



Peacebuilding and Conflict Management Training for women-led CSOs in Southwest State of Somalia- Final Report

5TH DECEMBER 2023



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR:	Alternative Dispute Resolutions
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
FGD:	Focus Group Discussions
GAM:	Gender Analysis Matrix
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
UN:	United Nations
UNPBF:	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
WHO:	World Health Organization



SUMMARY

Achieving peace and stability in Somalia has been a long-standing challenge and one that requires collaboration from different stakeholders, especially civil society organizations. Somalia's civil society organizations have an essential role to play in building peace and stability in the country, especially women-led CSOs. Indeed, women important contribution to peacebuilding has been highlighted throughout years. WLCSOs have unique and influential roles to play in facilitating conflict resolution, promoting dialogue, monitoring the implementation of agreements and policies, and engaging communities in peacebuilding processes. The main purpose of this report is to highlight important steps undertaken to improve the capacities of staff members of four women led CSOs in Southwest State of Somalia to establish and lead localized peacebuilding initiatives towards social reconciliation. The organization targeted across four districts in South West state were: Southwest Youth Vision (SWYV), Bay Women Development Organization (BWDO), Bay Women Association Network (BWAN), and Barawe Women Empowerment and Development Association (BAWEDA). Training sessions were held between October and November 2023. Each CSO was represented by 5 members, for a total of 20 participants (F18 M2).

The key training modules included conflict analysis, peacebuilding, conflict prevention, conflict transformation, conflict sensitivity, healing process, community engagement and advocacy for peacebuilding, alternative dispute resolution (ADR), and conflict mapping.

Overall Objective of the Training

The main goal of the training was to enhance the peacebuilding capacities of the targeted four CSOs in South West State. The training equipped these organizations with the essential skills and knowledge needed to establish and lead localized peacebuilding initiatives, thereby fostering social reconciliation within their communities.

Methodology

The training course employed a comprehensive methodology designed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and tools essential for effective peacebuilding action in Somalia. To ensure active learning and engagement, various methodologies were utilized:

- **Presentations:** the facilitators delivered informative presentations covering key concepts, theories, and best practices related to peacebuilding and social reconciliation, enabling participants to gain a thorough understanding.
- **Observations:** participants were given opportunities to observe real-life examples and situations pertinent to peacebuilding and social reconciliation. This hands-on experience deepened their understanding of practical applications and challenges in the field.
- **Demonstrations:** the facilitators demonstrated specific techniques, tools, or approaches used in peacebuilding efforts, allowing participants to understand practical aspects of the training.
- **Role plays:** participants engaged in role plays simulating context-based scenarios, applying their knowledge and skills in a simulated setting to foster critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
- **Explanations and discussions:** facilitators and participants engaged in open dialogue, encouraging active participation and creating a collaborative learning environment where diverse perspectives are considered.
- **Case studies:** real-life case study scenarios were presented to participants, allowing them to analyze and discuss complex situations.

By utilizing diverse methodologies, the training provided a holistic learning experience, combining theoretical knowledge with practical application. This empowered participants to become effective agents of change in peacebuilding and social reconciliation.

Training Participants

The training program targeted key staff from four grassroots women-led CSOs, namely SWYV, BWDO, BWAN, BAWEDA. The trainings, conducted between October and November 2023 targeted 20 participants (F18, M2), as illustrated in the table below.

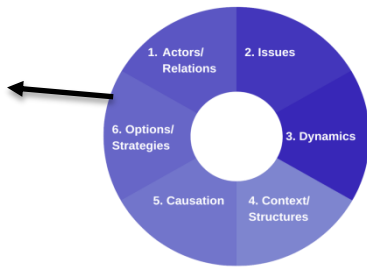
#	Civil Society Organization (CSO)	Location/Site	Training Period		Total Participants		
			Start Date	Start Date	Male	Female	Total
1	Southwest Youth Vision	Baidoa	9 th Oct, 2023	25 th Oct, 2023	0	5	5
2	Bay Women Development Origination	Berdale	16 th Oct, 2023	1 st Nov, 2023	0	5	5
3	Bay Women Association Network	Xudur	28 th Oct, 2023	13 th Nov, 2023	0	5	5
4	Barawe Women Empowerment and Development Association	Barawe	29 th Oct, 2023	14 th Nov, 2023	2	3	5
Total					2	18	20

Training Modules

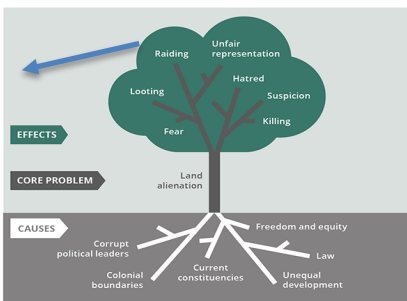
Throughout the peacebuilding training sessions, participants were targeted by a comprehensive curriculum comprising 10 training modules. These modules were meticulously designed based on the gaps identified by the peacebuilding needs assessment. Facilitators employed diverse methodologies to ensure thorough understanding and effective knowledge transfer to the trainees. Modules are illustrated below.

Module 1: Conflict analysis

This module provided participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze conflicts comprehensively. Participants gained a deep understanding of conflicts and their complexities, enabling them to develop informed and effective peacebuilding strategies. The entire module lasted 2 days. To enhance the participants' understanding, the facilitators introduced three Conflict Analysis Tools.

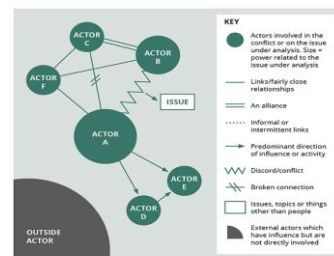


- The Conflict Wheel allowed participants to explore six essential dimensions: dynamics, actors, causation, structures, issues, and options/strategies.



Source: Fisher, et al. (2000: 29)

- The Conflict Tree visualized the root causes, core problem, and effects of conflict, represented by roots, trunk, and branches, respectively.
- Conflict Mapping provided a visual representation of the actors' power and relationships, along with the conflict themes or issues.



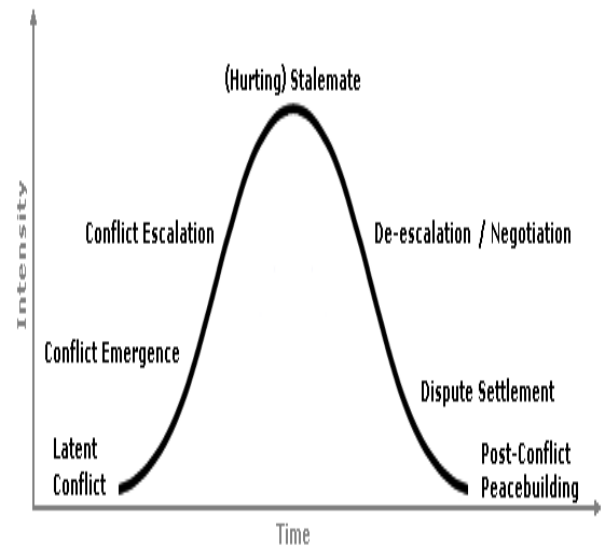
Source: Adapted from Fisher, et al. (2000: 23)

The training also covered different types of conflicts, including:

- interpersonal conflicts occurring between individuals or small groups,
- intra-group conflicts within specific identity groups, and
- inter-group conflicts between larger organized social or identity groups.

Furthermore, the participants were guided through the various stages of conflict. They learned about

- Latent conflict, characterized by differences of viewpoints that do not significantly disrupt the status quo.
- Conflict emergence marked a point where conflicts begin to surface due to triggers or increased underlying tensions.
- Conflict escalation involved an intensification of the conflict and a growing division among individuals and groups.
- The hurting stalemate phase arose when conflicts reached a deadlock, with neither side willing to back down or accept a loss.
- De-escalation and negotiation represented a shift in focus towards reducing tension and finding alternative solutions.
- Dispute settlement referred to the process of working out mutually satisfactory agreements between involved parties.
- Finally, post-conflict peacebuilding emphasized the ongoing implementation of settlements and the significance of building strong and equitable relationships to transform conflicts effectively.



By providing a comprehensive overview of conflict analysis, the training empowered the participants to analyze conflicts systematically, understanding their complexities and employing appropriate strategies to foster peace and reconciliation in their respective contexts.

Overall Feedback:

Participants appreciated the comprehensive understanding of conflict stages, expressing commitment to proactive conflict prevention, community engagement, and building sustainable peace. Feedback indicated a growing awareness of conflict dynamics and a determination to contribute positively to peace and stability in Southwest State, Somalia.

Module 2: Peacebuilding

The Peacebuilding module provided participants with a deep and comprehensive understanding of key topics related to peacebuilding principles and practices. The module was completed within 2 days. It began by recognizing and emphasizing the significant role of women and youth as agents of peace. Participants explored how women and young people are often at the forefront of movements and community-based





efforts worldwide to advance peace, promote equitable societies, and demand greater inclusion in decision-making processes. The module highlighted the importance of involving women and youth meaningfully in peacebuilding efforts.

Moreover, participants learned about the invaluable contributions of women to peace processes and the necessity of gender equality in creating sustainable peace. They examined national and regional policy frameworks related to women and peacebuilding, gaining a broader understanding of the institutional context and opportunities for advocacy and support.

The module also addressed the various barriers that hinder women's participation in peacebuilding, such as patriarchal norms, discrimination, violence against women, armed conflict, and inequalities in education, income, and household responsibilities.

Participants engaged in discussions and identified strategies to increase women's participation, including.

- advocacy
- creating safe spaces
- promoting their active involvement
- providing skills training
- considering women's needs in peace and reconciliation processes, and
- ensuring equitable access to resources.

Furthermore, the module emphasized the significance of building community social cohesion. Participants explored strategies for fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and understanding among diverse groups within a community. They learned about the importance of building trust, promoting inclusivity, and addressing underlying tensions and conflicts.

Module 3: Conflict prevention

Conflict prevention module was particularly focused on Southwest state context. The module provided an extensive coverage of key topics, including dialogue, mediation, and strengthening traditional dispute resolution mechanisms. It took 2 days for completion. Main topics covered are reported in the chart below.

a) Dialogue in Peacebuilding:	b) Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms:
<p>1: Definition of dialogue in peacebuilding</p> <p>1.1 Constructive conversation</p> <p>1.2 Addressing root causes</p> <p>1.3 Building trust and understanding</p> <p>1.4 Promoting peaceful coexistence</p> <p>2: Mediation as a peacebuilding method:</p> <p>2.1 Introduction to mediation</p> <p>2.2 Neutral third-party role</p> <p>2.3 Facilitating communication</p> <p>2.4 Promoting negotiation</p> <p>3: Examples of successful mediation in Somalia:</p> <p>3.1 Addis Ababa Agreement (1993)</p> <p>3.2 Somali National Reconciliation Conference</p>	<p>1: Definition of Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms:</p> <p>1.1 Resolving disputes without court</p> <p>1.2 Role of mediator in traditional mechanisms</p> <p>2: Principles of traditional dispute resolution:</p> <p>2.1 Community involvement</p> <p>2.2 Customary practices</p> <p>2.3 Cultural sensitivity</p> <p>2.4 Informal nature</p>



The module also emphasized the benefits of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms. Furthermore, specific examples of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms in different African countries were provided, including the Gacaca Courts in Rwanda, Xeer system among Somalis, Ekika System of the Baganda in Uganda, Juddiya in Sudan, and Ma'ada in the Afar region of Ethiopia.

Module 4: Advocacy and policy influence

The advocacy and policy influence module provided participants with a comprehensive understanding of the principles, strategies, and outcomes involved in influencing policies. The module was structured to ensure a logical flow of information and emphasized key concepts and practical applications. It was completed within 2 days.

Participants began by gaining an understanding of advocacy and policy influence, recognizing their significance in shaping decisions within political, economic, and social institutions.

A wide range of strategies and methods for advocacy and policy influence were explored. Participants learned about lobbying, campaigning, media work, research, and networking as effective approaches to create awareness, mobilize public support, and engage decision makers. The module emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluation to assess progress, identify lessons learned, and ensure the effectiveness of advocacy efforts.

Reflection of Trainees - Comparative Thoughts Before and After the Training:

Aspect of Training	Before Training	After Training
Awareness:	Limited awareness of diverse advocacy strategies and policy influence methods.	Enhanced awareness, with a comprehensive understanding of lobbying, campaigning, media work, research, and networking.
Skills:	Limited skills in mobilizing public support and engaging decision-makers effectively.	Acquired skills in creating awareness, mobilizing public support, and strategically engaging decision-makers.
Strategic Thinking:	Limited understanding of the importance of monitoring and evaluation in advocacy efforts.	Developed strategic thinking with an emphasis on monitoring and evaluation for assessing progress and ensuring effectiveness.
Confidence:	Limited confidence in navigating the policy landscape.	Increased confidence in applying diverse advocacy strategies to influence policy decisions.

The training significantly transformed the trainees' perspectives, equipping them with a deeper understanding of advocacy, policy influence, and the practical skills needed for effective implementation. The comparative thoughts highlight the substantial growth and development of the trainees throughout the training program.

Module 5: Conflict transformation

The training on conflict transformation lasted 1 day, and provided participants with valuable insights and knowledge on several key areas.

Post-conflict trauma healing: participants learned about the impact of traumatic events on individuals and communities, such as car accidents, natural disasters, sexual assault, or the loss of a loved one. They explored common symptoms of trauma, including nightmares, flashbacks, avoidance behaviors,

emotional numbing, and heightened anxiety. The training highlighted the importance of creating safe spaces for trauma victims to share their experiences, retell their stories, and engage in a healing process that involves acknowledgement, apology, forgiveness, and reconnection.

a) Wider Understanding and Context of Post-Conflict Trauma Healing

Trainees had the opportunity to gain a wider understanding of post-conflict trauma healing through up-to-date secondary data. Specifically the focus was on effects of trauma in Somalia's southern regions, with the analysis of the following reports:

Effects of Trauma in Southern Regions of Somalia:

A report by the World Health Organization, published in 2023, indicate that the southern regions of Somalia have been the most affected by the conflict and violence, with more than 80% of the trauma cases occurring in these regions. The report also states that the trauma cases in the southern regions have increased by 30% in the past five years, due to the escalation of attacks by Al-Shabaab and other armed groups. <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2023/02/07/Somalia-trauma-conflict-al-Shabaab>

According to a study by the United Nations Development Programme, published in 2023, the trauma survivors in the southern regions of Somalia face multiple challenges and barriers to access quality and affordable trauma care services. The study further reveals that the trauma care facilities in the southern regions are inadequate, understaffed, and under-resourced, and that there is a lack of coordination and referral mechanisms among the different actors providing trauma care. <https://www.emro.who.int/media/news/saving-lives-and-limbs-who-scales-up-its-trauma-response-in-somalia.html>

The report by the International Center for Transitional Justice, published in 2023, indicates the trauma victims in the southern regions of Somalia have been largely neglected and marginalized by the transitional justice and reconciliation processes. The report also indicates that the trauma victims in the southern regions have experienced high levels of stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion, and that they have limited access to justice and reparations: <https://pphr.princeton.edu/2017/08/24/an-overlooked-consequence-of-civil-war-mental-illness-in-somalia-and-the-somali-diaspora/>

b) Trainees comparative thoughts before and after the training

Before the training	After the training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees have had limited knowledge and understanding of post-conflict trauma healing. • They were less aware of the diverse impacts of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees gained a deeper understanding of post-conflict trauma healing. • They have also developed knowledge and skills to identify symptoms of trauma, create safe and supportive environments, and facilitate the healing process.

<p>trauma and the specific symptoms individuals may experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees have also been uncertain about the essential elements of the healing process and the importance of creating safe spaces for survivors to share their experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees experienced a shift in their perspectives, recognizing the significance of acknowledging trauma, offering apologies when appropriate, fostering forgiveness, and promoting reconnection within communities. • Through the training, trainees further developed a greater sense of empathy and sensitivity towards trauma survivors. • They have realized the importance of trauma-informed care and the role they can play in supporting the healing and recovery of individuals and communities affected by post-conflict trauma.
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Somalis contextualized post conflict trauma healing process, “Quraca Nabadda”, referred to as Acacia of Peace was lengthily discussed as a very effective tradition of peace building and trauma healing process.

Process and Symbolism:

The "Quraca Nabadda" process often involves gathering community members in a peaceful outdoor setting, typically under a large Acacia tree. The Acacia tree holds symbolic significance as a place of tranquility, shade, and unity. The process involves various steps as in the table below:

Steps	Explanations
Community engagement	The process emphasizes community participation and engagement. It brings together individuals affected by conflict or trauma, including survivors, perpetrators, and community members. The goal is to foster dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation.
Sharing stories and experiences	Participants are encouraged to share their stories and experiences related to the conflict or traumatic events. This storytelling serves as a form of catharsis, allowing individuals to express their emotions, perspectives, and grievances in a supportive environment.
Acknowledgement and apology	The process emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the pain, suffering, and harm caused by the conflict. Perpetrators are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and offer genuine apologies to the victims and the community as a whole. This step contributes to the healing process and rebuilding trust within the community.
Forgiveness and reconnection	The "Quraca Nabadda" process promotes forgiveness as a means of healing and reconciliation. Participants are encouraged to forgive each other and seek ways to reconnect and rebuild relationships. This step aims to foster a sense of unity, harmony, and social cohesion within the community.

The timing and frequency of the "Quraca Nabadda"	The process may vary depending on the specific context and needs of the community. It can be organized after a period of conflict, post-war, or in response to specific traumatic events. The process often involves the active involvement of community leaders, elders, and traditional healers who facilitate the discussions and guide the healing process.
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Process of Reconciliation and Rebuilding Community Trust.

The training program on the process of reconciliation and rebuilding community trust focused on equipping participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective peacebuilding in Somalia. Here's a summary of the topics discussed, why they were important, and how they were addressed:

Reconciliation: the training emphasized the long-term process of reconciliation, including elements such as developing a shared vision, addressing the past, and fostering cultural change. Participants gained insights into conflict resolution, building positive relationships, and engaging in dialogue and negotiation.

Rebuilding community trust: importance was placed on rebuilding trust within conflict-affected communities, with a focus on inclusive participation and collaboration. Trainees learned strategies for conflict-sensitive communication, community mobilization, and fostering collaboration to enhance social cohesion and community resilience.

Governance in peacebuilding: the governance section explored the relationship between governance and conflict dynamics, emphasizing principles such as inclusivity, transparency, and accountability. Participants discussed strategies for strengthening local governance structures, promoting multi-stakeholder collaboration, and integrating conflict sensitivity into governance processes.

Monitoring and evaluation: trainees learned about monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of governance interventions in peacebuilding. They discussed indicators and tools for measuring progress and adjusting strategies accordingly to contribute to conflict prevention and sustainable development.

The training program aimed at providing participants with a comprehensive understanding of the linkages between governance, reconciliation, and community trust-building in the context of peacebuilding in Somalia.



Module 6: Conflict sensitivity

The training on conflict sensitivity involved a structured process to ensure participants gained a comprehensive understanding of the concept and its application. Within 2 days, the module covered the following concepts:

- Definition of conflict sensitivity.
- Introduction to the Five-Sensitivity Model: this model was presented as a framework for conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity. The model encompassed five key sensitivities that participants needed to develop: conflict sensitivity, cultural sensitivity, gender sensitivity, trauma sensitivity, sensitivity to diverse needs.

Participants

overall

feedback:

Participants provided positive feedback on the training, noting improvements in their understanding and application of Conflict Sensitivity. They reported increased awareness of contextual conflict dynamics and enhanced analytical skills. The training also fostered empathy and respect, emphasizing cultural diversity, gender equality, and trauma sensitivity. Participants expressed commitment to integrating these principles into their future peacebuilding efforts.

Tools used in the participatory process:

Throughout the module, the following tools were used to facilitate the learning process: stakeholder analysis, conflict mapping, SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), focus group discussions, consensus-building techniques, such as consensus circles or deliberative dialogues.

Guiding principles underlying these tools include inclusiveness, impartiality, respect for ownership and suffering, accountability, partnership, coordination, and timeliness. These principles ensure sensitive and effective approaches to conflict analysis and transformation.

Module 7: Healing process

During 2-days module, the trainees were introduced to the definition of healing terms and why healing is important.

The stages of the healing process were illustrated, including birth, growth, and maturity. Causes of disintegration, such as a lack of clearly stated objectives, trust issues, lack of commitment, inequity in access to resources, and erosion of values were included.

Peaceful discussion was emphasized as a means of resolving conflicts.

Generally, the session on Healing Process provided the trainees with an understanding of the importance of healing, the characteristics of healing communities, the stages of the healing process, causes of disintegration, and the principles of peaceful confrontation in conflict resolution.



Module 8: Community engagement and advocacy for peacebuilding

In this comprehensive module, the trainees delved into the intricacies of community engagement and advocacy for peacebuilding. The module took 1 day and it explored various aspects such as local ownership and sustainability, collaboration and partnerships, advocacy and policy influence, and resource mobilization.

Main topics explained:

Emphasis on collaboration and partnerships: CSOs highlighted the importance of working together and forming partnerships to enhance peacebuilding effectiveness.

Advocacy techniques and strategies: training sessions covered advocacy techniques and strategies aimed at influencing policy decisions and raising awareness.

Discussion:

Community representatives discussed actively how to engage in collaborative initiatives and partnerships to address common goals, reflecting the emphasis on collaboration and partnerships highlighted in the training.

Training participants delved on advocacy campaigns within the community to raise awareness and garner support for women-led peacebuilding efforts, demonstrating the application of advocacy techniques and strategies learned during the training.

Overall Feedback:

Participants reflected on the role of collaboration, partnerships, and advocacy in amplifying the impact of peacebuilding efforts, recognizing their significance in advancing shared goals.

The trainees reiterated the need for strengthened collaboration between CSOs, community members, and other stakeholders, fostering increased awareness and support for peacebuilding priorities within decision-making circles.

Exercise:

CSOs were tasked to brainstorm on how to:

- establish collaboration and partnerships for effective peacebuilding,
- advocacy techniques and strategies,
- role of women-led CSOs on peacebuilding advocacy campaigns,
- how to build and strengthen collaboration and increased awareness/support for peacebuilding priorities anticipated.

By understanding the importance of community engagement, advocacy, and resource mobilization, peacebuilders can create sustainable peacebuilding interventions that address the needs and aspirations of the community and contribute to lasting peace.



Moreover, WLCSOs participants were trained on identifying, acquiring, and managing resources for peacebuilding goals. Training included sessions on strategic resource mobilization, considering various types of resources. Community members actively engaged in identifying local resources and potential contributors to peacebuilding efforts.

Module 9: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

The 1-day module on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in peacebuilding training provided trainees with an understanding of ADR, its advantages, and its application in the context of Somalia. ADR offers a faster, more cost-effective, and flexible alternative to litigation, and it can help preserve or improve relationships between conflicting parties. In Somalia, where the formal justice system has been weakened by years of civil war and instability, ADR plays a crucial role in peacebuilding. However, ADR also has limitations, including inconsistency, lack of transparency, accountability, and adherence to human rights standards. By understanding the potential and limitations of ADR, participants can effectively utilize this approach, promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and cooperation while considering the context-specific challenges that may arise.

This module served as the final training session, focusing on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and its relevance in peacebuilding efforts.

Analysis of FGDs with 20 CSOs Trainees across 4 Districts in Southwest State of Somalia

Twenty trainees from the four targeted CSOs participated in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as part of an ADR training program. The FGDs aimed to gather trainees' reflections, experiences, and perceptions regarding the application of ADR in their specific context.

The FGDs revealed that the trainees developed a solid understanding of ADR principles. They demonstrated awareness of ADR's advantages, such as its cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and potential to preserve relationships between conflicting parties.

Trainees expressed a positive perception of ADR's effectiveness in resolving disputes. They highlighted the potential of ADR to address conflicts in communities where the formal justice system is weakened, such as in Southwest State of Somalia. The trainees recognized the value of incorporating customary law (Xeer) and religious law (sharia), mediated by elders or religious leaders, as part of the ADR process.

Moreover, the FGDs revealed that the trainees perceived ADR as a vital tool for peacebuilding efforts in Southwest State. They recognized its potential to promote dialogue, reconciliation, and cooperation within communities. The trainees believed that effective ADR implementation could contribute to social cohesion, improved relationships, and sustainable peace.

Based on the analyzed reflections, it can be concluded that participants acquired a strong understanding of ADR principles, expressed confidence in its effectiveness, and recognized its potential for peacebuilding. The challenges identified during the FGDs provide valuable insights for program

improvement, focusing on issues of transparency, accountability, and the need for complementary approaches to address complex disputes.

Module 10: Conflict mapping

Conflict mapping in the context of Somalia refers to a systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and visually representing information about the dynamics of conflicts within the country.¹ Somalia has faced protracted conflicts with multifaceted causes, involving a complex web of actors, historical grievances, and resource competition. The tool of conflict mapping is crucial for understanding these intricacies, informing peacebuilding efforts, and facilitating effective intervention strategies. Main sub-topics covered were:

Identification of actors: understanding the diverse range of actors involved in conflicts, including clans, armed groups, governmental and non-governmental entities, and international actors.

Analysis of clan dynamics: delving into clan dynamics, power structures, and historical relationships due to the significant role of clan affiliations in Somali society.

Resource distribution and competition: examining conflicts related to resource competition, such as disputes over grazing lands and water sources, and how resource distribution and competition contribute to conflicts.

Spatial analysis: integrating geographic information into conflict maps to analyze the spatial distribution of conflicts, including mapping areas of active conflict, resource-rich regions, and zones with historical tensions.

Historical timeline: creating a timeline of events to trace the historical evolution of conflicts in Somalia, helping understand root causes, triggers, and patterns of conflict escalation and de-escalation over time.

Brainstorming session and Exercise:

Participants engaged in brainstorming sessions to identify various actors involved in selected conflicts in Southwest state of Somalia, discussing their roles, relationships, and alliances.

They analyzed clan dynamics, resource distribution, and competition, sharing insights and perspectives on how these factors contribute to conflicts.

Participants discussed the distribution of conflicts and historical timelines, collaboratively mapping out key events and their implications for conflict dynamics.

Feedback from trainees:

Trainees valued the comprehensive conflict mapping approach, recognizing its relevance in understanding Somali conflicts. They appreciated its participatory nature, noting how involving local communities enhances accuracy and contextualization. Trainees emphasized the importance of continuous updates to

¹ Zakarie & Abdifatah (2021). Understanding Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Dynamics, and Peacebuilding Strategies.



conflict maps, acknowledging the evolving situation, and stressed the significance of community engagement for successful peacebuilding in Somalia.

Conclusions, Challenges and Recommendations

Conclusions

A set of evaluation criteria was utilized to assess participant progress and gather feedback on the extent to which the training achieved its intended outcomes. These criteria included pre- and post-training evaluation questionnaires/forms, as well as post-training evaluation activities.

Pre/post tests at the beginning and at the end of the training session were conducted by Acted MEAL unit to evaluate the results of the training. Results from the pre/post tests conducted with Southwest State participants included:

Evaluation Criteria	Results
Participants with improved scores from the pre-test to the post-test	40% of participants (this low proportion can be attributed to challenges during pre-test data collection. Indeed, in some cases, they had to be collected after training started. This data should therefore be interpreted with a degree of caution).
Expected benefit of the training according to participants	Pre-test: 50% said very beneficial Post-test: 100% said very beneficial
Participants say that training met their expectations	100% said yes
Participants say they learned something new from the training	100% said yes
Participant's rating of the training quality	85% said very good 15% said good
Participant's rating of the trainer's performance quality	90% said very good 10% said good



The positive feedback received underscores the program's success in promoting a culture of peace, dialogue, and collaboration. This highlights the importance of investing in peace-building initiatives and equipping individual CSOs with the necessary tools for conflict resolution. Such efforts not only benefit the participants but also contribute to the broader goal of supporting localized women-led peacebuilding at the grassroots level.

Challenges

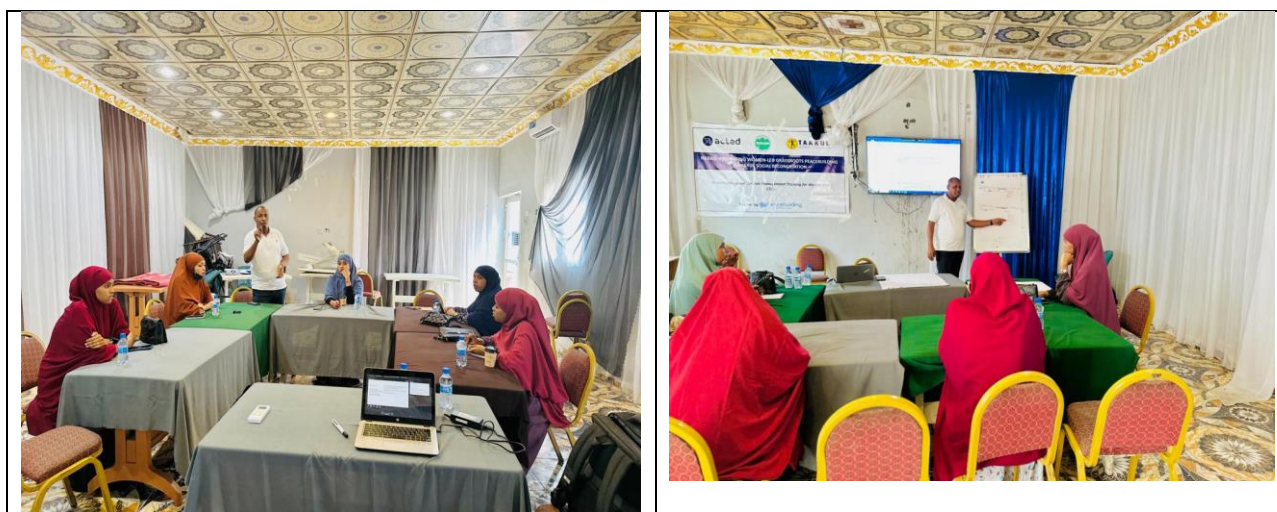
- **Limited literacy level:** high illiteracy levels pose a challenge among local populations, including grassroots peacebuilders and women. To address this, training content was conveyed in accessible language, with an emphasis on oral communication and storytelling. This approach allowed all participants to engage, share experiences, and gain insights, regardless of literacy constraints. Despite this, participants demonstrated a strong understanding of peacebuilding training modules.
- **Natural calamities:** the heavy El Niño rains in the country caused delays for participants attending training sessions. This led to a high number of late arrivals, particularly in Baidoa, slowing down the completion of daily modules
- **Limited access to resources:** local grassroots women CSOs in Somalia often struggle to access resources such as funding, infrastructure, and technology needed for peacebuilding efforts. To address this, the training included a session on networking and connecting with potential donors to increase access to financial and material resources for peacebuilding projects.

Recommendations

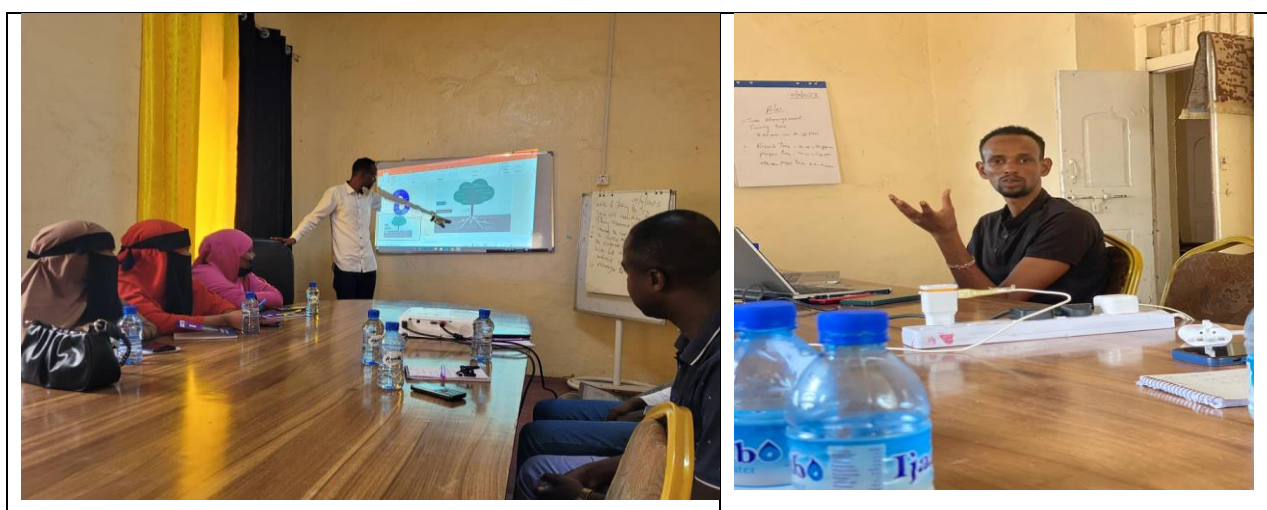
- **Ongoing support:** continued mentorship and support are vital for sustaining peacebuilding efforts, addressing challenges like resource constraints.
- **Gender-responsive and culturally sensitive approaches:** training programs for local grassroots women CSOs must prioritize their specific needs and cultural context. Content and methodologies should be gender-responsive, addressing inequalities and empowering women to lead in peacebuilding processes.
- **Resource mobilization and capacity building:** Facilitate access to financial resources, infrastructure, and technological support for local grassroots women CSOs. Offer more refresher capacity-building programs that focus on conflict resolution, negotiation skills, trauma healing, and leadership development to enhance their effectiveness in peacebuilding initiatives.
- **Networking and collaboration:** facilitate platforms for local grassroots women CSOs to connect, share experiences, and collaborate with each other, as well as with regional and international peacebuilding organizations. Promote the formation of networks and partnerships to enhance coordination, knowledge sharing, and resource pooling.

- **Advocacy and policy influence:** more refresher training to further build the advocacy skills of local grassroots women CSOs to effectively engage with policymakers and influence decision-making processes.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact and effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives.

Project Photos:



The ongoing training Sessions in [Baidoa](#)- South west state of Somalia



The trainer demonstrating conflict tree for Barawe Women Empowerment and Development Association CSO during the ongoing training session (**left**) and one of the participants asking questions (**right**) during the training sessions in **Barawe**- South west state of Somalia



The ongoing training Sessions for Bay Women Association Network (**left**) and participants in a preliminary group discussions (**right**) during the training in **Hudur**- South west state of Somalia



An ongoing preliminary group discussions (**left**) and team group photo (**right**) during the training sessions in **Berdale** for Bay Women Development Origination in Berdale district of Southwest- Somalia