



27/4/17

SSF II Gender Equality & Social Inclusion Strategy

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Overview

Prescribing and policing gender norms and relations, in other words controlling society's experiences of femininity and masculinity, along with social exclusion practices, is arguably at the very heart of the protracted and violent struggle for political and ideological power in today's Somalia. War, state-collapse and increasingly the influence of Reformist Islamist movements, along with the phenomenon of Al Shabaab have all served to narrow the gender possibilities open for Somali men and women, male and female youth and children to live by.¹

The overall strategic aim of the SSF in terms of gender equality and social inclusion is to make the Fund instrumental in reducing gender inequalities and social exclusion, in the process of achieving its ultimate impact goal: enhanced stability in Somalia. This Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy sets out the proposed strategy and approaches for SSF II programming to achieve this aim, as well as the conceptual framework, context and strategic analysis that led to the proposed strategy.

This Gender Strategy builds on lessons from SSF I¹ and has been developed from analysis based on: research in the Somali regions; a review of knowledge and best practice on gender and peacebuilding and gender in fragile and conflict-affected states; a review of literature on the Somali context and consultation with SSF II team members, the Secretariat, and the Conflict Sensitivity Advisor.

SSF is committed to ensuring that a 'gendered approach' is mainstreamed throughout the programme. This means that all planning, analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation recognises and takes account of the different gender-related needs and experiences of men, women, male and female youth, and male and female children. For SSF, pursuing gender equality and social inclusion means addressing not only inequalities between men and women/male and female youth and children, but also: inequalities between men, and between women, and between members of dominant kinship groups and marginalised or traditionally excluded, and/or groups that are in the minority in a particular location.

Main Categories of "Disempowered":

Within the current political, social and economic contexts in Somalia, three main categories of citizen stand out as relatively more disempowered and disadvantaged than others. They are discriminated against by the existing legal and political institutions, social norms and values, and the clan-based system of power relations that underpins social organisation:

1. Women and girls from all regions and all kinship groups
2. Traditionally marginalised groups, and internally displaced people (IDPs) (women, men, girls and boys)
3. Young men, aged approximately 15 – 35 years, especially those who are poor, lack fathers who are active members of their kinship group and/or belong to smaller less powerful kinship groups

How SSF II's Strategy and the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy interact

The SSF II Strategy's key principles to guide implementation are going to be key to successful integration of gender equality, social inclusion and state-building. In particular, the Gender Sensitivity principle found in the SSF II Strategy is foundational:

Gender sensitivity – The Stability Fund will ensure that the impact of a project on gendered power relations forms part of the design stage analysis. Investees will be expected to ensure that their interventions will not negatively affect the relative power of women and minorities. The Fund will also invest in projects that are specifically designed to promote or support change in gender power relations.

Of the 11 principles in the SSF II Strategy, all are relevant but the most relevant are those that direct SSF to work: with conflict sensitivity; at both state and community level; with both government, non-state actors and through coalition-building; by linking project funding to political engagement; through innovative approaches; with

¹ A gender strategy was developed for SSF I, in the first quarter after ASI was awarded the Fund Manager contract. However, the strategy was not fully aligned with the SSF overall programme strategy and thematic focus of the Fund – noted in the ASI 2016 SSF II proposal.

government input and oversight and with the possibility of a Performance Fund. To a large extent these align with the OECD’s findings on gender and state-building:

Basic guiding principles to working on GESI²

1. **UNDERTAKE GENDERED CONFLICT AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS IN EACH LOCATION WHERE THE FUND MIGHT INVEST AND REGULARLY UPDATE IT:** integrate political economy with conflict and gender analysis, and understand how stabilisation, state-building and conflict prevention impacts women and men, and members of different groups and age-groups differently.
2. **INVEST IN A COMBINATION OF STRATEGIES RATHER THAN A SINGLE ISSUE SINGLE STRATEGY FOCUS:** apply gender mainstreaming as well as making gender-specific investments but see every investment as a GESI opportunity – “live the talk”; adopt both direct and indirect strategies over both the short and long-term to maximise the possibility of integrating gender into state-building activities.
3. **INTERVENE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS AND WITHIN DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS** to support women’s agency and mobilisation and consider the diversity of women’s and members of marginalised and excluded groups’ views. Build bridges or facilitate communication flow from community level up to policy-makers. Make use of Social Exclusion Analysis theory to help analyse issues, identify entry points and plan interventions.
4. **WORK WITH A WIDE RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS** and facilitate identification of common interests and partnerships to promote intolerance of gender inequality and social exclusion.
5. **USE THE FUND’S LEVERAGE** and political influence and senior-level commitment to advance the gender and state-building agenda, and seize opportunities e.g. for critical thinking around issue-prioritisation and policy development (particularly powerful at this time, in the early stages of state-building).
6. **SEIZE THE MOMENT:** OECD findings show that the early stages of state-building are an important window of opportunity for integrating a gender perspective into state-building processes. The time looks ‘ripe for change’. Citing the 30% women’s quota and the passing of the Sexual Offences Bill by the Puntland government, SIDRO recently optimistically observed, “some major political and social transformations are taking place in Somalia in favour of Somali women.”³ Their optimism might be slightly dashed now due to the 30% quota let-down for women but at the same time, some would say the election results signal a water-shed moment for greater gender equality.

Critical Gender Issues to Consider for SSF II:

With these guiding principles and the SSF II Strategy in mind, the GESI Strategy proposes the following avenues to pursuing increased gender equality and social inclusion within the remit of SSF II:

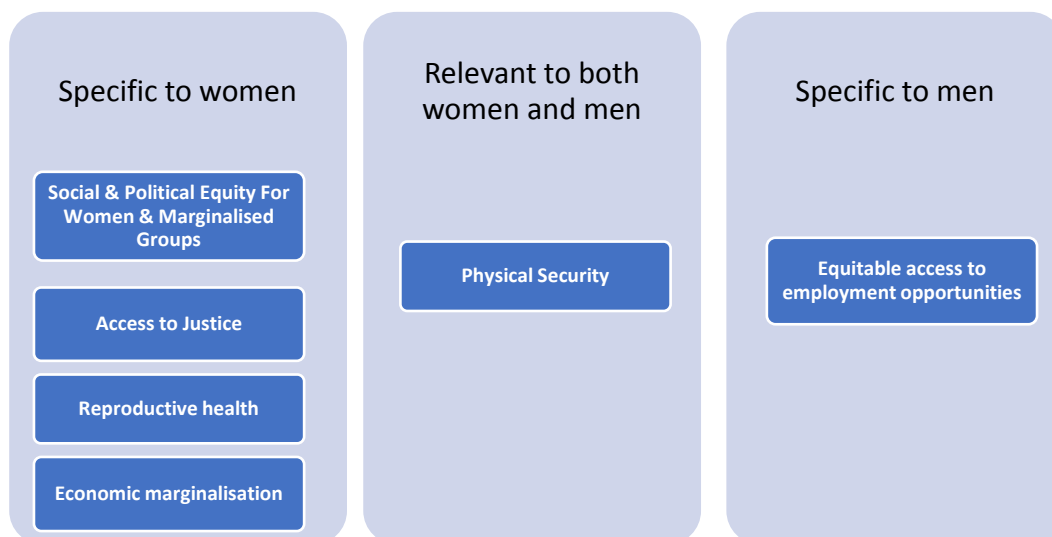


Figure i.1: Critical gender issues identified in the GESI Strategy

² OECD, 2013.

³ Others, are less optimistic. Such as female anti-FGM activists in Somaliland who report that there are now religious leaders actively advocating for girls to be cut on the grounds that it is ‘sunna’ and the only way for them to be ‘clean’ – an unravelling of the anti-FGM movement’s years of work to end the practice

The GESI Strategy is broken into three parts. Part 1 provides detailed background and analysis as to how the critical gender issues identified and proposed approaches grew out of vast research and knowledge pertaining to the Somali context. Part 2 provides a brief overview of the conceptual framework employed throughout this strategy, as well as a look back at how this strategy benefits from the experience and lessons learnt of SSF I. Finally, Part 3 looks at SSF's approach to implementing an effective and robust GESI Strategy.

1. In-Depth Analysis on Critical Gender Issues

This section describes the analysis that informs prioritization of the critical gender issues that are relevant to the SSF GESI strategy.

1.1 Who are the more disempowered and marginalised in Somalia today?

Within the current political, social and economic contexts in Somalia three main categories of citizen stand out as relatively more disempowered and disadvantaged than others. They are discriminated against by the existing legal and political institutions, social norms and values, and the clan-based system of power relations that underpins social organisation:

1. Women and girls from all regions and all kinship groups
2. Traditionally marginalised groups, and IDPs (women, men, girls and boys)
3. Young men, aged approximately 15 – 35 years, especially those who are poor, lack fathers who are active members of their kinship group, belong to smaller less powerful kinship groups

Somali 'women' are not a homogenous group with equal disadvantage or aspirations; nor do they share a unified voice. However, across the board, it is women and girls who face the most systematic and multiple forms of structural and practical gender-based discrimination and disempowerment. Among them, the traditionally marginalised and minority group women and children probably experience the greatest level of powerlessness to effect change in their lives, particularly when they live as IDPs.

Somalia's traditionally marginalised groups include the caste or occupational and outcast groups, as well as the Bantu and Bajuni communities. Whilst some groups are found throughout Somalia, others are concentrated in particular regions although these days they have been displaced widely. Generally, they are non-pastoralist groups, with their own sub-cultures, and in some cases their own languages and dialects. Taboos and myths perpetuated by those outside these groups serve to ensure that since the collapse of the state, which had afforded them protection, they are once more deeply discriminated against and can be treated as sub-human with impunity. They have also endured some of the worst atrocities of the wars in the South, lost lands, been enslaved and displaced multiple times.

According to UNDP (2012 Gender Brief) Women and children make up 70 – 80% of **IDPs** – many are widows or heads of households. Depending on the context, 'IDPs' could include majority clan members but the most displaced of the displaced are probably the traditionally marginalised groups from the farming areas of southern Somalia and the agro-pastoral groups from Bay and Bakool.

'Young men' are included in this analysis of power and disempowerment because under the clan-based system of social organisation that has been reasserted (by older males) since 1991, men under 35 are considered legal minors or 'youth'. This delayed adulthood is justified by older males on the grounds that young men are 'too impulsive', 'prone to violence' and 'lack good judgment'. Few older males would admit that it also serves their interests for it affords them age-related status and enables them to secure the majority of positions in the public sector. As 'youth' young men are very much subject to gender norms and expectations. They must obey their older kinsmen, they cannot question or challenge their elders, and they are excluded from formal participation in clan-based politics and other collective decision-making fora. In the pre-modern era, they constituted the 'warrior' class, "kept for the fight" and for raids. With the wars since 1991, males of this age group have once again been mobilised, sometimes forcefully, and armed by older kinsmen, and more lately by other armed groups, for the purpose of violent conflict. Research suggests that many young Somali male youth feel 'trapped between a rock and a hard place' – the rock being their family that expects them to bring in income, and the hard place being their kinsmen who expect them to comply with whatever is required of them, whether it is legal or illegal, endangering them or not.

1.2 Strategic context analysis: the headline gender issues today

Somalia has earned the ignominy of being ranked “one of the worst places in the world to be a woman”,⁴ the worst place on Earth to be a mother⁵ and “one of the worst places in the world to be a child”.⁶ However, this depiction ignores the diversity of experiences, identities and capabilities of Somali women throughout its history. Years of conflict and instability have affected Somali men and women, boys and girls differently with large geographic variations. War changes societies and can trigger changes in gender relations; this is evident when considering the current characteristics of Somali society, where women have often become the sole breadwinners. Despite this reality, the patriarchal culture of the country has left women marginalised and their involvement in key political processes is limited.⁷

The issues outlined below are the strategic headline gender policy-relevant issues that deserve, need or would ideally be addressed through state policy-making and intervention and therefore ought probably to be on any state-building agenda. Some are also appropriate issues to embrace through Stabilisation and or Conflict Prevention.

1.2.1 Specific to women, female youth and girls: *insecurity and VAWG, discrimination, disempowerment and exclusion, lack of access to justice, reproductive health - maternal mortality, economic hardship*

Physical insecurity and forms of violence against women and girls: with some notable exceptions,⁸ before the war, the security of women and girls was relatively well assured and protected by legislation and its enforcement by the state security services. With the collapse of the state, physical insecurity became and remains a daily reality for many women and girls across the country, particularly those from marginalised groups. Unlike men and boys, women and girls are afforded some protection from clan-related *killings* (see below) but they are vulnerable to other forms of conflict-related violence, including sexual and gender-based violence – linked and made more likely, in part at least, to the physical insecurity experienced by men (see below). Rape is traditionally taboo in Somali culture but customs protecting women and girls from sexual and gender based violence have been widely and increasingly transgressed since the collapse of the state to the point where rape as a phenomenon, including multiple perpetrator rape, is now normalised within some communities⁹ and impunity for perpetrators institutionalised within the existing justice systems.¹⁰ Domestic violence, traditionally frowned upon except within some sub-cultures, has reportedly increased, reportedly often linked to mental health and khat addiction issues.¹¹ Other forms of gender-based violence that currently affect women and girls include: the re-emergence of harmful marriage practices such as forced and early forms of marriage, widow inheritance, and women or girls exchanged in marriage to seal peace deals.¹² All of these have in common the likelihood that the woman or girl concerned has little or no power to reject the arrangement and other women are collaborators, if not instigators. The same is true of the continued widespread practice of female genital mutilation or cutting, FGM/C.

Discrimination, disempowerment and exclusion from collective decision-making: Since 1991 women and girls have been expected to live by a normative framework that derives from Somalia's pastoral past. Men too have to live by this framework but it is one that asserts male superiority and domination over women through gender norms and

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/increasing-womens-political-participation-key-to-ending-violence-against-women-in-somalia> (viewed 12.8.15)

⁵ http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGlpI4E/b.8585863/k.9F31/State_of_the_Worlds_Mothers.htm?msource=wenlpstw0515 (viewed 12.8.15)

⁶ http://www.unicef.org/somalia/reallives_16074.html (viewed 12.8.15)

⁷ ASI's proposal for SSF II, April 2016

⁸ Such as the state-sanctioned and perpetuated sexual gender based violence meted out against women of particular clan families during the civil war period – see *Somalia – The Untold Story*.

⁹ See CISP & International Alert, *The Complexity Of Sexual And Gender-Based Violence: Insights from Mogadishu and South Central Somalia*, October 2015

¹⁰ Source: Rakiya Omaar and Qumar Jibril, 2013. See also Sean Allen et al, UN Women Briefing Paper 1/2016: *Women's Access to Justice and Security in Somalia's Afmadow District: A SNAPSHOT* which notes, “Currently, if a man is arrested for a crime against a woman, he is often released after paying compensation. In most cases, men accused of rape seem to have relative immunity, particularly if they are part of the security services.”

¹¹ See *Impact of War on Somali Men*, 2015

¹² See Tungaraza,; NAGAAD, 2010; LPI Kismayo Study of Women, Conflict and Peace, 2017 (publication pending)

practices that disadvantage females at almost every level that is relevant in the modern world. As a consequence, despite the enormous burden they have carried due to the war's impact, women and girls endure multiple forms of discrimination, subordinated on the basis of their gendered position in society. Albeit, discrimination is experienced more so for some women than others as a result of the deeply embedded social exclusion beliefs and practices in Somali society. Efforts to counter discrimination typically meet with strong male resistance, though there are men who champion the rights of women and marginalised groups. And in Somali society, a 'real' man is one who shows respect and care for women, within the boundaries of normative gender values.¹³

Globally, women struggle to overcome exclusion from peace processes, political settlements and politics.¹⁴ Somali women's experiences are fairly well documented elsewhere,¹⁵ and discussed also in Part 3 of this paper. What needs to be highlighted here is the lack of a Somali women's rights movement and the injustice and resilience of the current systems that continue to resist women's inclusion.¹⁶ For example, based on interviews with women traders it has been estimated that Somali women may contribute as much as 60% of the national income through taxes and other contributions¹⁷ and yet they have no formal say in how domestic revenue is spent, and none of the governing structures are accountable to women. As yet, the extent of the injustice they endure is vocalised by only a minority of women – typically those who are educated, urban, and crucially those who are members of women's groups and collectives, such as those campaigning for women's rights. Supporting women's collective agency is a critical strategy to undermine and transform gender discrimination but it is not a straightforward solution as the lack of a Somali women's movement testifies.

The 2016 elections simultaneously illustrated the depth of discrimination against women in Somali politics and marked a very important milestone for women in Somali politics. That the 30% quota of seats officially allocated for women was widely ignored with women elected to only 24.4% of the overall total is rightfully a source of anger for women's rights activists.¹⁸ The results are shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 below. At the same time, having women in 24.4% of seats overall is an unprecedented and highly significant milestone for Somali women. Whether it genuinely signals a change of direction in Somali politics remains to be seen. However, the wins for women in the 2016 elections mean power-sharing with women in the Federal Parliament and National Federal Government has made a leap forward. For women to be so much better represented than before is obviously a tremendous boost for the gender equality 'agenda', and an encouraging starting point for SSF II's GESI mainstreamed state-building approach.

Across Somalia, nearly 75 % of females between 15-24 are illiterate (MICS 2006; UNDP 2012) and 66% of males. Above the age of 24 years the percentage of illiterate women is probably even higher, though lower for men. Adult female illiteracy is possibly the greatest obstacle to women's empowerment and has been identified as such by women themselves.¹⁹ Notably, minimal funding resources are currently targeting adult literacy despite the value this could have on so many levels.²⁰

Lack of access to justice: Since state collapse, women (and men) have only had recourse to profoundly dysfunctional secular justice systems, shari'a courts where *qadis* may be self-appointed and unqualified, or the traditional *xeer* system. All three systems are male-dominated, operate simultaneously, involve payment, and those administering the justice make judgements that typically favour men and the interests of patriarchy.²¹ Efforts by women in Somaliland to codify traditional laws pertaining to women and girls, such as concerning widow inheritance, have yet to see their work ratified in either houses of parliament. In Mogadishu, women have campaigned for a sexual

¹³ See Impact of War on Somali Men, op cit.

¹⁴ See for example: Women Building Peace – an international review of peace initiatives, Conciliation Resources, ACCORD Insight, 2013

¹⁵ See for example: Faiza Jama, Somali Women & Peacebuilding, 2010; Gardner & El Bushra, Somalia – the Untold Story, 2004

¹⁶ For a theoretical understanding of the gendered nature of institutions see: *New Institutionalism Through a Gender Lens: Towards a Feminist Institutionalism?* Fiona Mackay, Meryl Kenny and Louise Chappell, International Political Science Review 31(5) 573–588

¹⁷ Source: research conducted in Somaliland for A Gender Profile for Somalia, 2014 .

¹⁸ See for example SOMGEN's twitter account thread on the issue (last viewed 7.2.17)

¹⁹ Finding during FGDs in Garowe, Hargeisa and Mogadishu for A Gender Profile for Somalia, 2013/4

²⁰ See reports from UNESCO and AET distance learning adult literacy programme, SOMDEL.

²¹ See Sean Allen et al, UN Women 2016

offences act but so far their appeals have been rejected. In Puntland, however, women campaigners succeeded in getting a sexual offences act passed by parliament in late 2016.

Reproductive health issues: Access to Mother and Child health services is extremely poor. Only 9 percent of pregnant women are attended by skilled health personnel during birth, while only 6 percent receive adequate antenatal care (WHO 2012). Reliable emergency obstetric care is unavailable for the vast majority of urban women and completely unavailable for women in rural areas. Estimates for maternal mortality (MMR) remain at pre-war levels: 1,200 per 100,000 live births (UNICEF 2008). Key causes of maternal deaths include ante- and postpartum haemorrhage, obstructed labour, hypertensive disorders, and sepsis and infections (WHO/UNFPA 2009). A high fertility rate at 6.3 aligns with low contraception prevalence (15 percent), resulting in poor birth spacing, which increases risks to mothers. (WHO 2012). Teenage pregnancy has become common.

Economic marginalisation: Across the country many women have taken on the role of household breadwinner, on top of their other domestic tasks – a huge change in gender roles and a consequence of the war's impact on men. However, despite their importance for household income, women are economically marginalised and seldom able to earn more than subsistence level incomes. There are powerful women in the business community, but for the most part, women make up the majority of small and petty traders, work considered too lowly for most men from the powerful kinship groups to take on. Business women and female entrepreneurs face discrimination by banks and money lenders who require a male guarantor before they will give credit, and then the credit threshold is lower than if it is for a man.

In terms of access to employment opportunities, evidence suggests women are discriminated against in relation to public sector employment. They are much less likely than males to secure positions in the civil service for example, and when they do, it tends to be low status work that may not be commensurate with their educational attainment. Retention of men of retirement age due to the lack of a retirement and pensions policy may be part of the problem but so is male nepotism, endemic across Somalia's formal employment sector (see also below in issues specific to males).

1.2.2 Specific to men, male youth and boys: *insecurity and VAMB, inequitable access to employment opportunities*

Recent research²² shows that state collapse and violent conflict have impacted on Somali men in many damaging ways, expanded inequalities between men beyond the traditional marginalised groups, and generating male vulnerabilities on a number of levels, from the domestic to the political. The majority of men lack the resources - or crucially, the security - to fulfil their gendered expectations and responsibilities. At family level the reality is that women and children have had to step in as income providers, representing a fundamental shift in domestic adult gender roles. Evidence exists showing how female and male vulnerabilities are inextricably linked.²³ Despite the fact that society is male-dominated, many men feel dispensable, with no meaningful role and no stake in the future. It is credible to propose that to sustainably improve the lives of Somali women and girls it is necessary to also improve the lives of men, male youth and boys.

In the context of a state-building framework there are a wide range of headline issues specific to women and girls that need attention and are amenable to nascent-state-related action and policy change (see above). The situation is somewhat more complex for the kind of issues affecting men and masculinities. This is because, to a great extent, these are issues rooted in the nature and evolution of the clan-based system of social organisation since it re-emerged in 1991 to fill the vacuum left by state collapse and they have seemingly been exacerbated by how the state-building processes have taken place.²⁴ They are critical issues for stability and indeed for state-building, but it seems unlikely they can be tackled effectively through the state-building architecture which is partly responsible for them. Rather, it seems that the community level and peace-building or conflict prevention approaches are a more fruitful starting point for transformative engagement. Having said this, there are *some* issues which are too linked to cycles of conflict and violence to be ignored by state authorities. These are outlined below.

²² See: Somalia – a state of male power, inequality and insecurity, RVI Briefing Paper, March 2017

²³ See for example: Gardner & El Bushra: Impact of War on Somali Men – consequences for women, children and the family, RVI Briefing Paper, 2016; and Adversity and Opportunity: Gender Relations, Emergencies and Resilience in the Horn of Africa, 2016

²⁴ See: Somalia – a state of male power, inequality and insecurity, RVI Briefing Paper, March 2017)

Physical Insecurity and Violence Against Men and Boys (VAMB): *Male* insecurity is an overlooked issue in Somalia but security is a gendered phenomenon and Somali men and boys experience insecurity in quite specific ways, some of which can be classified as forms of gender-based violence. As ‘males’ men and boys have been the main targets of sex-selective killing throughout Somalia’s conflicts; they are the target of revenge killings, which have re-emerged since 1991; and they are the target of forced recruitment into armed groups, also a phenomenon since 1991. In addition, when a man or boy lives outside of the territory controlled by his clansmen his physical and mental vulnerability increases. Whether or not any or all of these forms of male on male GBV are amenable to state-intervention at the current time is debateable and likely to depend on the local context and timing. Until state legitimacy is earned and state officials are accountable to all citizens, not just those (men) who helped them reach power, the state may not always be the most effective vehicle for addressing clan-rooted forms of violence. The state does provide the potential for not only resolving clan-based conflict, but also providing an enforcement mechanism, but only where state structures are accepted by warring parties.

The state can more easily be employed in countering institutional (e.g. judiciary, security forces, financial sector, labour market, land, housing, education and health services) and social discrimination against members of Somalia’s traditionally marginalised and excluded groups. Male members of these groups experience daily injustices and forms of institutionalised as well as criminal violence and exploitation. Their lack of agency in turn undermines their capacity to fulfil their roles in the family such as protecting their womenfolk and children from similar abuses, including rape and other forms of sexual violence. It also, reportedly, makes them vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups like Al Shabaab, which can appear to offer avenues to power unavailable within normal life.²⁵ This possibility alone would seem to suggest improving their status and protecting their rights makes good state-building and stabilisation sense.

How federal member states (FMS) will be able to effectively protect men, male youth and boys from either forced recruitment into Al Shabaab, or targeted killings of those males who have run away from Al Shabaab and now live in fear for their lives, remains to be seen. But the issue of male insecurity in this regard seems likely to be widescale in some areas and a real test of the FMS’ capacity to fulfil the basic state-function of citizen protection.

Inequitable access to employment opportunities: Male access to employment or livelihood opportunities is highly discriminatory and largely dependent on kinship or clan related connections. This is part of the wider problem which is how, since 1991, kinship or clanship has circumscribed male experiences and opportunities, and, by extension, family fortunes, to an extent unprecedented since the pre-modern era. Boys and youth are especially vulnerable in this regard; they are handicapped if their father is unknown, or has transgressed his kinsmen for whatever reason, or if they live displaced and far from their own kinsmen as many IDPs and refugees do. For the majority of males their best chance of employment (and safety) is to remain close to their kinsmen, with all the mobility constraints this may entail. In the public sector, the same situation faces male youth as is described above for women – retention of retirement age males leaves little opportunity for young men to attain employment or work experience openings in the public sector. Those who do, are there almost always as a result of kinship connections.

Apart from the discrimination and nepotism at play, this issue is state-building and stabilisation relevant because it is a factor driving and perpetuating conflict between kinship groups in the competition for supremacy and control of state resources. Much greater and more equitable access to employment opportunities for men and male youth would seem one important strategy to deflate this competition and hence reduce one major factor or driver of violent conflict.

Physical insecurity, high unemployment, family poverty are all drivers of **illegal migration – *tahriib***. Research suggests there is hardly a single family in Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland unaffected by *tahriib* and its potentially terrible consequences for the individual but also for his / her family. Many families are left destitute by the ransoms they have had to pay to try to help their sons or daughters stay alive throughout their journeys.²⁶ Knowledge and understanding is increasing of the human smuggling cartels that operate both within Somali territories and beyond.

²⁵ Reference to findings from the RVI Impact of War on Somali Men study, LOGiCA, 2015; see also Roland Marchal.

²⁶ See for example, Nimo Ilhan-Ali, 2016

Effective intervention probably requires state-level action on multiple levels and coordination between states and with civil society, the business community, religious leaders, education providers and international agencies.

1.2.3 For both women and men: *suffrage and the representation and legitimacy of government*

Whilst it is noteworthy that women have been excluded from voting in the Somalia federal and parliamentary elections, the fact that the majority of men are also excluded rarely gets mentioned. Universal suffrage is not yet a feature of electoral processes in Somalia, though it is in Somaliland. The power to elect is held by men but just a small number of men, as representatives of their kinsmen. In the most recent elections the number of voting males was increased to an electoral college of 14,025 men, chosen by their clansmen for the purpose. This is similar in design to the traditional system of politics whereby men elect elders from their kinsmen to represent their lineage in inter-lineage or clan meetings – a process in which women, who cannot be elders, are excluded.

Although universal suffrage is an important gender issue it is perhaps less of a priority for SSF II than the other issues at the current time. For this reason it is not recommended for significant focus in SSF II (unless the contexts and popular priorities change).

1.3 SSF donor expectations: maximum impact and long-term sustainable change?

Ultimately, SSF's options for what to invest in will depend on the Fund's donors' readiness to use the Fund to drive and support important changes *even if* some or most of them are likely to take a long-time to bear fruit because of the complexities such as conflict sensitivity and social norms change entailed. If such an open and long-term vision is underpinning SSF then the likelihood is that the Fund can be truly instrumental in helping build a state(s) in which gender inequalities and social exclusion are no longer tolerated and therefore prospects for stability and sustained peace are good.

2. Conceptual Framework and Learning from SSF I

The conceptual framework underpinning this gender strategy combines gender equality principles, relational gender analysis and social exclusion analysis. Together these concepts are concerned with understanding and ultimately transforming power dynamics. Thus, they provide a relevant analytical backdrop to an understanding of violent conflict and of peace, and hence to stabilisation, state-building and conflict reduction.

2.1 Gender equality

Gender equality is both a rights concept and shorthand for a fairer world. As a rights concept, it means that one's rights, responsibilities and opportunities are not dependent on whether one is male or female. Everyone, regardless of sex or gender, is able to enjoy the same access to rights, responsibilities and opportunities. As shorthand for a fairer world, it means that advancing gender equality is not just about including women's voices ("the numbers side of things") or removing barriers to women's participation (e.g. ensuring meetings are held when women are free from domestic chores), although both are critical goals. It is also about adopting positive measures to bring about a transformation in the institutions and structures that cause or perpetuate discrimination and inequality, from household level up to local government, security, judiciary, ministries, to parliament itself.

2.2 Relational gender analysis

A relational approach to gender and gender analysis understands that both women and men have gendered identities and that these identities are constructed in relation to each other. A 'gender-relational' approach is an important tool in peacebuilding because it is broader than equating gender with women (and girls) and more analytical in that it examines the inter-relationship or 'intersectionality' between gender and other identity markers and axes of power, such as age, social class, sexuality, disability, ethnic or religious background, marital status or urban/rural setting. Such an approach contributes to more effective and sustainable targeting of programming.²⁷

2.3 Social Exclusion Analysis (SEA)

The SEA framework was adapted from anti-racism training tools developed in the UK. Its focus is on uncovering the nature of power relations and their structural underpinnings. The key underlying ideas of SEA are that:

- Entrenched power relations, underpinned by '*ideologies of superiority*', are the source of injustice and oppression
- Forms of systemic discrimination (such as racism, sexism, ageism etc.) have similar roots, function in similar ways and have equal importance
- Institutionalised discrimination (supported by laws, economic system, media, historical trends, etc.) is extremely hard to change
- The notion of power tends to be associated with something physical or coercive but in fact really strong power doesn't need to be exerted *because* it is so effective and normalised.

People are different in how they are constrained by their identities. Some conditions are changeable, others are not. For example, young people are often discriminated against, but they eventually become adults and then are no longer subject to discrimination. A person can move out of poverty or away from a neighbourhood where they are the object of discrimination. But you cannot escape from characteristics you are born with, such as your sex, colour, clan.

Entrenching and sanctioning *ideologies of superiority* are:

- Laws (e.g. governing movement and residence)
- Economic relations (who do people do business with?)

²⁷ See Rethinking Gender and Peacebuilding, International Alert 2014 http://international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Gender_RethinkingGenderPeacebuilding_EN_2014.pdf

- Culture, media (how are minorities portrayed in songs, poetry, art?)
- Religion
- History (are certain events recounted to justify the way things are?)
- Unbroken exercise of power over long periods (the longer discrimination goes on the more difficult it is to challenge)

Central concept: Discrimination happens when **negative attitudes combine with the power to act** i.e. negative attitudes on their own do not constitute discrimination

2.3.1 Relevance of SEA to SSF II's strategy

- SEA has been incorporated into the SSF contextual analysis template
- SEA approach identifies factors and how they relate and interrelate
- Helps you identify and understand the key burning issues
- Move away from a focus on victims to a focus on *who has responsibility*
- The emphasis is on the systemic nature of discrimination
- It stresses that change is possible and everyone has a role to play, rather than apportioning blame.

2.4 Basic guiding principles to working on GESI (OECD 2013)

1. UNDERTAKE GENDERED CONFLICT AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS IN EACH LOCATION WHERE THE FUND MIGHT INVEST AND REGULARLY UPDATE IT: integrate political economy with conflict and gender analysis, and understand how stabilisation, state-building and conflict prevention impacts women and men, and members of different groups and age-groups differently.
2. INVEST IN A COMBINATION OF STRATEGIES RATHER THAN A SINGLE ISSUE SINGLE STRATEGY FOCUS: apply gender mainstreaming as well as making gender-specific investments but see every investment as a GESI opportunity – “live the talk”; adopt both direct and indirect strategies over both the short and long-term to maximise the possibility of integrating gender into state-building activities.
3. INTERVENE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS AND WITHIN DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS to support women’s agency and mobilisation and consider the diversity of women’s and members of marginalised and excluded groups’ views. Build bridges or facilitate communication flow from community level up to policy-makers. Make use of Social Exclusion Analysis theory to help analyse issues, identify entry points and plan interventions.
4. WORK WITH WIDE RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS and facilitate identification of common interests and partnerships to promote intolerance of gender inequality and social exclusion.
5. USE THE FUND’S LEVERAGE and political influence and senior-level commitment to advance the gender and state-building agenda, and seize opportunities e.g. for critical thinking around issue-prioritisation and policy development (particularly powerful at this time, in the early stages of state-building).
6. SEIZE THE MOMENT: OECD findings show that the early stages of state-building are an important window of opportunity for integrating a gender perspective into state-building processes. The time looks ‘ripe for change’. Citing the 30% women’s quota and the passing of the Sexual Offences Bill by the Puntland government, SIDRO recently optimistically observed, “some major political and social transformations are taking place in Somalia in favour of Somali women.”²⁸ Their optimism might be slightly dashed now due to the 30% quota let-down for women but at the same time, some would say the election results signal a water-shed moment for greater gender equality.

2.5 Building on SSF I’s experience

Everyone involved has responsibility for helping make SSF II a fund that impacts positively on gender inequality and social exclusion. The gender strategy has been developed in consultation with the SSF team and builds on SSF I experiences. Box 1.1 below provides team members’ reflections on SSF I, and Box 1.2 details ideas team members put forward for how to improve GESI effectiveness in SSF II.

²⁸ Others, are less optimistic. Such as female anti-FGM activists in Somaliland who report that there are now religious leaders actively advocating for girls to be cut on the grounds that it is ‘sunna’ and the only way for them to be ‘clean’ – an unravelling of the anti-FGM movement’s years of work to end the practice

Box 2.1 Some Reflections from Team Members on Championing Gender Equality during SSF I

Attitudinal and ideological difficulties encountered from local stakeholders in the field:

“Sort out peace first then deal with gender equality”

“Leadership is for men, women’s area of responsibility is in the home”

“Gender is about women and girls”

“Gender is the imposition of a foreign ideology”

Practical difficulties and concerns:

“Finding enough women to participate on committees and in meetings – “if left up to males in the community no women would be invited”.

“Always the emphasis is on the quantitative aspect (the numbers of women) but this is insufficient to translate to transformation. Also, what they said may not get reported, or not get reported as having been said by women because the focus is on recording numbers only.”

“Treating ‘women’ as one separate category means women are only ever in one consultation group, ‘women’, whereas men appear in all consultation groups e.g. business leaders, religious leaders, elders, youth...”

“Most INGO investees can prepare reports with sex disaggregated figures but getting local contractors to do the same is another matter.”

“How do we get beyond ‘numbers’?”

Box 2.2 SSF Team Members Ideas on how to have greater impact on GESI during SSF II

Improve our own and partners gender sensitivity and awareness

“Provide gender perspective training workshops for staff and partners.”

“Be aware that rural women have different needs and interests to urban women.”

“Look at the gender balance of investees’ recruitment practices – sense that current tendency is a bias towards male recruitment.”

Counter male hostility towards the concept of ‘gender’

“Think about how we can engage men to advocate for women.”

“Help elders to appreciate the roles women are playing so that they make space for women. Show how family and community are interdependent e.g. educating a girl child means she will be better able to support her family.”

“Help men understand the benefits to society of enabling women to participate equally – help them to understand that they need women.”

“Use a culturally sensitive approach e.g. make reference to passages in the Quran that support or advocate gender equality and social inclusion to show that what you are saying is not an entirely alien or subversive idea.”

Investment considerations

“Knowing that women can also be part of conflict, we need to think differently about how to invest in peacebuilding.”

“Use SSF’s leverage to push for affirmative actions that help women bridge the gaps.”

“A focus on Education is vital for long-term gender transformation.”

“Look also at the situation of the boy child.”

“Consider the importance of women having access to credit without a male guarantor.”

“Invest in educating women to be leaders so that they can have greater impact when in office and ensure the education is over a long period not just a few days.”

3. PROPOSED APPROACH

This section looks at how SSF II can best deliver results within the framework of the SSF II Strategy that will lead to greater gender equality and social inclusion.

3.1 A Holistic Multi-pronged approach to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

SSF's GESI strategy is holistic in nature, aiming to address women's practical needs as well as challenging structural gender based inequalities that are barriers to the equal participation of women and marginalised groups in collective decision-making. A holistic approach is the opposite of a silo-ed approach and more than mainstreaming. It is principled (it models intolerance of gender inequality, discrimination and social exclusion), pro-active and imaginative, and seeks to effect change through a combination of systematic and opportunistic engagement. It involves looking for where there are openings and opportunities to work across outcome areas to address strategic gender issues. It encourages working with state and non-state actors to build and enhance their knowledge of the detail of local gender issues and formulation of practical and/or policy solutions that improve the lives of women, girls, youth and members of marginalised groups.

Thus, this GESI Strategy recommends a multi-pronged approach, which includes: gender mainstreaming, GESI-related funding quotas, engaging with men and women who are GESI champions, investing in work streams with explicit GESI objectives, and ensuring evidence and learning from SSF investments informs the discourse on policy making and overall strategy.

3.1.1 Gender Mainstreaming

As SSF identified in its Phase II Strategy, a 'gendered and social inclusion approach' will be mainstreamed throughout the programme whereby all planning, analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation recognises and takes account of the different gender-related needs and experiences of men, women, male and female youth, and male and female children, and between members of dominant kinship groups and marginalised or traditionally excluded, and or groups that are in the minority in a particular location. The specific steps for incorporating GESI into all aspects of SSF investment design and implementation are described in detail in the SSF II handbook and included as Annex 6.

Mainstreaming gender is not an end in itself but a strategy for promoting gender equality and preventing harm or reinforcing discrimination through gender-blind actions and policies. It calls on programme planners and policy designers to seek to understand and assess throughout their work the implications for women and for men, male and female youth and children, of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes. *Gender mainstreaming alone is not enough to bring positive and sustainable changes to women's lives.* Gender-based discrimination and inequity is usually deep rooted and patriarchy is very resilient. To effect meaningful change is likely to require gender-specific interventions as well as mainstreaming.

As highlighted in Part 2, a GESI mainstreamed approach begins with SEA. SSF will conduct a gendered context analysis to inform interventions in any new district it plans to work in. Guidance questions include:

To ask of women: *"have women been left out of consultations or consideration? If so, in what way and how might this omission be corrected? What difference would it make to do so?"* And of men: *"what is the position of boys and or men in this situation?" "Does this apply to all boys and or men, or does it affect different men differently?"*²⁹

And specifically, in relation to socially marginalised and excluded groups: *"how have such groups been identified?" "Have they been consulted (males and females)? What attitudes (assumptions, stereotypes, prejudices, values) do people have about them? What forms does their oppression take?"*

²⁹ This takes ideas from, "Applying a gender perspective in public policy: what it means and how we can do it better", Elizabeth Broderick, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission, 9.3.2012

3.1.2 GESI Related Funding Quotas

Two funding mechanisms that SSF will deploy to realise its strategic GESI goals are:

1. Use resources strategically to incentivise and reward progress on inclusivity (women, minorities, youth) based on emerging opportunities, e.g. by expanding peace dividends support for districts which ensure high quality women's participation and representation in all aspects of project design and implementation;
2. Ensure that at least 30% of the budget for stabilisation projects and for implementation of the Wadajir Framework is set aside for women focused projects that they themselves select

Both mechanisms will need guidelines developed (for example, which women are involved in decision-making processes for project selection), monitoring against conflict sensitivity as well as GESI impact and management. They herald an innovation for the Fund and an opportunity to learn from practice how incentives and funding quotas can be brought to bear most positively on GESI issues.

3.1.3 Engaging both women and men as gender equality social inclusion champions – at all levels

Experience from previous projects aimed at women's empowerment is that they sometimes only benefit a small number of women, rather than having much of a systemic impact because they lack policy engagement and enforcement by the State. However, by investing in women champions, active in the private sector or civil society, there is potential to build their credibility to play a vital role as advocates for gender equality. The most influential Somali women have built their credibility through their success as businesswomen or vocal civil society activists.³⁰ With the number of women MPs now elected, SSF will also seek to work with and capacity build women who are gender champions at government level. For we know that even where women MPs are gender champions, unless they are in sufficient number they can find themselves easily isolated and stymied in a male-dominated political space. The Fund will also explore ways of constructively engaging on gender equality and social inclusion issues with men in positions of power, at all levels, recognising that women's participation in decision-making processes in the formal political arena will remain an elusive aspiration without male backing.³¹ SSF may need to incorporate gender equality social inclusion training for both female and male prospective gender champions, and not just at government level but also at institutional level, including as a component of SSF's investee workshops.

3.1.4 Ensure evidence and learning from SSF investments informs the discourse on policy making

The diagram below shows a model to achieve policy and social change momentum at local, district, federal state and national federal state level in a way that links women and men and youth to policy-making.³² It is based on the assumption that to build effective GESI policy, requires momentum and buy-in. And this requires reduced tolerance of gender inequality and social exclusion among people and institutions at all levels (though not necessarily of all people at all levels). It proposes SSF will likely have simultaneous interventions or investments at each level, have created or supported interface opportunities and be supporting some overall level of coordination. It is not a blueprint but a way of visualising the levels, interrelationships and dynamics that a mainstreamed GESI i.e. social change and state-building programme, might successfully embrace. It requires SSF to exploit opportunities for GESI dialogue across the different levels afforded by our existing or planned investments, working in an opportunistic way, but ensuring that these approaches are documented and monitored so that success can be replicated.

³⁰ See for example, HIPS, The Political and Civic Engagement of Somali Women, Policy Brief 04/2015

³¹ ASI's proposal for SSF II, April 2016

³² See Pupavac op cit.

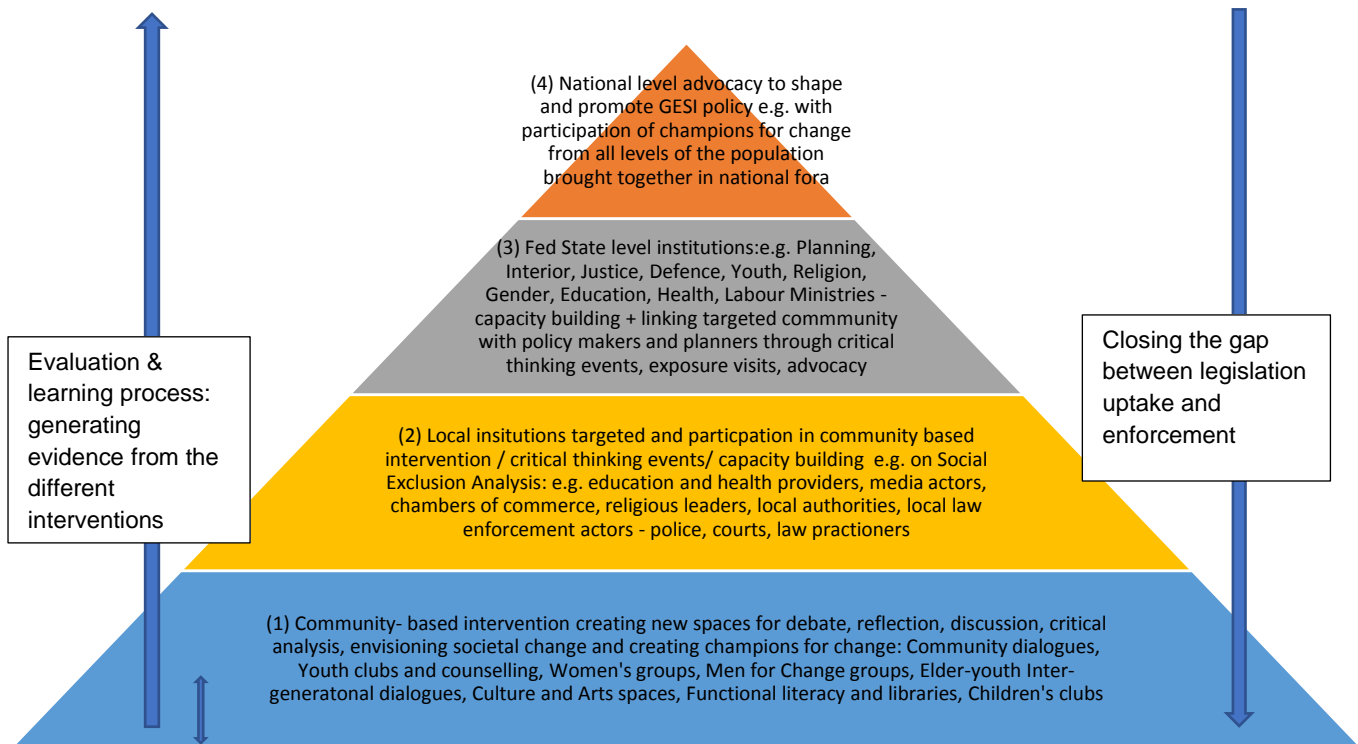


Figure 1.3: Model to achieve policy and social change momentum at local, district, federal state and national federal state level

3.2 Operationalising the GESI strategy through alignment with SSF II pillars

Bearing the above approaches in mind, in this section, the GESI Strategy will outline more concrete avenues for SSF to pursue to make a positive impact on gender equality and social inclusion. The SSF team, working with the GESI Advisor, will ensure full implementation of this gender strategy. This will include unpacking and mapping out critical gender issues, key actors involved and identifying appropriate Fund entry points.

3.2.1 Stabilisation: Strengthened social cohesion and community-government relations in Newly Recovered Areas (NRAs)

Priority GESI Issues: The four main GESI issues that will be addressed through SSF's stabilization work include: physical security, equitable male and female employment and livelihood opportunities, reproductive health, social and political equity for women and marginalized groups.

What will SSF do?

Before commencing work in newly recovered areas, SSF will conduct a gendered context analysis to inform the overall approach and ensure that male and female needs and priorities are taken into account.

There is a growing evidence base to prove that women too are political actors and play a role in the promotion and sustainment of conflicts, particularly clan-related conflicts. Their exclusion from collective decision-making is therefore a stability issue as well as a rights issue. Therefore, SSF will mandate that all new investments in newly recovered areas involve separate focus group discussions for women, facilitated by a women facilitator, to seek to understand needs, interests and priorities that may be specific to or identified by women. The range of options that women in newly recovered areas could prioritize include investing in female adult literacy, constructing or equipping maternal and child health clinics, water resources, savings schemes and livelihoods opportunities.

An observation from the first phase of SSF is that communities in newly recovered areas typically prioritize investments in tangible infrastructure projects that result in both short-term job creation and public assets through labor-intensive works projects such as canal rehabilitation, construction of roads, schools, health clinics, local administration buildings and solar lighting for public spaces (streets, stadiums, and markets). In hiring labour for

construction projects, SSF will ensure partners have a hiring policy that ensures equitable access to jobs for both men and women, prevents discrimination e.g. based on kinship ties.

In selecting which community priorities to fund, the SSF team will favor projects that serve the dual purpose of addressing a GESI issue and equitably benefiting all segments of society.

What can donors do?

Use leverage to promote a policy that does not tolerate discrimination against women and marginalized groups. Actively advocate to eliminate violence against women and boys, and be vocal in condemning sexual violence. SSF donors can ensure that GESI issues that are not addressed through SSF investments are prioritized under other projects that they fund through UN agencies and other partners. Finally, donors can mandate that women's voices are heard and reduce tolerance to discrimination against women and marginalized groups in their bi-lateral aid stabilisation programs e.g. Norway's Stabilisation project.

3.2.2 State-building: Better functioning, more accountable and responsive government institutions and increased participation and representation of women and excluded groups in governance structures

Priority GESI Issues: Physical security, social and political equity for women and marginalized groups, and access to justice are the main GESI issues under the State-building pillar.

What will SSF do?

Physical Security: Investments in police stations planned for Puntland and Gedo will be complemented with support to police units to undertake specialised Sex and Gender Based Violence (S/GBV) response training and allocation of spatial and human resources for dealing with rape cases and female criminal suspects. Initial work in this area has been initiated in Puntland and will be replicated in other places where SSF plans to build police stations.

Capacity Building and Networking Support: Whilst the proportion of women in the federal parliament is unprecedented and represents a step forward for greater gender equality, there remains a huge leadership and power gender deficit. Keeping this in mind, SSF will build on the successful work in the first phase of SSF on leadership and capacity building support to female leaders and women Members of Parliament in particular. The fund will seek ways to expand similar support through partners with a trusted track record for effective program delivery. A key priority will be countering barriers to women's political participation, supporting awareness raising among women and girls of constitutional rights through civic education and potentially supporting networking and advocacy between women's rights activists and their female MPs. In addition to targeted capacity building support, SSF will create opportunities for networking and experience sharing by bringing together women from civil society, government and private sector; especially those from different backgrounds and age-groups (e.g. elite, marginalised, urban and rural). With the right facilitation inputs, this kind of networking platform can help foster cross and intra-clan alliances and the development of shared agendas and collective strategies.

Access to Justice: To complement the work of UN Women and UNDP's rule of law program, SSF has hired a Gender expert to assess areas where SSF could consider strategic investments to increase access to justice for women in particular. As highlighted above, both the Xeer and Sharia systems of informal justice, as well as the formal judicial system are structurally male-biased and operated by men who serve male interests, at the expense of justice for women, girls and marginalized groups. SSF will conduct localised analysis to understand women's access to justice priorities in a small number of pilot locations and trial solutions based on these needs. SSF will share the results across the Somalia development network to try to inform wider programming.

Increase Women's participation in Governance: Implementation of the Wadajir Framework in Galmudug and potentially Hirshabelle may afford excellent opportunities for increasing women's participation and representation in local governance through the district council formation process. However, efforts to increase participation and representation of women and excluded groups in governance structures may be met with suspicion and rigid views about gender roles and responsibilities. In this situation, for the Fund's efforts to promote greater gender equality and social inclusion through state-building to be effective SSF needs to:

- Create safe spaces and platforms (at different levels), to encourage networking among gender champions (both men and women) to creatively develop strategies to change the normative framework for gender equality in Somalia.
- Avoid capture by elite female, or male, players and their interests when they do not genuinely represent or intend to promote change for those who are voiceless and marginalised by working at different levels and developing relationships within civil society as well as government and the private sector;
- Make inclusion meaningful: going beyond just ‘numbers’ e.g. of women participating in a meeting, to what it means and takes to have people on board whose needs, interests and perspectives are not usually heard; do this in different ways, including for example: ensuring meetings are timed for when women are free to attend, provision of childcare if needed, recording what women as well as men present have said, convening pre-meeting women-only meetings to give women ‘safe’ space to discuss issues and reach consensus before joining a plenary with men, incentivising groups that demonstrate equitable participation and decision-making;
- Consider using performance funding to incentive a more inclusive process e.g. by investing in a further round of peace dividends, only where the process of district council formation meets key benchmarks for the participation and representation of women and minorities. SSF is in discussion with other Wadajir implementing partners to ensure a joined-up approach in this area.

What can donors do?

Since 1991, women’s exclusion from politics has been largely the result of the re-emergence of clan-based politics and with it a return to traditional cultural beliefs and social gender norms that allocate responsibility for political decision-making to men. This situation not only denies women their rights under international human rights frameworks as well as national constitutional frameworks but means half of society’s interests and needs are not represented, women’s voices are unheard and women’s socio-political acumen is not utilised, at least not through formal channels. Similarly, discrimination as a result of being from a traditionally marginalised group reduces your chances as a male, and especially as a female, of being able to participate in mainstream collective decision-making for a. As a result, the chances of these communities’ needs and interests being heard are much reduced.

3.2.3 Conflict Reduction: Communities' vulnerability to conflict has been reduced

Priority GESI issues: Female economic empowerment, physical security, equitable male employment and livelihood opportunities, and social and political equity for women and marginalized groups.

What will SSF do?

Peace and Reconciliation Processes: Recognizing the many challenges with NGOs, government and externally funded mediation efforts, SSF’s approach to support peace and reconciliation activities will include undertaking a gendered conflict analysis. Part of this will be to understand the existing gendered dynamics involved in the process in question. For example, what are women’s current roles in the peace processes? Are they actively engaged in fundraising? How would SSF financial support impact on their roles and relative power or influence their roles may bring them? When considering what peacebuilding efforts to support, SSF investees will ensure meaningful consultations with women from different backgrounds take place and their various views are recorded and given equal weight to those of men. SSF will also consult with men from different backgrounds and situations, including older and younger, urban and rural, and those from traditionally marginalized groups. A gendered approach to peacebuilding investments will tie in to improving women’s inclusion in political settlements and agenda-setting: e.g encourage canvassing of women’s needs and interests (they will typically go beyond the cessation of male-male violence and settling diya-related grievances to addressing wider social needs and concerns, sometimes through peace dividends).

Address economic drivers of conflict: Unlike males, most females’ earnings are subsistence level and yet since 1991 many families depend on female income for survival, school fees, and shelter. Women are discriminated against when it comes access to credit. SSF’s economic development investments will seek to build the resilience of women and marginalized groups through creative access to finance and savings schemes. Recognizing the discriminatory and

nepotistic access to male income opportunities which often excludes young men from lower social status families, IDPs, males outside own clan area, SSF's investments in Technical and Vocational Training (TVET), labour intensive public works (for example as part of our drought response efforts), and enterprise development investments for youth will require robust selection criteria for selected participants informed by GESI considerations. This approach also recognises that within Somalia these marginalised youths are those often most vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups.

What can donors do?

Like SSF, in their support to peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts through other programs, ensure that where active women's peace groups exist, their agency is not undermined. While most formal mediation processes are male dominated, donors must appreciate the important role women play in fundraising for peace processes. If external funding completely subsidizes reconciliation efforts, it can negatively impact an important source of women's political and social capital.