the coastal mountains, and is channeled through their narrow valleys, to allow some farming activities. Bari district seems to be nearly self-sufficient in terms of food production, with the notable exception of rice, imported from South Asia.

The long coastline provides ample fishing opportunities, and many of the small villages along the coast specialize in fishing. The lack of good roads, electricity agro-industrial facilities and effective cold storage systems, however, condemn the fishers to subsistence fishing, and only little fish is exported. There is not much of an internal market, either, as Somalis generally look down on fish, which is more difficult to preserve on long nomadic journeys, as compared to meat.

The long coastline also presents a risk. The 2004 tsunami, whose epicenter was close to Indonesia, hit the coast of Bari quite hard, destroying part of Bandar Beyla, among other towns. Late 2015 two cyclones hit the coast, destroying boats, livestock, farms, houses and tracks, and in 2013 a stronger cyclone caused more than 160 deaths. The remoteness of Bari's coastline means little help has reached these communities.



1.1.3. ECONOMY

The port, trade and remittances

Bosaso is, with Mogadishu, Kismayo near the Kenyan border and Berbera in Somaliland, one of the four main ports of Somalia. Its main export item is livestock, shipped to the Gulf countries. A new road was finished in 2015 with the support of Italy and UN Habitat, bypassing central Bosaso and going straight to the port, to facilitate these livestock exports.

Earlier, Bosaso signed a deal with the rulers of Ras Al Khaimah, one of the emirates of the UAE, to set up livestock quarantining and quality control facilities. The quarantining is to ensure the good health of the animals before export, in particular the absence of Rift Valley Fever, which caused the Gulf countries to ban livestock imports from Somalia between 2007 and 2009. Bari region produces quite a lot of livestock itself – its camels are especially famed – but most livestock comes from much further: from Hiraan in central Somalia to Toghdher in Somaliland. Problems at the port of Berbera and instability in Kismayo and Mogadishu, and along the roads leading to these harbors, have made Bosaso the port of choice for many Somali livestock exporters, including those in Eastern Ethiopia.

It is quite surprising, therefore, that the port is so small, and its facilities so rudimentary. When Golis Telecommunications ordered a large generator from the Gulf, the generator could not be offloaded for many months for lack of a crane strong enough to lift it. The port, built in the late 1980s, was one of the last positive

projects of the Barre regime. It is deep enough to welcome large ships, but has little dock space. Most of the trade to and from Bosaso is done by wooden dhows plying the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, Red Sea and Persian Gulf.

There are plans to build a larger port: the Lootah Group, a construction consortium headed by a Palestinian based in Dubai, signed a deal with then Puntland president Mohamed Adde Muse Hersi in 2008 to improve the port and its facilities and establish a free trade zone; but not much is known about possible implementation, 8 years onwards. However, in 2015 Puntland signed an agreement with Divers Marine Contracting LLC from Dubai to deliver new cranes to the port, and deepen it to 13m. In Jan 2016 the first equipment for this new contract arrived in Bosaso.

Clearly, Somalia lacks the kind of institutional guarantees – notably the Rule of Law – larger investors such as the Dubai Ports World or PSA International would need.

Meanwhile Bosaso's airport, Bender Qassim International Airport (BSA), originally constructed with financial support from the UAE in 2007, has undergone a major renovation. The new airport was inaugurated in January 2016. This project, funded by Italy through UNOPS, is being implemented by China Civil Engineering and Construction Corporation. The new runway and terminal building should boost the city's regional integration. Airport authorities expect to open routes to Djibouti, Addis, Nairobi, Yemen, Dubai and other Gulf states and the Far East, and to cities in Somalia and Somaliland.

The stateless economy of Bosaso works well, as many observers have pointed out. The steady growth of Puntland's economy since 1991 demonstrates that the economy can prosper without a state, at least in Somalia. Nevertheless, foreign investors are scared off by the perceived lawlessness and unpredictability.



The crowded port of Bosaso, with dhows unloading and loading. Photo by R. Kluijver

Besides livestock, a famous export product of the northern Somalia coast is frankincense, and other aromatic gums such as myrrh and 'bokhar'. This export product has in fact given Puntland its name, as Egyptians referred to this coast as 'Punt', mentioning it as their prime source of frankincense and myrrh. These aromatic gums have retained their value ever since. They are harvested by making cuts on the aromatic trees, which grow on mountainous outcrops along the coast, especially in the area of Caluula. The only other area in the world where frankincense grows is on the opposite shore of the Gulf of Aden, in the region straddling the Yemen-Oman border.

Most of the trade in frankincense and myrrh is directed towards the Gulf countries, which are prime consumers but also resellers of these resins to the rest of the world.

Imported products are more varied; they include all kinds of consumer goods (household appliances, electronics, vehicles, textiles) and foodstuffs such as rice, vegetable oil etc. Most of them are distributed in the rest of Somalia and across the borders.

The importance of trade is not only economic, but also social. The trading networks centered on Bosaso extend throughout the whole world, with an emphasis on the Gulf (especially the United Arab Emirates) but with ramifications from Minneapolis to Zambia and from Stockholm to Malaysia. These global networks, in which most inhabitants of Bosaso seem somehow enmeshed, provide access to funding, education, and political influence and are major channels for the generation and investment of remittances.

The trade sector of Bosaso is, despite its global scope, still pre-modern in character. There are surprisingly few industrial facilities in Bosaso to add value to either the exports or the imports. There are many opportunities for investors here, and the Somali diaspora, sometimes backed by financiers in their adopted countries, are increasingly involved in setting up such industries, often making handsome profits in the short term, despite an unsatisfactory legal framework and a high degree of corruption.

Another sector that has done famously well in Bosaso is telecommunications, and along with it, financial services. Golis and Netco are two examples of successful regional operators based in Bosaso. Golis was singled out by the Economist in 2005 as being the cheapest telecoms operator in the world, offering standard tariffs of 0.20 USD per minute on international calls. Netco has branched out into providing electricity to urban populations. Both companies support bank-less electronic banking, where your sim card number is your bank account and you complete most financial transactions through USSD messages.

The telecoms sector has been able to grow so fast thanks to the Somali diaspora. With each call placed towards Somalia, the receiving operator gets a share of the call's cost, according to international telecommunications regulations. This mechanism has allowed mobile phone companies in Africa to grow exponentially, as Africa receives many more calls than it emits.

Financial services companies have captured much of the remittances flow using developments in the ICT sector. Although some of these operations were closed down by US anti-money-laundering laws passed in the wake of September 11, 2001, others survived. The most famous one in Somalia, and among the diaspora, is Dahabshiil (similar to Western Union but much cheaper). Dahabshiil handles about two thirds of the estimated 1.6 billion dollars annual remittances by the Somali diaspora to Somalia (*UNDP Somalia Human Development Report 2012 and interview with Dahabshiil's Abdirashid Duale in Africa Renewal, May 2013*) which has made it the biggest financial services company in all of Africa (*Wikipedia*). It has branched out into mobile payments, ATMs and handles the financial flows of many UN agencies and NGOs in Somalia.

Remittances by diaspora Somalis represent 25% of Somalia's GDP, and an estimated 40% of Somali households profit from them. The existence of smoothly running, inexpensive and global money-transfer mechanisms has greatly propitiated trade and investments.



Bosaso market street. Photo by R. Kluijver

One can observe a clear drip-down effect in the market of Bosaso. Although the town has no 'malls' or even covered markets, the market is huge and vibrant. There may not be many luxury items for sale, but there is a vast range of basic goods on offer. The retail sector in Bosaso is clearly doing well. It is said that, in order to set up a business with a chance of survival, you need 5,000 USD in Bosaso (in smaller towns 1,000 may suffice). This kind of sum is, judging by the growth of the sector, quite easy to find.

It is noteworthy that many businessmen in Bosaso apply for foreign passports, to allow them to travel (as a Somali passport is not helpful to cross international borders). Quite common is a Djibouti passport, which costs 1,500 USD to make according to sources in Bosaso.

A major source of income in Bosaso is people-smuggling. According to The World Bank and UNODC, a people-smuggler makes 9,000 USD per round trip from Puntland to Yemen, in boats that typically carry 100-150 passengers. It was estimated that in 2012 a dozen to two dozen smugglers and boats were in operation, departing from small ports close to Bosaso (Marrero mainly, also Qoow/Bender Siyaada), and that they ferried more than 30,000 migrants across the Gulf of Aden. The flow of migrants to Yemen from Somalia seems to be slowly diminishing, but the flow of Ethiopian migrants continues unabated, although most of the latter depart from Djibouti.

Bosaso has not become a conduit for drugs, ivory or other illicit export products, according to the UNODC.

The economy is completely dollarized in Bosaso; Somali money is mainly used to give to beggars or buy food items (the only denomination is 1000 Somali shillings, and 25,000 shillings = 1 USD). One of the reasons for this has been irresponsible monetary policies, leading to enormous inflation (i.e. the government printing money to pay its bills) several times over the past decade.

Rural poverty

Although the rosy picture of growth through business and investments seems to dominate self-perceptions in Bosaso, there is also extreme poverty, and especially in the rural districts of Bari. In the city, the solidarity networks based on clan affiliation protect the poorest against the worst effects of poverty, except in the case of the IDPs, who have reduced access to such solidarity networks (otherwise they would presumably not be in IDP camps).

In the countryside the picture is different: there has been a huge strain on local resources by several years of drought (the worst were in 2011-2012), the absence of institutions supporting rural activities, and of infrastructural works to increase access to water or mitigate the effects of floods.

In a warning issued in January 2015, the FAO singled out Puntland in terms of risk areas for malnutrition, pointing out that more than 10% of Bari's population is in a state of 'crisis and emergency'. Probably most of these are IDPs (the FAO acknowledged that, nationwide, 75% of those facing 'crisis and emergency' were IDPs) but some rural populations may also be affected. A 'household resiliency' study conducted in Bosaso and Iskushuban by UNICEF, WFP and the FAO found that after IDPs, fishing communities have the least resilience; this means that they have less reserves and alternative livelihood strategies to deal with shock (drought, natural disaster, inflation etc.).

Cyclones, which have hit the Indian Ocean coast of Bari in 2013 and 2015, shows how tenuous the livelihoods, and indeed lives, of these fishing communities are. Roads and telecommunications networks were washed away in floods, access to emergency relief and medical care was drastically reduced, and between 100 and 300 people died. By destroying 350 houses, smashing about 180 boats and killing 8,000 – 9,000 livestock, (*Norwegian Refugee Council, unpublished assessment, November 2015*), the coastal populations are now set for much hardship ahead. In rural Bari there is little in terms of a safety net.

The prospect of hydrocarbon exploitation

The following two excerpts of the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (SEMG) 2015 report are worth quoting in their entirety:

1. On 1 September 2015, the Puntland Petroleum Minerals Agency and the Houston-based ION Geophysical Corporation similarly announced they had signed an agreement allowing the company to acquire 8,000 km² of seismic data "covering the entire Somalia Puntland offshore margin" [this is to verify whether there are indeed offshore oilfields, as preliminary research has suggested]
2. The Federal Government of Somalia Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources is attempting to recommence negotiations with the oil major ConocoPhillips Co. over its pre-civil war concessions now located in Somaliland and Puntland. ConocoPhillips' pre-1991 concession includes blocks spanning Sool and Sanaag, two administrative regions that are actively disputed between Somaliland and Puntland, as well as with the self-declared regional State of Khatumo. The Ministry is "determined" to work on "pre-1991 contracts in North and North-east Somalia [emphasis added by SEMG]. (...) In the absence of a resource-sharing agreement — clearly delineating the roles of the Federal Government and the regional administrations when engaging with international oil companies — Somalia's untapped hydrocarbons wealth is likely only to fuel political tension and conflict. Until such a constitutional arrangement is reached, international oil companies — such as Soma — will continue to take advantage of an environment lacking in strong institutions, striking favorable deals with individual brokers in Government rather than independent contracting bodies.

Indeed, corruption is a major problem in Bosaso; from petty bribes through irregular 'fees' levied by customs officials to the costs and rewards of political office, corruption is as pervasive in this city as in the rest of Somalia. Corruption seems to be entrenched in the very concept of the Somali state, as political office or a position in an institution is seen as a legitimate source for rent – be it money, jobs for kinsmen, opportunities for migration, education or access to more political power. (Alex de Waal, 2015) The international community, with its obsessive focus on the top-down capacity-building of a central state, has contributed to this problem. More informal, community-driven governance systems – such as those that are the foundation of Somalia's economic success – seem more suitable to the Somali situation (Life and Peace Institute, 2014)

1.1.4. POPULATION

Demographic trends

Population figures of Bosaso are highly controversial. The Puntland authorities estimated it at 700,000 in 2012, but today the mayor claims 950,000 to a million inhabitants. A report by the UNFPA released in May 2015 was attacked by Puntland for its low estimates. It puts the urban population of Bari at 475,000, of which an

unspecified number would live in other towns of the region. UN-Habitat, in a 2009 report, estimated the population of Bosaso at 250,000. The latter still seems a high estimate.

Taking into account a surface of built land of about 10 square kilometers observable on the ground and on satellite photographs, and a low-to medium density –5000 to 10,000 inhabitants per square kilometer– a population of 50,000 to 100,000 seems more likely, even though it may be politically unacceptable to the Puntland authorities. If Bosaso were as densely populated as Mumbai – which it isn't – the population would still only be 200,000 – including refugees.

Interestingly, the District Development Framework prepared by the city council of Bosaso in 2009-10 contained the following table:

Table 1: Ref. Bosaso Municipality Helay (LEAD assessment ILO)

Population Estimate	Number of houses	Male %	Female %	Family average
850,000-1,000,000	14,500`	47%	53%	8 people

The municipality inadvertently gives quite a realistic estimate of the city's population: 14,500 houses x 8 people per household = 116,000 inhabitants. To this one should add almost 50,000 IDPs, as estimated by international agencies. For planning purposes, a total population of 150,000 to 175,000 thus seems quite realistic. According to UN-Habitat (2009) the city's pre-war population was about 15,000, so this would still be a ten-fold increase, at least.

Migration patterns

Bosaso attracts many young men from other parts of Somalia (most often Darod from Mogadishu and Jubaland) fleeing insecurity and economic hardship, and attracted by the opportunities the port city offers. There is also a rural-urban migration of Puntlanders who already have some kind of support network in the city, particularly in times of drought. Some are also students seeking higher education at one of Bosaso's universities. These groups can integrate quite easily into the city's social tissue because of clan relationships.

The approximately 50,000 IDPs that live in 26 camps, mostly situated on the edges of Bosaso, have generally not integrated into local society. Most of the IDPs are Rahanweyn or from Somalia's minorities: Bantu, Benadiri, Madhiban and the handicrafts-oriented minorities often referred to as the 'Sab' by Somalis (*Hawo Idris Haji Hassan: Economic Migrants or Internal Displaced Persons? Aalborg University Master thesis, 2012*). Some of them have arrived in the 1990s and there is now a large population of youth born in Bosaso's IDP camps. They are looked down on socially – intermarriage with the Darod or Hawiye is still taboo – which partially explains why they remain secluded in the IDP camps. Other reasons are poverty, and, some may argue, the comfort of being looked after by the UN and INGOs.

Among the opportunity seekers, there are many young Somali men, Darod or from minorities from south and central Somalia, without strong attachments to Bosaso who plan to emigrate to the Gulf or the West. Many of these stay for an indeterminate period, looking for work to pay their passage. Some of these men, uprooted and alone, end up recruited by Al Shabaab or criminal gangs. Both Al Shabaab and the pirates in Puntland are known not to care too much about clan identities – even though their leaders still benefit from their clan connections, the rank and file can come from different clans. Al Shabaab even makes an ideological point of not ascribing to clan identities.

One also finds many Ethiopians (ethnic Somalis from the Ogaden but also many Oromo), and smaller amounts of Sudanese and Eritreans, who are on their way to the Gulf states, but who sometimes get stranded in Bosaso, where they may find menial jobs. As many visitors have observed, Somalis may be poor but they are proud and often resent working in what they see as degrading jobs – this provides ample opportunities for migrant labor. There are reportedly many Ethiopian and Eritrean maids in Bosaso, while men tend to become farm hands (Al Jazeera report "The Plight of Ethiopian Migrants in Somalia", Feb 2015).

A new trend is that of Somali returnees fleeing the war in Yemen. Of the 230,000 Somalis registered in 2015 as refugees by the UNHCR in Yemen, a bit more than 26 to 27,000 had returned to Somalia by December 2015, almost all of them arriving in Bosaso. In addition, 3,000 to 4,000 Yemeni refugees have joined the returning Somalis. (*UNHCR, Yemen Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, 14 Dec 2015*)

Returning refugees use Bosaso as a transit point to return to their place of origin, after receiving support from the UNHCR and its implementing partners in the transit center set up near the port (a cash bonus to pay for

onward transport and buy food, and some material aid). However, it seems that some of these refugees are returning to Bosaso after finding they have lost their homes and land, and that there are no support facilities or aid agencies in their regions of origin.

Finally, there is a small but influential influx of diaspora Somalis returning from abroad. These mostly are eager to keep their attachments abroad, and tentatively try setting up a business venture or a charity project in Bosaso, often with mixed results. They tend to travel back and forth between Bosaso and their adopted homes.

Education

Education levels are rising rapidly. Besides at least 74 primary and 4 secondary schools (*Puntland Ministry of Education, undated and probably out-of-date data*) there are now three universities in Bosaso offering a variety of courses (mostly business, economics, planning and technical studies), of which the best seems to be the East African University. Literacy among all population groups also seems to be increasing, although according to the Bosaso authorities, in 2010, it was still under 50%. Most schools teach Arabic next to Somali, but some also teach English (such as the Garissa primary school in Bosaso, staffed by Kenyan Somalis). Cairo's Al Azhar university runs a secondary school in Qardho, and Egyptian teachers apparently find jobs in rural schools too.

1.2. HISTORY & SOCIETY

Bosaso's history, society and cultural roots vary according to who speaks about it. The narrative of identity is partially colored by socio-economic status, age and education level; but it is most strongly shaped by clan identities.

Altogether Bosaso's inhabitants do not seem very concerned about their history – they are oriented toward the future or engrossed in the here-and-now. Nevertheless, there are some interesting patterns and trends in the area's history.

1.2.1. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ROOTS

The foundation of Bosaso

As a city Bosaso is not so ancient. Legend has it that it was founded in the 14th century by a trader from Yemen, from the Mahra tribe in the Hadramawt. This is one of the ancient tribes of Yemen that still speaks an old South Arabian language. Hadramawtis were famous seafarers, having established a strong presence in Indonesia (Aceh) and in other localities along the Indian Ocean rim from the 9th century onwards.

Throughout history, trade has been brisk along the populated and rich Indian Ocean states, and from the 8th to the 19th century, commerce was mostly in the hand of Arab traders. This explains why, from South India to Mozambique, coastal populations are mostly Muslim. Although Somalis do not identify themselves as Arabs, the Arab identity of Somalia is not to be underestimated. Children are taught Arabic as a second language throughout Somalia (although most people do not speak it well), and Somalia is a full member of the Arab League.

In Somalia the Arab tribe of Yemeni origin, that has a presence in many coastal areas, is called Carab Salaax – pronounced Arab Salaah. They have become indistinguishable from other Somalis and are usually well integrated with the dominant tribe in that area, although they specialize in certain professions such as the retail trade or craftsmanship. The Carab Salaax are quite strong in Bosaso, and one of the city's areas near the port is called after them (Haafat-al Arab).

The trader who, according to legend, arrived in Bosaso was called Qassim, and his camel Bosa or Boosaas. This gave rise to both names the city has been known under: Bandar Qassim (the port of Qassim) as the city was called throughout most of the colonial era and, internationally, well into the 1980s; and Bosaso, as the city has been long called by its inhabitants. Some nationalists dispute that Qassim was an Arab. In any case, the figure and his camel are probably mythical.

Ancient historic roots

The northern Somali coast on which Bosaso lies, however, has a clear and ancient historic pedigree. It was known to the Egyptians as the land of Punt from about 3000 BC. It was famous for its frankincense, myrrh and other gums. This provides the etymology of the contemporary state of Puntland. This coast was also described

by Greek and later Arab seafarers as a commercial hub, where spices from India, ivory from the African interior and local resins and gums were traded against textiles, glass, wine and manufactured products from the Mediterranean world and the Levant. The material remains of this period of Puntland's history are scarce.

The tombs of the ancestors of the Somali tribes, however, are abundant in Northern Somalia. According to Somali genealogy, all ethnic Somalis derive from a few ancestors, which would have come to the Horn of Africa from Arabia around the 10th century AD. The tombs of these ancestors – of the Isaaq, the Dir, the Hawiye, the Darod and the Rahanweyn peoples – are almost all in the North. This reflects the (mythical) Arabian origin of the Somali tribes, as this coast is where they would have first landed. The tombs of the Darod and Harti ancestors are near the village of Haylan, in the part of Sanaag claimed by Puntland but not effectively administered by it. In Bosaso there are no such tombs.

The Somali language is of the Cushitic language group, whose historic origin seems to lie in the Nile Valley – unlike the Amharic spoken in neighboring Ethiopia, which is of the Semitic language group (together with Arabic and Hebrew) or the Bantu languages spoken to the South. The only other major Cushitic language spoken today is Oromo (Ethiopia). This makes the 'Arabian peninsula' tribal genealogy quite unlikely. It is more likely that the 'ancestors' of the tribes were religious personalities who, by converting tribes to Islam, gave them a new collective identity.

Arrival of the European Powers

In the 19th century, when the Somali coast was 'explored' and described by Western adventurers, Bosaso was not more than a small fishermen's settlement. The British had established a coaling station in Aden, on the way to India, which became very important after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Their interest in Somalia was mainly a result of their desire to protect their shipping routes. The looting of British ships that shipwrecked on the treacherous Somali coast and the murdering of their crews, as well as the danger of encroachment on the British shipping lanes by French and Italian adventurers and colonizers, led the English to establish relations with the Somali sultanates on the Northern coast.

The main British interest in this region was thus pacification. This implies domination through, for example, arms embargoes, anti-piracy operations, control of the region's foreign relations, and meddling in succession politics to ensure pro-British forces remain in power. But there was little interest if any in skimming the profits of trade or exploitation of the region's natural resources, and no interest whatsoever in grabbing the land and colonizing the country. It is striking how little international objectives in Somalia today have changed.

Berbera (now the main port of Somaliland) was since antiquity the most important port on this coast, with the best facilities. East of Berbera lay first the Warsangeli sultanate centered on the port of Laas Qooray, and beyond Bandar Qassim/Bosaso the Majerteen sultanate, with its seaside capital at Caluula, near the point of Somalia. Bosaso's main importance at that time seems to have been derived from its location on the border between the rival sultanates (which have long been locked in fierce rivalry, despite belonging both to the Harti confederation of the Darod).

In the view of colonial explorers such as Richard Burton, who visited the Northern coast of Somalia in 1854-55, the Warsangeli sultanate was considerably stronger and politically more developed than that of the Majerteen. Contemporary Puntland commentators, however, rarely mention this sultanate, and if they do, they often omit the 'Warsangeli' epithet. Given the clan composition of Bosaso, it has become more palatable to relate its history to the Majerteen sultanate.

The Majerteen form the largest clan of the Harti Darod. Within the Majerteen, there is one clan that is particularly important, in terms of population and historical power: the Mohamud Saleban (for a clan structure, see 1.2.3). The three sub-clans that form the Mohamud Saleban occupy most of Puntland's present territory (see map): the Osman Mohamud in the center of (old) Bari region, north of the Qardho-Bandarbeyla line, including Iskushuban; the Issa Mohamud which reside between Qardho and Garowe; and the Omar Mohamud which live between Garowe and Galkacyo. The Osman Mohamud traditionally provided the king (*Boqor*) of the Majerteen clan.

The Majerteen Sultanate started somewhere in the 18th century, but it rose to prominence in the mid-19th century under Boqor (King) Osman Mohamud, who gave his name to his clan. At the time the sultanate covered much of the current states of Puntland and Galmudug. In 1878, a rebellious cousin of King Osman, Kenadid, established a rival Majerteen sultanate in Hobyo, a port city in Hawiye territory, now in Mudug region.

King Osman's line eventually prevailed. In May 2014 the 34th *Boqor* of the Darod, King Burhan Musa, was crowned in Qardho, in a ceremony that attracted not only Puntland's and Somalia's traditional elites, but also

dignitaries from Egypt, Ethiopia, Yemen and Kenya (*Horseed Media, May 25, 2014*). Nevertheless, one doesn't hear much about the Darod royals.

When the European powers sliced up the African continent at the Berlin Conference in 1888, the hinterland of Bosaso was divided into three spheres of influence: that of the British, of the Italians and of the Ethiopians. The Warsangeli came under British domination, and the Majerteen under Italian domination. Initially, however, the British and the Italians did not seek direct rule, and were content to rule through their local allies, with which they had made treaties. The Ethiopians, however, sought to extend their imperial writ over the Somalis living in the plains to their East, and they conducted several ruthless campaigns at the end of the 19th century in the Ogaden, confiscating Somali livestock along the way and awakening Somali nationalist feelings.

The Dervish rebellion

The Ethiopian campaigns, and the sense of cultural and religious alienation caused by the domination by three Christian powers, sparked the Darawish (Dervish) rebellion, which lasted from 1898 to 1920. The insurgency was initiated by Mohamed Abdullah Hassan, a well-traveled Somali pastoralist from the Ogaden, who had picked up pan-Islamist ideas during his wanderings through the Middle East and North Africa. Accused (according to himself, falsely) by the British of having stolen a gun, the 'Mad Mullah' as he became known in the West, carved out a territory on the cusp of the three Christian powers, with its capital at Taleh (in the current region of Sool).

Mullah Hassan allied himself with clans unhappy with the rule of the Warsangeli and Majerteen sultans and ably commanded his Dervish troops against the three imperial powers and their local allies for two decades. He constructed many forts throughout Northern Somalia which still stand today, but gained lasting fame as a great poet, orator and spiritual figure. Since Somali independence in 1960 he is seen as a founding father of the modern Somali nation, and his poetry is taught at school and proclaimed at official occasions.

Bosaso (Bandar Qassim as it was then called) was the site of an agreement between the Warsangeli and Majerteen sultans to defeat the rebellion in 1910. They did not succeed, even with the help of the Ethiopian army and British and Italian-led troops, until 1920, when a RAF detachment of biplanes was dispatched from Aden to bomb and strafe the Darawish troops and thus help the Warsangeli sultan achieve a definitive victory. Here again, one can discern a parallel with the current situation: US warplanes and drones have made several documented raids over the past years to support Puntland's administration's fight against the Galgala / Al Shabaab insurgency.

It would however be misleading to compare Al Shabaab or the Islamic Courts Union with the Dervish rebellion. Despite the role Islam is playing in fostering a sense of ethical revolt and nationalism among young Somalis, there is no major Islamic organization that could be identified as inheritors of the Darawish. It would be similarly wrong to compare the Darawish navy, which clashed with British and Italian ships, to today's pirates, as the motivation in both cases was radically different. The main difference is probably the ability of Mullah Hassan to leave a lasting cultural legacy, tangible and intangible – which cannot be said by any stretch of the imagination of Al Shabaab, the ICU or the pirates.

The Puntland Defense Forces are called the Darawish, in memory of Mullah Hassan's troops.

The colonial period

Shortly after the defeat of the Dervishes, Italy and England reigned in their protectorates. Sultan Kenadid of Hobyo was sent into exile in Eritrea, Mohamed Ali Shire, the Warsangeli sultan, was sent into exile to the Seychelles, and the *boqor* was stripped of his authority. The Italians disarmed the Majerteen sultanates and fought local insurgencies until 1927 but maintained their indirect rule of Puntland through the local clan structures.

Italians invested heavily in their Somali colony in the interwar period; by 1935, there were over 50.000 Italians living in Somalia – 20.000 in Mogadishu, which had become a jewel of colonial architecture, and 30.000 on farmland in the vicinity of Mogadishu. They built model farms, industrial and commercial buildings, railways and transportation infrastructure and an army. But this interest was limited to south and central Somalia, where fertile grounds could be found. There was no development in Northern Somalia, which was left largely to its own devices.

The Italians fought two wars against Ethiopia, as it was Mussolini's proclaimed aim to 'liberate all Somalis' under his leadership. For a short while, during World War II, the Italians expelled the British from Somaliland to form

a contiguous territory (Italian East Africa) from Eritrea to Somalia, including Ethiopia. But in 1941 Italian East Africa was overrun by the British, who remained in control until 1949. The British dismantled much of what the Italians had built, considering these facilities as spoils of war, or too advanced for the local population. They also needed the machinery and construction materials (and Italian prisoners of war as labor) for their East African colony.

After 1949 the UN granted Italy trusteeship over Italian Somalia, on condition that over a ten year period (1950-1960) the territory would advance to independence under Italian guidance. The post-war Italian leadership was much less ambitious than the fascist one; but from the 1920s to the 1950s Italian was the language of the educated elites, of higher Somali culture and the administration. Nowadays – almost 60 years after independence – very few people speak Italian, and in Bosaso one cannot find any legacy of the period of Italian hegemony.

1.2.2. RECENT HISTORY

Bosaso under the Siad Barre regime and after its fall

The obscurity of Bosaso, and of Puntland in general, lasted through the first decades of independence. The lack of proper roads, or indeed of infrastructure of any kind, condemned the region of Bari as well as neighboring regions to livestock breeding and small-scale subsistence fishing and agriculture.

The area's remoteness made it well-suited for the guerilla insurgency of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front, the SSDF. The history of the establishment of Puntland is enmeshed with that of the SSDF, and in particular with that of the SSDF's longtime leader, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, the first president of Puntland (1998 to 2004) who went on to become the President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, 2004-2008.

Siad Barre, who assumed power in 1969, was himself a Darod but from the Marehan clan that is predominant in Jubaland, while almost all Darod in Puntland are from the Harti confederation/Majerteen. In 1978 Abdullahi Yusuf participated in a failed coup attempt, with other Majerteen officers, against Siad Barre. This was the beginning of the SSDF rebellion, which received the support of Ethiopia. During the 1980s Siad Barre managed to effectively contain the SSDF rebellion; one of the measures he took was to single out Bosaso for a major development scheme, by building a new port and a road to connect the city to Mogadishu, through Puntland's other population centers. This was completed in the late 1980s and marked the beginning of Bosaso's rise.

It is noteworthy that this city benefited from the Siad Barre regime, which at that time was laying waste to the cities of Hargeisa, Burao and Borama in what has now become Somaliland, and fighting the SSDF rebellion in other areas of Puntland. The SSDF insurgency was given new life after an agreement between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1988, where Ethiopia agreed to expel the SSDF from their Ethiopian bases; this encouraged the SSDF to occupy swathes of land in Western Mudug (near Galkacyo) and southern Bari (near Qardho) and Nugaal.

The political elites of Bosaso played a minor role in the SSDF rebellion, and in the later establishment of the autonomous Puntland region. This is one of the reasons why Bosaso did not become the capital of Puntland, and may help clarify the a-political stance of most citizens of Bosaso. The thoroughly mixed clan composition of Bosaso, with the predominance of many smaller Majerteen clans who rely on business rather than politics for their survival, in turn explains why Bosaso never became so involved in politics in the first place.

The brief reign of Al Itihaad Al Islamiya

Al Itihaad al Islamiya (Islamic Union) was a missionary organization funded by local sources in Saudi Arabia that was set up during Siad Barre's secular regime in Mogadishu. Its goal was to purify Somali Islam along partially Wahhabi, partially Muslim Brotherhood (social, non-political) lines. It attracted a large following, mainly among Majerteen Darod in Mogadishu and Kismayo, during the 1980s.

At the beginning of the civil war, the organization's members were persecuted by the Hawiye clans who tried to cleanse Mogadishu of Darod presence, and part of the organization, reportedly with the support of Osama Bin Laden who came to Somalia a few times in those years, morphed into a jihadi organization (*International Crisis Group: Somalia's Islamists, December 2005*). This militant faction regrouped in Kismayo where it was routed by Aideed's forces. The survivors fled by dhow and through Ethiopia to the new port of Bosaso, where they rejoined the political leadership of Itihaad, led by Ali Warsame.

The SSDF had gained de facto control of the Majerteen regions in Northeast Somalia when Barre's regime fell in January 1991. It had established its seat in Bosaso, profiting from the newly built facilities and connections.

Abdullahi Yusuf's SSDF welcomed the popular Itihaad fighters, as it had few fighters to protect its territory, and offered them the control of Bosaso Port (and part of its revenues) as well as of a few other strategic facilities in and near Bosaso.

Itihaad's fighters, who had gained experience in Afghanistan, established a training camp in Qoow (Bender Siyaada), 20 kilometers west of Bosaso along the coast. The training camp and much of Itihaad's activities were funded by a Saudi national operating from Djibouti, a man who had trained in Afghanistan and represented several Islamic charities while working, by some accounts, for the Saudi intelligence agency (*ICG, December 2005*). As mentioned, there are several accounts of Osama Ben Laden's involvement with the organization, also in Bosaso.

Tensions between the SSDF and Itihaad militants soon arose, with jihadis attacking foreign aid workers in Bosaso (killing UNICEF's Doctor Martina Pumpalova in January 1992) and SSDF security forces. The SSDF resolved to expel Itihaad. In June 1992 the Islamic militants attempted to take over Bosaso, Garowe and the rest of northern Puntland. The take-over failed, and the Islamists were routed by the SSDF with the help of clan militias. Clan elders had little sympathy for the radical ideas and brutal tactics of the Islamists, who in turn had no patience for clan politics. The Islamists fled into the mountains West of Bosaso (near Galgala, in fact).

The SSDF tried to flush the Islamists from the mountains, but had little success, due to the difficult terrain and the lack of cooperation from the local Warsangeli tribesmen. The Warsangeli felt insufficiently represented by the SSDF, which was dominated by the Majerteen. However they did not respond to overtures by the Islamists, keeping them at arm's length without being able to expel them on their own.

For a while the Islamists, under Hassan Dahir Aweys, settled in Laas Qoorey, the ancient capital of the Warsangeli sultanate, now a sleepy small fishing port. They stayed long enough to marry local girls and strike some roots in the area. Eventually the exiled political leadership of Itihaad (under Warsame, who had never been favorable to the idea of Jihad and Al Qaeda contacts, preferring an a-political religious stance) struck a deal with Warsangeli elders and Itihaad moved out of Sanaag region entirely, towards Ethiopia's Ogaden and from there to southern Somalia, where it had a second try at establishing political control in 1993-94.

Although it is difficult to lay direct links between the attempt by Al Itihaad Al Islamiya to establish an Islamic State in and around Bosaso with the current Galgala/Al Shabaab insurrection – which started more than 10 years after Itihaad was routed from Puntland – some similitudes are instructive:

- Northern Puntland/Sanaag is a strategic region for the Islamic militants, especially if coupled to access to a port, as they need open communication lines with Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula.
- There is little support for radical Islamic ideas among the population in general, and among clan elders in particular.
- Islamists have been able to exploit the tensions between the Warsangeli and the Majerteen to gain a foothold in the region West of Bosaso (see also below, Maakhir).
- The Warsangeli in general may have little sympathy for the Islamists, but they may tolerate them for a while to provide leverage against Puntland's Majerteen.
- The barren, empty and mountainous terrain of Eastern Sanaag region offers good hiding places for insurgent groups

Itihaad was supported by an active transnational network in the diaspora; the movement had representatives in Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, but also in Canada, Sweden, Italy and the UK. They pioneered the use of media for jihadi propaganda (distribution of videos of their battlefield victories, active dissemination of triumphant accounts), which now has become so common. In these regards, and in its refusal of clan identities, Itihaad can be seen as a precursor to current radical Islamic movements.

In 2001, when Al Itihaad Al Islamiya had, by all accounts, lost almost all of its influence, it was put on the list of designated terrorist organizations by the USA. This allowed local governments, also that of Puntland, to muster US support in their fight against religiously motivated opponents, even when those were not violent. It was sufficient to label them as Al Itihaad; this in turn exacerbated tensions between the authorities of Puntland and (non-violent) Islamists.

Formation of Puntland

From the collapse of the Siad Barre regime onwards, Puntland enjoyed *de facto* autonomy. Although the SSDF fought heavily against General Aideed's Hawiye militias in Mudug, the rest of the Darod-managed Northeast was relatively peaceful. The SSDF tried to formalize its political leadership from 1991 onwards – in 1992 there was a seminal meeting between the SSDF and the traditional political elites in Garowe. But there was no focus

on state-building. Infighting between Majerteen clans and the lack of resources to support any national project, plus a focus on Mogadishu where the Darod had traditionally ruled but were now ousted, distracted the attention of the region's political and military elites from local issues.

It was the lack of progress on regaining a foothold in Mogadishu, plus the successful experience of neighboring Somaliland, that under President Egal was slowly but surely recuperating from the devastation Siad Barre had wrought upon the area in the 1980s, that pushed Puntland's elites to declare their autonomy in 1998. They were supported in this by Ethiopia, where the dominant view is that Somalia's problems, with their potential spill-over effect into Ethiopia, are best contained by the formation of autonomous or secessionist regimes in the peaceful parts of the country – a divide-and-rule policy.

Puntland has always been very negative about the secessionist policies of Somaliland; moreover its elites have never wanted to relinquish the objective of ruling over all Somalia. That is why they adopted the 'building block' approach, suggesting that each region of Somalia rebuild itself as part of a federal whole; unity would only be possible if the component parts of the State were sufficiently strong. Somaliland, in the view of Puntland, is one of those regions. The regions are defined primarily along clan lines. This is why – another major source of conflict with Somaliland – Puntland claims the Sool and Sanaag regions, inhabited by Darod/Harti Dhulbahante and Warsangeli. Somaliland incorporated these regions with the historic argument that they belonged to British Somaliland. The issue of intra-Harti fighting that crippled Puntland politically during the 1990s was temporarily solved when Abdullahi Yusuf sought the support of the Warsangeli and Dhulbahante clans to win from the favorite Majerteen candidate, General Abshir. The three dominant Majerteen clans (Osman Mohamud, Issa Mohamud and Omar Mohamud) had excluded from the talks their Harti cousins, the Warsangeli and the Dhulbahante, who reside mostly in the Sanaag and Sool regions of Somaliland. Taken together, these five clans are clearly the most numerous of the northern Darod. The inclusion of the two large non-Majerteen Harti clans broke the political deadlock, but led Puntland to claim the Darod territories included in Somaliland, a source of permanent tensions between the two neighbors.

The essential factor to provide legitimacy to the creation of Puntland and its new political set-up was the agreement of the *Isimada*, the council of clan elders from all different clans in Puntland. The *Isimada* selects the members of Puntland's parliament, which in turn elects the President and Vice-President. Puntland's political set-up is thus wholly based on clan structures.

The founding conference of Puntland took place in Garowe. This was a small town that, in the early years of independence, was a district capital of Bari, and thus subordinated to Bosaso, the provincial capital. It appears the choice of Garowe as Puntland's capital was dictated by geographical considerations, mostly. It is in the middle of Puntland, on the dividing line between the Issa and the Omar Mohamud, and along the only paved thoroughfare of the region, thus easily accessible. The larger and more historic town of Galkacyo is divided between the Darod and the Hawiye, while Bosaso is oriented more towards trade and abroad than towards internal politics. The old Majerteen capitals at Eyl, Bargal and Caluula are too far from the region's center of gravity and too difficult to reach by road. Garowe, by contrast, is close to the Dhulbahante homeland and not too far from the Warsangelis.

Puntland since 1998

The first years of Puntland's autonomy were greeted enthusiastically by the local population; government institutions improved notably and independent media and civil liberties were allowed to take root – to a greater extent than in Somaliland. But as soon as President Yusuf's term came up in 2001, he held on to power, against the foundational Puntland Charter of 1998. He lost the elections from a rival, but didn't accept the results and used his influence with the security services to clamp down on protesting clan elders and political leaders, causing many hundreds of deaths and imprisonments. He lost the support of the *Isimada*, imperiling his legitimacy, and provoking a civil conflict which lasted until 2003.

Over the following two years President Yusuf created a police state, relying mostly on his own clan (Omar Mohamud), the security services, and the unconditional support of Ethiopia. He banked on the incipient war on terror, and the CIA, mindful of Itihaad's attempt to create a caliphate, helped him create a strong intelligence agency, the Puntland Internal Security (PIS) (*International Crisis Group: The Trouble with Puntland, August 2009*). The PIS received a large share of Puntland's annual 20 million USD budget, and could act with impunity. The judicial system and the civil service were transformed into politicized and thoroughly corrupt institutions.

In fact President Yusuf disinvested in institutions, closing and persecuting independent media and opposition parties. This provoked a general disenchantment among Puntland's population. When he finally achieved his

goal, of being elected President of Somalia with international support – mainly from Ethiopia and Kenya – he ensured his succession by a political ally. President Muse Adde, of the Osman Mohamud clan, did not reform the political system he inherited.

While he was president of Somalia (2004-2008), Abdullahi Yusuf relied heavily on the resources of Puntland, mainly its security services, to prop up his rule in South Central Somalia and achieve his political objectives – as support from the international community or other sectors in Somali society was not forthcoming. As a result Puntland suffered from neglect, excessive resource extraction and a general lack of political direction. This led to the rise of piracy and growing tensions between the Harti clans.

The Khatumo and Maakhir questions



On international maps these regions are part of Somaliland, but they are inhabited by Harti Darod people, and from the outset, the state of Puntland officially claimed these areas.

However, when the first President of Puntland, Abdullahi Yusuf, decided to base his rule on his control of the security services instead of on the Isimada (tribal consensus), he lost the support of both the Warsangeli and Dhulbahante clans, which had helped him gain power. In the time of his weak successor, General Muse Adde, they both fell out with the Puntland authorities and decided to create their own political entity.

The Warsangelis pronounced their autonomy in 2007 by establishing the state of Maakhir, which covers Eastern Sanaag and part of Southeastern Sool. Their capital became Badhan, while the main population

center was Laas Qoorey. Maakhir led a semi-autonomous existence until January 2009, when tribal elders decided to rejoin Puntland, after striking a deal with the newly elected Puntland president, Farole. This deal was however not accepted by the relatively small Warsangeli/Dubeys sub-clan, triggering the Galgala insurgency.

In 2008 there were several clashes between the armed forces of Maakhir and those of Puntland, notably over the export of charcoal. Maakhir set up an environmental protection force to stop the production and trade of charcoal, which is one of the prime reasons for the desertification of Sanaag. But Puntland's security forces protected the traders, who continued to export the product through Bosaso to the Gulf.

Meanwhile Somaliland, which originally neglected its Eastern regions as it focused on rebuilding the areas inhabited by the Isaaq clans, mounted two operations to bring back Maakhir under its control, notably occupying Laas Qoorey, which had become a minor center for piracy in the Gulf of Aden. But Somaliland has invested very few of its limited resources in developing Eastern Sanaag.

Although the Maakhir administration is currently dissolved, Warsangeli discontent with their status is still simmering – not only in the Dubeys sub-clan, which partially backs the Al-Shabaab linked insurgency in Galgala. They do not accept the claim by Somaliland, as they do not feel represented in the Isaaq-dominated politics of the secessionist state, and do not want to be cut from the rest of Somalia; but they are also uncomfortable with the Majerteen domination of Puntland.

Khatumo (which means 'positive conclusion' in Arabic) was proclaimed in 2007, when the Dhulbahante leadership fell out with the Puntland administration. It was formally established in 2012, and in 2014 Khatumo declared that Las Anod, the provincial capital of Sool, was its capital. That town is however still also controlled by Somaliland, leading to double or even triple administrative structures, none of which functions very well in practice.

Khatumo covers most of Sool and the small region of Ayn, unrecognized on most official maps, which covers the southeastern part of Togdheer (capital in Buhoodle), as well as a part of south-central Sanaag; this territory is co-extant with the areas inhabited by the Dhulbahante. Like Maakhir, Khatumo does not recognize the authority of Somaliland or its secession from Somalia, and it has clashed repeatedly with Somaliland's armed forces.

Both Maakhir and Khatumo were primarily created to provide leverage with Puntland's and Somalia's authorities, but neither self-declared federal state has been recognized as such by Mogadishu or Garowe. Both the Somali National Government and Puntland consider the regions as part of Puntland. They are not viable political entities, as there is next to no infrastructure (despite Khatumo's intention to build international airports at Las Anod and Buhoodle) – no paved roads, no industry, few deep wells, no electricity, etc.

Some initial explorations by Norwegian and Australian oil companies have revealed the presence of important hydrocarbon reserves in Sool, and there are strong indications there is more mineral wealth in both areas. Both Somaliland and Puntland have contracted foreign companies to search for oil. Because of political instability, however, there is little chance that these natural resources will be exploited in the near future. In the meanwhile, both regions – especially Khatumo – suffer from drought. Due to the perception of instability and lack of security NGO activity is quite limited in both regions.

It is probable that the areas inhabited by the Dhulbahante and Warsangeli will remain unstable, experiencing low-intensity conflict over the coming years between Puntland and Somaliland, with local clans alternatively siding with one side or the other and asserting their own autonomy. This may affect the security in Bosaso, but as long as Puntland and Somaliland are not drawn into all-out war over these areas, the impact is likely to be slight. On the other hand, if a political solution is found and the region is pacified, Bosaso would stand to gain much from the budding oil and other natural resource extraction industries.

The piracy years

Bosaso has never been a hub for piracy, but one may say the city profited from piracy through the investment of the proceeds of piracy, and the counter-piracy industry.

Piracy picked up after 2005, largely as a result of the crumbling control and legitimacy of Puntland's authorities and the increasing impoverishment of Puntland's coastal communities. At the end of the first decade of Puntland's autonomous existence, piracy spiraled out of control. Non-payment of security forces by Puntland's government played a role, as did the general environment of corruption and impunity.

Piracy was not much of a problem for Puntland and it soon became big business. The hubs of piracy were situated in Bargaal (Bari/Gardafuul) Eyl (Nugaal), Hobyo and Xarardheere (Mudug). Bosaso, as a regional business center, certainly profited at least a bit from the millions of dollars generated by this trade.

The UNODC and World Bank, in a study of 2013, pointed out that Bosaso was, with Galkacyo and the small coastal settlement of Bargal, the main location for investment of the proceeds of piracy in Puntland. The proceeds of piracy (also in Bosaso) were reinvested in creating private armies, buying political influence, investing in businesses or real estate, setting up maritime or land-based transportation companies, smuggling people to and weapons from Yemen, import-export, financial services (loans, accounting etc.) and the qat trade.

When President Abdirahman Farole took office in 2009, he promised to put an end to piracy, which was then experiencing its peak years. As an Issa Mohamud from Eyl he certainly had the right clan connections to tackle at least part of the business, and indeed, the inhabitants of Eyl drove out the pirates from their town. This tough stance against pirates prompted the international community to take a greater interest in providing technical support to his regime and to the Somali National Government.

It may sound cynical, but when the political costs of turning a blind eye to piracy became too high for the authorities of Puntland, they started cashing in on counter-piracy. As Alex de Waal puts it (*The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa, 2015*): "A persistent theme in analyses of piracy is that the individuals who organize and profit from piracy are closely connected to those who organize and benefit from counter-piracy." Typically, ex-pirates become private security escorts to protect ships from pirates.

The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, in their 2012 report, confirmed "the collusion of senior Transitional Federal Government officials in shielding a notorious pirate kingpin from prosecution, providing him with a diplomatic passport and describing him as a 'counter-piracy' envoy".

Politically, the problem of piracy prompted international support of counter-piracy forces, despite the fact that the first acts of piracy in the 2000s were performed by ex-militia men (*UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, 2012*). These had been trained by foreign private security contractors to capture foreign vessels illegally fishing in Somali waters, in order to fine them. From exacting a fine to demanding ransom was a small step.

The UAE funded the creation and training by South African mercenaries of the Puntland Maritime Police Force, whose base close to Bosaso's Bandar Qassim International Airport is reportedly the best equipped military base

in Somalia, after the AMISOM bases. Given the experiences of the past, there is a danger that at one point these counter-piracy forces will use their skills to turn to piracy again. It must be said that piracy and counter-piracy have been good business for many groups outside Somalia too, for example the shipping insurers in London, the Western naval forces, the international media etc.

Galgala conflict and Al Shabaab

The village of Galgala is situated close to the coast about 30 km west of Bosaso. It is inhabited by the Dubey sub-branch of the Darod/Harti/Warsangeli. This sub-branch has a reputation for being headstrong and engaged in illicit business: people trafficking to Yemen, arms smuggling into Somalia and piracy. The rise to power of Bosaso under Majerteen leadership, provoked increased rivalry and clan-based economic conflict, leading to occasional armed clashes between the city and Galgala.

Galgala was one of the nerve centers of the short-lived, non-clan based 'emirate' of Al Itihaad Al Islamiya in 1991-1992 (see above). Later, after the creation of the State of Puntland in 1998, it became a center of opposition to the perceived sidelining of the Warsangelis in the new government.

The alignment of the Galgala militias with Al Shabaab in 2010 seems to have been an opportunistic move by Mohamed Said Atom, the leader of the Galgala militias; it provided him with access to weapons and funding. It was also useful for Al Shabaab, who gained a foothold in northern Somalia and access to the people- and arms-smuggling routes across the Gulf of Aden. The Puntland authorities, in turn, could now access US and Western support in their fight against the insurgents, who had now become 'terrorists'. What was initially a local conflict thus became a matter of international concern.

The Puntland authorities launched several major offensives against the Galgala insurgents, which although by and large successful, were also inconclusive – although Atom was captured, and he 'defected' from Al Shabaab. Each time the Galgala insurgents scatter into the mountains of Al Madow, which offers many hiding places. Campaigns were marked by an increase of attacks by Al Shabaab on government targets in Bosaso, in a tit-for-tat retaliation and show of strength. In March 2015 the governor of Bari narrowly escaped a suicide bomb attack. Since he and the mayor of Bosaso have been replaced (in May 2015) by a new team, there have been no more attacks in Bosaso.

In 2015 armed men – supposedly Al Shabaab / Galgala insurgents – have descended into a village 30 km south of Laas Qooray, the historic Warsangeli capital, to request the cooperation of elders; when the elders refused, the armed men left without firing a shot. Security officers also report that the insurgents have tried to establish several times to gain a foothold in Qandala district, east of Bosaso.

It seems the insurgents / Al Shabaab are desperately looking for a logistics base; by default this will be Bosaso, which with its large population of mixed backgrounds provides a degree of anonymity. A security officer analyzed that this was the reason that there had been no Al Shabaab attacks in Bosaso for the past six months.

Now the 'Galgala Shabaab' have split in two, like Al Shabaab in the south; some pledging allegiance to the Islamic State, while most refuse it. This internal conflict is generally seen as weakening the movement and temporarily, at least, reducing the threat they pose. But it may induce heightened efforts by both Islamic State and Al Qaeda to court the insurgents with money, weapons and new alliances. In addition, until now Al Shabaab have always overcome internal tensions and rallied to face a common enemy. So the split may not have such important consequences after all.

1.2.3. CLAN COMPOSITION

Unfortunately there is no agreement, among either the Somali population or among foreign scholars, about the exact clan structure of the Somali people. The following focuses on population groups in Bosaso:

Darod clans present in Bosaso

MAJORITY CLANS

❖ Harti	Almost all Bosaso citizens belong to the Harti
➤ Majerteen	The biggest clan of the Harti group in Puntland
▪ Mohamud Saleban	The biggest sub-clan of the Majerteen in Puntland. Tense intra-clan rivalries

• Osman Mohamud	From Qardho & Iskushuban area to the coast; royal clan (<i>boqor</i> = king)
• Issa Mohamud	Between Qardho and Garowe (Nugal) to the coast (Eyl)
• Omar Mohamud	Between Garowe and Galkacyo (Mudug) to the coast (Gacaad)
▪ Ali Saleban	Large population in Bosaso (city & district)
▪ Ali Jibril	Numerous in Bari/Ufeyn. Long-running dispute with Ali Saleban about access to water resources complicated by piracy-fueled disputes
▪ Siwaqroon	Majority in Caluula (Alula); strong in the trade of frankincense and myrrh, and fishers
▪ Bihidihan	Population group along the coast between Bosaso and Qandala; fishers
▪ Ismail Saleban	
▪ Ugar Saleban	Involved in a long feud with Ali Saleban in Kalabayr area
▪ Abdirahim Saleban	
Small Majerteen business clans	These clans don't have many members but include rich entrepreneurs, and thus wield a lot of influence in Bosaso
▪ Wabeneye	
▪ Jambele	
▪ Kaptanle	
▪ Wadalmuge	
▪ Dawayene	
➤ Dashishe (Harti)	Small but powerful merchant clan in Bosaso, rich from real estate
➤ Warsangeli (Harti)	Large clan living mostly in Eastern Sanaag region of Somaliland, claimed by Puntland. Of royal lineage (Warsangeli sultanate)
▪ Omar	Majority Warsangeli clan
▪ Dubey	Sub-clan from Galgala
➤ Dhulbahante (Harti)	Large clan living mostly in Sool region of Somaliland
❖ Marehan (Darod)	Clan of previous President Barre (deposed 1991), influential mostly in Gedo region of south Somalia
❖ Ogaden (Darod)	Mostly in Ethiopia

MINORITY CLANS

❖ Arab Salaah	Original South Arabian tribe from Yemen (Meheri), now completely assimilated in Darod, small traders, farmers spread throughout Puntland
❖ Jareer	Hard working southerners, mostly employed in fishing and port
❖ Rahanweyn/Eeley	Mostly present as IDPs, looked down upon as 'beggars'

The table above says little about clan alliances and rivalries, which are permanently shifting. At the end of 2015 the Ali Saleban, who form a majority in and around Bosaso, were locked in feuds with the Ugar Saleban and the Ali Jibril; the Dashishe have clashed several times with Osman Mohamud; and the Warsangeli and Dhulbahante clans are at loggerheads with the Mohamud Saleban.

1.3. NAVIGATING BOSASO

Bosaso is an easy town to get around. Its layout is simple, its different zones of activity clearly identifiable, and its authorities are accessible.

1.3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY

The main axis of the city is the paved road, which runs North-South from the port to the East African University. The new road (Eastern bypass) built with the support of UN-Habitat and delivered in 2015, is supposed to

become the industrial axis of the city, with large hangars for import and export, mostly of livestock. The bypass must relieve the center of Bosaso of the heavy truck traffic and flocks of cattle being herded towards the port. But for the time being most of the commercial and the small-scale industries servicing regional trade (mostly truck mechanics) are still along the old road, south of the center.

Two shorter paved roads lead from the main road to the airport, meeting at the northwestern edge of the city. Along these roads, and the Western edge of the city (near the airport) lie most international agencies and NGOs. Given the stringent security regime that the UN and NGOs have imposed upon themselves, most internationals, if they can visit Bosaso at all, don't go beyond this area (from the airport to the office, and the office to the guesthouse if it is on a different compound).

The map in annex 4 shows the location of all the UN agencies, INGOs, some of the main LNGOS, government offices and other places of interest.

Utilities

There is electricity in many but not all areas of Bosaso, provided by different suppliers: public and private. Telecoms providers such as Netco also sell electricity. There is almost 24/7 electricity supply, but as 1 kW costs about 1\$, consumption is very moderate: few buildings have air conditioning, despite the hot weather. The massive use of fans leads to shortages in the summer, when electricity is often rationed.

Most of the city's population has access to clean water of some sort: piped public water, shallow wells or water supplied from deep wells by private entrepreneurs. Cost is between 1 and 2 USD per m³. Pressure decreases in the summer. The water from shallow wells is so brackish, polluted and salty it is nearly undrinkable.

There is garbage collection from a few garbage collection points in the city. The collected garbage is dumped on a site to the East of the city. This system is far from ideal, as in fact garbage is dumped almost anywhere, and plastic bags have invaded the landscape. The 'unofficial' garbage dumping sites throughout the city are a health hazard. They probably contributed to malaria and dengue outbreaks over the past years.

There is not a single park in Bosaso. Houses don't have enclosed gardens either, generally (beyond a rare tree), and on satellite imagery one sees no greenery. The beach is very dirty because of the deficient garbage collection, and does not seem to attract citizens seeking leisure activities (only children swim). There are also no promenades or other places in the city where a family could go for a stroll; no malls, no cinemas, no children's playgrounds. In fact, only men congregate, in one of the hundreds of teahouses found throughout the city. They chew qat and talk until dusk.

For more about 'using' the city, see chapter 4.

There is no public transport system, but privately-run routes using tuk-tuks and small pick-ups equipped with benches ('Daihatsus'). This transportation system probably responds to the needs of the citizenry. Despite the lack of paved roads (or good unpaved roads) there are not many traffic jams in the city – this is because there are few cars.

In Somalia cars drive on the right hand side of the road; but many imported cars have their steering wheels on the wrong side. This does not seem to be a problem for the authorities. The Toyota Mark 2 is a favorite car.

IDP camps

Between the UN compounds and the shore lie a few IDP camps; most other IDP camps are in the center-east of Bosaso. The poorest inhabitants of Bosaso are doubtlessly the IDPs, who cannot count on social support networks to help them raise out of their poverty. They by and large remain dependent on the UN and the NGOs. Some refugees have been in the camps for twenty years, and many others were born there.

Conditions vary from camp to camp. In some camps the houses are made of recycled construction materials, there is no access to education, little sanitation and some children suffer from malnourishment; while in others UN-Habitat has built solid houses, INGOs provide decent communal WASH facilities, and local NGOs organize education.

As described above, although there are no exact figures available about the composition of the camps' population, it seems most of their inhabitants are Rahanweyn or from Somalia's minorities, who have little connection with the rest of Bosaso's population.

The local population does not seem to envy the material benefits received by IDPs from the UN and INGO community; they are glad they are taken care of, as the local community could not take on the support of 50,000 additional mouths to feed. Tensions between the host community and the IDPs exist, of course, but have not

led to violent incidents, probably due to the defusing role played by the international community. IDPs generally do not consider the host community as hostile (*Hawo, 2012*)

1.3.2. IMPORTANT INSTITUTIONS AND PLACES

The mayor's office

The mayor has his office in the town hall, on the main street of Bosaso; but he also has a private office, guarded by his own Dashishe people. The Dashishe traditionally hold the mayoral office in Bosaso

As a Dashishe, the mayor has strong personal connections with the business community, which he attempts to help by making Bosaso an attractive place for investors. He is well-traveled and educated as an engineer. The mayor seems to run most of the town's affairs from his private office, where his personal staff and the most trusted city councilors convene. This, in itself, is telling about how public affairs are run. Outside the town hall one can find many indigent Somalis squatting with a piece of paper in their hand containing their claim, which they hope to present to the mayor.

The municipality had nine departments in 2010; from the biggest, in terms of personnel, to the smallest they are: urban police, social affairs, revenue, public works, fire brigade, monitoring & evaluation, personnel & labor, finance, land registration and planning (altogether 387 people in 2010; reliable figures for 2015 could not be found).

The municipality's imprint on daily life and urban development is quite minimal, however; both because of the traditional way of doing things (through political networks, mainly the mobilization of clan loyalties) and because of a dire shortage of resources. The mayor asked NSP to raise funds to buy a second fire engine. UN-Habitat has engaged the municipality to help with urban planning and improvement of infrastructure; this led to a nice document in 2009 containing seminal information for a master-plan, but not much happened afterwards.

The governor's office

While the mayor's role is leading the day to day administration of the city, and ensuring the smooth operation of commerce, industry and employment in the city, the governor's role is more political. The governor of Bari, now Yusuf Mohamud Wacays 'Dhedo', is appointed by the President of Puntland. His writ extends only within the new boundaries of Bari (excluding Gardafuul and Karkaar) but it is substantial there. He leads the armed forces (Darawish) and the police in security operations and mediates in the many cases of clan conflict, preferably before blood is drawn.

The governor seems not to spend much time on smugglers or the illicit activities of criminal gangs, who are generally not seen as troublesome. His focus is squarely on Al Shabaab: on fighting the militants and chasing them out of Bari, rooting out factors of local support using strong handed methods (especially among the Warsangeli Dubey, see above) and persecuting possible sympathizers.

But most of his day is spent trying to maintain or improve the fragile balance of power between clans. His own clan, the Ali Saleban, is involved in several conflicts (with the rival Darod/Harti/Majerteen sub-clans Ali Jibril and the Ugar Saleban, notably). It is not clear how he can mediate impartially in such conflicts.

Governor Dhedo is seen as ruling Bari with an iron fist; it has not helped create an environment conducive to civil liberties, media freedom (at the end of 2015 a journalist was in prison for criticizing his actions) or justice. But he is seen as effective from a security point of view.

The SPU

The Special Protection Unit (SPU) was set up to protect the international humanitarian community in Puntland and Somaliland in 2005. It was the result of discussions between the UNDP, donors and the governments of both regions. The mission of the SPU, part of the police force, is to provide protection to international staff in their offices, residences and on their missions.

The UNDP originally agreed to fully take on the costs of the SPU – the UN was automatically covered, while INGOs and other internationals had to apply to the UN for protection through the SPU. If the UN decides it does not need to pay, the full costs of the armed security detail are paid for by the international, directly to the SPU.

While tariffs agreed between the UNDP and the Puntland authorities for SPU protection were \$7/day per SPU guard for a day mission, and \$10/day for an overnight mission, this does not seem to apply to visitors. At the end of 2015 going rates were 25 USD/day per guard, + 5 USD if they stay after 5 pm, + 50 USD/day per car; at least one car + four guards were required in permanence within Bosaso, while if one left the city's perimeter, one needed a second car with four additional guards. When one stays at a UN guesthouse or other facilities guarded by SPU, the armed escort can leave; but if one stays at a hotel or a guesthouse not protected by the SPU, one must pay for the soldiers to stay overnight. Support to food costs and tea etc. are not necessary but greatly appreciated.

Although there is no legal obligation for a foreigner to avail him- or herself of this protection, there is a strong expectation from the side of Puntland's authorities that a foreigner will do so; while internationals present in Bosaso would also expect a visitor to use this protection. As is the rule with protection schemes, not paying for organized security creates a potentially hazardous situation; because it provides an incentive for those benefiting from security payments to create a security incident. In a chaotic environment like Bosaso where impunity for security forces is the norm, that is easily done. So whether one feels one needs the security or not, it is better to rent the SPU's services.

Of course this makes it difficult to visit opposition figures or anyone who may have an issue with the government's security forces.

At the end of 2015, the agreement between the UN and the SPU had apparently come to an end. The SPU accused the UN of not honoring its agreement, and at least some of the security guards stationed outside INGOs and UN premises had not been paid. Whatever the causes and outcomes of this contention may be, it is clearly not in one's best security interests to first place armed guards outside one's house or office, and then make them unhappy by not paying what they expect. One small incident already took place in Garowe, where SPU officers would not let UN staff enter their premises.

The police and the judiciary

In Bosaso one finds two types of police force: those working for the mayor (traffic police etc.) and those working for the Ministry of Interior (Puntland police). We will here focus on the latter.

The police has been heavily involved in establishing and preserving the political order in Puntland. Although they regularly apprehend criminals, a lot of their time and effort goes towards counter-insurgency operations and tracking down and neutralizing opposition to Puntland's political elites.

As a result, police stations (there are several in Bosaso) and the prison have been targeted by Al Shabaab attacks, and shootings regularly take place at police roadblocks or during police raids in areas of Bosaso where insurgents/the political opposition is thought to reside.

Security forces regularly do not receive their salaries on time; several times over the past years the Puntland authorities have run up a backlog of payments of several months, prompting police to use their authority or even their weapons in protest. Criminal activities by security forces also regularly take place – in general, Bosaso's security forces seem to act with impunity. There are no oversight and accountability mechanisms, or ways for citizens to obtain redress except through clan elders.

There is a good police academy, supported by the UNDP, at Carmo, near Bosaso. This academy is reportedly functioning well, but it cannot influence the actual environment in which the police must work after graduation, which may involve corruption, racketeering and other illegal activities.

In this regard it must be said that the judiciary institutions in Puntland severely lack capacity, professionalism and the right incentives, although there may be honest people working in them. Most Somalis prefer to resort to Xeer (traditional tribal law, pronounced by clan elders) rather than dealing with the formal justice system. But some complaints – for example those opposing citizens with the institutions of state – cannot be addressed through Xeer.

There have been questions about how the police is receiving its weapons. No formal exception was made to the UN-enforced arms embargo for the arming of Puntland's police. It appears quite likely to all parties involved that the local authorities source their weapons on the smugglers market, as many of the weapons currently used by the police appear to come from Yemen (*UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, 2015 and Somalia Report: "The Police of Somalia, Somaliland, Puntland" May 31, 2012*). This may help explain why so few actions seem to be undertaken by Puntland's security forces against the smugglers.

The PMPF

The Puntland Maritime Police Force was set up in 2010 to undertake counter-piracy operations and apprehend illegal fishers in Puntland's waters. See below, section 2.1, for more information.

1.3.3. WHO'S WHO IN BOSASO

Somalis have an amazing capacity to remember names, functions and personal histories of a large number of people. The following list is not a definitive one, but rather a subjective take of University students on who are the most influential people in Bosaso – even when they only partially live in the town.

By clan:

Osman Mohamud. In Bosaso the most powerful member of this clan is *Kalif Issamudan*, one of the largest investors in Puntland (not only Bosaso); he lives mostly abroad (Dubai, London etc.). Another very rich bankroller of the authorities is known as '*Adam Dollar*'; he has a near monopoly on cash exchange, and reportedly a hangar full of cash, that he often lends to the government to pay salaries. Another important money trader is *Ali Abdi Aware*, money trader and owner of the (nationwide) Somali Broadcasting Corporation. Mr. *Daney* from Tawfiq General Trading Company, previously federal Minister of Planning, with a business in Oman, is another important Osman Mohamud clansmen.

Issa Mohamud. *Sheikh Ahmed*, religious leader in Bosaso. *Said Issa Mahmud*, director of Golis Telecommunications. Previous President of Puntland (2009-2013) *Abdirahman Farole* (from Eyl)

Omar Mohamud. Clan of Puntland's current president *Abdiweli Gaas*. The *OPEC brothers* lead an influential business group; *Horseed construction* and *Maruf retail* are other examples of this clan's influence. There is a sizeable Omar Mohamud diaspora in Zambia, Mozambique, and other areas of South Africa, but now some of them are allegedly shifting their business back to Puntland, and notably to Bosaso. *Hassan Taran*, the chairman of Bosaso business council, is also an Omar Mohamud.

Ali Saleban. Clan of the current Governor of Bari region Yusuf Mohamud Wacays '*Dhedo*'. The Ali Saleban are strong in transportation; they sponsor a lot of shipping using an influential diaspora in Oman. *Ali Shere*, previous Minister of Finance of Farole, now Puntland Minister of Planning. Mr. *Liban*, large trading company. *Horseed media group*.

Wabeneye: *Kamaluddin*, owner of the International Village Hotel, is seen as number one among the most influential people in Bosaso by several respondents.

Dashishe: *Abdullatif*, owner of the Juba Hotel, one of the richest businessmen in Bosaso. *Major Engineer Yassin*, of the Ugas sub-clan, which traditionally rules the Dashishe.

Ogaden: In Bosaso, Sheikh Dahir, maybe the most influential religious leader, hails from the Ogaden clan of the Darod people.



Mayor Yasin (left) and his deputy Said Garown



The governor of Bari, Dhedo.

2. SECURITY INFORMATION

2.1. CURRENT SITUATION AND TRENDS (AS PER DEC 2015)

The situation in Puntland, in general, is not stable, but also not critical. Bosaso is somewhat shielded from the sources of political instability in Puntland, as the city plays no major political role, and focuses on the development of its commercial activities. It is also possible that the city will benefit somewhat, in the short term at least, from low levels of conflict in other parts of Puntland.

Security for International Non-Governmental Organizations

In the past five years there has been no attack on UN or INGO targets, although the perceived threat level remains high. A careful analysis of all security incidents in Bosaso district reported by NSP (more than 1000 in this period) reveal that only *national* INGO and UN staff members have suffered directly from insecurity. All incidents were non-lethal petty crime cases or low-level political harassment, and in most cases UN or INGO staff did not seem to be targeted because of their employment status.

Full list of security incidents affecting UN and INGOs in Bari province, 2010-2015

Date	What	Where	Perpetrator	Victim
02-May-2011	Criticism of humanitarian aid assessment forms by clan elders and clerics, upset by questions about gender and mother-father relations in times of drought.	Bosaso, Garowe	Clan elders and religious leaders	UN, NGOs
16-Aug-2011	Unmarked vehicle hired by UN agency targeted by RCIED, maybe unintentionally; national UN staff injured	Yalho	Unknown / Al Shabaab?	UN vehicle
31-Oct-2011	Intimidation of INGOs by anonymous person claiming to be Al Shabaab, as reported on local website. Threats are directed towards places UN and INGO workers congregate.	Bosaso	Al Shabaab	INGOs, UN, local businesses
05-Jun-2012	Arrest and release of INGO national staff member for unknown reason, seemingly unrelated to his employment status	Bosaso	Security forces	INGO national staff
06-Feb-2013	Arrest and release of UN national staff member for alleged murder of a clan leader	Bosaso / Lanta Hawada	Security forces	UN national staff
13-May-2013	Armed theft of UN driver's mobile phone and glasses in the evening, probably unrelated to employment status	Bosaso	Criminal	UN national staff
27-May-2013	Arrest and release of UN national staff member for unknown reasons	Bosaso / Lanta Hawada	Security forces	UN national staff
10-Aug-2013	Denial of delivery of humanitarian assistance by Puntland administration: a ship carrying food aid from Berbera to Bosaso cannot unload shipment, as Puntland authorities and clan elders accuse Somali government of manipulation	Bosaso	Puntland authorities, clan elders	NGOs, aid recipients
24-Aug-2013	Shooting of INGO-rented vehicle and its occupants, including national staff and a civil servant, resulting in light wounds, by an Ali Saleban clan member who is an alleged pirate	Carto	Clan militia/pirate	INGO vehicle and staff, Puntland authorities
15-Mar-2015	Theft of 70 to 80,000 USD aid money by police escort, with possible complicity of local implementing partner's driver	Kobdhexaad	Security forces	UN and LINGO, aid recipients
06-Jul-2015	UN alert issued to its staff about possible attacks during Ramadan, not in response to specific threat	Bosaso	None	UN staff

Another security threat is posed by disgruntled government forces; for example unpaid police officers who set up illegal checkpoints (2013), or armed escorts who robbed the UN-provided cash of a local NGO they were meant to protect during a transport (March 2015, 80 km SW of Bosaso). A stand-off between international agencies and the Special Protection Unit of Puntland's Ministry of Security over payment of salaries is a

dangerous development; such issues need to be addressed urgently by engaging the clan-based political system, and thus maintain harmonious relations between INGOs and Puntland's authorities.

There are few points of contact, and thus of potential friction, between local communities and internationals. 90% of INGO, LNNGO and UN activities focus on support to IDPs, who themselves are quite isolated from the local community. In the past five years there has been only one reported incident (in Soweto neighborhood, 2012) where the local host community interfered in an aid delivery project, claiming they should also benefit.

Because of this lack of contact, cultural insensitivity-inspired conflicts also rarely take place. In May 2011 there was vocal criticism in mosques and public forums of an inter-agency assessment among the city's population because of questions about female genital mutilation and relationships between respondents' parents. The authorities had to intervene on behalf of the UN to explain some questions had been 'misinterpreted'. But the fact that in 2015, six NGOs were implementing gender-based violence programs among IDPs, did not provoke any reported protests, despite the fact that IDPs lack many basic amenities and, for example, access to education and healthcare.

The international community in Bosaso is frequently put on edge by possible threats. For example, reports of surveillance of UN or INGO premises by unidentified individuals; or public statements by Islamist insurgents that they consider the UN and other 'crusader' agencies legitimate targets. Each time Puntland authorities launch an attack on the Galgala / Al Shabaab militants, the likelihood of a suicide or IED attack on UN premises in Bosaso increases – this is also the analysis of the local authorities.

But the reason the UN maintains a risk level of 5 (the highest) is less related to developments in Bosaso, than to the attack on a UNICEF staff bus in Garowe in April 2015. That attack was claimed by Al Shabaab, and the UN concluded that its premises, staff and programs were threatened in Puntland in general. At a risk level of 5 only the most essential UN staff movements are allowed, in two armored cars. The INGO community generally follows UN security rules. The presence of international staff is avoided – some agencies don't send non-Somalis at all, and expat managers hold their meetings with local staff in Garowe instead (Garowe being presumably, but not demonstrably safer). When international staff is present in Bosaso, their movements are severely restrained. It is also difficult for Somalis, in general, to enter INGO compounds.

The severe limitation of contact between INGOs and the host community does undoubtedly bring security in the short term. In the medium term such isolation may however reduce the impact and efficacy of INGO programs, besides causing psychological strain on international staff present in the town. In the long term, it creates a disconnect between the local population and authorities on the one hand, and the international aid community on the other. INGOs have little leverage in Bosaso, and leverage is an essential ingredient of security in Somalia.

The observation of foreigners who do move freely in Bosaso – for example researchers, journalists and consultants – is that there is no hostility and little insecurity in the streets, and a strong desire to engage foreigners positively. It therefore seems commendable to explore a readjustment of threat perceptions. That could open the way for the initiation of aid projects engaging Bosaso's population and a much larger international presence. A degree of cultural sensitivity and good relations with local powerbrokers (see section 4.1) would vastly improve the security of internationals in Bosaso.

The possible resurgence of piracy and its consequences

As mentioned above, there are reasons to believe there may be a resurgence of piracy in Puntland. Besides the factors motivating would-be pirates, the authorities may also have a stake in its revival. Piracy does not harm Puntland's society much, and it would allow the authorities to exert leverage over the international community as its ally in combating piracy on land – through development funding and additional investments in Puntland's security forces. As to the international community and its security experts, there is no reason to believe they would not willingly tackle a new threat of piracy after the relative success of recent campaigns.

If this happens, however, one may expect a large influx of foreign security experts and (para)military personnel. Until now their presence (for example with the Puntland Maritime Police Force, or through high-flying drones) has been so discrete as to be nearly invisible. A larger visibility may create an anti-foreigner backlash among the population – think of Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, a stronger monopoly of violence by the currently ruling clan elites could further upset the clan balance and social peace. A resurgence of piracy, although not directly threatening INGO activities, could thus create a perilous situation for INGOs.

The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea's 2015 report seems to validate this threat perception. They note that in March 2015, Puntland authorities signed an agreement with Somali Security Services Ltd, a private

company set up by Abdiweli Ali Taar, a friend of Puntland's current president, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali 'Gaas', to provide Coast Guard services. In exchange SSS Ltd will receive 30% of government revenue obtained from fishing license sales and fines imposed on arrested vessels.

Taar previously supplied private coast guard services to Puntland's authorities from 2002 to 2005 and 2008 to 2009. In that period he personally sold illicit fishing licenses, fueling the anger of local fishers. His privately trained coast guards hijacked a Thai fishing vessel they were guarding in 2005, demanding a ransom of 800,000 USD; this did not prevent Taar getting a new contract in 2008.

Another private security company, 'Hart Security', headed by the former SAS officer Lord Richard Westbury, provided Puntland's authorities with a Coast Guard from 1998 to 2002. Many of the pirates acknowledged they had received their training and skills from Hart Security or Taar's 'Somali-Canadian Coast Guard'.

The Puntland Maritime Police Force currently ensures the security of Puntland's coasts. The organization was set up in 2010 as an elite force answerable to the Puntland President (Farole) for internal security operations. The PMPF has been funded by private individuals from the UAE and trained by Saracen, South African mercenaries, under the general supervision of Erik Prince (ex Blackwater) who is based in Abu Dhabi. Saracen was rebranded as Sterling Corporate Services in 2013 and is still involved in training the PMPF. The base of the PMPF along the coast behind the new airport has been described as the best-equipped military facility in Somalia, after the AMISOM bases.

In 2011 the UN Monitoring Group fingered Saracen as the "most egregious threat" to peace and security in Somalia because of its massive violation of the arms embargo, as the PMPF was equipped with modern weaponry acquired in spite of the UN arms embargo. Saracen does not even have a license to operate as a security contractor in the region.

The UN Monitoring Group noted in 2012 that the PMPF had yet to demonstrate it was truly engaged in the fight against piracy. It was noted that the 'maritime' police force had been used instead to provide security to controversial oil exploration activities in Sool, to neutralize the hostility of Dhulbahante tribes. When the Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF) placed current President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali "Gaas" under house arrest in October 2012 in Bosaso, while he was still an opposition politician, he was staying at Taar's residence. This may help explain why 'Gaas' has teamed with Taar to create a private coast guard while the PMPF is fully operational.

The danger that Taar may revert to past practices, selling fishing licenses illegally to his clients, is substantial. Currently, two 'brokers' known as Cabdi Nuur (in Bosaso) and Abdulkadir (in Dubai) sell forged fishing licenses to a wide variety of clients; the UN Monitoring Group obtained proof of a Korean and Iranian fleet operating with such fake licenses. When the UN's investigators requested Puntland's authorities for a reaction about these apparently condoned practices, they received none – suggesting a degree of collusion.

According to the PMPF, licenses typically sell for 10,000 dollars, of which half goes to the Ministry of Fishing, and half to the agent selling it. In December 2015 the PMPF's deputy director told NSP that in the previous month, they had checked 130 Iranian fishing boats in Somali waters, of which 110 had licenses; they had arrested and fined 8. Selling fishing licenses is a multi-million-dollar yearly business. The UN Monitoring Group noted that Iranian vessels were paying 15,000 to 20,000 USD per license.

The PMPF acknowledges that local fishers are frustrated at the wholesale selling of fish resources by their government and private middlemen, and warns of the threat of recrudescing piracy if the international community doesn't step up their support to the PMPF, who needs a mothership to patrol larger areas. The UN Monitoring Group noted (in 2015) that some member states are supporting the armament of the PMPF despite the arms embargo. The UN still considers the PMPF a private military force.

To quote long-time observer Alex de Waal again: "*A persistent theme in analyses of piracy is that the individuals who organize and profit from piracy are closely connected to those who organize and benefit from counter-piracy*" (De Waal, *The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa*, 2015).

The probable evolution of the Al Shabaab threat

At the close of 2015 Al Shabaab in Puntland experienced internal squabbles about whether they should pledge allegiance to the Islamic State or remain with Al Shabaab in the rest of Somalia. In October 2015 a group of 20 fighters, led by Abdikadir Mumin, a preacher who had been expelled from the United Kingdom because of his propagation of radical ideas (*Horseed Media*, 24/12/2015), split from Al Shabaab in Puntland to join the Islamic State. In December 2015 both factions battled in Qandala district. It is unclear whether IS can actually deliver support to the breakaway faction in Somalia; it is also unclear how much traction IS has locally. Mumin as well

as, reportedly, most of the fighters who defected along with him, belongs to the Ali Saleban sub-clan, and thus can count on some protection by the population. The split certainly has weakened Al Shabaab in Puntland.

However, Puntland's authorities claims that Al Shabaab is now defeated should be treated with caution. First, they have repeated this claim almost every year, while – as the graph below shows – the percentage of security incidents recorded by NSP, that are related to Al Shabaab and the Galgala insurgents, is in fact increasing over the years.

Secondly, there is little understanding of the actual appeal of Al Shabaab and IS in Puntland – partially because of the ruthless suppression of contact with both groups by Puntland's authorities. Relaying the views of Al Shabaab or the Galgala insurgents was, over the past five years, one of the main reasons for the harassment of journalists by the authorities. However, discussions with students at Puntland's universities indicate a substantial minority of the educated youth supports the insurgents and Islamists, even though the support for moderate Islamism – the examples most cited being Turkey and Malaysia – is much broader. The lines between both groups are of course not clear-cut.

Moreover, even a diminished Al Shabaab does not eliminate the threat for international NGOs or the UN, as a few disgruntled radicals with access to explosives and weapons – readily available in Somalia – are enough to launch a deadly attack.

The long term may be different. As noted, religious conservatism and political Islam are on the rise in Puntland. Dissatisfaction with the clan-based system of current government, corruption and repression is brooding among young professionals who perceive this system to be against their interest.

General trends affecting security

Following are the trends in Puntland's security, and *how they may affect the situation in Bosaso*:

1. **Trouble at the borders.** The festering conflict between Puntland and Somaliland over the regions of Sool and Sanaag may erupt into armed conflict at any point in time. Until now neither state has had interest in a conflict; but this could change due to internal political factors in Somaliland or Puntland, conflict over oil or other valuable natural resources, infighting within Dhulbahante or Warsangeli clans drawing in external players, a growing presence of Al Shabaab, or a combination of any of these factors.

The conflict between Puntland and the Galmudug administration over the border separating both entities is also worrying; fighting between the Darod and Hawiye clan groups in Galkacyo, in December 2015, caused great concern, as the fighting between these groups has been the major trigger of the civil war.

Continued conflict on Puntland's borders could encourage Bosaso's tendency to isolate itself from Somalia's problems by focusing on overseas connections. Conflict in the rest of Puntland, however, may also boost Bosaso's position and commercial interests. Increased influx of refugees could be addressed by a much larger UN and INGO presence. But peace in Sool and Sanaag, and development of these regions' natural resources, could provide a boon to Bosaso as it could be the major port servicing this development.

2. **Clan balance.** Currently, besides the alienation felt by parts of the Dhulbahante and Warsangeli, there seems to be no major imbalance between the major Harti Darod clans of Puntland. Current clan and sub-clan conflicts are low-level and seem manageable, with even the smaller clans having a stake in continued stability. This arrangement is inherently of a fragile nature, and conflict can erupt easily among clans, especially during electoral processes or other moments of political transition. The question is whether Puntland will gradually manage the transition towards a non-clan based political system.

Here again, Bosaso seems shielded from potential conflict between the large clans of Puntland by its own clan composition, with a diversity of many small business-oriented clans that wield political and economic influence, and sufficient representation from the major Majerteen clans to also give them a stake in Bosaso's stability and prosperity.

3. **Governance.** Most institutions of governance in Puntland are weak by any standard: the civil administration, the judiciary, revenue collection, legislative organs and the provision of services to the citizenry have all been atrophied by the hegemony of clan-based politics, and by the lack of resources of the government (and bad management of available resources). Only the security forces are relatively strong, which encourages the reflex of governance through repression. This is however

mitigated by clan politics. Also, the poor governance in Puntland has not been met by organized opposition from its citizens; even Islamic opposition is weak compared to other Muslim countries that suffer from bad governance. It seems Puntlanders do not expect good governance. This may change as a young, more educated generation of citizens enters the political-economic marketplace with frustration about its limitations and ethics.

Bosaso would logically become the center of such contestation, because of its Universities, strong connections with the diaspora and the need for better institutions of governance to facilitate its growth. It is not clear how such expectations could be met by the current political set-up. As it is likely that some of this contestation will be inspired by religion, there is a danger that internationally backed repression of such contestation by Puntland's authorities could escalate tensions. In the short term, however, this risk is not yet apparent.

4. **Economic inequalities and migration patterns.** As rural livelihoods are negatively impacted by natural conditions (drought and maritime storms), population growth and bad governance, the economic inequalities between the relatively affluent urban centers and the affected rural areas could lead to mass rural exodus, as people seek a better life in Puntland's cities.

Bosaso could become the victim of its own success. Unemployment rates are already high but are off-set by the opportunities in the informal sector. But the capacity for growth of the city is hampered by the lack of governance and resources to invest, for example, in improving the port or urban infrastructure, and fostering the growth of value-adding activities to the import-export sector. The city could sink into poverty and instability if it becomes surrounded by massive shantytowns populated by indigent rural populations.

5. **Al Shabaab and militant Islamism.** In military terms, Al Shabaab appears to be on the run, much reduced and looking for a new base close to the Gulf of Aden. But they are not defeated. In political terms, it is difficult to gauge support for militant Islamism, because of the repression of political and religious voices that oppose the current system. Militant Islamic resistance could suddenly flare up, especially if ill governance through the clan-based political system is not improved.

The situation in Bosaso is not clear. It is probable that attraction to forms of Islamic resistance, be it ISIS or Al Qaeda or a form of nationalistic Islam, is growing among the student population and the commercial elites (interviews of community leaders by NSP, December 2015). Whether this tendency is approaching critical mass, and how strong other, more secular forms of resistance may be, should be investigated; for the time being, one can only point at a speculative threat.

6. **Piracy.** A recrudescence of piracy in Puntland could take place. The original causes of its emergence in the 2000s are still present: over-fishing in Somali waters, poverty along the coast, lack of efforts to develop coastal economies, presence of weapons and arms smuggling, underpaid security services that can act with impunity, foreign-trained 'counter-piracy experts' looking for lucrative opportunities, corrupt officials and ample funding for the fight against piracy. The overfishing now happens with licenses issued by Puntland's authorities, but there are still many reports of illegal fishing, and of licenses with dubious validity issued by well-connected Somalis. Tactics would probably change to reflect the new challenges pirates face: on-board protection, EU navy presence, improved surveillance... Somali piracy 2.0 may be more tech-savvy, including hacking ship systems and satellite communications, and more brutal.

Bosaso would probably benefit from a recrudescence of piracy, as the proceeds of piracy would partially be invested into its legal and illegal economy, while counter-piracy could again become big business.

7. **Modernization.** Although modernization, in political and institutional terms, seems stalled in Puntland, in cultural terms it is taking quick strides. As opportunities grow for participation in global trade ventures and in higher education, and Puntland is increasingly integrated with the rest of the world through internet access and diaspora connections, the population of Puntland is gradually becoming part of a global citizenry with a stake in continued integration. As indicated by the growth of Islamist sympathies, this modernization is not equivalent to joining the Western world – the Gulf and the Asian shores of the Indian Ocean may offer better perspectives. Although generally positive, this rapid cultural change will also produce tensions and conflict, between generations, visions of society and concepts of collective identity

The ambition of Bosaso to become the Dubai of the Gulf of Aden may seem far-fetched, but it is a positive goal. Such an ambition can defuse or channel the tensions generated by cultural conflicts produced by rapid modernization - as has happened in the nearby Gulf states, Turkey or China.

2.2. ANALYSIS OF RECENT PAST

The following tables are based on NSP’s exhaustive reporting, of 992 security incidents that took place in Bosaso district from October 2010 to September 2015, for a period of exactly five years.

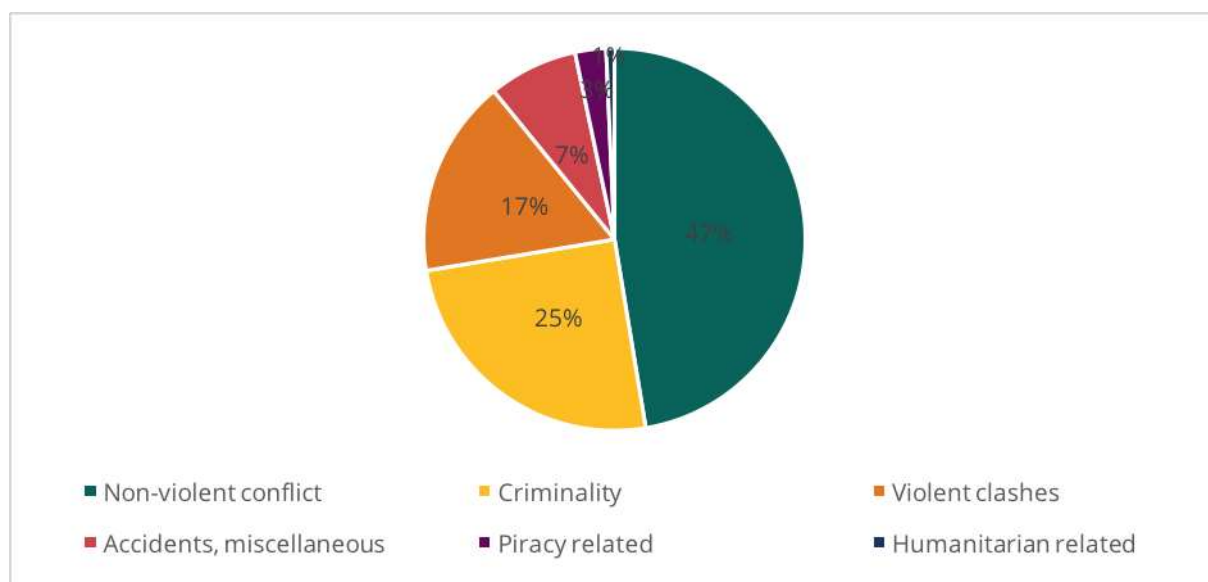
Note that in some of the tables below, the total amounts to more than 992; that is because multiple factors may be given per incident.

2.2.1. TYPE OF INCIDENTS AND THEIR MOTIVATION

Roughly half of the reported incidents are of a non-violent nature: security operations resulting in arrests, political reshuffling, opposition politics and their repression, roadblocks, administrative constraints, troop movements etc.

The other half does involve violence of some sort: mostly common criminality (armed assault, murder, burglary) but also many cases of armed clashes between the government and insurgents/Al Shabaab and between clans. IED and hand grenade attacks, politically-motivated assassinations and the like also fall under the ‘violent clashes’ category. Of these violent incidents, a high number (208 of the 414, or 50%) are lethal – often involving multiple deaths, especially in the case of armed clashes and IED attacks.

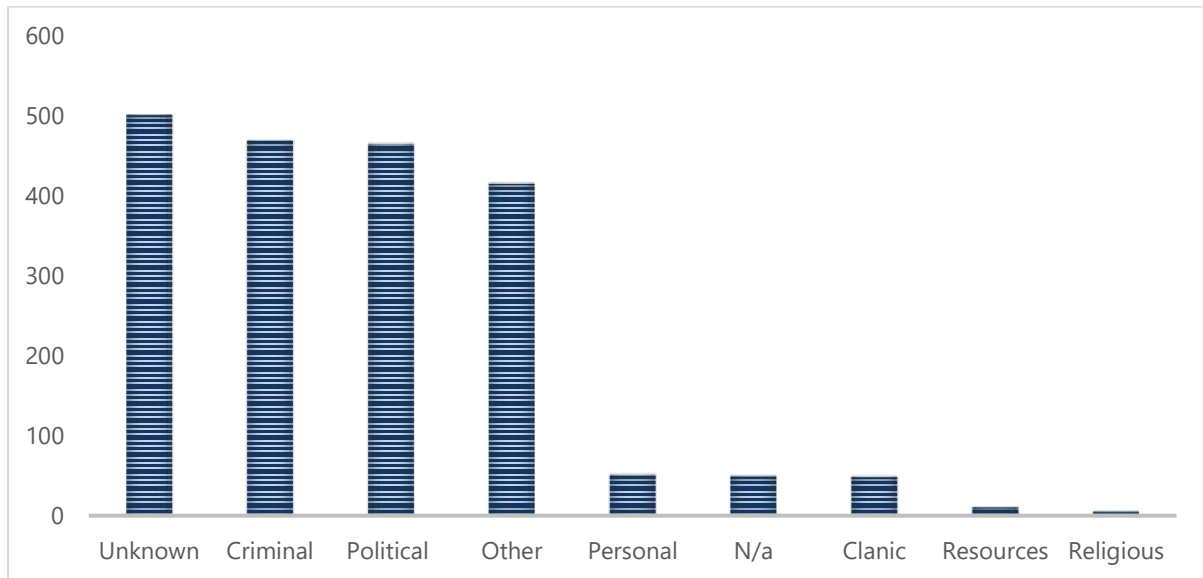
Figure 3: Type of Incidents, Bosaso, 2010-2015



Relatively few of the incidents reported in the past five years were related to piracy (26), and these were in steady decline throughout this period, from 8 in the first year to 2 in 2015.

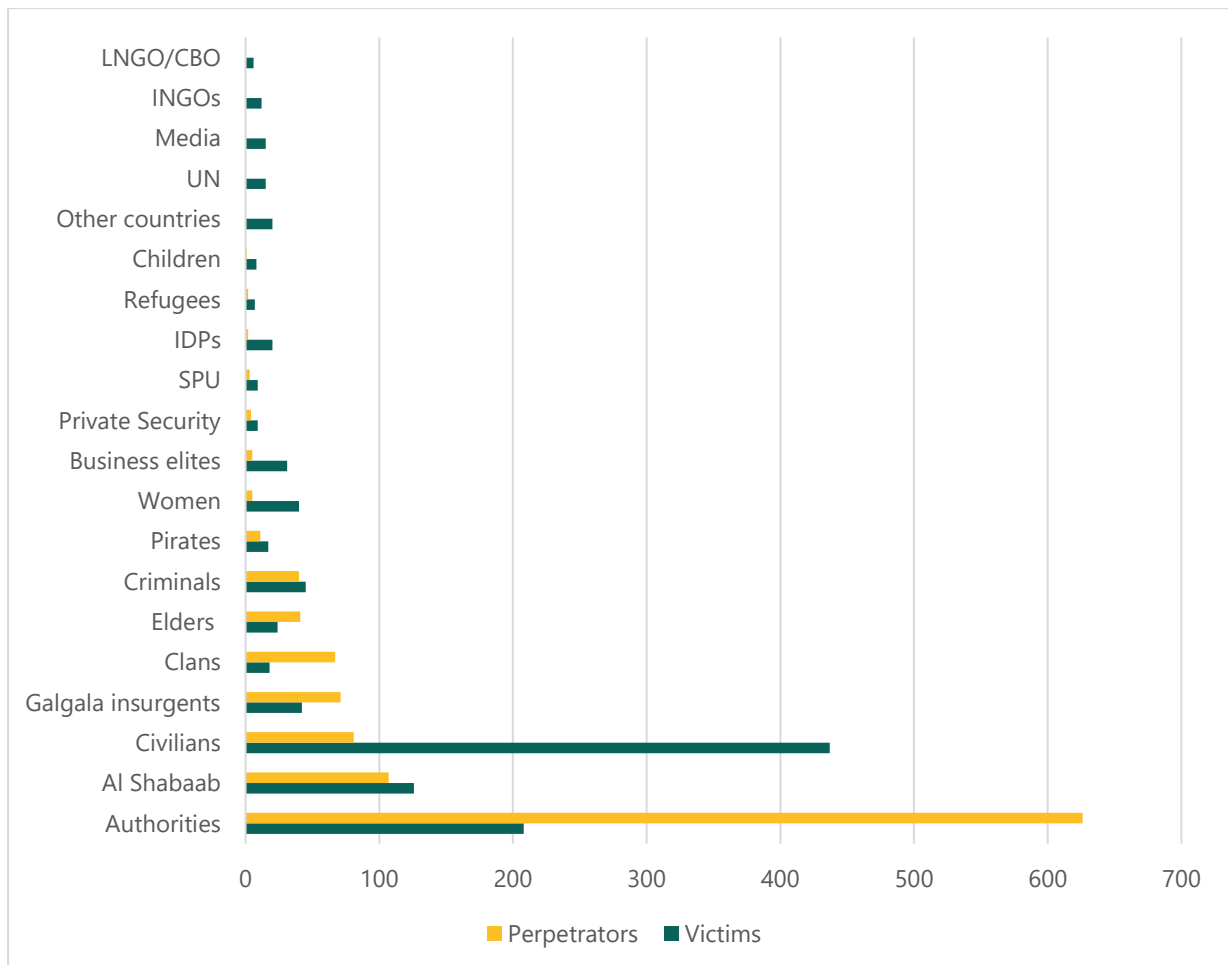
A careful scrutiny of the data reveals that only 7 incidents were directly related to humanitarian operations – a few others involved local staff of NGOs, but apparently not because of their employment status, but accidentally or as wealthy targets. None of the incidents involving humanitarian agencies were lethal.

Figure 4: Motivations of Perpetrators



In most cases the motivation of those perpetrating the security incidents was unknown; insofar it could be determined, it was equally shared between criminal, political (often both) and other reasons. Much less incidents were committed for personal reasons or by clan dynamics, and almost none were primarily motivated by resources (some clashes between clans for access to water) or for religious reasons.

Figure 5: Perpetrators and victims of security incidents in Bosaso, 2010-2015



If one looks at the perpetrators and victims of the incidents, it becomes clear that most incidents are caused by the authorities of Puntland – the Puntland Defense Forces (PDF, also known as Darawish), the police, Puntland’s Intelligence Services (PIS) and the Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF). As to the victims, they are mostly civilians. This does not necessarily mean that there is a very repressive regime in Bosaso. In fact, many of the incidents reported concern raids, arrest & detention, security checkpoints, trials and sentences: these are non-lethal, basic law and order operations implemented by security forces.

Nevertheless, there are many infringements of basic rights by the authorities, especially in detention procedures. Sometimes many dozens of people are picked up in raids targeting Al Shabaab sympathizers, only to be released shortly afterwards, in what are clearly intimidation attempts by local authorities. Almost one in three of the reported incidents involve arrest and detention – many of these involve the (attempted) solution of common criminal cases. As we have seen above, criminal activities constitute 25% of reported incidents, while a criminal motivation is also behind many of the other incidents.

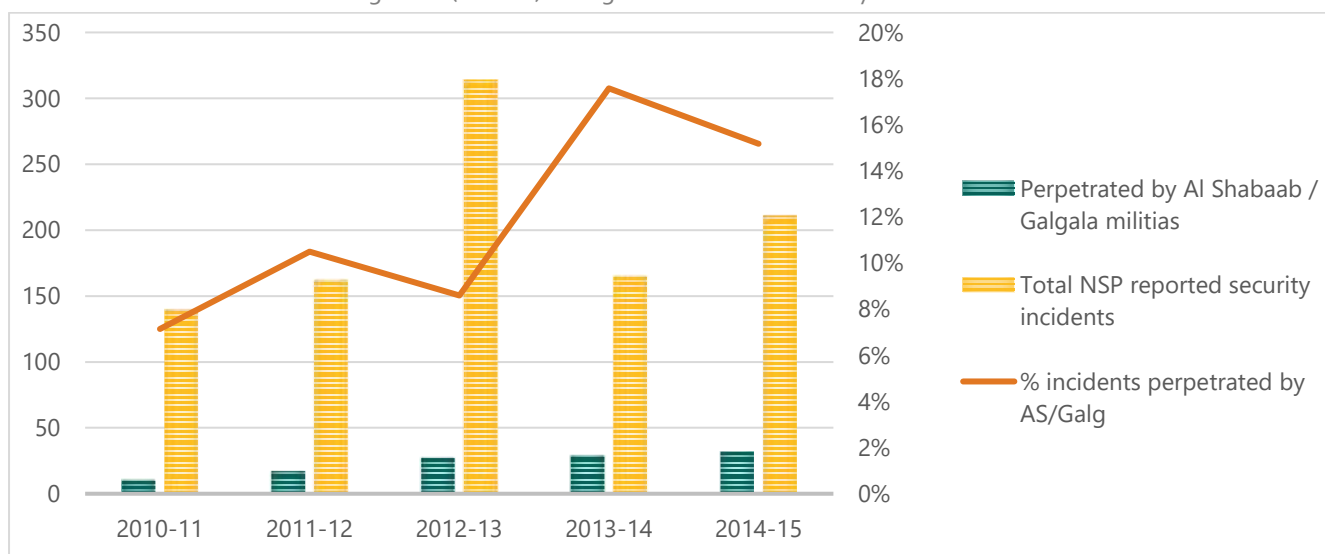
Regularly, reports appear of security personnel using their weapons to commit criminal acts or engage in clan-related violence. Given how easily available police or army uniforms are to obtain, in some cases these may be disguises used by criminals.

The 2013 general elections saw a spike in repressive acts by the authorities, targeting mostly opposition parties or figures. This in turn provoked angry demonstrations, which were usually met with repression. It is quite likely that future elections will be accompanied by similar levels of political violence. Journalists and media are not often the victims of incidents (12 cases in 5 years) but there is clearly not much respect for media freedom among Bosaso’s authorities. At different times, Horseed FM, Hiiraan online, Radio Voice of Peace, Radio Bar Kulan, Somali National TV, satellite broadcasters Universal and Horn TV, Radio Daljir and Radio One Nation saw their operations affected: usually by a temporary ban after having aired news the government objected to, such as an interview with insurgents. In a few cases journalists were arrested and detained without charge for periods of up to two months.

After such ‘law and order’ related security incidents, the above table clearly shows the preponderance of incidents related to Al Shabaab and Galgala insurgents. Many of these still fall in the realm of law and order, such as security operations directed at discovering and arresting Al Shabaab sympathizers. But a full 8% of all incidents recorded concerned military operations. As the table below shows, despite repeated claims by government that the insurgency has been defeated, incidents involving them have increased, albeit not dramatically over the past five years.

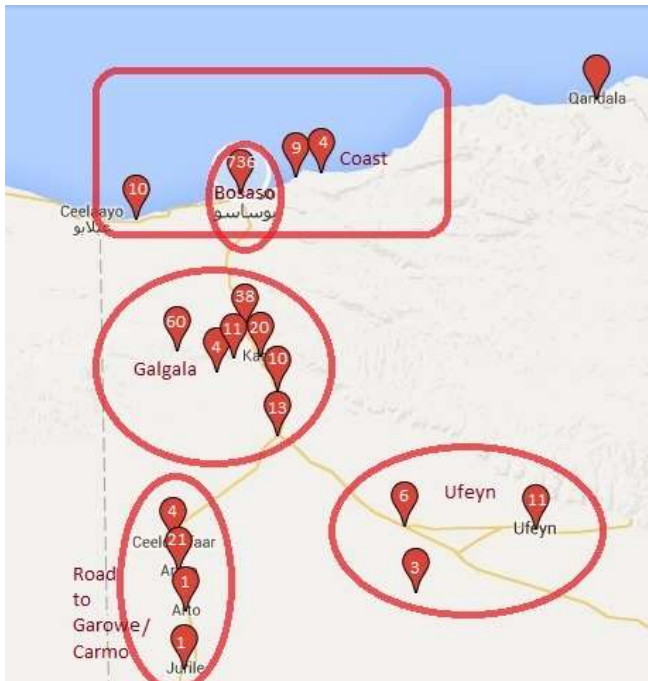
These clashes with insurgents also explain why the authorities are the second most frequent victims of attacks: But not only insurgents, clan militia also target security personnel, and more rarely civilian authorities.

Figure 6: (Islamic) insurgents' share in insecurity



Most of the violence related to clashes between the government and insurgents takes place outside of Bosaso, near Galgala – on the southeastern slopes of the Cal Madow (or Golis) mountains, which start West of the main road to Garowe and extend deep into the Sanaag region normally attributed to Somaliland (but claimed by Puntland and effectively largely self-governed). This violence however often spills over into the localities along the main road: Laag, Yalho, Karin and Kala Beyr. During the campaigns of the government in the mountains, Al Shabaab often struck back at targets in Bosaso.

The following map shows the geographic distribution of security incidents in Bosaso district (this is according to the 'old' maps still used by the international community). The map shows that 75% of reported security incidents occurred in Bosaso town; the next big cluster is around Galgala; a minor cluster is around the town of Carmo, on the road connecting Bosaso to Qardho, Garowe and the rest of Somalia. Finally, there are small clusters of incidents along the coast, and around Ufeyn.



That most incidents take place in Bosaso is not surprising, as this is where most of the population lives – probably at least 75% of the district. Along the coast on both sides of Bosaso incidents are mostly of a criminal nature, often involving (people) smugglers and shoot-outs. In Ufeyn there have been several clashes between the Ali Jibril and the Ali Saleban clans related to the proceeds of piracy or over access to water, followed by revenge killings. In and around Carmo incidents have involved clan-related or politically motivated clashes and car-jackings, minor incidents provoked by Al Shabaab, and a few piracy related incidents (security operations, shoot-outs and car-jackings). In this area the Ali Saleban and the Ismail Saleban have clashed several times over the past years, and less frequently the Osman Mohamud and Issa Mohamud.

In Bosaso, many incidents are not tied to a specific locality (but touch the city as a whole). The remaining incidents are distributed as follows (only locations with 7 or more incidents).

Hotspots in Bosaso		
Raf Iyo Raaho	31	Poor area towards the south of the city where many migrants from the rest of Somalia settle; suspected hotbed of Al Shabaab support
New Bosaso	19	Middle-class housing estate on the southwestern edge of Bosaso, with very mixed clan composition
Gaaca	9	
Golis Building	9	Central area around the Golis telecommunications headquarters
Laanta Hawada	8	
Suweyto	8	Named after the Johannesburg township; mixed area close to the port
Balaade	8	
Boqol Bush IDP	8	Most unruly of the IDP camps
Bosaso Police Station	7	Frequently targeted by Al Shabaab
Bosaso Port	7	Criminal activities

2.3. DETAILED RISK ASSESSMENT

2.3.1. KIDNAPPING

The risk of kidnapping is not high. There have been no cases, attempted cases, or suspicion of planned cases targeting the INGO community over the past five years. In 2007 and 2008 five separate kidnapping incidents did take place, involving aid workers and journalists – this gave Bosaso its reputation as a dangerous place for foreigners. It is impossible to say whether the situation has truly changed, so mitigation measures remain essential. Abduction of local businessmen or political/tribal leaders for ransom or political gain does sometimes occur, mostly as part of a clan conflict or for purely criminal purposes. Most cases are quickly solved, however. Kidnapping is a complicated affair, and it requires a relatively large support base and territory to maintain the secrecy necessary for the logistics of the operation. In Somalia the anonymity that would allow the kidnappers to hide their victim does not exist, requiring an entire sub-clan to be involved in such an operation, so kidnapping is most likely to occur when there is serious clan conflict, and becomes more probable if the kidnapping somehow damages the other clan (for example by showing they cannot provide security to foreigners). Currently there is no such strong clan conflict in Bosaso. Al Shabaab seem more interested in killing foreigners than kidnapping them, although their first target remains the local authorities.

2.3.2. IEDS AND OTHER VIOLENT ATTACKS

There have been about 50 IED attacks over the past 5 years; the vast majority were perpetrated by Al Shabaab and the Galgala insurgents against Puntland's security forces, and a certain number also seem to have targeted influential office bearers. Most of these are mines, some are remote controlled and in only two cases they were carried by suicide bombers, on foot (Bosaso police station, 2014) or vehicle borne (attack against Puntland Maritime Police Forces, 2013). There hasn't been any case of an IED attack against a humanitarian target in the past five years.

Over this period there have been about 25 cases of hand grenade assaults, almost all of them against police stations in Bosaso, or police checkpoints, or more rarely telecommunications installations or public officials. In some cases these attacks seem to be part of ongoing feuds between clans. Hand grenades have not been used against NGOs or UN targets, according to NSP data of the past five years.

Shootings are the most common form of violent attacks in Bosaso: about 170 incidents were reported; IED attacks and hand grenade assaults are often combined with shooting. They usually are firefights between the security forces and criminals or insurgents, or between criminals or clans, and sometimes they amount to (attempted) killings of officials or opposition figures. As one Bosaso resident who had returned from the USA put it, the frequency of shootings, relative to the population of the city, is quite modest compared to American cities.

It is difficult to assess what the real danger of IED, grenade and other attacks for international staff is, as the highly restricted and protected movements of the UN and INGOs have not exposed international staff to this risk. Even foreign journalists, consultants and researchers tend to move only with armed protection, albeit it less restrictively. In the absence of such data it is advisable to continue taking mitigation measures. Given that most violent incidents occur between insurgents and disgruntled clan members and the authorities, the main danger is 'being in the wrong place at the wrong time', so the best safeguard is not being too close to likely targets: local authorities and security forces, or clan leaders embroiled in disputes with other clans.

2.3.3. CARJACKING

In the past five years there were 18 instances of carjacking, most of them of a criminal nature, or related to inter-clan fighting. In about half of the cases the cars were recovered by the police, or after intercession by clan elders. In one case in 2013, a vehicle rented by an INGO was fired upon by a person identified as an ex-pirate, and its occupants lightly injured.

There have been no cases of an NGO or UN car trying to be carjacked in the period examined. Most likely, a carjacking incident would be linked to the owner of the car (renting it to the project) rather than to the INGO renting the car or the project it is used for. It is therefore critical to be well informed about who one is renting the car from – preferably a person with enough clout to avoid the carjacking.

2.3.4. ARMED CONFLICT

Armed clashes between the security forces and Al Shabaab or insurgents, or between clans, may not directly threaten internationals, but they can cripple operations. This risk is highest in Sool and Sanaag areas, or along the undefined border between Puntland's Darod and Galmudug's Hawiye, through Galkacyo and Mudug region. It would be highly unwise in the current conjuncture to attempt to set up NGO operations in the above-mentioned conflicted border zones, but those are relatively far from Bosaso.

In the district of Bosaso there may be armed clashes between clans, but these would not pose a significant threat to eventual NGO activities there (currently there are very few). The road south to Qardho and Garowe seems relatively safe now, after having witnessed many armed conflicts over the past years, but of course this safety is fragile, as the road from Bosaso to the rest of the country is a favorite place for discontented clans or insurgents to gain visibility.

Given the high level of criminal activities along the coast, coupled with counter-piracy or –insurgency covert operations involving Western security services, it is advisable for NGOs to keep a distance from the coastline, as they could easily be suspected of 'spying'.

2.3.5. POLITICAL CONFLICT

Puntland politics are murky, and it might easily happen that NGOs that seek to engage local authorities or social forces become entangled in a political conflict they are not aware of. The range of activities currently undertaken by NGOs do not carry this risk, as they almost exclusively target IDPs, who by and large are not involved in local social or political issues.

Should an NGO decide to work closer with non-IDP communities or the authorities – for example on electoral processes, or civil and political rights – it could still shield itself from such involuntary entanglement by maintaining close contacts with a variety of local strongmen and leaders.

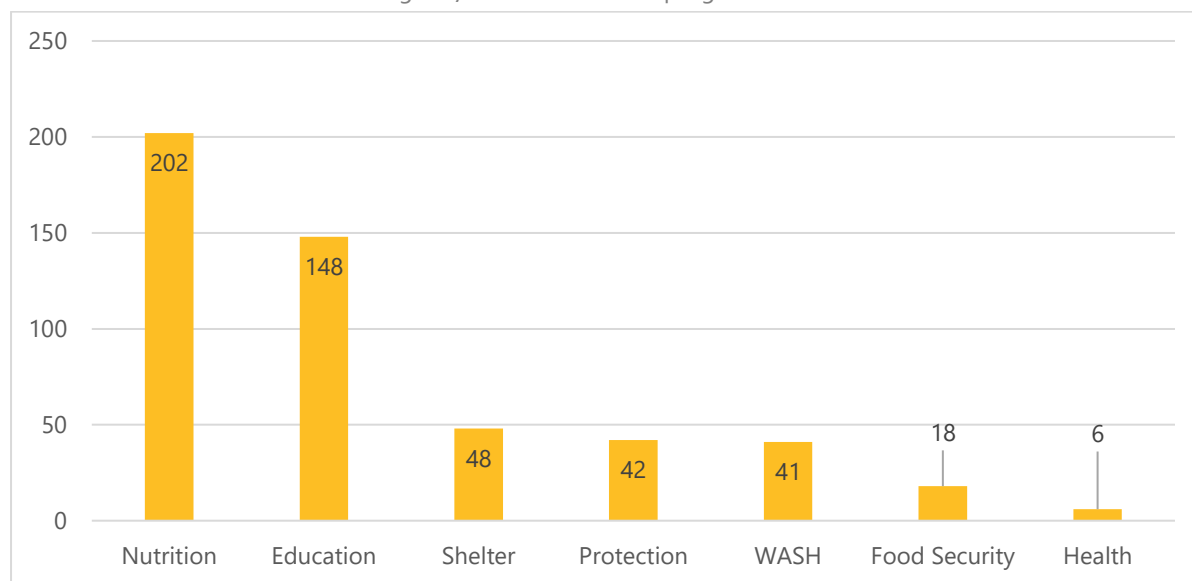
3. NGO PRESENCE

3.1. WHO, WHERE AND WHAT

According to the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) there were, in 2014, 505 registered programs being run by local or international NGOs, or by UN agencies themselves. These were at varying levels of completion, from 'in schedule' to 'completed'.

In the categories used by UNOCHA, the distribution of these 505 programs per sector of activity was as follows:

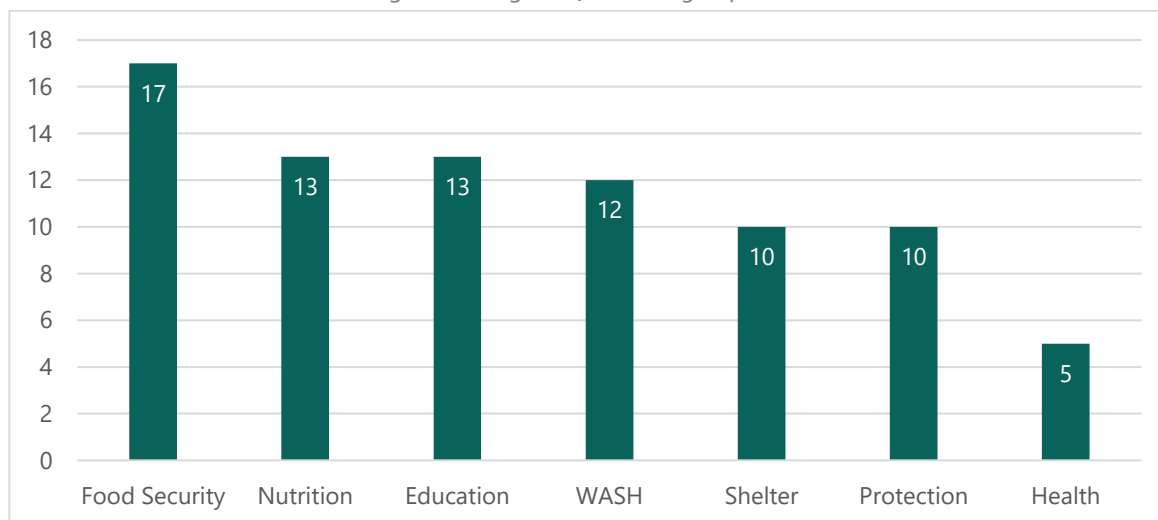
Figure 7: Number of NGO programs in Bari



If one removes the duplicates (same organization undertaking the same activity in the same district) the number of programs implemented by the UN, international and local NGOs falls to eighty; the distribution of activities using UNOCHA's categories then becomes as follows.

The vast majority of these programs focuses on Internally Displaced People (IDPs) living in the refugee camps of Bosaso, Qardho and other localities in Bari – there are IDP communities in all districts of the region.

Figure 8: Programs, removing duplicates



Food security programs are implemented by the WFP in all six districts of Bari, by Save the Children International, the FAO, by Care International, the ICRC, IRC and NRC. See below for acronyms.

Nutrition programs are organized by either FAO or WFP, and implemented by a variety of local partners in Bari's refugee camps, through outpatient therapy mobile clinic programs, basic and targeted supplementary feeding programs, mother-child health and nutrition and more rarely through tuberculosis prevention programs.

Education again focuses on IDPs, and on primary education. Programs focus on the rehabilitation or improvement of physical facilities, equipping schools, training teachers, providing incentives to teachers and providing course materials for students. The main implementers in this sector are the Adventist Relief and Development Organization, Norwegian Refugee Council and Mercy Corps.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programs have a wide scope: from the construction or repair of boreholes, water reservoirs and other infrastructure to hygiene promotion and distribution of kits. The disposal of solid waste, the trucking of water to IDP communities, the digging of latrines or providing hand wash stations are other activities in this sector. Involved NGOs are the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the local Tadamun Social Society (TASS).

In the sector of Shelter, the main activities are the provision of non-food items to IDPs and the building of accommodation for them: from permanent housing units built by UN-Habitat to the provision of 'emergency shelter kits' to newly arrived, through the building of semi-permanent shacks. Implementing organizations are DRC, NRC, TASS, Save the Children International, the UNHCR and UN-Habitat.

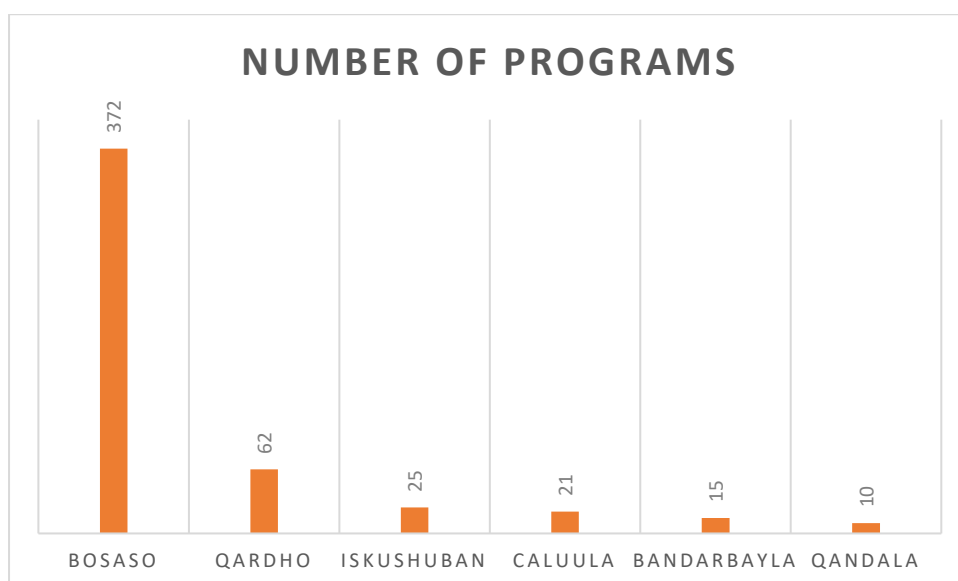
As to Protection, here programs focus mainly on gender based violence, which are implemented by the Italian Gruppo per le Relazioni Transculturali (GRT), NRC, Care and local NGOs such as Horn of Africa Development Organization (HADO), TASS and others. Meanwhile Save the Children works on child protection and development in IDP camps through the construction of playgrounds and community-based protection.

Finally, in the Health sector there is a mother and child primary health care program by the Somali Red Crescent Society and primary health care programs by GRT and by Mercy USA, with a focus on Tuberculosis and HIV/Aids.

Although this list of activities registered by UNOCHA gives a fair picture of NGO activities in Bari, it is far from complete. Médecins du Monde has been supporting the General Hospital of Bosaso, Veterinaires Sans Frontières – Suisse has a long-standing program to support pastoralist livelihoods and training herders to keep their livestock healthy. The international organizations IOM and UNICEF also have a presence in Bosaso, dealing with refugee populations; and there are many local NGOs cooperating with international NGOs and UN agencies on the delivery of aid, mostly in the fields of food security and nutrition.

The geographical distribution of the 505 programs listed by UNOCHA is as follows in the six 'old' districts of Bari:

Figure 9: Geographical spread of humanitarian programs



The geographical distribution of relief programs reflects the distribution of population to a certain extent; but it also reflects difficulty of access. Only small secondary roads lead into Qandala district, while Caluula and Bandarbeyla, along the rugged Indian Ocean coast are at a long day's driving from the main road, leading through unstable country where irregular checkpoints often appear on the road. Iskushuban is closer by the main road, and Qardho is on it (and also the second biggest town of 'old' Bari region – it is currently the capital of 'new' Karkaar region).

Activities of INGOs in the districts of Bari region focus on livelihoods of pastoralist and fishing communities – in current development parlance: "improving their resilience".

3.2. A SHORT HISTORY OF NGOs IN BOSASO

3.2.1. GENERAL TIMELINE

Pre-1991	No known activities of NGOs in Bosaso
1991-92	Ascendancy of Al Itihaad Al Islamiya in and around Bosaso
1992	Establishment of Tadamun Social Society, a local NGO now well-respected.
1992-94	Small scale activities of NGOs and UN agencies in Bosaso, centering on the influx of refugees from the rest of Somalia into Bosaso. After failure of humanitarian intervention (UNOSOM 2) and the humiliation of US troops, US and UN pull out of Somalia, followed by most NGOs
1994-2001	Few NGO activities in Bosaso
1997	4 UN staff members and one EU official kidnapped near Bosaso for 3 days, released unharmed
1998	Formation of Puntland as an autonomous state in a federal Somalia
2000-2003	As result of the UN-sponsored establishment (2000) of a new government for Somalia (in exile) and a new peace-keeping mandate (2001), UN agencies and NGOs return to Bosaso. Many activities set up to assist IDPs and a few also to assist development efforts of the new state of Puntland.
2003-2007	Golden age of NGOs in Bosaso. Relative peace, security and freedom (drink & dance parties on the beach). Establishment of many local NGOs as implementing partners for INGOs
Dec 2004	Tsunami batters Puntland's coast. 300 people die and 50.000 are displaced, while more than 1000 houses are destroyed.
2005	Special Protection Unit (SPU) of Puntland's security services created in an agreement with the UNDP, to protect international staff and their movements
2007-08	Rise of Al Shabaab and the targeting of UN and NGOs in violent attacks. Galgala insurgency makes many areas outside Bosaso, and traveling on Bari's main road, dangerous.
2007	Kidnapping of a Kenyan and a Briton working for Care, a French journalist and two international aid workers of MSF
2008	Kidnapping of a German national with his Somali wife, a Canadian, Australian and Somali journalist
Oct 2008	2 suicide bombers strike security forces in Bosaso, huge blasts, few dead
2008-2011	Heyday of piracy in and near Somali waters. Pirates based in many small ports between Laas Qoorey (Sanaag) and Xarardheere (Mudug) including many in Bari Region.
2008-2010	Bosaso becomes more insecure as a result of the Galgala insurgency, Al Shabaab, criminality linked to piracy and political instability. NGOs withdraw their international staff and/or scale down.

2010-2015	Yearly campaigns by Puntland security forces against Galgala insurgents and Al Shabaab, with some assistance from abroad (USA), leads to repeated counter-strikes by AS/Galgala insurgents on government targets in Bosaso, including police stations, the jail, the governor and other prominent personalities.
2010-2015	Low level of international humanitarian presence in Bosaso – support to IDPs mostly provided through national staff and LNGOs, with a reduced but continuous UN presence.
2011-2015:	Drought registered in Puntland every year except 2012
March 2012	Puntland Maritime Police Force enters into operation after two years of training
Nov 2013	Cyclone 'Deep Depression ARBo1' hits the Puntland coast causing 162 deaths and 300 injuries, as well as enormous loss of assets
Dec 2013	First vehicle-based suicide attack in Bosaso since 2008 targets PMPF convoy
January 2014	Abdiweli 'Gaas' (Omar Mohamud) replaces Abdirahman 'Farole' (Issa Mohamud) as President of Puntland in a peaceful, contested election among Puntland's 66 members of parliament. Abdihakim Haji Omar (Dhulbahante) becomes Vice-President
March 2014	Isse Yulux, Puntland's most well-known and successful pirate, 'resigns' requesting amnesty from the government, marking the end to the (first) wave of modern Somali piracy.
May 2014	Saudi bombing in Yemen starts, leading to a flow-back of Somali refugees in Yemen.
August 2014	Suicide bomber (rare occurrence) targets Bosaso central police station
2014-15	Two reported but as yet unconfirmed incidents of US air support during Puntland security forces operations against Al Shabaab.
March 2015	Puntland President Abdiweli 'Gaas' fires the governor of Bari and dismisses the local council of Bosaso along with the mayor. The new governor is Yusuf Mohamud Wacays 'Dhedo' (Ali Saleban) and the new mayor Engineer Yassin (Dashishe)
April 2015	RCIED attack on a UNICEF minibus in Garowe causes the death of 4 UNICEF international staff. UN reacts by raising the risk level in all locations in Puntland to the highest level.
Nov 2015	Cyclone Chapala hits the coast of Bari at Gardafuul, causing the destruction of more than 1000 homes and the loss of economic assets
Dec 2015	UNOPS renegotiates contract with SPU after taking over security liaison role from UNDP

3.2.2. CURRENT ISSUES FOR NGOS

Bosaso used to be the main location for UN agencies and NGOs in Puntland, being the largest town, relatively safe and easy to access. However during his term (2009-2014), President Farole made it mandatory for all international organizations operating in Puntland to establish their regional base in Garowe, the official capital of Puntland. As a result many offices shifted from Bosaso to Garowe, leaving a small field office or only temporary structures behind.

As elsewhere in Somalia, NGOs are increasingly subjected to taxation and multiple registration fees – for example, an NGO may be required to pay a registration fee at the regional, provincial and district level. Collectively voiced complaints about unclear administrative practices experienced as obstructive have however apparently had results. Both UN agencies and NGOs reported in 2015 that there was greater willingness to discuss and negotiate these impediments. In terms of clarifying the framework, an NGO Bill is under discussion and NGOs have been able to submit views on the text.

At the same time, efforts by the Government to involve the Puntland Tender Board in the award of contracts worth over 5000 USD are causing significant tension. The Government asserts that engagement is necessary to prevent corruption in the granting of contracts. NGOs claim that involving the Tender Board is unlikely to have that effect. In addition, it is unclear that a public procurement law, intended to govern the award of public contracts, can apply to NGOs which are private entities.

The UN has been requested in January 2015 to pay registration taxes on contracts of service awarded to local service providers, again on doubtful legal grounds. Beyond ensuring that contractors present evidence of tax compliance, the humanitarian community has attempted to resist involvement of the Tender Board.

While the UN and NGOs complain of undue interference and taxation of their work, the authorities of Bosaso and Bari complain of lack of coordination. They see this as partly due to Puntland's government requirement to centralize all programs in Garowe, and partly as the inherent tendency of NGOs to avoid contacts with authorities, even when these are better placed to identify priorities and tackle implementation problems.

Finally, as noted elsewhere in this report, 2015 saw a confusing stand-off develop between the UN and the Special Protection Unit, over payments to security personnel guarding the premises and staff of international organizations. Given a number of precedents in and around Bosaso, where discontented security personnel turn (temporarily) to criminal activities, hijacking or kidnapping what or whom they were supposed to protect, this is a worrying development. Once, in late 2015, SPU prevented UN staff from entering their compound in Garowe. Hopefully this stand-off will soon be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

3.2.3. A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF SOME INTERNATIONAL NGOS IN BOSASO

MDM provides support to eight Mother-Child Health centers, to Bosaso general hospital and the East African University Academic clinic, on a UNICEF-funded program. They have worked in Bosaso since 2011 and frequently host international staff. They share premises and a guesthouse with *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières-Suisse* (VSF-S)

VSF-Suisse has been active since 2001 on programs to improve pastoralist livelihoods and herd management in conjunction with Puntland's Ministry of Livestock and Animal Husbandry. VSF-S also runs programs with IDPs. In 2015 VSF-S completed a program working with 8000 pastoralists from Bari, Karkaar, Nugal and parts of Sanaag.

The **Norwegian Refugee Council** (NRC) has been working in Bosaso since 2007 on shelter and WASH programs for IDPs. At the end of 2015 the NRC was contemplating to start a project in Qardho too. NRC has worked on food security through 'Food for Work' programs, supported small businesses with micro-grants and supported returnees from Yemen with 100 USD cash hand-outs to facilitate their onward journey to their region of origin.

GRT, an Italian NGO, started working in Bosaso in 2003 with mental health programs in the general hospital. They started out with an interest in traditional medicines and alternative therapies, but like many other NGOs they have responded to the priorities of donors, and now GRT mostly is engaged in supporting IDP populations with education, health and gender-based violence projects, on UNICEF and UNHCR-funded projects.

Other well-established international NGOs in Bosaso include the **Danish Refugee Council**, **Save the Children International**, **Care** and **Mercy Corps**. These NGOs typically employ between 20 and 50 local staff and no internationals. At the end of 2015 only one international NGO had an international staff member resident in Bosaso; she was on a 3-month assignment.

When one speaks to NGO staff, local authorities and people on the street, the impression is that the urban population of Bosaso is quite indifferent to the NGO presence. There is a vague impression that international NGOs are not quite effective, misled by their national programme staff, potentially corrupt and overall self-serving. But on the other hand citizens are glad that NGOs relieve the city of the burden of care for the IDPs and do not seem disturbed by NGO's presence.

This low profile may be beneficial to the security of NGOs; as the current mayor, Engineer Yassin, who himself worked for Mercy Corps, the FAO and Development Alternatives International, put it: "NGOs are not a target of Al Shabaab, unlike the UN. They would gain from an even more business-like profile."

3.2.4. LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY

The term used in Somali for civil society is *Bulshada Rayidka*. It is defined as consisting of all community members capable or representing their community without being related to the government.

An organization called Puntland Non-State Actors in Garowe includes the following in its definition of civil society: "non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, business associations, and different categories of professionals, such as teachers, lawyers and doctors".

Interestingly, clan and religious leaders are not seen as part of civil society, because they are seen as linked to the authorities.

When asked about relations with Al Shabaab, and whether they could somehow be brought into the fold of civil society, respondents claimed that is impossible, as there is no discussion or pluralism possible in the view of Al Shabaab. For example, among university students a distinct fear exists of Al Shabaab sympathizers. A student leader who spoke out against them in 2010 was immediately assassinated. According to some students, this has created an atmosphere of fear; as a result, some people (including the students themselves) may believe support for Al Shabaab is stronger than it actually is. But who knows what these students really believe?

It seems, nevertheless, that Puntland's civil society is generally aligning itself with Islamic values. Not only students, also professional organizations and business associations are finding guidance in religion, albeit of a very different kind to that practiced by Al Shabaab and ISIS. The gradual ascendancy of religious over secular values is akin to developments in Turkey and Malaysia rather than Syria and Yemen.

Puntland's civil society is in the forefront of the struggle for democracy. Generally, educated Puntlanders agree that the current system, whereby clan elders rule politics, is not desirable. The rule of more educated and capable people, dedicated to the nation, not the clan, is seen as preferable. It is however difficult to escape clan-based politics, as the membership composition of many 'non-clan-based organizations' shows.

There is no consensus about how the transition to a 'real' democracy may happen; in the same manner that the government of Puntland is grappling with how to reform the future elections. The dallying on that front may seem opportunistic, but the confusion is certainly also genuine.

For the time being, Puntland's politics are still of a repressive nature, and there is not much political space for the participation of civil society. It is quite normal for political leaders in power to openly harass their opponents. The current President, Abdiweli Gaas, was placed under 'house arrest' by the PMPF when visiting at a friend's place in Bosaso, while he was campaigning as an opposition candidate.

There seem to be no major human rights advocacy organizations in Puntland either. Civil society is mostly focused on supporting local communities by providing relief and development opportunities.

Among the large list of local NGOs working in Bosaso – some of whom may appear and again disappear along with funding opportunities – four are singled out here, as representing different tendencies.

Tadamun Social Services (TASS) was established in 1992; it has thus become a venerable institution of local civil society. Tadamun supports humanitarian needs but also serves social development. It runs 22 schools, of which it says all but five are now supported by the local community. It also reaches out actively to the business community and the Somali diaspora to invest in its many projects. TASS now runs programs in other areas of Somalia, but its base is in Bosaso. It plans to set up a Youth Multipurpose Center to assist in the education and social development of the youth, and turn them away from piracy.

Shilcon (Shilale Rehabilitation and Ecological Concern) was set up as an environmental organization in 1993. It is based in Bosaso but also works in the other districts of 'old' Bari. Originally Shilcon focused on banning the charcoal production in Bari – rare trees are being felled and burnt all throughout Somalia to produce high-grade charcoal for the Gulf countries. The lack of donor support for environmental programs meant that Shilcon is now implementing WASH and other projects for international organizations, but still always seeking an environmental angle, such as in its current efforts to devise a solution to Bosaso's garbage collection problems.

Adeso (African Development Solutions), formerly known as Horn Relief, was set up in 1991 by Fatima Jibrell in Connecticut, USA. It has since developed into what is called a 'donor darling'. Banking on her credentials as a pastoralist, Mrs. Jibrell set up a Pastoral Youth Leadership Program in 1998, a Camel Caravan for awareness raising and on-the-job training in 2001; in 2002 she instigated the Puntland parliament to pass a law banning the production of charcoal (which was not implemented, to the contrary). Mrs Jibrell has won prestigious international prizes and took her rebranded organization to other countries in Africa: South Sudan and Kenya. In Bosaso, Adeso has planted trees along the roadside.

Horn of Africa Aid and Development Organization (HADO) was established in 2005. It is a large and successful local NGO and works in all districts of Bari on WFP and NRC-funded nutrition programs, as well as some smaller ones. HADO has a technocratic approach which is quite common among NGOs. It ensures access to all areas by making sure its field staff is composed of people with the right connections, and its motto is to 'create local institutional problem-solving capacity'. As other successful local NGOs, HADO works closely with the local government.

Other local NGOs listed in Bari include the Somali Red Crescent Society, Islamic charities such as Al Cimraan Mosque and many implementing NGOs.

4. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

4.1. HOW TO ADAPT

Your personal safety in Bosaso will be determined on the one hand by measures of isolation: avoiding contact with potential threats, staying safe behind high walls, respecting the curfew, filtering visitors arriving at the door, etc. On the other hand, your safety will be enhanced by measures of integration: being liked, knowing the right people who can sort out your problems in case of an emergency, not making gross cultural mistakes, being able to correctly judge situations arising in your environment, and so forth. Unfortunately, both kinds of security measures sometimes clash, when for example visitors to your compound are searched despite of rank and familiarity. This may provide you with security in the short term in exchange for hostility in the long term.

It must be noted that in a traditional society like Somalia, great value is placed on hospitality, and honor is related to the ability to protect one's guest. Integration will therefore be a more rewarding long-term strategy for personal safety and organizational acceptance. This must not be approached naively, as adaptation takes time and must be enhanced by some linguistic capability and cultural knowledge. Just 'being nice' is not enough, as there are all kind of Somalis with different agendas; even an experienced operator will find it challenging to chart a clear course through all these conflicting interests. Even MSF and the ICRC, champions of a low-key, non-armed and integrative approach in their work, have systematically resorted to armed escorts in Somalia. Mitigation measures, which usually place an emphasis on isolation, therefore remain essential, especially when dealing with staff with no cultural or linguistic knowledge.

4.1.1. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

"Do not mention the clan". It may be puzzling to an external observer why Somalis, for whom clan identity is so important, often seem to hide their affiliations. It is definitely not considered appropriate to ask someone directly about their clan affiliation. You will never find this information on official communications, and rarely on online platforms such as Wikipedia or in news media.

Other parties, however, will gladly inform you, and most people seem to know the clan affiliation of all their acquaintances. It helps to go through the clan affiliation of the people you meet before and after your meeting to help you understand how they position themselves.

Nevertheless, one should allow for change, and not reduce a Somali to his or her clan. Bosaso, in particular, with such a bewildering array of small but influential Majerteen clans, quite a number of bigger ones and non-Majerteen Harti clans, is a city where clan may play less of a role than in cities with clear-cut clan affiliations, such as Galkacyo.

Behavior and dress codes of men and women are similar to many other Islamic countries and need not be dwelled on here. Bosaso is conservative. Drinking and playful interaction with members of the other sex used to be quite normal, according to some sources, and it may have gone underground rather than disappeared entirely. In any case, in the public domain such expressions of personal liberty and desires have become taboo.

It is enormously appreciated if you learn a few words of Somali. Arabic is also spoken, but in a limited way, and mostly by educated, well-traveled people. It is taught in schools and is officially the second language of Somalia.

4.1.2. REGISTRATION AND DEALING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Registration with Puntland's authorities serves two purposes, from their perspective: security and rent. As Puntland's authorities feel responsible to what happens to foreigners in their region, one must accede to the first purpose of registration without giving in wholly on the second.

Rent-seeking can take place in several ways, from outright bribes (unregistered 'registration fees') to seeking a job for a relative or some kind of influence through connections with foreign organizations, so it should not be rejected wholesale, if only because this is the way power works in Somalia, and indeed, in much of Africa. One can set one's limits – for example, not paying bribes – but also be aware that entering the 'rent-seeking' relationship can also bear advantages. For this purpose, the exact extent of influence of the official seeking rent must be correctly gauged, and the rent be proportionate. The leader of an influential sub-clan is worth much more than a lowly official who has bribed his way into his position, so it may not be a bad idea to rent a car and

driver from that clan leader when starting a project in an area he controls, but for the lowly official a soda or a quick lunch in a teahouse to politely and publicly make acquaintance might be enough.

It helps to see relations with the authorities as transactions on the political marketplace, to use Alex de Waal's expression, rather than as dealings with the institutions of a state hierarchy. The state as known in the West does not exist, and it doesn't even seem to be the objective of most political players. The most seasoned observers of Somali affairs agree that the insistence on creating a Somali state has been the main reason for the failure of international intervention.

This does not mean that one should not engage willingly with the line ministries or other relevant authorities. All NGOs in Bosaso seemed quite content with the relations with 'their' line ministries. The institutions of State have small budgets, so they must cooperate with NGOs and international agencies to fulfill their objectives. Such ministries also derive legitimacy from the international activities, which is why they often do not seek 'additional' rent, so the problem of corruption is not always posed. Professional pride may also turn people representing the authority away from 'rent-seeking' behavior. But one should always be sensitive to the dire needs of most authorities. Offering rides in one's car – insofar allowed by one's security regime – or paying lunch in a restaurant, or practical gifts of any other type are highly appreciated and make relations with the authorities much easier.

4.2. HOW TO GET THERE AND BACK

Although the road from Bosaso to Garowe is now quite safe according to most local residents, it would be unwise for foreigners to expose themselves to the threat of kidnapping and car-jacking on that road. Flights, through the recently reopened Bender Qassim airport, are also much more convenient, as the drive from Garowe to Bosaso takes 5 to 6 hours.

4.2.1. FORMALITIES BEFORE TRAVELING

Before traveling to Bosaso, one needs a letter of approval by Puntland's Ministry of Security, authorizing the immigration office of one of Puntland's points of entry to issue an entry visa. This authorization is routinely given when requested by an organization with a local representation (i.e., registered in Puntland). One does not need a Somali visa, or to apply through a Somali embassy, unless one of course is expecting to pass through immigration in Somalia before entering Puntland. It is sufficient to have this letter before boarding the plane to Bosaso. At the immigration office in Bosaso one pays 50 USD for the visa, although tariffs sometimes seem to vary. This visa is valid for 30 days (entry only) but can be extended without much trouble by the local authorities.

Another arrangement one must make before traveling is the armed escort of the SPU. It is essential to have a local fixer anyhow; he can book this escort. Normally, rates need to be negotiated. Latest rates paid by the NSP consultant were 150 USD/day for 4 people, a driver and a car. When leaving the city limits, the SPU may insist on taking another car with four soldiers, however this can probably be negotiated when going to areas which are not perceived as dangerous.

4.2.2. FLIGHTS, AIRPORT & MEDEVAC

UNHAS flies to Bosaso twice a week. Currently there's only one route, from Hargeisa to Bosaso, to Garowe, back to Bosaso and then returning to Hargeisa, which allows one to come from Hargeisa for a few hours or from either location for half a week or more. As a matter of principle, UNHAS does not fly on routes served by commercial airliners, so once Bandar Qassim International Airport starts hosting regular commercial flights, UNHAS's schedule is bound to change. See appendix for contact details.

Only UN agencies registered organizations can make bookings on UNHAS flights. To be registered an organization must be an NGO or a donor. UNHAS requires bookings to be made at least 72 hours before the desired departure, and usually only sends the confirmation of the booking 24 hours before the flight. This confirmation is sent to the focal point of NGO, except if you request personally confirmation. It happens quite frequently that UNHAS cancels a flight, and that you must wait another half week before getting your next chance to go to or leave Bosaso.

Another option is EC air, operated by the European Commission. In principle this service is only for EC officials and the organizations they support, and there is no clear schedule of flights, although there appears to be a weekly flight to Bosaso.

Medevac can be arranged by Medair, UNHAS or AMREF. See contact details at the end for contact information.

Bosaso airport is scheduled, according to the authorities, to open in January 2016, but a delay of several months is a likely eventuality.

Currently UNHAS and other flights land on an airstrip next to the PMPF base along the coast, several kilometers behind the airport. Upon arrival visitors are escorted from that strip to the immigration office in the newly built terminal building. From the airport, magnificently situated along the azure waters of the Gulf of Aden, it is a very short drive to Bosaso. The first neighborhood one drives in to is that of the UN and international agencies.

4.2.3. ROADS

The main threat on Bosaso's roads comes from accidents, not criminal or terrorist activities. Visitors should stick to their own safety standards (seat belts, careful driving) instead of giving in to local ones. Trips should be planned to ensure that one will be home well before dark.

The roads outside Bosaso are not safe. Along the coast one can apparently travel westward to Ceelayo (20 km), on the border with Sanaag region, or eastward to Marrero (13 km), but it is not advisable to go beyond.

The road leading out of Bosaso to Ufeyn and onwards to Iskushuban, Caluula, Bargal or Bandarbeyla is reasonably safe, but extremely rough and strenuous. In some areas one may encounter irregular checkpoints but, if accompanied by well-connected local people, these should not present much of a problem. One should be aware that these roads lead through the heartland of piracy, so adequate protection on this road is essential.

In the 2000s there have been instances of foreigners being abducted by their security escort, so it is best not to rely exclusively on the SPU, but ensure one has good connections with local clan leaders and political strongmen before adventuring far outside of Bosaso.

4.3. WORKING IN BOSASO

4.3.1. PLACES TO STAY, TO EAT & TO SHOP

The UN has several guesthouses: the UNHCR is almost always fully booked by its own staff, but there is sometimes place in the WFP/FAO guesthouse. The UNDSS representative is the focal point for accommodation in Bosaso's UN guesthouses. Prices in 2015 were 25 USD/night + 10 USD for full board. Rooms are individual, with bathroom, Wi-Fi, DSTV and some elementary gym facilities.

The Danish Refugee Council also provides rooms for guests, at a similar rate (35 USD per night for full board), which can be booked through their office manager (see contacts at the end) and with similar facilities, except sporting.

The International Village Hotel is the only hotel used by foreigners. It's location is nice (one of the only spots in Bosaso you'll find greenery) and the service, though spotty and not very professional, is friendly, and the food a bit better than in the guesthouses, though also more expensive. Internet works fine. A drawback is that you'll need to book SPU guards all night, for an extra 5 USD/night per person. They will camp outside your room, so it's nice to offer them tea. The International Village Hotel is owned by one of Bosaso's most influential citizens (Kamaludin, Wabeneye), so it's good to make acquaintance.

There are also a few other hotels in town that seem reasonable, such as the Juba Hotel or the Geeyte Hotel on the seaside. These are owned by Abdulatif and Sheikh Hussein Geeyte, respectively, both very influential Dashishe traders. Although they may not be sufficiently safe for international staff, according to current security standards, they are good for national staff. Prices are about 40 USD per room per night.

It seems to be cheap to set up your own office and guesthouse. You can rent a whole new house in the international area of Bosaso for, reportedly, 200 USD per month. There is a lot of available upmarket real estate. Registration should not be too difficult, and the SPU can be hired to provide security (current rates are 80 USD per month per soldier; you would need at least four). As Bosaso is a business-minded town, it should not be too difficult to arrange running water, electricity and internet, if not already provided with the house.

If security conditions allow, it is entertaining to join one's Somali counterparts, when the working day is over, in one of the many rudimentary teahouses of Bosaso. There one will find elders, politicians and traders dressed in simple local garb, often engaged in high-level discussions about local issues, or telling tales of experiences from around the world. The food in Bosaso's teahouses may be a bit tricky for foreign stomachs, but one can easily eat well in one of Bosaso's many 'good' hotels – which compare to quite dingy places elsewhere in the world, but serve good food. Local fixers will know. The Juba and Geeyte hotels both serve good food. Your SPU escort will want to eat at home to save money, but if you eat in a restaurant they can't leave you, so it's fair to provide for them. I would invite the commander of the escort to eat at my table and let the three escorts and the driver get street food.

Otherwise, if not on too tight a schedule, it is advisable to go to your (SPU-guarded) guesthouse for lunch so your escort and driver/fixer can have their own lunch at home.

Bosaso observes a kind of siesta, especially in the hot season, from about 1 to 4 pm. People work in the morning, rest after lunch and socialize in the afternoon and early evening, with or without qat. This means that in practice, you can usually only meet people in the morning, as the UN and most NGOs observe a 'closed door' policy after 4 pm, and the SPU considers that their duties are over by 5 pm. The official UN curfew is at 6 pm, but in fact, almost all citizens of Bosaso return home by that time.

4.3.2. MEDICAL FACILITIES

If faced with minor medical difficulties, it is advisable to go to the Daryeel Hospital, a private establishment set up with German support. It is located in the heart of the international area (and called 'Puntland hospital' on the NSP map). The general hospital of Bosaso is the other logical choice, with a wider array of services but less hygiene.

For more serious issues, it is wise to opt for medevac. Contact Medair, UNHAS or AMREF for guidance; see Annex 5

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- [Horseed Media](#) (daily news from Somalia)
- [Reports of the UNSC Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea](#)
- [Resilience in Somalia](#), the website of the FAO-UNICEF-WFP shared project
- [The Somalia Report](#) (in-depth research, not always impartial, stopped in 2012)
- [Global Policy Forum](#) (search Somalia for information about PMCs)
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- [Somali Atheism](#), [Somali Freethinkers](#), and [Ancient Somalia](#) are blogs with interesting information and perspectives.
- [Puntland Government Site](#) (unofficial maybe, but with the government narrative & constitution)
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