



**CONFLICT
DYNAMICS®**
INTERNATIONAL

Quarterly Update

July - September 2021

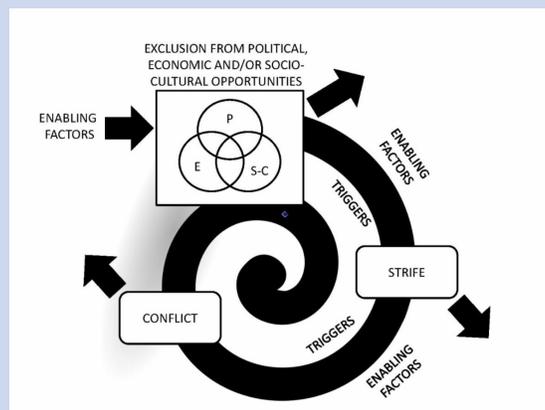


Advancing Women's Political Participation Workshop in Khartoum

Dear Friends of Conflict Dynamics,

It is a simple but deadly formula: exclusion leads to strife in societies, which can trigger conflict. This is the path which we have found to hold true in every context in which we have worked; the only variables are time, conducive factors, and triggering events. This is why we work on the mechanics of more inclusive governance systems and dialogue processes.

In the past few months, we have seen new challenges to inclusion emerging and also great opportunities.



In Sudan, we have been working with inspiring young women leaders and others who are hungry for change and eager to shape more inclusive systems of governance. They seek to move away from past exclusionary and divisive arrangements. In Eastern

Sudan, the recent protests are a result of exclusion, actual and perceived, of the people in that region for a very long time. We see again and again that people are taking direct action to bring about the change they wish to see, including to have their voices heard and to be included.

We have great respect for the people of Afghanistan, having worked there on a number of initiatives during 2008-2015. The recent political upheaval and the resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan risk another cycle of exclusion and subjugation for the Afghan people. It has shown, starkly, the limits and failings of international state-building interventions. Another learning from our work is that even when exclusion dissipates, it often comes back in another form. That, however, can sometimes span a time period of many years and often generations.

Ultimately, inclusion - like politics - is the art of the possible, not the ideal.

Thank you as always for your interest in and support of our work,

Gerard Mc Hugh
Founder and President

Where In The World Is Conflict Dynamics?



BALANBALE, SOMALIA - The [Somali Youth Development Network \(SOYDEN\)](#), supported by Conflict Dynamics, has established a new District Peace Committee (DPC) in Balanbale, Galmudug, Somalia. Prior to the formation of the DPC, 120 community members including elders, women, youth, religious leaders, the business community, and internally displaced persons were chosen to participate in a four-day workshop on peacebuilding and conflict management.

The new DPC, with 15 individual members including four women, was formed through a consultative, participatory, and democratic process. Formation of the DPC and the trainings will have a significant impact on the



KHARTOUM, SUDAN - On 10-11 July and 29-30 August, Conflict Dynamics' Sudan Team facilitated workshops supporting young women's participation in the transition period. Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, the workshops expanded upon previous events with young women's networks conducted in February and March and funded by Global Affairs Canada.

The workshops brought together a total of 27 young women from Khartoum and other cities such as Atbara, Wad Madani, Kosti, and Kassala. Attendees were activists and political party members, recommended by previous participants as active leaders in their communities.

The workshops focused on advancing

community. One participant shared an experience of healing and relief, forgiving an assailant from 26 years ago, 'I am thankful to SOYDEN for this training that had such a huge impact on me to an extent that I unconditionally forgave this man'.

☒: SOYDEN



NEW YORK, NY, USA - During the September 2021 resumed session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, the Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) grant [special consultative status](#) to Conflict Dynamics International. Special consultative status enables organizations to provide the Economic and Social Council with expert information and advice as well as the ability to attend international conferences and events, issue written and oral statements, and organize side events at high-level meetings.

We are eager to share our experiences with our United Nations peers from our 17 years of work in the fields of Humanitarian Action and Peace Action, drawing attention to the importance of inclusive peacebuilding and humanitarian response.

women's - especially young women's - participation during the transition period. Topics covered include elements and processes within a political transition; how women's political participation can improve women's rights and socioeconomic status; and specific mechanisms for increasing women's participation; among many others.



Innovations in International Philanthropy Symposium

BOSTON, MA, USA - Although virtual this year, Conflict Dynamics joined other New England based organizations in attending the second Innovations in International Philanthropy Symposium, hosted by New England International Donors and The Philanthropic Initiative's Center for Global Philanthropy. Focused on joining forces to strengthen international philanthropy, the symposium featured productive sessions on impact investing, achieving impact, partnerships and collaboration, and experience sharing from organizations around the world.

Innovative approaches to increasing the impact of the relationships between donors and implementing partners is something Conflict Dynamics has been advocating for, you can read more about this in our medium piece: [For organizational resilience and impact, focus on business model not overhead.](#)



BURTINLE, PUNTLAND, SOMALIA - The Burtinle District Peace Committee, established by SOYDEN and Conflict Dynamics, provides mediation and reconciliation for community issues in an area still building effective law enforcement and judicial processes. Years of conflict, unaddressed grievances, and crises such as climate change and the coronavirus pandemic make the work of the Burtinle DPC that much more valuable as even small disagreements can easily flare into violence. The Rapid Response Fund (RRF) under the Addressing Root Causes Project funded by the Dutch Government was created for this purpose. It provides DPCs with immediate financial support to pivot their work to address emerging community issues to prevent escalation to conflict.

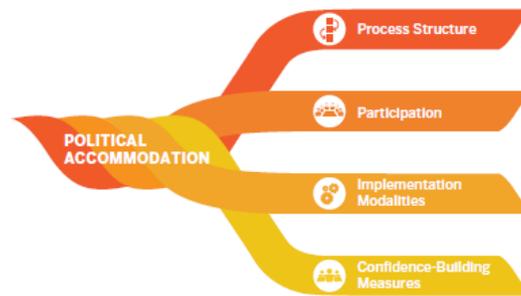
This September, the Burtinle DPC used resources from the RRF to address conflict between two local groups over the construction of a reservoir in a district of livestock herders who have been battling dry land and inadequate rainfall. Although disagreement over the reservoir had been ongoing for years, recent clashes had resulted in the death of six people and had injured a further nine.

With support from the RRF, the Burtinle DPC organized a meeting between the conflicting groups in an informal setting, which is Somali tradition. Traveling to the remote villages, the DPC assembled nominated community elders who addressed historical grievances and explored options to resolve the current situation through constructive dialogue. Following the meeting, all participants agreed to a cessation of violent hostilities, the withdrawal of militias, a commitment to refrain from re-incidentment of violence, and to establish a committee of elders from either side for close coordination on future issues and reparation measures. Visit the [GlobalGiving page](#) for more information on how you can support the RRF.

📍: SOYDEN

What is Happening on the Ground?

PROCESS FRAMEWORK
for Political Accommodation



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EXPLORING COORDINATION OF SUDANESE PEACE AGREEMENT PROVISIONS

Conflict Dynamics' Sudan Team has remained committed throughout the transition period to exploring how parties can implement the recent peace agreements comprehensively and inclusively to serve the needs of all Sudanese people. The team's latest product is The Comparative Matrix, which reviews the provisions from the Constitutional Declaration, the Juba Agreement for Peace, and the Declaration of Principles with the SPLM-N – Al Hilu. The matrix is organized according to the framework in Conflict Dynamics' Political Accommodation Methodology. The Comparative Matrix is an efficient reference for comparing provisions across agreements and will be crucial when identifying where the provisions in the different agreements can build on each other and where there are gaps and inconsistencies. View the [Comparative Matrix](#) here and we look forward to hearing your feedback.

The Comparative Matrix is the first resource in a series of products from Conflict Dynamics' Sudan Team on the different transitional period agreements and their outcomes. Additional products will include a discussion note covering summaries of provisions across areas of convergence, divergence, and gaps as well as a technical analysis note offering analysis of the opportunities for implementation of the provisions. We look forward to sharing these upcoming products with you next quarter!



SOMALI VOICES ON SOMALI ISSUES

Although 2021 has been fraught with political crisis for Somalia, elections for senators

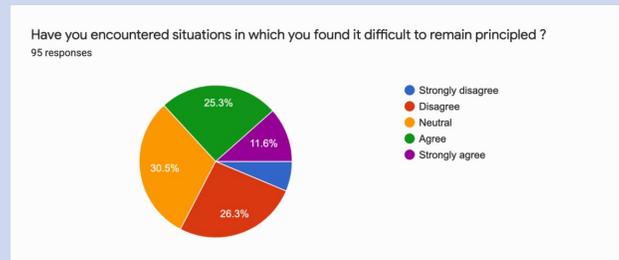
in the Upper House continue to move forward. Elections for the Somaliland representatives occurred at the end of September, representing a major step forward in the election timeline. As delegates voice their opinions at the ballot box, Conflict Dynamics' Somali Team is working to ensure the voices of all Somalis are heard as the country works to transition to a new administration.

While elections carry on, the Somali Team is gathering key stakeholders from throughout Somalia to share their perspectives, insight, and vision for the political future of Somalia. This research will inform the production of discussion papers which will cover topics such as the logic of federalism in Somalia and the approach to distribution of powers (DoP) and inter-governmental relations (IGR).

The team is currently preparing to conduct the second phase of research collection in Jubaland, Hirshabelle, and Galmudug. Working around coronavirus restrictions, the Somali Team has been able to collect information through virtual consultations, key informant interviews, group dialogues, and technical workshops.

In addition to the production of discussion papers, the Somali Team is preparing to engage key stakeholders in a series of round table discussions on the roles and responsibilities of the Upper House as well as discussions on DoP and IGR. Beginning in October, Conflict Dynamics, [Forum of Federations](#), and [The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies](#) will convene influential actors from across sectors to explore federalism in Somalia and how DoP and IGR can be successfully implemented following the election. The parliamentary and presidential elections present an incredible opportunity for the people of Somalia therefore the Somali Team continues to develop guidance to ensure political systems are inclusive and representative of everyone.

📄: SOYDEN



NAVIGATING A SHRINKING HUMANITARIAN SPACE

Compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, [humanitarian needs are at the highest levels in history](#), but the operating environment for humanitarians is becoming increasingly challenging. Security incidents involving aid workers have increased, humanitarian and medical assistance are frequently targets of attacks, and access is often denied to populations most in need. Conflict Dynamics is working with [Save the Children International](#) and the [Harvard Humanitarian Initiative \(HHI\)](#) to develop guidance and tools for humanitarians to more effectively negotiate and engage different actors to improve humanitarian access.

It is important in the development of any guidance that it is responsive to real-time needs of practitioners who will be using it, based on their experiences in their contexts. Conflict Dynamics, HHI, and Save the Children have recently surveyed over one hundred humanitarian practitioners on their experiences, challenges, and needs around humanitarian engagement. Preliminary results show the current environment

has created challenges for practitioners to engage in a principled approach and suggests that available guidance has not adapted to the current environment. Furthermore, it does not account for obstacles such as the fragmentation and various types of conflict actors, negotiating around insecurity, and adapting methodologies and approaches to fit specific contexts.

Upcoming capacity-building workshops planned for Mali and South Sudan, as well as an additional six contexts in 2022, will provide a unique opportunity to hear the perspectives of humanitarian practitioners throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and to explore opportunities for improving humanitarian outcomes in different conflicts. Keep your eyes out for updates, including new products and guidance.

Who's Who at Conflict Dynamics?

Partner Spotlight

The Somali Youth Development Network is an integral part of the work of Conflict Dynamics' Somali Team. Learn more about Executive Director Osman Moallim and his outstanding commitment to peace in Somalia.



Osman Moallim

Executive Director, Somali Youth Development Network

Osman Moallim works alongside Conflict Dynamics in his role as the executive director of the [Somali Youth Development Network](#) (SOYDEN), our primary partner in community-level peacebuilding in Somalia. SOYDEN is a non-governmental youth organization, free from political, clan, religious, and ethnic divisions. The main objective of the organization is to solidify peacebuilding programs through education, skills training, and recreational activities for young people in Somalia. SOYDEN works with Conflict Dynamics to fulfill its vision of uniting and developing Somali youth groups by creating inclusive District Peace Committees (DPCs) throughout Somalia where all community members have a role to play in resolving issues no matter their age, gender, clan, or religion. Osman was one of the founders of SOYDEN and has served as the executive director since 2004.

While many of you are familiar with Osman's work with SOYDEN, he has a long history of involvement with Somali civil society. After the collapse of state institutions in Somalia in 1991, he began his work with civil society groups and has been a prominent peace activist and practitioner ever since. He was elected as the Focal Person of the Coalition for Peace in Africa in 2007 and served as the focal point for peace advocacy in Somalia.

Osman's commitment to peace and security has been demonstrated in many ways including: his contribution to the coordination mechanisms of South-Central Non-State Actors, his establishment of the Somali Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Units (CEWERU), his involvement in Somalia CEWERU and his establishment of good relationships and collaboration between local peace committees on both sides of the Somalia and Kenya border, and his support in developing the National Security and Stabilization Plan.

In his role as executive director of SOYDEN and country coordinator of CEWERU, Osman facilitates peace throughout Somalia through the formation of 40 District Peace Committees, the development of social healing tools for peacebuilding, and the creation of strong networks and partnerships among national, regional, and international organizations working for peace. Many of these social healing tools have been utilized in trainings by SOYDEN and Conflict Dynamics including [Quraca Nabada](#) tools for a social healing approach to peacebuilding, trauma-informed resilience tools for leaders, and trauma-informed community empowerment tools for individuals. These tools address the need to heal from past trauma and focus on the effects of conflict on the individual in order to restore trust among the community and develop sustainable peaceful approaches to managing and preventing future conflict.

Osman has remained committed to peace in Somalia over the past decades and has risen to meet every challenge, including the recent obstacles posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Community-level peacebuilding looks much different these days with masks, outdoor spaces, larger venues, and virtual convening. Please consider supporting SOYDEN and their latest project helping DPCs to rapidly respond to community-based issues which threaten to escalate to violent conflict. You can find more information about the project and how to give on [GlobalGiving](#).

[Join Our Team!](#)

You could be the next employee featured in our Who's Who section! Read more about our open positions below.



Research Assistant, Peace Action

Conflict Dynamics is seeking an exceptional and highly-motivated research assistant to work on peacebuilding research and communications as part of our Peace Action Team. The research assistant will create, publish, and manage Conflict

Research Assistant, Digital Technology in Humanitarian Action

Digital technology is evolving everyday, providing endless possibilities for solving many of today's most pressing issues. Conflict Dynamics is seeking a driven and inquisitive research assistant to explore how this new technology

Dynamics' Peace Pulse digest; conduct policy-oriented research related to peacebuilding and political accommodation; draft case studies and other products; and contribute to peace-related social media and online communications.

The position is for an initial three month period for one semester of class credit. Click [this link](#) to read more.

could be harnessed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance and to put more power in the hands of beneficiaries in conflict zones. This research assistant would be working alongside Conflict Dynamics' Children in Armed Conflict and Humanitarian Engagement and Access Teams on developing ongoing pilot projects. Click [this link](#) to learn more.

What are We Reading at Conflict Dynamics?

Scholarship from colleagues, partners, and friends in the fields of Humanitarian Action and Peace Action.



[Why Somalia's Grand Strategies Aren't Working](#)

Liban Obsiye & Liban A. Hussein

Drawing parallels to the recent events in Afghanistan, the authors with extensive experience in Somali security, discuss why billions of dollars and large-scale international support has not been enough to successfully implement the 'grand strategies' for stability in Somalia.

The authors argue that the problem with recent strategies and approaches to security in Somalia is that they are developed by international actors without regard for what is sustainable and realistic for national actors to implement. These plans are often centralized and developed without input from the general Somali population, which has led to failure and recapture of territory by al-Shabaab. Along with Conflict Dynamics' Somali Team, the



[Humanitarians Push to Vaccinate in Conflict Zones](#)

Madeline Drexler

The fight against COVID-19 has demonstrated the need for global cooperation. Despite a call for a global ceasefire by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in March 2020, conflicts have continued to rage and civilians in their midst continue to suffer the effects of war and of the global pandemic.

In this article, the author explores the history of vaccine-related ceasefires and explains that despite the failure of this recent call, keeping the option on the table provides hope for its utility in future health emergencies. Practitioners from leading humanitarian organizations share their views on the importance of inclusive negotiation strategies in

authors believe that effective security policies require inclusive participation of the Somali people and comprehensive local engagement. The article concludes with the argument that "Top-down decision-making must be replaced with a bottom-up approach that can identify local challenges, resources, and opportunities to deliver sustainable security".

📷: Article Photo - AU-UN IST Photo/Stuart Price



[Operation Carthage: How a Tunisian company conducted influence operations in African presidential elections](#)

Andy Carvin

Conflict Dynamics' latest edition of the Peace Pulse focuses on '[Elections: Pathways towards peacebuilding](#)'. In it you can find recent scholarship and literature in the field of peace action, including select pieces on the influence elections have on peacebuilding processes around the globe.

In *Operation Carthage*, Andy Carvin details an exclusive investigation into a sophisticated digital campaign connected to Tunisian digital communications firm UReputation which was found to have used social media to attempt to influence the 2019 Tunisian presidential election. The investigation, dubbed Operation Carthage, unveiled inauthentic Facebook content targeting people in 10 African countries and exerting its influence in multiple African presidential campaigns including Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. This article explores the new trend of

securing access and earning the trust of armed groups as well as civilians.

Conflicts today are increasingly complex but they are the most important targets for COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. Not only will vaccines prevent these mobile populations from becoming hotspots and from developing new variants, but successful campaigns can pave the way for much needed humanitarian aid.

📷: Article Photo - WHO Photo/P. Almasy



[Reported Coup Attempt Complicates an Already-Tenuous Transition in Sudan](#)

Joseph Tucker

The fall of Omar al-Bashir brought anticipation of a new democratic government in Sudan, however the path has not been easy. A recent coup attempt, although foiled, highlights the complications and frustrations felt by those involved in the slow moving transition process.

In this article from the United States Institute of Peace, the author examines several dimensions of the coup attempt including the possible culprits and their motivations, how the attempt affects the perception of the military, and what is needed to ensure the democratic transition remains on track.

Despite the obstacles that the transitional government has met, the author highlights the Sudanese people's rejection of having to choose between freedom and stability, demonstrating a commitment to the transitional process and a democratic Sudan.

'disinformation as a service' and the impact it threatens to have on democracy.

📷: Article Photo - Bryan Denton/The New York Times

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