

Turkish aid agencies in Somalia

Risks and opportunities for building peace



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Executive summary

Turkey's growing role

WITH A GROWING ECONOMY AT HOME and widening diplomatic and commercial ties across the world, Turkey is increasingly considered to be a rising power. Turkey's government has sought to cement this reputation through, among other strategies, active engagement in conflict-affected states, especially in its neighbourhood and surrounding regions. This approach has been developed into the foreign policy concept of 'humanitarian diplomacy'.

Alongside traditional security cooperation and mediation efforts, this engagement has included the provision of humanitarian and development aid. Turkey's official aid budget has increased dramatically in recent years and is delivered through a range of public agencies coordinated by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA). Turkish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are also increasingly operating in conflict-affected states, which the government sees as part of a multi-track approach that draws on both state and civilian capacities.

Turkey and Somalia

Turkey's engagement in Somalia deepened substantially following the 2011 famine. The government has strengthened diplomatic and commercial relations, hosted international conferences on the country, pursued mediation efforts and provided support for Somalia's military and police. Relations have primarily focused on the Federal Government in Mogadishu, though engagement Somaliland and Puntland is growing.

Somalia has been within the top five largest recipients of official aid from Turkey since 2011. Coordinated by TIKA in Mogadishu, where most official aid projects have been focused, assistance has shifted from humanitarian relief to the provision of bilateral development aid primarily focused on physical and social infrastructure, including health and education sectors. Capacity building and direct budget support have also been provided to the Federal Government in line with a focus on statebuilding. Turkish officials are perceived to have been more willing than other donors to provide development aid despite ongoing insecurity, and have built close relations with senior figures in the Federal Government who they believe should have full ownership over development in their country.

After Syria, Somalia is the largest recipient of aid from Turkish civil society. Turkish NGOs in Somalia are varied in size, mandate and history. Also operating mainly within Mogadishu, many have shifted from providing humanitarian relief to providing services and supporting development projects, primarily in the health and education sectors. Many have delivered aid directly through Turkish staff and volunteers on the ground. However, partly due to insecurity, they are increasingly working through Somali partner organisations and focusing on capacity building.

Although this report does highlight a number of areas for improvement, many from Somalia's government and civil society view aid from Turkey positively. This is partially explained by Turkey's identity and cultural proximity to Somalia. However, its development aid is also seen as practical, tangible and efficient, while the scale and quality of Turkey's humanitarian response in 2011 is widely praised. Relative to traditional donors, its aid is commonly perceived to be more effective in reaching beneficiaries because it is directly delivered on the ground rather than remotely from neighbouring Kenya. Indeed, the physical and very visible presence of Turkish aid workers in Mogadishu starting in August 2011 was widely welcomed.

Looking ahead

Turkey is certainly a popular country in Somalia and its aid has underpinned this reputation. But the honeymoon period will not last forever; Turkish aid actors will need to be ready to reassess their roles and keep improving how they engage. As is the case with the country's future as a whole, it will be Somalia's leaders, officials and civil society that ultimately influence the impact of Turkish aid. Nonetheless, an explicit focus by official and non-governmental Turkish aid agencies on making aid work for peace could represent the next progressive step in the evolution of Turkey-Somalia relations. This will require addressing risks that aid inadvertently fuels conflict, and capitalising on a number of opportunities.

Risks that aid fuels conflict

The actions of all international aid agencies operating within the political economy of conflict in Somalia cannot help but impact on it. Turkey is no different. This research has identified several ways in which Turkish aid agencies may have inadvertently fuelled conflict dynamics in Somalia:

- One of the major initial challenges for agencies from Turkey was their limited knowledge of Somalia's conflict dynamics which, combined with a rush to provide large amounts of assistance, may have increased their exposure to risks.
- Despite often managing aid delivery directly, there is little doubt that in certain instances it has been misused or diverted into the war economy, for example through looting by armed actors or manipulation by refugee camp 'gatekeepers'.
- Turkish relief NGOs have been at risk of aid being manipulated for military or strategic purposes as they have been forced to engage with a range of conflict actors – including al-Shabaab – to secure humanitarian access, a common challenge for humanitarian actors in the country.
- Close association between the Turkish government and a political elite within the top echelons of the Federal Government means that aid may have been directed to specific areas based on clan and/or political and economic interests. Elite capture of Turkish aid has potentially boosted the influence of certain groups, inadvertently altering power relations and conflict dynamics.
- Financial aid – notably Turkey's official direct budget support to the Federal Government – has been at risk of affording opportunities for corruption, which itself risks sustaining patronage politics and the abuse of public office. Turkish officials are, however, very aware of the risks of corruption.
- The geographic concentration of aid to Mogadishu has implications for highly-contested regional political dynamics and has risked fuelling perceptions that Turkey is not impartial, undermining its diplomatic credibility to foster peace and reconciliation processes. This is now changing, however, with plans to expand Turkey's field of operations outside Mogadishu.
- The Turkish government's multi-track approach means that the boundaries between official aid and promotion of Turkish business are not always clear. While this approach offers many potential benefits, it can also, at times, be perceived to undermine its

government's stated commitment to aid that is impartial and exclusively focused on Somalia's development.

- The multi-track approach of coordination between Turkish state and civil society aid agencies – at its peak in response to the 2011 famine – still has more to achieve. Levels of coordination and engagement with agencies from other countries are also perceived to be low.

Opportunities to reduce risk and promote peace

Turkey's positive reputation and extensive engagement in Somalia provide a platform for both its government and NGOs to ensure that their aid contributes to long-term peace and stability in Somalia. Many Turkish aid actors are open to explicitly focusing on supporting peace. Looking forward, a number of opportunities stand out in three broad areas:

1. Make aid conflict sensitive

- A conflict-sensitive approach would prove a useful framework for focusing future development projects in this direction while ensuring that all aid risks are managed, at the very least. This will require a deeper understanding of the context based on conflict analysis and wider consultation with varied Somali stakeholders. Turkish agencies will also need to be willing to adjust projects based on assessments of their impact on this context. A range of Turkish aid actors have already demonstrated their capacity to deepen knowledge and adjust projects.
- While opportunities to reduce aid diversion into the war economy exist through the direct delivery approach, as Turkish NGOs begin to reduce their physical presence on the ground, greater attention will need to be paid to preventing these risks as their model of delivery changes.
- Aid projects that Turkish aid actors are currently supporting, whether in the infrastructure, health or education sectors, could be leveraged to indirectly support peacebuilding alongside development objectives. Direct support could be provided for Somali-led peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives, including through sharing Turkish expertise developed in other contexts.

2. Encourage statebuilding that works for peace

- Through existing statebuilding initiatives, Turkish aid actors have an opportunity to put the promotion of accountable, inclusive and legitimate political processes at the centre of this work, while continuing to encourage Somalia's leaders to work towards a sustainable political settlement. Existing capacity-building initiatives that provide training or deploy experts to the Somali government should be further developed. The Turkish government could also take a stronger stand on corruption and make itself more transparent and accountable, especially with regard to its direct budget support.
- Through the strong relationships it has established, and building on prior commitments, the Turkish government could encourage Somali authorities to engage more with civil society and citizens on matters of governance and peace as well as creating spaces and forums for this to happen. Turkish NGOs could also directly assist Somali civil society groups to play more active roles in the process of statebuilding.
- As one of the most sensitive aspects of statebuilding, Turkey's government could play a constructive role in carefully assisting with the establishment of regional administrations that are genuinely inclusive and participatory. Furthermore, a long-term commitment to localised and bottom-up processes of institution building, for example at municipal level, may prove to be a productive investment beyond Mogadishu.

- Positive prospects exist for the rebalancing of aid by the Turkish government to new regions, though this will create its own set of risks and complications that will need to be carefully managed. As Turkish agencies extend their reach into other geographic areas, they should seek to build closer partnerships with effective Somali civil society organisations and work through them rather than risk displacing them.

3. Construct stronger partnerships around peace

- The Turkish government will need to manage carefully its relations with commercial actors, making clear that the principles of conflict sensitivity apply to them as well as aid agencies. Greater transparency over the difference between economic interests and support for Somalia's development would help tackle misperceptions.
- A stronger multi-track partnership between official and civil society actors could be catalysed around the promotion of peace, in the same way it was created in response to the famine in 2011. This could involve Turkish civil society actors shaping a joint strategy, which will help to ensure that it is reflective of a wider set of perspectives and genuinely multi-track.
- Given that they face many of the same challenges, Turkish actors could adopt lessons learned by other donors who have been engaged in Somalia on a significant scale for a sustained period. Meanwhile, other international actors could benefit from understanding how Turkey has managed its recent, ambitious engagement in Somalia, what challenges it has faced and how these have been overcome.

Implications for humanitarian diplomacy

The domestic and international factors that will shape Turkey's rise are hard to forecast. However, it looks set to continue to play a role in conflict-affected states. Its recent experience in Somalia could help further develop the concept of humanitarian diplomacy. Four implications stand out for policy makers:

- There is a need for Turkey to create a much more explicit focus on conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding within its emerging national aid strategy, with its aid agencies being given a mandate to integrate a focus on peace into their objectives and strategies.
- There is a need for the provision of development aid to be more coherent with and closely tied to the other dimensions of the Turkish government's broader engagement in conflict-affected states, including mediation efforts and its role in the security sector.
- Cultivating a two-way partnership of coordination and consultation with Turkish civil society actors, through a shared focus on addressing conflict and insecurity, could help make the multi-track approach an effective reality that maximises the use of Turkey's civilian capacity.
- Alongside establishing strong relationships with host governments, as Turkey has done in Somalia, the focus of engagement should also be on people and the views of a broader set of stakeholders, including civil society groups. In order to create more responsive governance systems over the long run, legitimacy, accountability and inclusiveness should be placed at the centre of support for statebuilding.

Introduction

OVER THE LAST DECADE OR SO, Turkey has become more visible as a global actor. The country's government has pro-actively sought to present Turkey to the world as willing to help promote stability in its neighbourhood and surrounding regions. Countries affected by conflict and instability have come under the focus of its foreign policy and have benefited from Turkey's expanding overseas aid budget. While much of it was focused on the crisis in neighbouring Syria, in 2013 Turkey was the world's third largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance.¹ It is not only assistance from the Turkish government that has become more visible: a plethora of Turkish NGOs are delivering emergency relief and development aid in some of the world's most challenging environments. This increased activity, along with its global expansion of diplomatic and economic relations, has marked Turkey's rise to prominence on the international stage.

This report examines Turkey's recent engagement in Somalia – in particular Turkish aid to the country, including both official assistance and that delivered by NGOs. The impact assessment of individual aid projects is beyond the scope of this study. Nor does it seek to make a broader judgement on the humanitarian or development impact of aid from Turkey as a whole, especially given the differences between the numerous state and non-state actors involved. Instead, the report highlights the potential risks and opportunities presented by Turkey's aid to Somalia. While Turkey's positive reputation and extensive engagement put both its government and NGOs in a strong position to ensure that aid contributes to long-term peace, at the same time Turkish agencies have been at risk of inadvertently fuelling conflict dynamics in Somalia. This report makes a number of recommendations for tapping into opportunities and averting risks.

This topic is significant for several reasons. First, while there are a number of dimensions to Turkey's engagement in Somalia, aid has come to play a central role in the relationship and so merits attention in its own right. Second, in the words of one Somali civil society activist, "Somali people believe that Turkey is the most important partner of Somalia. No other country is more important."² What Turkey is perceived to do in Somalia is highly significant. Somali stakeholders will be the ones who ultimately determine their country's future, but Turkish actors can make a significant contribution to peace through their aid. Third, Turkish officials are currently reviewing the country's aid policy, and Turkish NGOs are expanding their sphere of operations. So, Somalia presents an invaluable case study to deepen understanding of how Turkish aid can be utilised to promote peace and stability in the conflict-affected states where it is increasingly being spent. Finally, Turkey's approach to aid delivery in Somalia has,

¹ The United States and the United Kingdom were first and second respectively. Global Humanitarian Assistance (2014) *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2014* Development Initiatives.

² Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

in some ways, differed from that of the country's traditional donors. Understanding how Turkey engages, and the advantages and disadvantages of its approach, stands to inform engagement by the wider international community in Somalia.

The report is divided into four sections. Section One explores Turkey's rise and its role as an emerging donor. In order to provide a contextual framework, Section Two focuses on conflict dynamics in Somalia and some of the ways in which international aid has interacted with them. Section Three provides an overview of relations between Turkey and Somalia, and in particular identifies several characteristics of Turkish aid to Somalia. Section Four analyses ways in which Turkish aid may exacerbate conflict in Somalia, as well as opportunities for its aid to contribute to lasting peace.

Methodology

The report is based on research conducted in 2014. It draws on a desk review of relevant research papers and reports, as well as media articles. The research team conducted a total of 52 key informant interviews, as well as holding several focus group discussions. Twelve interviews were carried out in Istanbul and Ankara with Turkish diplomats, officials and NGOs. Seven interviews were held in Mogadishu, with Somali officials, politicians, NGOs and activists, alongside a focus group discussion with 20 individuals from various parts of civil society. Nine interviews were held in Garowe, Puntland, with officials, politicians and NGOs, while 14 representatives of civil society participated in a focus group discussion. 15 interviews were held in Hargeisa, Somaliland, with officials, politicians, NGOs and businessmen, as well as a focus group discussion with 18 representatives of civil society and the business community. In Nairobi, eight interviews were carried out with diplomats, donor officials and NGO staff. One interview was also conducted in London. A workshop was held in Istanbul in May 2014 and was attended by 17 representatives from Turkish government agencies, NGOs and research organisations.

1

Turkey's emerging role

Turkey as an emerging global actor

TURKEY IS CURRENTLY the world's 18th largest economy and a member of the G20. Parallel to the country's growing economic ties with the rest of the world, Turkey's diplomatic reach is expanding at a corresponding pace – in 2009, Turkey announced the opening of 33 new embassies alongside an increase in budget and personnel for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Widening its focus beyond its traditional partners in the West, Turkey has pursued closer relations with Asian countries and increased engagement in Africa, for example hosting a Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit in 2008 and watching exports to the continent grow by 520 per cent between 2003 and 2011.³ Turkey's membership of a wide variety of multilateral forums and organisations is illustrative of a diplomatic reach that cuts across usual groupings.⁴ Turkey's overseas aid increased from US\$120 million in 1999 to an estimated US\$3.3 billion by 2013.⁵

Taken together, these strands of Turkey's global reach contribute to its image as a power on the rise. Turkey's rising power status also derives its authority from a Turkish foreign policy that prioritises engagement with its neighbourhood and wider region, encompassing the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Caspian, Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and the Horn of Africa, including Somalia. Turkey's rise has been underpinned by changing dynamics, both internally and externally.

At the global level, the end of the Cold War saw Turkey lose its role as the eastern bulwark of a Western security alliance.⁶ The events of 11 September 2001, the ensuing invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the Arab Uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa saw Turkey's regional landscape – and its role within it – shift significantly.

At the same time Turkey's rise should also be seen against the backdrop of a new emerging global order, characterised by a rebalancing of power between states and the advent of bodies such as the G20 and the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa grouping (BRICS). Overall, emerging countries such as Turkey have come to play bigger roles in international politics, especially at the regional level.⁷

³ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, 'Africa Regional Information', www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa, accessed on 17 October 2012.

⁴ This includes, for example, membership of, observer status or limited participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the BRICS Forum, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

⁵ TİKA (2014) *Turkish Development Assistance 2013*, (Ankara: TİKA), p 9.

⁶ This role was an existential component of Turkish foreign policy since the formative years of the Republic. Reborn from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey, at the time, had very little choice but to adopt a pro-Western foreign policy. The founding fathers of the 'modern Turkey' blamed the Ottoman Empire's demise on its falling behind the Western nations in modern technology and scientific education. Catching up with the West therefore meant building close relations with the industrialised nations of Europe. On the other hand, colonisation of the Middle East by the British and French in the south and the ominous expansion of the Soviet Russia in the Caucasus had made this a viable and rational policy choice.

⁷ Indeed the legitimacy of rising powers as global actors arises partially from their influence in, and support from, neighbouring countries. The self-sufficiency of and cooperation among regional powers to assist with the development of their immediate geographical vicinity, as well as their commitment to the stability of their neighbourhoods, therefore constitute the principal tenets of a phenomenon referred to as 'minilateralism.' See Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*, (New York: Basic Books), 2012.

Equally significant to Turkey's rise have been changes within the country itself. Following the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) landslide electoral victory in 2002, the parameters of Turkish foreign policy have been redefined. On the one hand, the new government sought to demonstrate to the world that Turkey is a proactive player in regional and global politics. On the other hand, the narrative of Turkey's rise has been presented to a domestic audience as the outcome of its successful leadership.⁸ Furthermore, a period of relative political stability and the implementation of critical reforms at home, though still turbulent and incomplete, have bolstered the government's self-confidence in foreign policy. While it has recently slowed, economic growth over the past decade has also underpinned Turkey's rise.⁹

Humanitarian diplomacy and conflict- affected states

Since coming to power in 2002, the Turkish government has sought to strengthen its global role through active engagement in the problems faced by its immediate neighbours and in surrounding regions. The Turkish government has explicitly tried to reinvigorate relations with its wider region through building on historical, cultural, religious, political and economic ties. Turkish policy makers argue that these numerous ties are an asset which place Turkey in a unique position to promote stability. As such, given the international community's interests in this oft-turbulent area, Turkey's position is believed to make it both a regional power and a strategically important global actor.¹⁰

Turkey has provided traditional security assistance to conflict-affected states within and beyond its neighbouring regions. Turkish participation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping rose after the end of the Cold War.¹¹ Turkey has funded training programmes for military and police in numerous countries, including in Afghanistan, where it also provided troops to international forces in the country.¹²

Another way in which Turkey has sought to promote stability in the wider region has been through diplomacy and peace mediation. For example, Turkish policy states that the government "attaches special importance to preventative diplomacy, pioneers a great deal of mediation attempts in a wide geography and endeavours actively for the peaceful settlement of disputes".¹³ Examples include efforts by Turkey to mediate between Israel and Hamas and competing factions within Palestine, attempts to promote Sunni-Shiite reconciliation in Iraq and the hosting of talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹⁴

However, Turkey's attempts to promote stability in its wider region have not always proven successful.¹⁵ Aspirations have often outstretched capacities. Furthermore, policy has been severely tested by events beyond Turkey's control. For example, the Arab Uprisings seriously tested the government's 'zero-problems with neighbours' policy, which prioritises peace with and within neighbouring countries as fundamental to domestic peace.¹⁶ Indeed it is the prolonged crisis in Syria, on Turkey's doorstep, that has perhaps most clearly demonstrated the limits of Turkish influence. Finally,

8 Christie-Miller A, 'Turkey takes the lead in rebuilding Somalia' in *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 June 2012.

9 GDP grew at an average rate of six per cent between 2002 and 2008, increasing to over eight per cent in 2011 following the global financial crisis. Economic interaction with the rest of the world has mattered for this growth. Whereas trade accounted for just 17.1 per cent of GDP in 1980, it accounted for 52.3 per cent by 2008 Evin A, Kirişçi K, Linden, R, Straubhaar T, Tocci T, Tolay J, & Walker J (2010) *Getting to Zero: Turkey, its neighbours and the West Transatlantic Academy*, p 23.

10 Davutoğlu A (2001), *Stratejik Derinlik*, (Istanbul: Küre Yayınları).

11 United Nations Peacekeeping Statistics, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/, accessed on 19 May 2014.

12 'Number of countries requesting police training from Turkey rises', (2012), *Anadolu Agency*, 27 August 2012.

13 Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Resolution of Conflicts and Mediation', www.mfa.gov.tr/resolution-of-conflicts-and-mediation.en.mfa, accessed 11 October 2012.

14 Bayer R & Keyman F (2012), 'Turkey: An Emerging Hub of Globalization and Internationalist Humanitarian Actor?', *Globalizations* 9. 1, p 84.

15 See Aras B (2014), 'Davutoglu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy Revisited' in *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* and Cornell S (2012), 'What drives Turkish Foreign Policy?' in *Middle East Quarterly* Winter 2012, p 24.

16 See, for example, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2014), 'Policy of Zero Problems with Neighbors', www.mfa.gov.tr/policy-of-zero-problems-with-our-neighbors.en.mfa

challenges within Turkey, whether related to armed conflict with Kurdish groups or wider dynamics of state-society relations and the consolidation of democracy, have put limits on the attention given to foreign policy issues and risked undermining the relative domestic stability that has underpinned growing engagement overseas.

These challenges have not dented Ankara's promotion of the concept of 'humanitarian diplomacy'. Policy makers use humanitarian diplomacy to frame Turkey's recent foreign policy and determine its future direction.¹⁷ While still a largely undefined and evolving concept, in policy rhetoric humanitarian diplomacy claims to reject *realpolitik* in international relations and to take people and human dignity as an alternative point of reference.¹⁸ Writing when he was foreign minister, Turkey's current prime minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, argued:

*"On the one hand, this new stance underscores our endeavours to find solutions to crises, in particular within our region. On the other hand, it is a perspective that embraces the whole of mankind and aims to shoulder the responsibility of dealing with the full range of issues occupying the minds and consciences of mankind."*¹⁹

Largely shaped by the events of the Arab Uprisings, the concept of humanitarian diplomacy is understood by policymakers to serve Turkey's national interests and allow it to adapt to contemporary regional and global dynamics. Moreover, it is argued that Turkey deploys a 'multi-track' approach to humanitarian diplomacy, where multiple actors, including NGOs and business associations, shape and implement its foreign policy.²⁰

Turkey as an emerging aid donor

The expansion of Turkish aid is also considered a core component of its humanitarian diplomacy.²¹ Turkey's total official development assistance in 2013 (the last year for which figures are publicly available) was approximately US\$3.3 billion, a more than five-fold increase since 2005.²² As well as being the world's third largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance in 2013, as a percentage of Gross National Income, Turkey was also the world's most generous.²³ However, it has not only been the state which has increased its aid: assistance from Turkish NGOs amounted to US\$280.2 million in 2013, an increase from US\$56.7 million in 2005.²⁴ However, it is important to note that, as with many other emerging donors, Turkey is still an aid recipient.²⁵

Turkey first began to experiment with small development assistance programs in 1985.²⁶ The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), was established in 1992 to deepen ties with the newly-independent Turkic states of Central Asia, where the majority of Turkey's aid was focused.²⁷

Following a decline in Turkey's aid in the 1990s, the current government has been able to draw on economic growth at home to finance increased giving overseas. Aid has

17 'Final Declaration of the Fifth Annual Ambassadors Conference', Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, 3 January 2012, accessed 30 April 2014, www.mfa.gov.tr/final_declaration_of_the_fifth_annual_ambassadors_conference.en.mfa

18 *Ibid.* Also see Keyman F & Sazak O (2014), 'Turkey as a Humanitarian State', POMEAS, Paper No 2.

19 Davutoğlu A (2013), 'Turkey's humanitarian diplomacy: objectives, challenges and prospects,' *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 32 (2013), p 865.

20 Akpınar P (2014), 'Turkey's Peacebuilding in Somalia: The Limits of Humanitarian Diplomacy' in *Turkish Studies* 14 (4), pp 735–757.

21 *Ibid.*

22 TIKA (2013) *Turkish Development Assistance 2012*, (Ankara: TIKA), p 12.

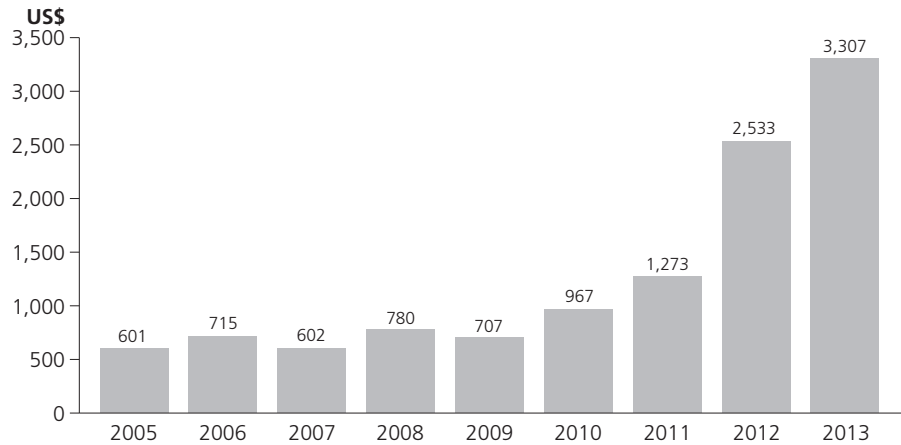
23 The United States and the United Kingdom were first and second respectively. *Op cit.* Global Humanitarian Assistance (2014).

24 *Op cit.* TIKA (2014), p 12 and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2012) *Statistics on resource flows to developing countries*, www.oecd.org/dac/stats/statisticsonresourceflowstodevelopingcountries.htm, accessed on 25 October 2012.

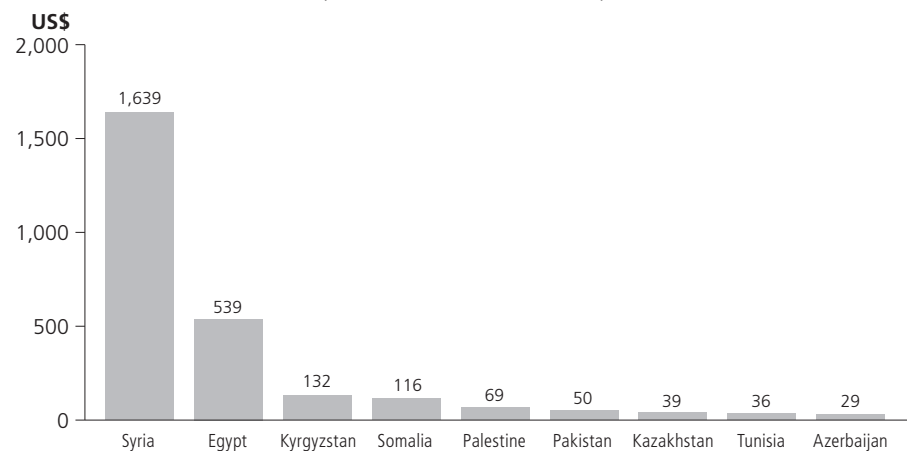
25 For example, while it provided US\$1.2 billion in 2011, the same year it received more aid than ever before, at US\$3.2 billion. See Global Humanitarian Assistance (2014) *Turkey*, www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/turkey

26 Murphy T & Sazak O (2012), 'Turkey's Civilian Capacity in Post Conflict Reconstruction', (Istanbul: Istanbul Policy Center), p 3.

27 Representing nearly Turkey's entire aid budget at the time, in 1992 total aid to the Central Asia peaked at just over US\$1 billion. However, Turkey's aid to Central Asia fell short of its objectives and was reduced. Wheeler T (2013), *Background Briefing: Turkey's Engagement with Central Asia* (London: Saferworld).

Figure 1: Total Turkish Official Overseas Aid (2005–2013, US\$ million)Source: TIK A (2014) *Turkish Development Assistance 2013*, TIK A, p 9

been used as a means to visibly demonstrate that Turkey is helping to address shared global challenges. For example, the new government committed itself to helping meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and gradually increasing assistance as a means to do so.²⁸ Turkey also hosted the 4th UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Istanbul in May 2011, and committed to earmarking US\$200 million available to LDCs annually from 2012.²⁹ Turkey has also indicated that it will make global development one of the key issues on the G20's agenda when it takes over the G20 Presidency in 2015.

Figure 2. Ten largest recipients of Turkish development assistance 2013Source: TIK A (2014) *Turkish Development Assistance 2013*, TIK A, p 11

Over the last few years, Turkey has increased the number of countries it provides aid to, reflecting a wish to widen Turkey's diplomatic reach and network of global partners. For example, aid to African countries was increased alongside an intensified diplomatic engagement with the continent, with 2005 being declared the 'Year of Africa'. The Turkish government has also sought to link aid to Turkey's economic interests. Aid, for example spent on technical assistance or on infrastructure development, is seen as a means to combine economic and development relations for both Turkey and the recipient country.

Aid to conflict-affected states

In line with its broader foreign policy, much of Turkey's aid is channelled to states affected by conflict. According to its MFA, Turkey has purposefully "boosted its overseas development assistance to various countries affected by conflicts and other

²⁸ Apaydin F (2012), 'Overseas Development Aid Across the Global South: Lessons from the Turkish Experience in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia' in *European Journal of Development Research* Vol. 24 No. 2 p 266.

²⁹ Hurriyet (2012), 'Turkey donates \$1.3 billion to poor countries' in *Hurriyet News*, 23 April 2012.

sources of instability”³⁰ Since 2008, TIKA has coordinated official assistance in response to conflicts in Iraq, Georgia and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.³¹ Afghanistan is a prominent recipient of Turkish aid to conflict contexts. Turkey has committed over US\$30 million for two Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which have focused on reconstruction efforts and the provision of health care, education, police training and supporting alternative livelihoods. Through its aid programme, Turkey has also deployed approximately 220 civilian experts and advisors to the country.³² Significant aid was also provided to post-revolution Egypt, Libya and Tunisia following the instability of the Arab Uprisings. More recently, however, conflict closer to home has been of greatest concern to Turkey, with Syria the largest recipient of Turkish aid in 2012 and 2013, mostly in the form of assistance to Syrian refugees in Turkey.³³

Several broad Turkish perspectives on both official and civil society aid to conflict-affected states are worth briefly noting. First, Turkish aid actors, both official and non-governmental, argue that seclusion of relief workers into restricted secure zones or their total removal from conflict zones creates an efficacy problem and stokes distrust among local people. It is perceived that Turkish relief agencies, on the other hand, prefer to live in close proximity to and operate in conflict zones with a high degree of visibility. This is seen to be an important means through which to build trust with national authorities and local communities.

Second, political and ideological conditions to aid are rejected. Turkish officials have stated that “our principle is not to interfere with the domestic policies of certain aid recipients”³⁴ Equally, Turkey’s government claims it does not seek to actively promote democracy overseas.³⁵ While support for statebuilding is central to Turkey’s approach to conflict-affected states, it is seen that this must be apolitical and focused only on the reinstatement of basic state institutions and services, not an imposition of political models.

Third, while financial assistance is an important component of Turkey’s aid, the government stresses that the priority is “technical cooperation for development of institutional capacity and human resources in partner countries”³⁶ Turkey seeks to build capacity, especially of recipient state institutions, by deploying both civil servants and civil society, actors who are seen to command a vast reserve of skills in rebuilding war-torn societies. In line with its multi-track approach, both government agencies and NGOs are understood to play a role in the coordination, diffusion, and implementation of Turkey’s ‘civilian capacity’.³⁷

Official aid modalities

Turkey provides several different types of development assistance: Official Development Assistance (ODA), Other Official Flows (OOF) – which includes financial support for security services that cannot be counted as ODA – private sector flows with a development impact, and aid from Turkish civil society. ODA is itself broken down into social infrastructure, economic infrastructure, production sectors and other flows (including emergency aid, peacebuilding operations, refugees and contributions to international organisations). Despite Turkey’s participation in a broad range of multilateral forums, it continues to provide most ODA through bilateral channels.

³⁰ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs ‘Development cooperation’, www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-development-cooperation.en.mfa, accessed 11 October 2012.

³¹ *Op cit.* Murphy & Sazak (2012).

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Op cit.* TIKA (2013).

³⁴ ‘Interview with Sedar Cam, Director of TIKA’ (2012) *Africa Online* 3 August 2012.

³⁵ *Op cit.* Evin et al (2010).

³⁶ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘Development cooperation’, www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-development-cooperation.en.mfa, accessed 8 May 2014.

³⁷ Civilian capacity can be defined as “non-uniformed civilian individuals or groups deployed overseas to crisis or post-conflict settings by (or coordinated through) their respective governments”. Keating P & Wiharta S (2012), *Synthesis Report of the Baseline Study on Civilian Capacity: A CIVCAP Network Joint Research Project* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs), p 3.

For example, in 2012 only US\$110million of Turkey's ODA was provided through multilateral organisations.³⁸

TIKA is the key agency involved in the delivery of Turkey's overseas aid. Poverty eradication and sustainable development in partner countries have become a priority for TIKA's work, especially following the renewal of its mandate in 2011 under the Office of the Prime Minister.³⁹ It now works in over 100 countries with permanent offices in 30. In general, TIKA plays a number of roles.⁴⁰ First, it has its own internal aid budget which is spent on projects in partner countries, either at the request of its country offices and embassies or following commitments from high-level officials. Second, it implements aid projects that are funded by other government ministries or directly authorised by the Prime Minister's Office.

Third, TIKA coordinates the numerous other government and public agencies that provide ODA.⁴¹ These include the Ministries of Education, Health, Culture and Economy and Commerce, public entities such as TOKI (the Housing Development Administration) and public universities. Through Turkey's Ministry of Interior, the police provide aid in the form of training programmes, while some contributions from the Turkish Armed Forces (largely categorised as 'peacebuilding operations') are considered ODA. In line with its focus on conflict-affected states, emergency aid from Turkey has also increased rapidly. The Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD), established in 2009 as separate entity under the Office of the Prime Minister, provided US\$38.6 million in international assistance in 2012.⁴² Kızılay – the Turkish Red Crescent – is considered a public entity and is the largest disperser of relief ODA from Turkey. However, it also receives public donations, works independently from state institutions and shares several characteristics with NGOs.

Civil society

In the past 20 years Turkey's civil society sector has grown in size, has seen a change in its focus and coverage, and seen a redefinition of its relations with the state. The combination of economic liberalisation and an easing of social restrictions and laws as part of Turkey's candidacy for the EU further widened the space and funding for non-governmental actors willing to establish autonomous associations. The wars in the Balkans, in conjunction with the easing of domestic restrictions, spurred the emergence of humanitarian NGOs working overseas for the first time in the 1990s.⁴³ The 1999 Marmara earthquake in Turkey was a significant event that led to the creation of several new NGOs specialising in emergency response, many of which subsequently began to work outside Turkey.⁴⁴

Just as ODA has grown, a wide range of Turkish NGOs have been able to capitalise on a booming Turkish economy over the last decade and mobilise significant donations from the public. Today an array of faith- and rights-based organisations, professional associations, and special-interest groups are active both nationally and internationally. Despite the diverse character of Turkish NGOs working overseas, many share a focus on humanitarian aid, providing basic social services and development projects (especially in the health and education sectors) and providing technical capacity-building assistance.

³⁸ *Op cit.* TIKA (2013), p 12.

³⁹ Decree no. 656 of 24 October 2011 restructured TIKA with the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the technical cooperation and coordination process. See TIKA, (2012), p 13.

⁴⁰ Interview, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

⁴¹ *Op cit.* TIKA, (2013), p 20.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Kardas S (2013, February 4), *Turkey's Development Assistance Policy: How to Make Sense of the New Guy on the Block*. (Washington: German Marshall Fund).

⁴⁴ See Mitchell W, Zhong Z, & Mizuta J, 'Earthquakes, Geopolitics, and Civil Society: Republic of Turkey and The People's Republic of China Compared', (Paper presented at the 3rd International Geography Symposium – GEOMED, Antalya, Turkey, 10–13 June 2013).

Looking forward

The recent growth in Turkish development and humanitarian assistance, particularly to conflict-affected states, has been a significant element of Turkey's rising power status. Yet the pace at which Turkish official aid programmes have expanded over the last decade has often exceeded the capacity of existing institutions to manage them. Furthermore, the number of government bodies involved has complicated the provision of development aid, which has tended to be driven by ad-hoc and short-term requests rather than longer-term country strategies.⁴⁵ The Turkish government is currently undertaking a process of clarifying and institutionalising its aid policies with the drafting of a new aid law and aid strategy. Turkey's non-governmental aid agencies face their own set of challenges and processes of evolution. With established funding bases, they will no doubt continue to play a visible role overseas. How explicitly they tie themselves to the government's approach is open to question, especially given the changing dynamics of politics at home. However, it is clear that the future of Turkish aid, from both governmental and non-governmental actors, will be greatly shaped by their experiences in conflict-affected states today.

⁴⁵ Interview, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

2

The Somali context

Somalia's conflict

SOMALIA HAS BEEN A THEATRE OF CONFLICT since the fall of the Siad Barre regime in 1991. Clan conferences held in the 1990s led to relative stability in the self-declared but internationally unrecognised independent state of Somaliland and, to a lesser extent, the autonomous region of Puntland. Peace has been more elusive in South-Central Somalia. A Transitional Federal Government (TFG), established in 2004 and backed by troops from the African Union (AU) and neighbouring countries struggled in a conflict with the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) movement, which by 2006 had taken control of Mogadishu. Despite the absorption of some ICU leaders into the TFG following a peace agreement in 2009, al-Shabaab – originally the youth wing of the ICU – continued to violently oppose the government, emerging as the main opposition to the government and controlling large areas of territory.

Alongside the retreat of al-Shabaab from Mogadishu and territorial gains by the government and AU forces in 2011, the ending of the government's transitional period and the election of a new leadership bought renewed optimism to Somalia in 2012. Many felt the country had turned a corner. However, widespread domestic and international support for the government has waned as it has struggled to manage the problems it has inherited. Al-Shabaab has proved able to launch asymmetric attacks, maintain territory and remain a serious security threat, despite the killing of its leader in a September 2014 US airstrike. Continuing to rely on a contested system of proportional clan representation, the government has struggled to make progress in reconciling clans so as to provide a basis for a sustainable political settlement between them.

The mandate of the current government expires in 2016, when elections are scheduled to take place. The constitution has yet to be fully agreed; a “winner takes all” approach to political power and allegations of corruption further exacerbate problems. Disputes surrounding the process of federalism and the negotiation and recognition of regional state authorities in recovered territories in South-Central have created a serious risk of renewed clan conflict. Finally, the continued strength of clan militias poses a major challenge to the creation of state-controlled security and police forces. For the foreseeable short-term future, and even with the ousting of al-Shabaab from the territory it controls, these issues will prove serious obstacles for Somalia as it moves down the path of peace and stability.

Overview of aid to Somalia

External aid has long been a feature of Somalia's internal dynamics. Huge sums were invested following its independence in the 1960s, but with little sustainable impact, leading some to title the country 'the graveyard of foreign aid'.⁴⁶ Somalia's strategic importance during the Cold War period saw aid flow to the country from first East and then West.⁴⁷ Somalia was to become the largest recipient of aid in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s.⁴⁸ But in 1989, with the logic of the Cold War diluted, Western donors suspended aid following the Somali government's heavy-handed repression of an armed uprising in Somaliland.⁴⁹

Following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime and the response to famine in 1992, aid to the country slowly reduced in the nineties, with few aid agencies operating on the ground by 1997. However, the events of 9/11 raised concerns about the potential for so-called 'failed states' like Somalia to become breeding grounds for terrorist groups. These concerns put the country back on the international radar and steered efforts to revive a functioning state, including through aid to back the establishment of the transitional government.⁵⁰

The intensity of conflict in Somalia contributed to humanitarian crises.⁵¹ In 2008 and 2009, 3.2 million of Somalia's estimated nine million people required urgent humanitarian assistance.⁵² Despite increases in aid, insecurity became a major barrier for humanitarian access to populations in need.⁵³ In 2009 and 2010, many aid agencies were forced to reduce greatly or withdraw their humanitarian operations in South-Central Somalia, especially after al-Shabaab declared that they would be considered 'legitimate targets'.⁵⁴

In July 2011, famine led to the largest humanitarian crisis in Somalia for two decades. Nearly 260,000 people died.⁵⁵ Somalia became second-largest recipient of humanitarian aid in the world.⁵⁶ The withdrawal of al-Shabaab's forces from Mogadishu partially increased the space for aid agencies to operate on the ground in the city, where internally displaced persons (IDPs) were arriving in substantial numbers. Nonetheless, high levels of insecurity across much of South-Central Somalia alongside restricted access to al-Shabaab-held areas meant that many aid agencies relied on remote management, with activities often implemented through or in partnership with Somali NGOs, contractors and authorities.⁵⁷

Since 2011 agencies have slowly increased their presence on the ground and begun to move away from remote management, although many continue to support and work through national partners as a means of building local capacity. While the famine was declared over by early 2012, many in Somalia continued to need urgent assistance throughout 2012 and 2013. In July 2014, analysts were warning that a combination of

46 Ayittey G (1994), 'The Somali Crisis: Time for an African Solution', *Cato Institute – Policy Analysis* 205.

47 Geopolitical interests meant that the manipulation and misuse of aid was widely tolerated by foreign donors. During Somalia's conflict with Ethiopia in the late 1970s, relief aid for refugees was diverted by Siad Barre's government and provided to troops while refugee camps were used to recruit, train and encamp them. One US aid monitor in Somalia estimated in 1981 that "two thirds of the aid was stolen by the military right from the docks in Mogadishu or from the refugee camps". See Warsame H A (2011), 'Role of International Aid and Open Trade Policies in Rebuilding the Somali State', *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies* 11 (10), p 55. Also see Menkhaus K (2008), 'International Policies and Politics in the Humanitarian Crisis in Somalia' in *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, Issue 4, October 2008.

48 By the mid-1980s, 100 per cent of Somalia's development budget was funded by aid. See Ayittey G (1994). This aid arguably created a "bloated and unsustainable central government unresponsive to its own people". Menkhaus K (1997), 'US Foreign Assistance to Somalia: Phoenix from the ashes?' *Middle East Policy* 5 (1).

49 *Op cit.* Menkhaus (1997), p 138.

50 Bradbury M (2010), 'State-building, Counterterrorism, and Licensing Humanitarianism in Somalia' *Briefing Paper – Feinstein International Center*, p 4.

51 *Op cit.* Bradbury M (2010), p 8.

52 Warsame H A (2011), 'Role of International Aid and Open Trade Policies in Rebuilding the Somali State', *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies* 11 (10), p 53.

53 In 2008, Somalia accounted for two-thirds of all aid workers killed worldwide; Bradbury (2010), p 6.

54 Their operations were made more complex by US legislation that banned any type of support, direct or not, to proscribed terrorist organisations, including al-Shabaab. See Bradbury (2010), p 6.

55 BBC (2013), 'Somalia famine "killed 260,000 people"' in *BBC News*, 2 May 2013.

56 Global Humanitarian Assistance (2012) *Somalia: International financing investments Development Initiatives*.

57 *Op cit.* Bradbury (2010), p 10 and Seal, A & Bailey R (2013), 'The 2011 Famine in Somalia: lessons learnt from a failed response?' in *Conflict and Health* Vol. 7, No. 22.

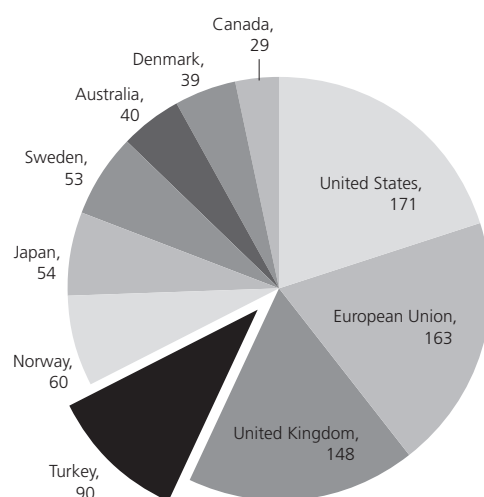
below-average rainfall, rising food prices and insecurity has caused a renewed crisis, raising the possibility of a return to famine conditions.⁵⁸

Figure 3: Humanitarian assistance and other ODA (excluding debt relief) to Somalia, 2002–2012 (US\$ million)⁵⁹

	Total official humanitarian assistance	Other ODA (excluding debt relief)	Total ODA
2002	145	99	243
2003	153	103	256
2004	168	91	259
2005	205	90	295
2006	340	111	451
2007	289	127	415
2008	579	193	773
2009	557	140	696
2010	253	270	524
2011	752	232	985
2012	627	373	1000

As noted, humanitarian aid has not been the only form of assistance to Somalia in recent years. All of Somalia's major donors have included support for development initiatives in their aid allocations to Somalia. For example, USAID supports education, the development of the Somali business sector, livestock and farming, and the creation of an investment-friendly environment.⁶⁰ A range of NGOs have implemented projects in similar sectors. The majority of donor-funded development projects have been implemented alongside or through Somali actors. Many have focused on relatively stable regions of Somalia and Somaliland.

Figure 4: Reported top ten donors of total ODA (2011–12 average), US\$ million⁶¹



Donors have also focused resources on dealing with Somalia's insecurity. A significant amount of funding (albeit often not technically defined as ODA) has been spent on African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces, and on training government military forces. Some donors have also sought to support peace through development programming, for example through creating employment for young men or through

⁵⁸ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit, Somalia and Somalia Land and Water Information Management (2014), 'Food Security worsens as Drought looms in Somalia Emergency unfolding among Mogadishu IDPs', *Early Warning Alert Press Release*, 7 July 2014.

⁵⁹ Global Humanitarian Assistance (2014), *Somalia*, www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/somalia

⁶⁰ USAID (2014), *Somalia Fact Sheet*, www.usaid.gov/somalia/fact-sheets/somalia-fact-sheet.

⁶¹ Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (2013), *Aid Statistics, Recipients at a Glance*, www.oecd.org/countries/somalia/recipientcharts.htm

delivering ‘peace dividends’ to relatively stable areas. Some assistance has been explicitly focused on peacebuilding initiatives, for instance through supporting processes of reconciliation.

Beyond these initiatives, significant donor attention has gone to strengthening the capacity and reach of state institutions. In the 1990s, some support of this kind was focused on the autonomous region of Puntland and the self-declared state of Somaliland.⁶² However, since 2004, attention has been increasingly – though not consistently – focused on the government in Mogadishu. The TFG was initially provided with direct aid for the payment of civil servants, members of parliaments and the security sector.⁶³ Between 2009 and 2012, a variety of donors collectively channelled at least US\$57.8 million to the TFG.⁶⁴ Beyond direct budget support, aid was also spent on technical assistance for institution building at all levels of government. However, despite these efforts, the transitional governments from 2004 to 2012 never managed to develop meaningful capacity.⁶⁵

The international community agreed in September 2013 on a ‘New Deal’ to renew Somalia’s state, promote peacebuilding and catalyse development. With ambitions to move beyond business as usual, the process led to the creation of a Somali Compact, which identified five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals (inclusive politics, security, justice, economic foundations and revenues and services) developed with the new government.⁶⁶ Its aim is for aid to be aligned with Somali-owned and led priorities, and delivered in partnership with and increasingly through government institutions, including through direct budget support. In September 2013, international donors pledged to provide Somalia with US\$2.4 billion of aid over the coming years to support the implementation of the Somali Compact.⁶⁷ However, to date, the release of this funding has been slow due to delays in the development of concrete plans, political uncertainty in the Mogadishu government and concerns about financial management and corruption.

How has aid risked fuelling conflict in Somalia?

Aid and violent conflict are intricately interrelated. The violence and disruption caused by conflict often generates an urgent need for aid, especially humanitarian assistance, while at the same time creating conditions of insecurity that can obstruct its provision. Concurrently, while aid does not cause conflict, research shows “that even when it is effective in doing what it is intended to do – to save lives or promote development – aid too often also feeds into, reinforces and prolongs conflict”⁶⁸

Aid continues to be part and parcel of the political economy of Somalia’s conflict at all levels. Attempts to “restore peace and security to Somalia are critically undermined by a corrosive war economy”.⁶⁹ The diversion of international aid into this war economy is a major risk. Humanitarian aid has been diverted from the point it enters Somalia, including at Mogadishu’s port, where the UN Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG) has alleged more than US\$3.4 million worth of aid was diverted during the

62 Menkhaus K (2014), ‘Aid and institution building in fragile states: The case of Somali-inhabited eastern Horn of Africa’ *WIDER Working Paper 2-14* (002) United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research, p 7.

63 *Ibid.*

64 This figure is likely to exclude significant amounts of undeclared financing from some donors. United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013). Letter dated 12 July 2013 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council – United Nations Security Council, online.

65 *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2014), p 5.

66 A special agreement was made for Somaliland, which identified its own four peacebuilding and statebuilding goals for donor support.

67 *IBTimes* (2013), ‘Somalia To Receive \$2.4 Billion In Aid From Global Donors, As President Promises to Focus on Development’ in *IBTimes* 17 September 2013.

68 Anderson M (1999), *Do No Harm: How aid can support peace – or war* (London: Lynne Rienner), p 37.

69 United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2010). Letter dated 18 July 2011 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council – United Nations Security Council, online, p 7.

2011 famine.⁷⁰ In 2010, the SEMG alleged that a “handful of Somali contractors for aid agencies have formed a cartel and become important powerbrokers — some of whom channel their profits — or the aid itself — directly to armed opposition groups.”⁷¹ According to the SEMG, contracts with Somali businessmen for the delivery of food aid have constituted one of the largest sources of revenue in the country.⁷² Furthermore, aid delivery has in some cases “become a militarized business, with businessmen maintaining their own militias in order to protect their warehouses, convoys and distribution points ... contractors have maintained some of the largest private militias in southern Somalia.”⁷³

The phenomenon of ‘gatekeepers’, who control the delivery of aid to end users, emerged in response to high flows of IDPs to Mogadishu in 2011. While not a new phenomenon and by no means uniform, gatekeepers were often clan-based and linked to local militias and powerful local officials.⁷⁴ Taking control of IDP camps, they were able to charge aid agencies for access, manipulate the delivery of aid, inflate numbers of beneficiaries and divert aid for consumption or sale in local markets.⁷⁵ In these ways, IDPs were essentially used as pawns to attract aid resources. Despite humanitarian imperatives, **by working alongside or through gatekeepers, aid agencies risked reinforcing these power dynamics.**⁷⁶

As is the case in many conflict zones, **access to those in need by humanitarian agencies must be negotiated with armed actors who are in control, whether they are militias, regional authorities or representatives of the federal state itself.**⁷⁷ As the SEMG reported in 2013, “all armed actors in Somalia subjected humanitarian organizations to taxation, illegal roadblocks, intimidation and extortion.”⁷⁸ Extorted aid resources, taxes and fees can create a direct source of material support for the war effort. In 2009, al-Shabaab controlled an immense territory with around 5 million inhabitants, and an Office for the Supervision of the Affairs for Foreign Agencies was established.⁷⁹ Agencies often had to negotiate on regulations, travel permits, registration fees, taxes and the hiring of staff.⁸⁰ Between 2009 and 2012, al-Shabaab banned several agencies and imposed new taxes and conditions on those that were allowed to continue operations.⁸¹ A further risk is that without appropriate safeguards, the way aid is distributed, and where it ends up, may be **unduly influenced to serve military objectives**, and this can create opportunities for conflict actors’ control over local populations.

Aid can also inadvertently lead to violent conflict between different groups or individuals if its distribution is deemed unfair. As one participant in a focus group discussion in Garowe explained, “If there is no equality over who gets it, who does not, then you have problems.”⁸² These dynamics can play out at all levels, ranging from localised intra-clan disputes at community level, conflicts within larger areas or regions, to conflict at the national level. In a state like Somalia, characterised by inter-group competition and weakened local mediating systems, competition over the control of aid and its distribution is tightly bound up with conflict dynamics. One long-time observer of aid to Somalia paints a bleak picture: “The aid system is pretty

70 *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013), p 25.

71 *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2010), p 7.

72 Mogadishu Port has also been a lucrative source of (often illegal) taxes on aid shipments while aid storage fees have long been a profitable business. *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2010), p 7 – emphasis added.

73 United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2010), p 61.

74 Human Rights Watch (2013), *Hostages of the Gatekeepers: Abuses against internally displaced people in Mogadishu*, Somalia Human Rights Watch, p 5.

75 United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2012). Letter dated 11 July 2012 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council – United Nations Security Council, online, p 310.

76 *Op cit.* Human Rights Watch (2013), p 7.

77 *Op cit.* Bradbury (2010), p 9.

78 *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013), p 31 – emphasis added.

79 *Op cit.* Bradbury (2010), p 9.

80 Jackson A & Aynte A (2013) ‘Al-Shabaab engagement with aid agencies’ *ODI Humanitarian Policy Group – Policy Brief 53*, p 2. One aid worker was told by al Shabaab that “we are the government of this area and responsible for your security; unfortunately we do not have enough to pay our soldiers so you should pay us for providing you with protection.” Bradbury (2010), p 9.

81 See: Jackson & Aynte (2013), p 3, and *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013), p 31.

82 Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

rotten as a whole. The majority of organizations are part and parcel of local power structures. This has implications for conflict with regard to who has control over the aid tap, who receives assistance and who doesn't."⁸³ According to some analysts, the state sits at the centre of these dynamics:

*"Since 1960, one of the most important roles of the Somali state has been as a catchment point through which foreign aid is funnelled into the country. This unintentionally reinforced a 'Mogadishu bias' in modern Somali political culture, a centralization of political life and competition in the capital, the point at which foreign aid entered the country and was allocated."*⁸⁴

Aid captured through control of the state has been used to maintain a system of patronage politics along clan lines. In many cases lucrative state functions have become privatised or even criminalised as the "pursuit of power and profit has become indistinguishable."⁸⁵ It appears that these problems have proved difficult to bring under control despite the arrival of a new administration in 2012. The SEMG argued in 2013 that "the misappropriation of public resources continues in line with past practices"⁸⁶ and that the "system inherited by the new government is in many ways beyond its control, while at times political decisions and appointments have exacerbated conditions of corruption."⁸⁷ Although heavily disputed, it has gone as far as to allege that "some 80 per cent of withdrawals from the Central Bank are made for private purposes and not for the running of government."⁸⁸ In some regards, those in control of the state have often focused on attaining further external resources rather than raising domestic revenue, building a social contract with society or establishing systems of governance appropriate to Somalia's context.

There is a clear logic to support for statebuilding in Somalia, where state failure arguably lies at the root of insecurity, humanitarian crisis and underdevelopment.⁸⁹ Several factors have made such support especially challenging, including a uniquely protracted period of collapse, Somalia's political culture, a low domestic revenue base and numerous vested interests in continued state weakness.⁹⁰ But continued aid for top-down **statebuilding as currently conceived may simply entrench the economic and political logic of the status quo.** Indeed, some point to the example of Somaliland where there appears to be an inverse relationship between levels of aid and the success of institution building.⁹¹ **Some of the most successful cases of institution building in Somalia have come from the ground up at the local level, autonomously driven by cooperation between diverse sets of official and non-state actors.**⁹²

A wider problem looms for statebuilding in Somalia. Governments that have appeared on paper to represent national unity have often in fact been "coalitions of a small number of clans and factions" that are not representative, responsive and accountable enough to foster national unity in practice.⁹³ One group's control of state institutions is perceived to be at the expense of others, especially given the state's history not only as a catchment point for foreign aid but as a tool of violent oppression and predatory behaviour. The stronger the state, the higher the stakes. The federal model emerged as a response to these concerns, but the lack of clarity around formation and division of powers means that **statebuilding will remain an inherently conflict-generating process until it is based on a strong political settlement deemed legitimate by the majority of**

⁸³ Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014.

⁸⁴ *Op cit.* Menkhaus (1997), p 127.

⁸⁵ *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2012), p 12.

⁸⁶ *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013), p 23.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p 8.

⁸⁸ In November 2013, Somalia's Central Bank Governor resigned citing concerns over the scale of corruption. *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013), p 8 and *Rueters* (2013) 'Insight: Graft allegations test West's ties to Somali president' in *Reuters* 14 February 2014.

⁸⁹ Menkhaus K (2006), 'Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building and the Politics of Coping' in *International Security* 31 (3), p 93.

⁹⁰ *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2014), p 2.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* p 12 and Menkhaus (2006), p 97.

⁹² *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2014), p 12.

⁹³ *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2006), p 97.

Somalia's stakeholders. Furthermore, any lasting settlement will require far deeper levels of reconciliation on a range of issues such as inter-clan grievances for past and ongoing acts of violence and disputes over historical rights to land.⁹⁴

Given the absence of any meaningful central state, donors in the late 2000s approached statebuilding through a 'building blocks' approach that concentrated attention and resources on the regional authorities that did exist. This may minimise some risks associated with support to a central state while creating opportunities for more ground-up approaches to statebuilding. However, **dynamics that play out at the centre, including those related to the capture of institutions by certain groups, also play out at the regional level while regionalism itself creates its own set of winners and losers.**

Any assessment of the risks associated with delivering aid in Somalia needs to be qualified. First, there is no doubt that aid has benefited many people in Somalia. Vital humanitarian aid has saved countless lives. Many development projects have undeniably improved the livelihoods of their beneficiaries. Efforts to support institutions have in some cases been successful, especially through long-term support to hybrid systems of governance at the local level.⁹⁵

Second, the majority of those involved in the delivery of aid are well aware of the risks and have taken actions to reduce them. For example, humanitarian and development actors have reduced risks of diversion through the use of third-party monitoring systems and improved the management of IDP camps, and 27 agencies have endorsed guidelines for risk management best practice in an attempt to harmonise NGO approaches to risk mitigation.⁹⁶ The UN has created a Risk Management Unit intended to tackle problems such as those associated with the use of contractors. Principles and guidelines for aid agencies to 'do no harm', so critically important in a context like Somalia, are taken seriously by many agencies and have underpinned difficult decisions to withdraw humanitarian support.⁹⁷ Donors and aid agencies have sought to adopt conflict-sensitive approaches to their development projects, for example through supporting community-level governance structures to manage the distribution of aid benefits. Indeed Somali stakeholders frequently point to examples of how aid can help to promote peace, for example through bringing together fighting communities or the creation of viable alternatives to the war economy.⁹⁸ Donors providing aid to the Federal Government have tried to use mechanisms such as fiduciary agents or proposed joint financial management systems as a means to reduce opportunities for manipulation.

There is, of course, room for considerable improvement. Full and consistent commitment to principles and guidelines to 'do no harm' remains patchy while a "culture of denial and secrecy continues to exist that prevents the humanitarian community from sharing bad experiences, learning hard lessons and developing common tools".⁹⁹ Meanwhile, some in the aid community believe that "INGOs have hundreds of processes and checks and balances but aid still gets diverted".¹⁰⁰ And, as one donor official admits, "we still have so much to learn about being conflict sensitive in Somalia. It is a huge challenge."¹⁰¹ Increased awareness as to the risks of support for statebuilding has proved hard to translate into practice, meaning that "many institution-building

⁹⁴ *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2006), p 77.

⁹⁵ *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2014), p 12.

⁹⁶ Somalia NGO Consortium (2014) *Guidelines for risk mitigation for NGOs working in Somalia/Somaliland* Somalia (Nairobi: NGO Consortium).

⁹⁷ See for example: Somalia NGO Consortium (2014), *Guidelines for risk mitigation for NGOs working in Somalia/Somaliland* Somalia (Nairobi: NGO Consortium), OECD (2011) *2011 Report on International Engagement in Fragile States: Somalia Republic* (Paris: OECD), ISAC (2008) *Joint Operating Principles for Somalia – Working Document* Inter-Agency Standing Committee Somalia, Collaborative Learning Projects (2008) *Do No Harm in Somalia* (Cambridge: CDA).

⁹⁸ Focus group discussions in Mogadishu (25 February 2014) Garowe (15 February 2014) and Hargeisa (9 February 2014).

⁹⁹ *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013), p 32.

¹⁰⁰ Interview, Nairobi, 19 February 2014.

¹⁰¹ Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014.

projects continue to possess similar features of past projects”, including with regard to aid to the Federal Government in Mogadishu.¹⁰²

Despite their shortcomings, such efforts to reduce risk highlight a third and crucial point, which is that the impact of aid on conflict dynamics is greatly determined by the way in which it is delivered. A range of Somali actors, who are by no means merely passive recipients of aid, play active roles in shaping the processes of its distribution in the country. Nonetheless, a deeper understanding of the context and a greater willingness to accept their own responsibilities will put those outside actors providing aid in a much better position to reduce risks of conflict and maximise opportunities to build peace. This applies to aid from Turkey, one of Somalia’s increasingly influential donors.

¹⁰² *Op cit.* Menkhaus (2014), p 9.

3

Turkey's engagement in Somalia

Overview of Turkey-Somalia relations

ALTHOUGH FAIRLY PERIPHERAL, officials from both Turkey and Somalia frequently reference the fact that historical relations between the countries were established during the Ottoman period.¹⁰³ While Turkey first established an embassy in Mogadishu in 1979, provided some development aid in the 1980s and took part in the UN missions of the early 1990s, it is not until relatively recently that the modern Turkish Republic has deepened its engagement in Somalia.

The Turkish government initially engaged in Somalia through multilateral forums. Turkey's recent engagement in Somalia dates back to January 2007, when Turkey's prime minister met with Somali leaders on the sidelines of an AU summit and offered assistance.¹⁰⁴ It was around this time that UN officials also started to actively encourage Turkish officials to engage in the country.¹⁰⁵ Turkey was subsequently involved with the Djibouti Peace Process that started in 2008 and offered aid to Somalia at a donor conference in Brussels in 2009. In May 2010 engagement deepened substantially when Turkey co-hosted a conference in Istanbul together with the UN to address the transition crisis in Somalia. In August 2011 Turkey hosted a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) where US\$350 million of humanitarian aid was promised for Somalia.

In August 2011, against this backdrop and at the height of Somalia's famine, a 200-person delegation including then Prime Minister Erdoğan visited and toured Mogadishu; he was the first leader from outside Africa to do so in nearly two decades. The delegation included members of the cabinet, aid workers, businessmen, cultural envoys and the prime minister's family. During this trip, significant aid commitments were announced as well as the establishment of direct flights from Turkey to Mogadishu and the re-opening of an embassy, one of the first for a non-African country in decades. The symbolic and high-profile visit demonstrated Turkey's intention to expand and strengthen the role it plays in Somalia.

Somalia has not fallen off the list of foreign policy priorities for the Turkish government. In January 2015 Erdoğan, now Turkey's president, returned to Mogadishu, and a series of new agreements between the Turkish and Somali governments were struck.

¹⁰³ In the sixteenth century Somalia was aided by Ankara in combating encroaching Portuguese and Ethiopian advances. In the seventeenth century, sultanates along Somalia's coast had nominal links with the Ottomans, with mosques built at the time still standing in parts of Somaliland, Interview, Hargeisa, 10 February 2014 and ICG (2012), 'Assessing Turkey's Role in Somalia', *Africa Briefing No. 92*, International Crisis Group, *Ibid*, p 2.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁵ Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014.

Reflecting on the efforts of both Turkish officials and citizens, President Erdoğan stated, “We have come this far thanks to their devoted efforts, sacrifices and service ... Seeing that our promises are being fulfilled and results have begun to emerge further pleased us. The developments since our last visit give us hope for the future.”¹⁰⁶

Official relations

Several factors underpin the Turkish government’s engagement in Somalia. One is the belief in Turkey’s solidarity with the developing world and the moral imperative of assisting a country in crisis. Turkey’s policy in Somalia has been framed by its leaders and diplomats in such ethical terms, with its Foreign Minister stating in 2013 that “Turkey’s approach to the Somali crisis is one of the visible examples of Turkey’s human-oriented foreign policy”.¹⁰⁷ Second, efforts to promote peace and stability through mediation, security sector support and aid in countries such as Somalia reflect the role that foreign policy makers have sought to create for Turkey. In these ways, Somalia is another case for Ankara to demonstrate that, concomitant with its rise as a global actor, it is contributing to addressing shared international challenges. For example, in 2011 Turkey’s prime minister dedicated half of his speech to the UN General Assembly to helping Somalia, stressing that “It is our greatest wish that the leadership demonstrated by Turkey in this direction will set an example for the entire international community”.¹⁰⁸ Finally, Turkey’s engagement in Somalia should be seen in the context of efforts to deepen relations in Africa, which intensified in 2005. Somalia sits at the centre of Ankara’s Africa policy, acting as a bridge to deeper engagement elsewhere on the continent.¹⁰⁹

The Turkish government’s policy towards Somalia has been defined by five key objectives:

- Ending Somalia’s international isolation
- Providing humanitarian aid
- Rebuilding infrastructure and supporting development projects
- Helping to restore security
- Promoting political consensus and statebuilding as well as fostering unity¹¹⁰

These objectives have primarily been pursued through numerous visits of high-level leaders between Turkey and Somalia and sustained through their respective embassies.¹¹¹ While official exchanges have taken place with authorities in Puntland and Somaliland, the primary focus of the diplomatic relations was initially with the Federal Government in Mogadishu. According to one observer, the initial Turkish position on Somalia was that “they did not want to be part of the process of the division of Somalia and did not want to be seen as encouraging a more divided and split country”.¹¹² In addition, Somaliland authorities were themselves slow to engage with Ankara. Furthermore, the political sensitivities of relations between Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Garowe have made a more balanced engagement challenging for Turkey.¹¹³ Nonetheless, Turkish officials are well aware of the need to establish closer ties with other authorities and a consulate has been opened in Hargeisa.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (2014) “We have served our Somali brothers as required by our brotherhood; our solidarity will continue” – Press Release, 25 January 2015.

¹⁰⁷ Davutoğlu A (2013), ‘Turkey’s humanitarian diplomacy: objectives, challenges and prospects’, *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 32, p 867. Also see ‘Final Declaration of the Fifth Annual Ambassadors Conference’, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, January 3, 2012, www.mfa.gov.tr/final_declaration_of_the_fifth_annual_ambassadors_conference.en.mfa and Murphy T & Woods A (2014), Turkey’s International Development Framework Case Study: Somalia (Istanbul: Istanbul Policy Center) and Davutoğlu A (2013), ‘Turkey’s humanitarian diplomacy: objectives, challenges and prospects’, *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 32, p 866–67.

¹⁰⁸ Erdoğan, Recep Tayyip 2011, *Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey: Speech to the 66th UN General Assembly* (New York: United Nations), 22 September 2011.

¹⁰⁹ Özkan M (2014), *Turkey’s Involvement in Somalia: Assessment of a State-Building in Progress* (Ankara: Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research), p 18.

¹¹⁰ *Op cit.* Akpınar P (2013), p 740.

¹¹¹ Both TFG President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and serving President Hassan Sheikh have made frequent trips to Turkey while various Turkish officials have subsequently followed up on the prime minister’s visit to the country in 2011.

¹¹² Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014.

¹¹³ Interview, Hargeisa, 10 February 2014.

¹¹⁴ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

In May 2012, Turkey hosted a second conference on Somalia in Istanbul. As well as seeking to put Somalia on the international agenda, the event aimed to establish a common path beyond the TFG's mandate. It brought together key regional and international governments, the main Somali political groupings, business leaders, delegates from Somaliland and over 300 civil society representatives, including 135 traditional elders who played a role in selecting Somalia's post-transition political representatives. The Turkish Ambassador stated in a speech to Somali civil society that "[u]nlike the previous conferences, the Istanbul conference will not be attended only by the politicians but by civil society as well".¹¹⁵

Though at times perceived to be acting unilaterally, Turkish officials openly recognise that Turkey is limited in what it alone can accomplish in Somalia.¹¹⁶ The roles Kenya and Ethiopia play in Somalia, aside from their AMISOM troop commitments, are acknowledged¹¹⁷ and engagement with the regional organisations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the AU is maintained on a frequent basis.¹¹⁸ After the second Istanbul conference, Turkey joined the informal Somalia contact group that among others includes the EU, US and Ethiopia. Turkey was one of the countries that participated in the Brussels conference that endorsed the Somalia New Deal Compact, and that co-chair the New Deal working group on security with the US.

Non-state actors and the multi-track approach

Beyond the government's official engagement, Turkish businesses and civil society organisations are also active in Somalia. As with Turkish engagement elsewhere on the African continent, Somalia also has a commercial draw as a relatively under-exploited and potentially profitable market for Turkish companies. Some in Turkey's business community are eager to "penetrate the Somali market and play a lead role in reconstruction and economic development".¹¹⁹ Turkish officials state that they have actively sought to promote commercial relations between the two countries.¹²⁰ This appears to have paid off: Turkish exports to Somalia have increased from US\$8.5 million in 2008 to nearly US\$44 million in 2012.¹²¹ The Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey (TUSKON) is active in Somalia, where it is encouraging its members to invest and has created the Somali-Turkish Business Association. A small number of Turkish companies have been involved in the construction sector for several years.¹²² Turkish company Favori received in September 2013 a government contract to manage Mogadishu's airport, which has been renovated by Kozuva, another Turkish company.¹²³ Another Turkish venture, Al Bayrak, has been offered a 20-year contract for the management of its main sea port – though the former has been held up by political opposition to the deal.¹²⁴ UK-Turkish firm Genel Energy started exploring for oil in Somaliland in 2012 but pulled out after 18 months, reportedly due to security concerns.¹²⁵

One major Turkish civil society organisation, the Human Rights Foundation (IHH), has been working in the country since 1997. Turkish charities played a significant role in creating popular awareness in Turkey of Somalia's 2011 famine, mobilising celebrities and the media while collecting donations from the public and leading the charge to engage. According to one Turkish analyst, in many ways "the Turkish state was trying

¹¹⁵ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 7.

¹¹⁶ Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2014.

¹¹⁷ For example, Turkey and the government of Kenya agreed recently on a security pact for Somalia. *Somalicurrent* (2014) 'Kenya-Turkey Agreed to Stabilize Somalia' in *Somalicurrent* 15 April 2014.

¹¹⁸ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹¹⁹ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 13.

¹²⁰ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹²¹ Turkish Statistical Institute, 'Foreign Trade Statistics Yearbook 2012', www.turkstat.gov.tr/Kitap.do?metod=AnaKategori&KT_ID=4&KITAP_ADI=Foreign+Trade

¹²² *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 3.

¹²³ *World Bulletin* (2015), 'Turkish President inaugurates hospital in Somalia' in *World Bulletin* 25 January 2015.

¹²⁴ *Garowe Online* (2014), 'Federal Parliament postpones vote on Seaport Management Deal', in *Garowe Online* 3 April 2014.

¹²⁵ Interview, Hargeisa, 12 February 2014.

to catch up with civil society”.¹²⁶ Indeed, while foreign policy issues receive relatively little public attention within Turkey, its government has also sought to respond to the views of the electorate and the campaigns of civil society. It was during the Ramadan period, when public awareness and civil society mobilisation around the Somali famine was at its peak in Turkey, that Prime Minister Erdoğan visited Somalia.

Turkish NGOs are often quite independent; however, they have sought to coordinate efforts with the government. On the other hand, the Turkish officials seek to present the role of non-state actors as part of a well-coordinated national effort that draws on Turkey’s civilian capacity and is illustrative of the multi-track approach to humanitarian diplomacy.¹²⁷ While a multi-track approach can be an important asset for combining humanitarian interventions with a wider peacebuilding and conflict transformation agenda, the realities of the coordination between the Turkish state and a wide range of NGOs are explored more critically below. Nevertheless, many Somali officials and civil society actors perceive Turkey’s government, NGOs and businesses as components of a wider Turkish package, even if this approach might need further refining and modification to benefit the conflict transformation and reconstruction in Somalia.

The visible presence of Turkish actors on the ground in Mogadishu has reinforced positive views of Turkey among many in Somalia. Through the actions of a range of Turkish state and non-state actors, Turkey has developed significant soft power. At the same time, the very identity of Turkey arguably makes such engagement much easier. Cultural proximity can be a comparative advantage in some circumstances, and Somali and Turkish actors frequently point to religion, empathy and closeness to community as an advantage for Turkey. The perception of Turkey as a democratic country with high rates of development has also contributed to Somalis’ positive feelings about Turkey’s role in the country. Turkey is broadly perceived to be distinct from groupings of Western states that have traditionally been engaged in Somalia with limited results. In these ways, according to one analyst, it “is seen as a country to emulate rather than an external power to be feared”.¹²⁸

Engagement on peace and security

Turkish nationals and aid projects have been caught up in Somalia’s conflict dynamics. Al-Shabaab has attacked Turkish aid convoys and, in October 2011, detonated a bomb killing 70 people, many of them waiting to collect the results of scholarship examinations as part of a Turkish aid programme.¹²⁹ Turkish officials were directly targeted in a car bombing in July 2013. Following this attack, an al-Shabaab spokesman argued that the “Turkish are part of a group of nations bolstering the apostate regime and attempting to suppress the establishment of Islamic Sharia”.¹³⁰ In January 2015 al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for a car bomb targeting a hotel where Turkish officials were preparing for President Erdoğan’s imminent second trip to Mogadishu.¹³¹

While cognisant of the importance of wider conflict dynamics in Somalia, Turkish officials see al-Shabaab as the most important threat to the country’s overall stability. One argues that without its presence, Somalia would likely return to much higher levels of peace and be able to overcome clan politics: “If we get rid of the terrorism then it becomes a normal democratic country and people will work through this ideological way.”¹³²

¹²⁶ Interview, Ankara, 26 November 2013.

¹²⁷ For example, its Foreign Minister has argued that “Turkey has sent its most active civil society groups and aid organizations into Somalia, to be able to demonstrate that we share a common fate with Somalia”. ‘Somali peace foremost priority, says Turkish FM’ *Somaliland Press* 27 May 2012. Also see Murphy & Woods (2014).

¹²⁸ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 2.

¹²⁹ Al Jazeera (2013), ‘Turkey’s moves in Somalia unnerve al-Shabaab’, in *Al Jazeera* 8 August 2013.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Sheikh A & Omar F (2015), ‘Bomb explodes near Turkish delegation in Somalia day before President’s visit’ in *Reuters*, 22 January 2015.

¹³² Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2014.

In general, Turkish actors engaged in Somalia are sceptical of international and regional interventions that rely on military tools and ignore the complex social and political relations between al-Shabaab and civilians.¹³³ Turkish diplomats state that the Somali national security forces must be improved to counter the threat of al-Shabaab and to reduce the country's dependence on troops from neighbouring countries, which is seen as a source of provocation for al-Shabaab fighters and supporters.¹³⁴ As such, while Turkey's government has provided some funds for AMISOM,¹³⁵ it has prioritised its support for Somalia's own military and police forces.¹³⁶ Turkey's 2010 bilateral treaty with Somalia includes military cooperation and, in 2011, it provided US\$300,000 for a UN-managed fund for transitional security institutions.¹³⁷ In August 2012, Turkey announced the creation of a US\$5 million trust fund for security sector reform and, just days after new President Hassan Sheikh Mohamed's inauguration, a military delegation was sent to Turkey to discuss the rebuilding of the army, with a new agreement signed in February 2014.¹³⁸ Somali police have also been trained in Turkey on a regular basis since 2012 and there are plans for this training to take place in Mogadishu.¹³⁹

Turkey's support for Somalia's security sector has not been without controversy. AMISOM has played a key role in the implementation of Somalia's security sector reform programme and "AU officials consider Turkey's training of Somali police as a duplication",¹⁴⁰ The SEMG has sought more information from Turkey on its support for the security sector and raised concerns over adherence to the reporting requirements of the arms embargo in force on Somalia and Eritrea.¹⁴¹ One of the greatest risks regarding the diversion of assistance to Somalia from other donors has historically related to security assistance, with weapons, vehicles, and equipment given to support security provision repeatedly falling into the hands of militias, and soldiers trained by international actors repeatedly defecting to various factions, and thus directly feeding into ongoing violence.¹⁴²

Turkish officials believe that a military approach to al-Shabaab must be accompanied by constructive dialogue with the group's members.¹⁴³ While promoting conflict resolution is a substantial part of Turkish diplomatic engagement in Somalia, the extent to which the government has directly engaged on mediation with al-Shabaab is unclear.¹⁴⁴ Following the armed opposition group Hizbul Islam's announcement of a split from al-Shabaab in September 2012, and its openness to talks with the government, one Somali report stated that Turkey had played an important role.¹⁴⁵ Turkish diplomats admit that efforts have been made to engage with al-Shabaab and there have been reports that it sought at one point to establish lines of communication between militant groups and the TFG.¹⁴⁶ Nonetheless, it appears that these ambitions have not met with great success. Turkish efforts to mediate have not only involved its government: a Turkish NGO also attempted to mediate independently between al-Shabaab forces

¹³³ Interview, Istanbul 25 February 2014.

¹³⁴ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹³⁵ *Op cit.* Global Humanitarian Assistance (2012).

¹³⁶ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹³⁷ *Op cit.* Global Humanitarian Assistance (2012).

¹³⁸ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 14. See RBC Radio (2014), 'Ministry of Defence signs an agreement of military support with Turkish Defence Ministry' in *RBC Radio* 28 February 2014.

¹³⁹ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014. Also see, for example: 'Turkey accepts 60 police recruits', *Somaliland Press*, 30 June 2012.

¹⁴⁰ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 14.

¹⁴¹ United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2013). Letter dated 12 July 2013 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council – United Nations Security Council, online.

¹⁴² Bryden M, 'Somalia Redux', (CSIS, August 2013), pp 9–10, citing M Bryden et al, 'Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1811 (2008)', (New York: UN Security Council), 10 Dec 2008, p 12.

¹⁴³ Interview, Istanbul 13 February 2014. Turkish officials, however, are quick to differentiate between social and political integration, highlighting that for rehabilitated al-Shabaab members to be a part of the political system they would have to first recognise the legitimacy of the Federal Government. Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2013.

¹⁴⁴ Turkey's then Foreign Minister noted in 2012 that with "our advantage and special relationship with Somalis of all stripes, Turkey could play a role in mediating conflict parties in Somalia". Cited in Aynte A (2012), 'Turkey's Increasing Role in Somalia: An Emerging Donor?', *Al Jazeera Centre for Studies Report*, p 4.

¹⁴⁵ 'Turkish diplomacy revitalises Somalia: Will Hassan Sheikh now capitalise?' *Mareeg* 25 September 2012 /www.mareeg.com/fidsan.php?Turkish-Diplomacy-Revitalizes-Somalia:-Will-Hassan-Sheikh-Now-Capitalize?&sid=25911&tirsan=3. Accessed on 22 October 2012.

¹⁴⁶ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014. *Op cit.* Aynte (2012), p 4.

and local communities outside of Mogadishu in 2011, but the TFG stopped the process and banned the NGO from working on the issue.¹⁴⁷

The main focus of the Turkish government's mediation efforts has been on facilitating talks between the Federal Government and authorities from Somaliland.¹⁴⁸ While some in Hargeisa perceive that Ankara has a bias towards Mogadishu and is pushing a unification agenda, senior leaders from Somaliland involved in the talks believe that it is neutral.¹⁴⁹ For their part, Turkish diplomats stress that their only aim is to support reconciliation and confidence building between the two political authorities.¹⁵⁰ Several rounds of talks have been held in Turkey and a secretariat has been established in Istanbul. However, and despite positive statements and agreements made between both parties, tangible outcomes have so far been few and far between.

Turkish officials have stated their intention to encourage constructive dialogue within South-Central Somalia, between the Federal Government and emerging regional administrations. The strengthening of relations between these areas is seen as a priority by the Turkish government for the peace and cohesion of the country.¹⁵¹

As is the case with many of Somalia's donors, it is also argued by Turkish diplomats that the Federal Government must be able to provide alternative social services into areas where al-Shabaab previously had control. It is believed that extending its authority beyond Mogadishu in this regard will be vital to building the state's legitimacy and filling the vacuum created by al-Shabaab's absence.¹⁵² Final agreement and implementation of the constitution and a federal structure of governance is seen as an important priority in this regard.¹⁵³ Finally, Turkish diplomats have on several occasions emphasised that national reconciliation will be required for the country to move forward.¹⁵⁴

Turkey's aid to Somalia

The 2011 Somalia famine was an unprecedented moment in Turkish aid history, representing a mobilisation of public donations and coordination of activities between civil society and the state that had not been seen before. Private sector donations from Turkey in 2011 reportedly amounted to US\$57 million while the state donated US\$94 million, making Somalia its fourth largest aid recipient that year.¹⁵⁵ Around 500 Turkish aid workers and volunteers poured into the Mogadishu from August 2011 to deliver humanitarian aid that included provision of water, food and non-food items in IDP camps.¹⁵⁶

Official aid

Aid to Somalia has by no means been a one-off response to a single crisis: in 2012, it was the second largest recipient of emergency aid and the fifth largest recipient of overall official aid, valued at US\$86.6 million.¹⁵⁷ This rose to US\$116 million in 2013, making Somalia the fourth largest recipient again.¹⁵⁸ In 2012 it remained the number one destination of TIKA's own internal budget, accounting for 30.5 per cent of the

¹⁴⁷ Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

¹⁴⁸ While there is no open armed conflict between the two administrations, disputes over Somaliland's status risk escalating, especially around trigger issues such as the demarcation of borders, the management of natural resources (such as oil and fishing rights) and the proposed 2016 elections. Interview, Hargeisa, 10 February 2014.

¹⁴⁹ Interview, Hargeisa, 12 February 2014.

¹⁵⁰ Turkish officials emphasise that Somaliland's people must be able to decide for themselves whether to be part of a Federal State or to be an independent sovereign state. They have suggested that the eventual inclusion of civil society members and business people will be necessary for social reconciliation between the regions. Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁵¹ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁵² Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2014. Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁵³ Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2014.

¹⁵⁴ See for example Davutoğlu A (2013), 'Statement by Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey at the Somalia Conference, 7 May 2013, London' – Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

¹⁵⁵ See: TIKA (2011), *Turkey's Development Assistance Report*, (Ankara: TIKA), and Harte, J. (2012, December). 'Turkey Shocks Africa', *World Policy Journal*, 29 (27, 32) DOI: 10.1177/0740277512470926.

¹⁵⁶ Reuters (2012), 'Turkey tries out soft power in Somalia', *Reuters* 3 June 2012.

¹⁵⁷ *Op cit.* TIKA (2013), p 57.

¹⁵⁸ *Op cit.* TIKA (2014), p 9.

agency's total spending.¹⁵⁹ In 2013, however, Somalia received 10.7 per cent of TIKA's aid, a smaller proportion than that allocated to Palestine and Tunisia.¹⁶⁰

Working under the auspices of the Turkish embassy, TIKA is the key implementing body for official assistance to Somalia. Originally focused on the delivery and coordination of humanitarian aid, TIKA has gradually diverted its focus to sustainable development projects as the famine started to ease. In 2012, the majority of TIKA's budget was allocated to water and sanitation (44 per cent), economic infrastructure (16 per cent), education (15 per cent), health (13 per cent), and government and civil institutions (seven per cent).¹⁶¹ This allocation changed in 2014, with economic infrastructure taking the lion's share (70 per cent), followed by health (24 per cent) and government and civil institutions (four per cent).¹⁶²

TIKA has identified its priorities in Somalia in multiple ways, including through scoping missions, direct consultation with the Federal Government and other Somali actors, and its engagement in multilateral forums. A key input, which continues to guide TIKA policy today, is a list of potential development projects identified by a delegation of government experts sent to Mogadishu in 2011.¹⁶³ New project proposals received directly from the Somalia Federal Government are sent to TIKA's headquarters for authorisation together with a feasibility assessment. The TIKA office in Somalia has significant influence in programme funding decisions and mode of implementation.

Projects are mostly implemented in partnership with Somalia's Federal Government ministries or local authorities and, in some cases, with Somali NGOs. Public-private partnership is also sought, with TIKA sub-contracting some of the programme implementation to both Turkish and Somali companies. TIKA uses fast-track tender processes in Somalia. It also carries out monitoring and evaluation of its aid projects, although it is not clear whether external and independent project evaluation constitutes part of the project cycle.

TIKA has the mandate to coordinate all the aid flows coming from other Turkish public agencies. The most prominent in Somalia are the ministries of education and health and Turkey's religious, water, airports and housing agencies. Nearly all official humanitarian aid is delivered through Kizilay (see below).

To date, Turkey's official aid projects have been implemented largely in Mogadishu, with little if any of the funding provided to the Federal Government passed on to the regions beyond its administrative control. With the opening of TIKA offices in Hargeisa in 2014, and potentially also in Garowe, Turkey's aid distribution is expected to change. Turkish officials have also expressed intentions to open offices in Baidoa and Kismayo, subject to the security situation.

Although it is not clearly spelled out in publicly available policy papers, Turkey claims that its approach represents a unique model of aid delivery in Somalia. In the words of the last Turkish Ambassador to Somalia, Kani Torun, "our aim is to show a different model can work in getting help to the people."¹⁶⁴ Turkey perceives the over-bureaucratisation of some of the traditional aid delivery systems as a hindrance to its effectiveness. However, while the simplification of processes is desirable in the sector, it would appear that Turkey is using simplification interchangeably with ad-hoc interventions, with some officials admitting that Turkish aid actors are more willing to act first and then organise processes afterwards.¹⁶⁵ This raises further questions as to whether aid delivery is guided by a coherent model. Nonetheless, Turkish officials

¹⁵⁹ *Op cit.* TIKA (2013), p 24.

¹⁶⁰ *Op cit.* TIKA (2014), p 245

¹⁶¹ *Op cit.* TIKA (2013), p 275.

¹⁶² *Op cit.* TIKA (2014), p 275.

¹⁶³ Interview, Ankara, 28 May 2014.

¹⁶⁴ *Op cit.* Reuters (2012).

¹⁶⁵ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

identify what they believe to be several defining characteristics of Turkey's approach to aid delivery in Somalia.

One perception among Turkish officials is that Turkey has been more willing than other donors to invest aid in development projects alongside humanitarian responses and despite ongoing instability. In the words of one, the "West is waiting for Somalia to be stable to invest in. But Turkey is investing in stability."¹⁶⁶ Aid for the development of physical infrastructure is considered to be a high priority. Turkey's ambassador has suggested that "without it, there can be no development in the country."¹⁶⁷ One of TIKA's largest development projects – and one of the few to be implemented in Somaliland as well as in Puntland and South-Central Somalia – has been focused on water infrastructure. Turkish aid has also supported repaving roads and renovating the airport in Mogadishu. Health has been a significant focus area of development aid. US\$35 million has been spent on the renovation of Digfeer hospital in Mogadishu, now named the Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital. The Turkish government has also paid for the running of two field hospitals in the city staffed with Turkish doctors. In 2015, Turkey committed to building 10,000 houses for low-income groups in Mogadishu.¹⁶⁸ In addition to physical infrastructure, Turkish aid has also supported social infrastructure development, for example in the education sector through scholarships to study at Turkish universities, with 440 places offered in 2012, and small amounts of aid provided to universities and schools within Mogadishu.¹⁶⁹ Capacity building initiatives have also been supported through agricultural or fishing training centres.

Another characteristic of Turkish official aid that is similar to some other emerging donors is the preference for engaging in direct bilateral aid practices rather than supporting multilateral bodies to implement projects or deliver its aid. Turkish officials argue that this is a considerably faster and more effective way to deliver aid. Additionally, they suggest that the approach encourages greater transparency and trust between Somali leaders and Turkish actors.¹⁷⁰ Indeed close interpersonal relations with key government officials are understood to play a central role in Turkey's approach.¹⁷¹

A third characteristic identified by Turkish officials is that, also similar to other emerging donors, Turkey seeks to challenge approaches that circumvent the role, ownership and active involvement of the central state in development management. Consistent with the principles of the Somali Compact and the approach of other donors, the empowerment of Somalia's leadership in directing the development of their country is perceived as a key means for furthering the principle of national ownership.¹⁷² National ownership is promoted through promoting the role of Somali authorities in managing aid flows, building horizontal partnerships with the Federal Government and/or relevant local authorities that are based on consultation, and ensuring approval of programmes by the Somali authorities before implementation.

Statebuilding, largely understood as the improvement and expansion of the operations of the state, whether at federal or local level, is also seen by officials as a central component of Turkey's approach in Somalia. It is understood to have a 'multidimensional' impact, connected to Turkey's approach to ownership and engagement. Building the

¹⁶⁶ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁶⁷ Cited in Daily Nation (2012) 'Why Turkish aid model is proving to be a success in Somalia and elsewhere' in *Daily Nation* 1 April 2012.

¹⁶⁸ *Op cit.* Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (2014).

¹⁶⁹ *Op cit.* TIKA (2013), p 77.

¹⁷⁰ *Op cit.* Murphy & Woods (2014).

¹⁷¹ For example, during the period he served as prime minister in the Federal Government, close relations were established with the current president of Puntland, who came to power in January 2014. Officials argue that these close relations mean that Turkey is now in a position to deliver aid projects in the region. Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁷² For example, Turkey's Foreign Minister argued at the 2013 London conference that "from now on Somalis should be in the driving seat of all future endeavours concerning Somalia". Cited in Turkish Foreign Ministry (2013), Statement by Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey at the Somalia Conference, 7 May 2013, London, www.mfa.gov.tr/statement-by-mr._ahmet-davutoglu._minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-turkey-at-the-somalia-conference._7-may-2013_-london.en.mfa. Also see Turkish Foreign Ministry (2012), The Second Istanbul Conference on Somalia, Final Declaration, 1 June 2012, Istanbul, www.mfa.gov.tr/the-second-istanbul--conference-on-somalia_-final-declaration_-1-june-2012_-istanbul.en.mfa

capacity of the state to deliver services, especially in the health and education sectors, is seen as crucial to delivering development to Somali citizens. This in turn is seen as strengthening the legitimacy of the state. Finally, statebuilding is seen as a means to make Somalia self-sufficient.¹⁷³

Support for statebuilding is provided through training for Somali officials. For example, the Turkish MFA has trained Somali diplomats, while courses on urban policy have been delivered to officials from local municipalities in Somalia. Some 52 Turkish doctors and managers working at the Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital will train their Somali counterparts and turn the hospital over to full Somali control within five years. In 2012, the Turkish Ambassador also announced that Turkey would support improved financial management through support for a revenue authority, tax regulation authorities and a financial auditing system – though these have yet to be implemented.¹⁷⁴ It is unclear how many experts the Turkish government has sent to support the capacity of the Federal Government. Officials recognise that insecurity in Mogadishu has been a challenge for their deployment.¹⁷⁵

Another form of support has been through financial support. For example, Turkey's government has committed US\$85.6 million for the operating costs of the Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital over the next five years.¹⁷⁶ Turkey has also provided direct budget support. Between June and December 2013, the Turkish government provided the Somali Central Bank with US\$4.5 million in cash every month. According to Turkish officials, this was provided to meet a critical shortfall in funding for salaries of Somali public servants and security forces.¹⁷⁷ In response to media reports in February 2014 suggesting otherwise, the Turkish government confirmed that it would continue to provide cash aid to the Federal Government.¹⁷⁸ Withholding investment in Somalia's state until sufficient levels of checks and balances are established within the governance system is seen as an impediment to the statebuilding project by Turkish authorities, who take the view that external financial support can help create the institutional mechanisms necessary to manage corruption.¹⁷⁹

In line with moves in this direction by a range of traditional and emerging donors, Turkey's approach to development in Somalia aims to complement its economic interests for the mutual benefit of both countries. As such, the promotion of Turkish investment and businesses in Somalia is seen to complement aid.¹⁸⁰ As one Turkish diplomat argues, "the best aid is trade".¹⁸¹ In these ways, officials see the role of business actors as being part of the government's unique multi-track approach to Somalia.

Turkish NGOs

Turkish NGOs are also seen as a central component of the country's multi-track approach.¹⁸² Many of those working for NGOs share this sentiment, arguing that their role is perceived by Somalis as part of a wider package of Turkish assistance to the country. Although frequently pointed to as a major challenge for Turkish aid actors, government agencies and civil society actors have at times coordinated aid among them.¹⁸³ This coordination was at its zenith in 2011 in response to the humanitarian emergency, and there have subsequently been a number of joint development projects between Turkish official agencies and NGOs.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷³ *Op cit.* Aynte (2012), p 4.

¹⁷⁴ Torun K (2012), 'Role of Turkey in Fragile and Conflict Affected States – The Case of Somalia: From humanitarian aid to development assistance, 2011–2012' speech delivered at World Bank, Nairobi, 27 November 2012.

¹⁷⁵ Interview, Ankara, 28 May 2014.

¹⁷⁶ *Op cit.* TIKa (2013), p 28 and World Bulletin (2015).

¹⁷⁷ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁷⁸ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2014), *Press Release Regarding Turkey's Aid to Somalia* – No. 49, 16 February 2014.

¹⁷⁹ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁸⁰ Warah R (2012, April 1), 'Why Turkish aid model is proving to be a success in Somalia and elsewhere', *Hiraa Online*.

¹⁸¹ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

¹⁸² Indeed TIKa includes statistics on non-state assistance in its annual reports on Turkey's global aid.

¹⁸³ Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2014.

¹⁸⁴ Interview, Ankara, 19 July 2013.

A wide variety of NGOs are present in Somalia. Kizilay, which is part of the International Red Cross–Red Crescent Movement, and is considered non-governmental like its counterparts elsewhere, is a major Turkish aid actor in Somalia, receiving some US\$60 million from the government in 2011 for delivery of emergency assistance.¹⁸⁵ While it was fifth for the Turkish government, Somalia was the largest global recipient of aid from Turkish NGOs in 2012, with US\$26.41 million provided.¹⁸⁶ This figure increased to US\$36.1 million in 2013.¹⁸⁷ The most active NGOs in Somalia are IHH, Deniz Feneri, Yardım Eli (Helping Hands), Yeryüzü Doktorları (Doctors Worldwide) and Kimse Yok Mu ('Is Anybody There?'), one of Turkey's largest NGOs. Smaller aid associations, such as the Aegean International Health Federation (ESAFED), are also active in Somalia.

Turkish NGOs focus aid on a range of sectors. As noted, Kizilay is active in the delivery of humanitarian aid, running the Jazira IDP camp in Mogadishu and delivering a wide range of services to the approximately 12,000 inhabitants of the camp in 2011 and 2012.¹⁸⁸ During the famine period Turkish NGOs provided a significant amount of the aid in the Jazira camp, though they also worked in other IDP camps in Mogadishu.

Turkish NGOs are active in the health sector. Some of this has been focused on infrastructure, with three hospitals being built in Mogadishu by private NGOs. They have also supported numerous training initiatives for Somali health workers in Turkey, sometimes in partnership with official Turkish agencies. Health services, such as cataract operations or health clinics, have been provided directly to Somali beneficiaries. A wide range of Turkish NGOs have implemented projects in the education sector. For example, Kimse Yok Mu has earmarked roughly US\$7 million for Somali students to study in Turkey until 2022 while in 2013 IHH opened one of Somalia's biggest schools in Mogadishu.¹⁸⁹ The Nile Foundation runs three schools in Mogadishu and one in Hargeisa. A number of Turkish NGOs also provide vocational training, with IHH for example supporting an agriculture course.

Turkish NGOs have supported infrastructure projects in addition to the construction of schools and hospitals. For example, Kizilay, in partnership with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, has established a concrete plant in Mogadishu to support road construction. A number of Turkish NGOs are involved in the provision of water infrastructure. For example, Kimse Yok Mu spent an estimated US\$2 million on water wells in 2013.¹⁹⁰ IHH is currently building 96 wells in the country and plans to open an irrigation channel in the South-Central region to help farmers.¹⁹¹

Turkish NGOs also distribute charitable donations. For example, Yardım Eli sponsors some Somali families with US\$100 dollars a month.¹⁹² Significant donations are made during Ramadan and Eid. For example, Kimse Yok Mu states that it has given roughly US\$3.7 million worth of donations for the Eid festivals from 2011 to 2013.¹⁹³

Given the significant variation in their size, histories and mandates, it is difficult to define clear commonalities in approaches to the delivery of aid by Turkish NGOs. Nonetheless, several factors are worth noting.

One is the fact that, like Turkish official aid, the majority of assistance from Turkish NGOs has been delivered in Mogadishu. Another is that many Turkish NGOs have adopted what they call a 'direct aid' approach, meaning that it is Turkish aid agencies, manned by Turkish staff, who directly oversee the management of aid distribution on the ground, from its arrival in Somalia to its delivery to final beneficiaries. Even

¹⁸⁵ *Op cit.* Global Humanitarian Assistance (2012).

¹⁸⁶ *Op cit.* TİKA (2013), p 77.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.* and TİKA (2014), p 9.

¹⁸⁸ Kizilay, 2013. Katalog: 37–46.

¹⁸⁹ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2013, Also see 'Permanent Projects from IHH for Somalia'. Humanitarian Relief Foundation, www.ihh.org.tr/en/main/news/2/permanent-projects-from-ihh-for-somalia/1085

¹⁹⁰ Kimse Yok Mu (n.d.) *Kimse Yok Mu Somalia Budget 2011–2013*. (Istanbul: Kimse Yok Mu).

¹⁹¹ 'Permanent Projects from IHH for Somalia'. Humanitarian Relief Foundation, www.ihh.org.tr/en/main/news/2/permanent-projects-from-ihh-for-somalia/1085

¹⁹² Interview, Istanbul, 10 March 2014.

¹⁹³ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

though some other international NGOs deliver aid directly or have done in the past, notably in the 1980s and 1990s, many Turkish aid workers believe that this approach makes them distinct from others. It is seen as a means of ensuring that their aid reaches beneficiaries. For example, reflecting on their response to the famine, one Turkish NGO worker notes that “all our workers were Turkish. We did this to control our own aid and budget”.¹⁹⁴ A notable aspect of the direct aid approach is the reliance of several Turkish NGOs on rotations of Turkish volunteers, who are coordinated by one or two permanent professional staff on the ground.¹⁹⁵

On the whole, the direct aid approach has in the past precluded delivering aid through local NGOs. However, this is not uniform; as with the NGO sector across the globe, modalities vary. At least one large NGO, IHH, has no permanent office in Somalia; its one to two permanent staff work through a Somali partner organisation, Zamzam. Moreover, other NGOs have worked with local partners to deliver relief aid to areas which are not accessible by foreign organisations and, in ad-hoc cases, local partners have been used to implement projects in areas where Turkish NGOs do not have a permanent presence, including in Puntland and Somaliland.

As the security situation continues to be highly volatile and the number of attacks against Turkish projects and aid workers has increased, the number of Turkish organisations working through local partners has increased and they also increasingly rely on national staff members to implement programmes. With this, the capacity building for national organisations has been included into activities. Trainings and skills transfer through partnerships for both state and non-state actors has started to be highlighted by NGOs as a contribution to ending aid dependency and promoting sustainable development.

Turkish NGOs stress that they adhere to humanitarian principles, namely impartiality, independence and humanity, in the delivery of humanitarian aid. While variation exists between NGOs, many seek to work through or alongside Somali government authorities in the design and delivery of development projects. For example, one explained that when his NGO first arrived in Somalia in 2011, “we connected with the President of Somalia first, he told us who to engage with”, leading to a relationship with figures in the Ministry of Health who advised them on the location of projects.¹⁹⁶ Others have had similar experiences and, at the very least, most NGOs appear to seek official Federal Government support for their projects from relevant ministries.

Different approaches exist to the identification and assessment of potential aid projects. For example, Kizilay sent an assessment team to Somalia shortly before launching its response to the 2011 famine, where it consulted with the Somali Red Crescent Society, while Kimse Yok Mu draws on a network of Turkish volunteers in the country, usually linked to faith-based schools, to inform decision making on where aid should be delivered. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of aid projects also varies between organisations.

Aside from Kizilay, most NGOs are largely dependent on public donations in Turkey, exemplified by the large public campaign on Somalia’s famine launched by civil society in 2011. Public fundraising is often done for earmarked projects, reducing the flexibility to respond to changing needs. Turkish NGOs have also indicated that as attention has turned to Syria, public donations for Somalia have started to decrease.

¹⁹⁴ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

¹⁹⁵ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

¹⁹⁶ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

4

Risks and opportunities ahead

A warm response

TURKEY'S AID HAS BEEN ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED by many Somalis. Distinct from Somalia's traditional donors, the image of Turkey – as an emerging economy with historic and cultural links to the country – partially explains this. Somalis frequently affirm this while Turkish aid workers also suggest that their cultural proximity has helped in connecting with local communities. Nonetheless Somali stakeholders stress that the 'how' matters just as much as the 'who' in explaining the popularity of Turkish aid. Several commonly-held perspectives on why Turkish aid has been popular are worth noting.

The humanitarian response to the 2011 famine by Turkish aid agencies has attracted considerable praise. For example, one Somali working for an international aid agency argues, rightly or wrongly, "while the response was mainly in Mogadishu, when it comes to reach and saving lives [Kizilay] were effective. No other agency provided as much."¹⁹⁷ The director of the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has stated that Turkish NGOs "are providing the best service in the best way possible. The Turkish-run camps are the ones with the highest standards."¹⁹⁸ Pointing to the lives saved, one Somali politician suggests that "generation after generation will remember what Turkey has done".¹⁹⁹

There appears to be an appetite among many Somalis for the type of development projects that Turkey has supported, especially with regard to physical infrastructure. For example, one civil society activist argues that "traditional donors can learn from Turkey about providing aid that is tangible and practical, aid that a common person can see".²⁰⁰ The relative scale of this type of assistance, and that it is delivered despite ongoing insecurity, is also a common topic for praise. Reflecting on aid from other donors, which he described as slow and bureaucratic, one Somali researcher adds that aid from Turkey is "quick, relevant and impactful".²⁰¹ As with its humanitarian assistance, Somali stakeholders often stress that Turkish development projects are of high quality, for example singling out Turkish schools for praise.²⁰²

While hard to corroborate, one local official in Mogadishu estimates that Turkish projects have already created 2,000 skilled and unskilled jobs through building

¹⁹⁷ Interview, Nairobi, 18 February 2014.

¹⁹⁸ Today's Zaman (2014), 'UN Issues praise for Kimse Yok Mu, other Turkish Charities' in *Today's Zaman*, 2 February 2014.

¹⁹⁹ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁰⁰ Interview, Hargeisa, 10 February 2014.

²⁰¹ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁰² Focus group discussion, Mogadishu, 25 February 2014. Also see Today's Zaman (2014), 'Turkish schools in Somalia won 22 medals in 2 years' in *Today's Zaman*, 14 February 2014.

schools, hospitals, constructing roads and rubbish collection.²⁰³ However, some still believe that “they don’t hire as much as they could, they bring their own people from the cleaner to the engineer.”²⁰⁴ In addition, one researcher argued, “direct aid also risks undermining government legitimacy, which needs to be built for long-term stability. As such it needs to be the Somali government that is seen to be delivering development, not outsiders.”²⁰⁵ While other factors certainly play a role, including security, these are both reasons why other donors have tended to move away from the direct delivery of their aid and instead direct it through Somali actors.²⁰⁶

Nonetheless, the direct delivery model employed by Turkish aid providers is consistently highlighted as a reason for their effectiveness by Somali stakeholders. Somalia’s ambassador to Turkey suggests that “Somalis perceive Turks different than any other nation, as we refer to Turks as our brothers. The major reason behind this is due to Turkey implementing aid directly to Mogadishu.”²⁰⁷ Pointing to Turkey’s rehabilitation of the Digfeer hospital in Mogadishu, one Somali observer argues that “if this hospital works and is managed by Turkey for five years it will be the best hospital in East Africa.”²⁰⁸ Numerous stakeholders interviewed for this study believed that a larger proportion of Turkish aid was likely to reach its intended beneficiaries because Turkish agencies were on the ground administering its delivery.

Turkish officials further argue that the presence and visibility of Turkish aid workers on the ground in Mogadishu during the response to the famine contributed to the emergence of greater hope and optimism in Somalia.²⁰⁹ One aid worker, based in Nairobi, admits that “a Turkish doctor cycling down a Turkish-built road to work in a Turkish clinic was welcomed by Somalis because it was hugely important for hope. Somalis don’t need people hiding.”²¹⁰ Even though relative improvements in security were likely a key factor, some believe that the decision of officials and aid workers from other countries to relocate from Nairobi to Mogadishu was influenced by Turkey’s example.²¹¹

Ahead of President Erdoğan’s second visit to Mogadishu in January 2015, his counterpart, President Hassan, summarised the official response to Turkey’s aid:

“Turkey has shown the way in developing a holistic, on-the-ground partnership with Somalia that has supported us in growing according to a nationally-led and owned agenda ... Turkey did not hold back, waiting for stability before it invested. Instead, it invested to achieve it. Where other international partners chose to plan their interventions from elsewhere, Turkey put its people on the ground in Somalia to maximise the efficient use of their human and planning resources in support of their financial resources. Turkish aid workers delivered their aid directly to the beneficiaries, to maximise impact.”²¹²

Alongside perceived improvements in security in 2011 and the election of a new government in 2012, Turkey’s engagement in Somalia was part of a changed international narrative on the country’s future. Glowing media reports, visiting foreign dignitaries, international conferences and packed flights to Mogadishu all suggested Somalia was turning a corner. The reality is, sadly, significantly less rosy. With continued violence and political instability continuing to undermine the emergence of the state,

²⁰³ Interview, Mogadishu, 24 February 2014.

²⁰⁴ Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁰⁵ Interview, London, 25 February 2014.

²⁰⁶ The Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital could prove to be a significant test of whether Turkey’s government is able to transfer substantial capacity to Somali actors through its aid projects. It should not be forgotten that in the 1980s, US\$40 million of aid “was spent to build a brand new hospital equipped with sophisticated machinery and operating rooms, in Corioley, south of Mogadishu.” Reportedly due to the lack of training for Somali medical workers and staff, the hospital soon “fell to pieces”. *Op cit.* Ayittey (1994).

²⁰⁷ Cited in Daily Sabah (2014) ‘Turkey’s Aid Unlike Others, Says Somalia’s Envoy to Ankara’ in *Daily Sabah Newspaper*, 12 November 2014.

²⁰⁸ Interview, Nairobi, 18 February 2014.

²⁰⁹ Interview, Ankara, 21 February 2014.

²¹⁰ Interview, Nairobi, 20 February 2014.

²¹¹ Interview, Nairobi, 22 February 2014.

²¹² President Sheikh Mohamud (2015), ‘Turkey’s role in Somalia: A model of solidarity in tough times’ in *Daily Sabah*, 24 January 2015.

the corner has not yet been turned. Long-term observers of Somalia are quick to point out that past periods of similar optimism have been punctuated by cycles of violence and instability.²¹³

Over the past 20 years, many international actors have invested significant effort and resources into delivering humanitarian relief and trying to support development and stability in Somalia. But, against this background, others assert that Turkey's approach is pioneering, and speak "of pragmatism, of hope, of a country that dares to aim for development before the outcome of the political unrest is settled".²¹⁴

It is possibly too early to validate many of the positive claims about Turkish aid or accurately judge how it has shaped Somalia. It is beyond the scope of this research report to assess the impact of individual aid projects or to make a broader judgement on the humanitarian and development impact from Turkish aid as a whole, especially given the differences between the multiple state and non-state actors involved. Nonetheless, it is possible to highlight some risks that have arisen in the Somalia context as well recommendations on opportunities for Turkish policymakers, officials and civil society involved in the distribution of aid to ensure it promotes peace.

Risks that aid drives conflict

The provision of aid is affected by conflict dynamics. In the case of Turkey, this has been illustrated in multiple ways. In 2012 militiamen fired on a crowd in an apparent attempt to control IDPs receiving aid from Kizilay.²¹⁵ In another incident in 2012, TFG forces and district clan militias clashed in Mogadishu over a dispute related to a Turkish aid consignment.²¹⁶ In other cases, al-Shabaab has directly targeted Turkish actors and aid projects, arguing that Turkey's support for the government makes it a legitimate target.

It is clear then that Turkey's aid is bound up with and affected by Somalia's conflict dynamics. Indeed, the provision of aid is not only affected by conflict dynamics, but aid can itself impact on these dynamics, for better or for worse. All aid actors operate within the political economy of conflict in Somalia, rather than being detached from it, and Turkey is no different. With this in mind, several risks can be identified, some of which are common to all aid actors, some of which apply more specifically to Turkey.

Limited knowledge of conflict dynamics

One of the major initial challenges for aid agencies from Turkey was their limited knowledge and experience of Somalia's conflict dynamics, a fact that is acknowledged by Turkish officials and NGO workers.²¹⁷ Many first became involved in Somalia as part of the large-scale response to the 2011 famine. One Somali working for an international NGO notes, "They did not consider a lot of things. For them it was just to reach people and support them."²¹⁸ One Turkish NGO worker reflects that "we were not experienced enough in both our humanitarian and development aid; we did not have a strategy and we did not do good evaluations."²¹⁹ A rush to provide assistance combined with a weak understanding Somalia's conflict may have increased the risks of aid further fuelling the conflict.

213 Interview, Nairobi, 18 February 2014.

214 *Op cit.* Aynte (2012), p 4.

215 *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2012), p 298.

216 *Ibid.*

217 Validation workshop, Istanbul, 28 May 2014, focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

218 Interview, Nairobi, 18 February 2014.

219 Validation workshop, Istanbul, 28 May 2014.

Risks of diversion

There are indications that in certain instances Turkish aid has been diverted into the war economy. In some cases it has simply been looted, as was the case in September 2012 when al-Shabaab looted several trucks containing Turkish food aid.²²⁰ Diversion has occurred in other ways too. For example, one Turkish aid worker described how his agency discovered that flour they were distributing was being immediately sold on the market.²²¹ Focus group discussants in Mogadishu claimed that in some instances when Turkish agencies used Somali contractors, aid was diverted.²²² As one Somali NGO worker noted, “During the last two years, business people intervened in the [Turkish] aid for their own interests. They have tried to divert Turkish aid assistance to the market before it reaches beneficiaries.”²²³

Turkish aid workers also recount the immense logistical challenges experienced by all aid agencies when operating in IDP camps, where numbers often exceeded expectations and the absence of identification cards made preventing the diversion of aid extremely difficult.²²⁴ The SEMG observed in 2012 that gatekeepers in charge of IDP camps purposefully destroyed makeshift shelters in order to obtain new tents from Turkish NGOs. These tents were then “often given or sold to members of the community close to the district officials, not to the IDPs ... When tents were in fact delivered to IDPs, the occupants were monitored to ensure they kept the tents in good condition for eventual resale.”²²⁵ Indeed, as with other donors rushing into Mogadishu, IDP camps became assets that were controlled by militias and gatekeepers to attract Turkish aid.

Engagement with local authorities and conflict actors

In some cases, Turkish NGOs’ access to IDP camps required the permission of local authorities who were understood to have important clan ties by aid workers.²²⁶ While Turkish NGOs state that they did not directly pay for access, they did in some cases have to employ individuals suggested by local authorities in order to develop relations.²²⁷ Although it is not known how widespread this practice is, in circumstances where local authorities do not always coordinate services according to needs, such incidents potentially entrench the local power relations which emerge from but also sustain conflict dynamics.

This is also illustrated by Turkish humanitarian agencies who, like many other international NGOs, have on occasion had to engage with al-Shabaab or other conflict actors beyond Mogadishu in order to get humanitarian access to areas of South-Central Somalia.²²⁸ While it may be justified for humanitarian purposes, through such practices all aid agencies, including those from Turkey, risk increasing the power and legitimacy of conflict actors, and being manipulated for military or strategic purposes.

Capture of aid by elites

One criticism levelled at Turkish aid agencies is that many have become too closely associated with a specific political elite within the top echelons of the Federal Government.²²⁹ It is difficult to substantiate the variety of perspectives about the relationships between Turkish aid actors and different actors within the government. Furthermore,

²²⁰ *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2012), p 305.

²²¹ Interview, Istanbul, 10 March 2014.

²²² Focus group discussion, Mogadishu, 25 February 2014.

²²³ Interview, Mogadishu, 22 February 2014.

²²⁴ Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²²⁵ *Op cit.* United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2012), p 312–313.

²²⁶ Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²²⁷ Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²²⁸ Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014.

²²⁹ Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014, Interview, Mogadishu, 24 February 2014. Also see ICG (2012), p 8 and Saferworld (2012) *Mogadishu Rising? Conflict and governance dynamics in the Somali capital* (London: Saferworld). Some go so far as to suggest that access by Somalis to certain Turkish aid actors was, at least initially, captured and controlled by elite groupings for political ends. While such claims are extremely difficult to verify, it is worth noting that Somali researchers engaged in this study faced challenges in accessing Turkish officials and NGOs in Mogadishu for interviews. Another person from a Somali NGO goes as far as to argue that “Turkish NGOs have their own gatekeepers in Mogadishu. If you want to visit them and meet with them then you must be related to their gatekeepers. This is also true of TIKA. I tried to meet with TIKA, to contact them, but you need to know the right people. You need a letter from the Prime Minister. This is a very big gate!” Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

opinions over who should and should not have authority over Turkish aid projects are obviously highly politicised. Nonetheless, it is clear that Turkish officials have sought to develop personalised relations with key government figures who have played a role in shaping Turkey's official aid. This was the case for instance with the 2011 delegation of experts to identify potential development projects, which was coordinated with the Office of the President.²³⁰ As noted, Turkish NGOs have also engaged closely with government authorities in order to decide on the allocation of their aid.

Engagement with Federal Government officials is of course not unique to Turkish aid agencies, especially with the advent of the New Deal. In many regards it is necessary, for example in the conduct of needs assessments. With regard to development aid, there is also an argument for engaging with the government in order to promote its ownership of aid and to support statebuilding processes.

However, while by no means always the case, political leaders and officials in Somalia are often perceived to represent factional clan interests rather than the country's citizens as a whole.²³¹ The risk is that the benefits of aid are directed to specific individuals and groups for political or economic benefit. Turkish aid workers have come to acknowledge this problem, with one noting that "the Federal Government itself always tries to direct you in non-neutral ways".²³² Perceptions of the capture of aid by particular interests can feed into grievances about corruption and the unfairness and exclusion it entails.

Indeed a further risk is that by affording Mogadishu's political actors significant influence over how the benefits of aid are delivered, Turkish donors risk empowering them at a perceived cost to others, thus inadvertently altering power relations and affecting conflict dynamics.²³³ For political actors, having authority over Turkish aid reportedly "bolsters their relevance and influence".²³⁴ For example, it has been reported that Somali officials in the Education Ministry became increasingly influential as a result of the Turkish government's flagship scholarship programme.²³⁵

These risks do not mean that aid cannot be coordinated with or through the state or that seeking to support statebuilding and national ownership of development efforts should be abandoned. Rather, the point is that the risks need to be acknowledged and managed in partnership with Somali stakeholders.

Undermining state institutions

An additional risk is that the reliance of Turkish officials on personal relationships risks undermining institutional development. For example, one Somali politician complains that the Turkish government "directly contacts the President, the Speaker and the Prime Minister. They ignore government institutions."²³⁶ While Turkish aid actors perceive direct engagement as the most effective way to get things done in the absence of institutionalised structures within the Federal Government, being perceived to bypass institutions potentially risks exacerbating the very problem of weak institutional capacity the Turkish government states it is trying to fix.

Corruption

As noted, Turkish officials are aware of the challenges posed by corruption but argue that directly supporting state authorities and pursuing consistent but incremental reform while building capacities to prevent corruption is a more effective approach than refusing to deal with authorities at all.²³⁷ This is not a risk-free strategy. Although not substantiated, one Federal Government politician claims that some "Somali

²³⁰ Interview, Ankara, 28 May 2014.

²³¹ For example, one civil society activist argues that "The government of Somalia is only one family and they only stay in Mogadishu and they only control Mogadishu. It is not Somalia", interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²³² Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²³³ Interview, Mogadishu, 22 February 2014.

²³⁴ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 9.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Interview, Mogadishu, 22 February 2014.

politicians misled Turkish aid officials by naming relatives to support [the] Turkish for their interests ... We know young individuals enriched by the Turkish aid management!"²³⁸ One Turkish NGO worker paints a similarly bleak picture of his experience:

*"So one minister comes and asks you to distribute to their clan ... So you need some services and you need to buy some local services, and another minister comes and asks you to buy the services from his company. So every single minister and every single politician or MP has their own business in Somalia."*²³⁹

There have also been allegations of corruption within specific Turkish aid projects, such as the Turkey's high-profile scholarship programme. According to one Somali civil society activist, "The distribution of the scholarships and the running of the examinations by the Turks was good, they went everywhere and the process was fair. The problem was later on."²⁴⁰ Somali officials managed the final allocation of places. Although unsubstantiated, the names of successful candidates were allegedly in some cases removed, with others travelling to Turkey instead.²⁴¹

Providing direct budget support to the Federal Government presents as great a risk of corruption for Turkey as for any other international donor. There is no doubt that Turkey is more open about its direct aid to the Somali government than some other countries and that some Somalis see it as demonstrative of a tangible, efficient and quick form of support.²⁴² However, it is unclear as to how Turkey's aid is accounted for. As noted, the SEMG has highlighted the misuse of government's funds in Somalia, including from its central bank. Some in civil society welcome Turkey's intention but are concerned that "the government itself is not accountable. Nobody knows where the US\$4.5 million goes."²⁴³

Unbalanced geographic concentration of aid

As noted in Section Two, the tendency towards the concentration of international aid to Mogadishu is a highly contentious issue tied up with the wider dynamics of this conflict. There is a perception that Turkish aid actors do not understand these regional dynamics. For example, in Somaliland some argue that "the Turkish do not understand how Somalia collapsed, it was due to the marginalisation of Somaliland. Somalilanders will defend their sovereignty – helping only Mogadishu will drive conflict."²⁴⁴ A politician in Puntland shares similar sentiments: "There are great risks of continuing to support Mogadishu alone. People's perceptions will see injustice and inequality ... The Somali government is based on clan conflict and a clan basis: There are clans in Mogadishu and clans in the region. This is why having a federal system is so important. If Turkey does not support such a system then there will be conflict between clans, within the government and with Turkey itself."²⁴⁵

It should be noted that criticism of the distribution of Turkish aid has not been restricted to Somaliland and Puntland. A leader of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ), a group affiliated to the Federal Government, complained in 2012 that "We see [the Turks] in Mogadishu and hear about them, but we never meet with them."²⁴⁶ Criticism has in the past also come from leaders from Galmudug and Ximan and Xeeb.²⁴⁷ Given that tensions over the formation of administrative regions in South-Central Somalia are currently running high, this may be a particular risk for Turkey over the coming years.

²³⁷ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

²³⁸ Interview, Mogadishu, 22 February 2014.

²³⁹ Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²⁴⁰ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁴¹ In the words of one civil society actor, "the whole thing was actually an illegal trafficking process." Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014, interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014, interview, Mogadishu, 23 February 2014. Also see Horseed Media (2011) 'Somalia: Mishandling Turkish Scholarships, a Sign of Institutional Corruption' in *Horseed Media*, 27 September 2011.

²⁴² Interview, Mogadishu, 24 February 2014.

²⁴³ Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁴⁴ Focus group discussion, Hargeisa, 9 February 2014.

²⁴⁵ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁴⁶ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 8.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

The perceived imbalance of Turkish aid risks damaging its image, which ultimately undermines the country's soft power and diplomatic credibility to foster peace and reconciliation processes. For example, while the type of aid it has provided to Somalia is widely commended in Somaliland, some are suspicious as to where the Turkish government's political sympathies lie and question whether it can be a neutral facilitator of talks between Mogadishu and Hargeisa.²⁴⁸

Rebalancing aid

Turkish aid actors are learning from their experiences in Somalia, and TIKA has committed to expand its engagement outside of Mogadishu. While this will mitigate some of the risks associated with the Mogadishu-centric approach of the past few years, experience suggests that this will bring challenges of its own. For example, politicians in Puntland point to a case in August 2013 when a Turkish aid shipment to the region was rejected because it was organised by the Federal Government through a Mogadishu-based contractor. They argue that Puntland's own authorities, using contractors from Puntland, should have been responsible.²⁴⁹ At the time, Puntland authorities claimed that they would ask the Turkish government to explain the "politicised violation that Turkey has become part of".²⁵⁰ Opinions over what future role Somalia's Federal Government should play in overseeing Turkey's aid to different parts of Somalia and Somaliland remain divided: Some suggest that it should play an oversight role. Others suggest all aid must go through the Federal Government, arguing that a 'dual track' approach will keep Somalia divided. In Somaliland, some simply state that "two enemies cannot eat together. We cannot have aid shared with Mogadishu or from Mogadishu."²⁵¹

Ties to commercial actors

Some observers question whether the boundaries between Turkish aid and business interests are sufficiently transparent and whether they undermine its government's stated commitment to impartiality and Somalia's development.²⁵² Given Turkey's close relationship with the Federal Government, questions have already been raised over the awarding of contracts to Turkish companies to manage Mogadishu's airport and seaport.²⁵³ Both concessions are lucrative and, arguably, highly politicised assets. The danger here is that Turkey's aid is seen as linked to the winning of contracts by Turkish companies, undermining not only its own image and neutrality but also perpetuating a culture where the abuse of public office is tolerated.

Weak coordination between Turkish agencies

Aid agency coordination is a persistent challenge in all conflict-affected states, including Somalia, and the multiple Turkish aid agencies operating there face similar challenges. While senior politicians point to Somalia as an example of Turkey's multi-track approach in action, one NGO worker suggests that "in reality multi-track did not work well after the initial response to the famine".²⁵⁴ The fact that several Turkish hospitals have been built in close proximity to one another by different agencies is highlighted as an example of poor inter-agency coordination. Furthermore, some NGO aid workers feel that they have had few opportunities to be consulted by officials on the Turkish government's overall approach.²⁵⁵ Turkish officials admit they are still improving

²⁴⁸ Focus group discussion, Hargeisa, 9 February 2014.

²⁴⁹ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁵⁰ Al Arabiya News (2013), 'Somali state returns Turkey's 'politicized' aid' in *Al Arabiya News* 13 August 2013.

²⁵¹ Focus group discussion, Hargeisa, 9 February 2014.

²⁵² Interview, Nairobi, 6 February 2014.

²⁵³ See for example Shabelle Media Network (2013), 'New Scandal Faces Somali Federal Government' in *Shabelle Media Network* 13 July 2013 or *Somalicurrent* (2014), 'Somali Parliament refuses Turkish company to manage port' in *Somalicurrent* 3 April 2014.

²⁵⁴ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

²⁵⁵ Validation workshop, Istanbul, 26 May 2014.

coordination between multiple state agencies in addition to trying to create mechanisms for coordination with civil society.²⁵⁶

Limited engagement and partnership with other international agencies

The Turkish government and Turkish NGOs have faced similar challenges in coordinating with other international agencies. One obstacle has been simple geography, with a plethora of international aid coordination meetings being largely held, until recently, in Nairobi (though it should be noted that the Turkish government also maintains an embassy there). Another challenge is the sheer number of coordination processes, which several Turkish officials and NGOs interviewed suggested could be time consuming and ultimately distracting. Low capacity constrained their ability to engage meaningfully. Furthermore, some within the international donor coordination system acknowledge that it is monopolised by traditional donors and built around what could be seen as a largely Western-oriented outlook. They suggest that it is somewhat presumptuous to expect Turkish actors to coordinate on these terms.²⁵⁷

At the same time, there is a strong perception among Western donors and civil society actors that Turkish agencies – at least initially – sought to distance themselves from partnership or association with other countries and instead focused on direct bilateral engagement on the ground.²⁵⁸ This may have not only jeopardised the effectiveness of aid, but reduced chances for mutual learning, information sharing and joint risk reduction to ensure that aid does not inadvertently fuel conflict. One analyst argued in 2012 that “bypassing the traditional mechanisms for aid delivery in Somalia did not make [Turkish aid agencies] more effective; it just created the conditions for that aid to be captured by mafia-types in the TFG and elsewhere. I’m not a great defender of the Somalia aid industry. But there’s no other mechanism [in the country] that delivers aid better. Solo efforts in Somalia don’t work.”²⁵⁹

Opportunities to reduce risk and promote peace

“[The Turkish] now have goodwill and a generous reputation. They need to capitalise on the momentum they have created – but now provide more strategic support, adopt do no harm principles and understand the conflict better. They responded very quickly, but they now need to be more responsive and careful while being engaged with different political blocs.”²⁶⁰

Looking forward, there are numerous opportunities for the Turkish government and Turkish NGOs to ensure that their aid contributes to long-term peace and stability in Somalia. It needs to be acknowledged that Turkey’s positive reputation and substantial engagement in the country put it in a strong position to do this but that the honeymoon period of Turkey-Somalia relations will not last forever.

Turkish aid actors are, in general, keen to deploy aid in active support of peace. It is unlikely that all will seek to engage directly on conflict issues, with some actors seeing this as beyond their mandate. However, at government level, there appears to be political willingness to orient aid towards peacebuilding: senior officials frequently assert that their aid to Somalia intends to go beyond meeting relief or development needs and promote peace and stability in line with the objectives of Turkey’s approach to mediation and security cooperation. Some Turkish NGOs are explicit about taking a ‘multidimensional approach’. As one Turkish aid worker explains, many believe “that the humanitarian is humanitarian, diplomacy is diplomacy, relations are relations,

²⁵⁶ Interview, Ankara, 28 May 2014.

²⁵⁷ Interview, Nairobi, 20 February 2014.

²⁵⁸ It should be noted Turkish aid workers have on occasion seen their own efforts to coordinate with other international NGOs rebuffed. Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²⁵⁹ Cited in Heaton L (2012), ‘Saving Somalia’ in *Foreign Policy*, 24 April 2012.

²⁶⁰ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

peacebuilding is peacebuilding, all these are separate and going to different directions. [But] we believe that all of them need to go together; they mustn't be separate."²⁶¹ While other Turkish NGOs do not focus so explicitly on peacebuilding, they are at least aware of the links between their interventions and peace.

However, it appears that most Turkish aid actors are not yet running projects explicitly focused on peacebuilding, or actively shaping the design and implementation of their aid projects to maximise their positive impact in promoting peace. TIKA officials, for example, state that peacebuilding issues fall under the mandate of the Turkish embassy and that, aside from support for statebuilding, its projects are primarily focused on relief and development.²⁶² It is unclear how aligned these efforts are with the government's wider engagement on Somalia's conflict dynamics or whether it is believed that support for development is, alone, a sufficient contribution to peace. For their part, while at least one Turkish NGO has been involved in mediation, the majority of NGO aid is largely restricted to relief, the provision of public services, training or charitable donations.

This suggests that opportunities are being missed: Turkish aid agencies are especially well placed to play peacebuilding roles given their presence on the ground, the trust that they have built up with Somali stakeholders and their unique identity. As such, it is important that a range of Turkish aid actors reassess how they can increase the positive impact of their aid. A number of recommendations can be identified in three areas: conflict sensitivity, statebuilding and partnerships.

1. Make aid conflict sensitive

The wide array of Turkish humanitarian, development and statebuilding projects being delivered on the ground in what remains a profoundly conflict-affected context inevitably carries risks that aid will do harm. Therefore Turkish government agencies, led by TIKA, and NGOs providing assistance would do well to adopt more conflict-sensitive approaches and practices in the design and delivery of their aid. Conflict sensitivity can be used as a framework to reduce risks, as well as helping aid agencies actively to contribute to peacebuilding. In this way, the array of projects being delivered by different Turkish actors could add up to a significant contribution to long-term peace in Somalia.

Adopting more conflict-sensitive approaches would require three steps, which apply equally to dynamics between South-Central, Puntland and Somaliland, within these different regions and at the community level. First, Turkish actors would need to deepen their understanding of relevant conflict issues and dynamics. Second, they would need to assess how their aid projects currently interact with the identified conflict dynamics: do they exacerbate or reduce negative dynamics? Third, based on this assessment, they should take action to minimise risks and maximise opportunities to build peace through their interventions. Many Turkish aid organisations appear well placed to adopt all of these steps.

Deepen knowledge and analysis of conflict dynamics

To begin with, some Turkish aid actors have already demonstrated a commitment to deepen their understanding of Somali conflict dynamics. Government representatives stress that their officials have increased their understanding of Somalia as they have deepened their engagement in the country.²⁶³ Those from NGOs who have remained

²⁶¹ Interview, Istanbul, 13 February 2014.

²⁶² Interview, Ankara, 11 March 2014.

²⁶³ Interview, Ankara, 28 May 2014.

on the ground for a significant amount of time demonstrate a strong awareness of conflict dynamics.²⁶⁴

The knowledge that has been developed through time and experience now needs to be supplemented with up-to-date research and analysis on conflict dynamics. Few, if any, TIKA officials or NGO workers appear to be using conflict analysis in a structured way to inform aid programming. Furthermore, existing knowledge could be vastly strengthened through extending and deepening structured consultation on aid and conflict with a wider set of stakeholders beyond authorities, including Somali NGOs, youth groups, women's groups, elders, professional associations and religious figures. Turkish officials maintain that they already engage actively with civil society, though the frequency and extent of this consultation – and whether it focuses on aid and conflict issues – is open to question. Consultation with civil society varies between Turkish NGOs, though some Somali civil society organisations see this as a general weakness and point to specific cases where Turkish NGOs missed opportunities to engage with them before delivering aid projects.²⁶⁵

It is crucial that knowledge on conflict dynamics is shared between, and made accessible to, all aid actors; it should not need to be developed all over again with every new Turkish arrival in Somalia. Understanding of conflict dynamics could be instituted at all levels of government and non-government agencies, but is especially important for those tasked with identifying, planning and overseeing the implementation of projects. Finally, conflict analysis should not only be part of the assessment and planning processes, but could be integrated into monitoring and evaluating aid delivery. Facilitating such sharing of learning and training on conflict dynamics is a role that TIKA could potentially play as part of its coordinating responsibilities.

Adapt interventions to reduce risks

Conflict-sensitive approaches will entail Turkish aid agencies assessing the potential impact of their aid on conflict dynamics and adapting their interventions to reduce risks. Again, some Turkish agencies have already demonstrated their ability to adapt. For example, on discovering the diversion of the flour it was providing, one Turkish NGO redirected it to a bakery project where it was used to generate income.²⁶⁶ Another Turkish aid agency changed the way it provided food aid in IDP camps due to tensions around delivery points.²⁶⁷ Following problems with corruption, the administration of Turkey's scholarship programme was changed to ensure that only legitimate candidates were awarded places.²⁶⁸ While these may all be pragmatic responses to the realities of operating in Somalia, such flexibility demonstrates the capacity and willingness of Turkish aid actors to redesign their aid away to manage risks of fuelling conflict. This approach should now be pursued in a more consistent way.

The direct delivery approach of many Turkish aid agencies in Somalia may offer opportunities to reduce the risks of diversion into the war economy by removing the need for brokers, contractors and other middlemen, and by using staff on the ground to monitor final delivery to beneficiaries. One Turkish aid worker explains that "ships are coming to Mogadishu port; they are unshipping their load and going: 'We helped Somalia'. Well do you know where that aid goes? And later you see that aid is being sold in markets. That's why [we] organize and distribute our aid directly ourselves."²⁶⁹ This is a view shared by many other Turkish aid workers.²⁷⁰ Some Nairobi-based donors

²⁶⁴ Interview, Istanbul, 10 March 2014. Illustrating this, one Turkish aid worker explains some of the issues: "So from my perspective you have to consider the clan, you have to consider the clan background, you have to consider their power among the central government. You have to consider the number of militia. I am very serious about it. You have to consider the relations with the neighbouring district commissioners. And you have to consider the relations with the Mayor of another region. I mean there are many criteria ... So we were trying our best." Interview, Ankara, 11 March 2014.

²⁶⁵ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁶⁶ Interview, Istanbul, 10 March 2014.

²⁶⁷ Interview, Istanbul, 11 March 2014.

²⁶⁸ Interview, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁶⁹ Interview, Istanbul, 10 March 2014.

²⁷⁰ Interview, Ankara, 11 March 2014.

agree, with one for example arguing that “the only way to get around the war economy when delivering aid is to do it directly”.²⁷¹

However, the reality is that some aid appears still to be diverted; greater attention needs to be paid to reducing it. Furthermore, other aid agencies have managed to ensure that assistance reaches final beneficiaries despite in some instances using a model of remote management in Somalia. While Turkish NGOs are unlikely to adopt a model of remote delivery, as they reduce their staff on the ground and increasingly work through Somali partners, they could benefit from learning how others have minimised risks. This should include a discussion around the reasons why other relief agencies shifted away from the direct aid model from the past.

Bring a peacebuilding lens to aid projects

Conflict sensitivity should go beyond reducing risks to taking actions that contribute to peace. One approach is to integrate peacebuilding objectives into the delivery of projects primarily aimed at promoting development outcomes. Some aid agencies are already aware of such possibilities. For example, several Turkish NGOs interviewed see their aid projects targeted at youth – whether through schools, orphanages or scholarships to study in Turkey – as potentially having implications for peace, on the basis that education reduces the appeal of extremist ideologies and creates alternatives to joining armed groups.²⁷² There are options for other Turkish aid agencies and the government to apply similar thinking to interventions in a range of other sectors. For example, if TIKA delivers infrastructure projects in regions emerging from protracted insecurity then an economic dividend for peace could be created through generating local employment and procuring locally. Of course, jobs and local benefits do not automatically create peace. Using conflict-sensitive practices – for example by ensuring employment is balanced between different clans and that local procurement processes are transparent – will help maximise peacebuilding benefits.

Directly support peacebuilding processes

Turkish aid could also be used for projects that explicitly focus on peace in their objectives. Aid from either the Turkish government or from Turkish NGOs could support Somali civil society actors engaged in reconciliation processes between different groups and regions. In many parts of the country, these actors have already demonstrated their ability to act as mediators.²⁷³ Furthermore, there are a range of Turkish actors, from both government and civil society, who have had experience of supporting peace and reconciliation processes in other conflict-affected countries as well as within Turkey. These actors could share their expertise and experiences with Somali stakeholders; this is an aspect of Turkish civilian capacities that appears so far to have been under-utilised in Somalia.

2. Encourage statebuilding that works for peace

Many other donors share the Turkish government’s belief that state weakness and fragility are at the heart of Somalia’s conflict. However, it is clear that in the context of Somalia it cannot be approached simply as a technical exercise in building the capacity of institutions. As the 2012 Istanbul conference declaration states from the outset, the foundations of successful statebuilding must not be forgotten: “For genuine peace to take hold in Somalia, Somali people should seek dialogue, reconciliation and political cooperation including in establishing inclusive, accountable and legitimate governance.”²⁷⁴ The pursuit of these outcomes must underpin Ankara’s approach to

²⁷¹ Interview, Nairobi, 20 February 2014.

²⁷² For example, speaking of a scholarship programme, one aid worker explains that “for conflict resolution we think that education has a primary effect. That’s why we brought all those students here ... But conditionally we brought them: ‘Go return back to your home country and serve your country but without guns.’” Interview, Istanbul, 10 March 2014.

²⁷³ Interview, Hargeisa, 11 February 2014.

²⁷⁴ The Second Istanbul Conference on Somalia, Final Declaration, 1 June 2012, Istanbul.

statebuilding if it is to promote peace rather than fuel further conflict and repeat the mistakes of other donors.

Promote accountable, inclusive and legitimate political processes

Its close relationships with Somalia's political leadership and Turkey's soft power mean that several opportunities exist for Turkey's government to extend its current support for statebuilding to issues related to accountable, inclusive and legitimate political processes. It is already positively contributing to statebuilding processes through its capacity building programmes for government ministries and institutions. This kind of support for the development of soft infrastructure remains important, but it could be more explicitly focused on strengthening accountability and inclusivity mechanisms within state institutions in order to make them more responsive to the needs of citizens over the long term. For example, linked to its support for police reform, Turkey could extend its focus to the implementation of the rule of law and human rights outlined in Somalia's constitution. Indeed, the finalisation of the constitution itself has been agreed between Mogadishu and its international partners as an area for support under the Somali Compact.

Turkey's focus on mediation could be more explicitly linked to its support for statebuilding. While elections are planned for 2016, it needs to be acknowledged that on their own they will not create a lasting political settlement – indeed they may create additional pressures on already fragile agreements between political elites in Mogadishu. As such, Turkish officials must continue to expend diplomatic energy on encouraging Somalia's leaders to work with one another before, during and after voting. This needs to be extended not only beyond Mogadishu's elite to include regional and local leaders from elsewhere in the country, but also to include the wider public (see below).

Take a strong stand on corruption

Opportunities exist to address the problem of corruption directly. Mechanisms for reducing corruption need to become part of the public services support package to Somalia. For example, in order to help the government address corruption, Turkish officials have already voiced interest in supporting the establishment of a biometric identification system so that wages for civil servants can be electronically tracked.²⁷⁵ There have been efforts on the part of the Federal Government and its international partners to implement public financial management reform to address long-standing concerns around levels of corruption. A Financial Governance Committee is in place to implement a programme designed to improve public financial and Central Bank management. Turkey could not only directly support this programme but also help by ensuring that its proposed capacity building for Somalia's central bank is aligned with the programme's overall objectives.

Corruption will not disappear overnight; it is a symptom of how Somali politics functions today. However, such politics have arguably been fuelled and sustained by international aid. As such, while Turkey's government should and can find ways to directly address corruption, it must, at the very least, also ensure that its own aid is not fuelling it. One focus group participant argues that "given the level of corruption at the federal level then it is a good move for the Turkish government to end the cash aid".²⁷⁶ Doing so could undermine relations between the two governments, but Ankara needs to consider suspending cash aid until it is assured that efforts to address corruption are demonstrating results and that aid ends up being used as intended. Turkey – and all international donors – should be accountable not only to their own taxpayers but to the Somali people on whose behalf they justify their aid. As voiced in one focus group discussion:

²⁷⁵ Interview, Istanbul, 25 February 2014.

²⁷⁶ Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

“When the donors – European, American or Turkish – bring their money, who will be accountable? Their aid will end up in the hands of the wrong people, either politicians or NGO workers. Throughout society we have wrong people who are not acting in the interests of Somalis but in fact they are distributing aid to their own clan. A lack of accountability from donors on where this money ends up is also an issue, as is lack of accountability to Somali people. So we need accountability from the top and the bottom.”²⁷⁷

Support a role for Somali civil society and citizens in statebuilding

Accountable, inclusive and legitimate politics can be supported from other quarters too. The Turkish government could build on its prior commitments to inclusive civil society participation through pushing the Federal Government to allow Somali society to play a larger role in overseeing their country’s governance and through creating forums and spaces for civil society and citizens to engage directly with policy makers. Turkish NGOs, and the Turkish government itself, could directly assist Somali civil society groups to play more active roles in the process of statebuilding. Indeed, some civil society actors see the engagement by traditional donors and NGOs in this area as relatively stronger, in “terms of empowering citizens to know their rights, good governance, fighting corruption – that is a lot better than what Turkey is doing in Somalia.”²⁷⁸

Carefully support emerging authorities

One of the most contentious issues of statebuilding relates to the balance of power between the Federal Government and future federal state and regional authorities, and the formation of authorities themselves. Support for this dimension of statebuilding, including for example through capacity building for emerging authorities, could be a means for Turkey to assist with the establishment of administrations that are genuinely inclusive and participatory. Nonetheless, the primary objective of Turkish engagement in this area should be to ensure that sufficient time and space exist for Somali-led dialogue at all levels – the process must not be pushed or rushed by external actors. It is also crucial that both Turkey’s government and NGOs are aware of the political sensitivities of aid delivery to and within emerging federal states.

Support bottom-up institution building

A long-term commitment from Turkey’s government to support local bottom-up processes of institution building in Somalia may prove to be a productive investment. For example, it could extend its experience of working with the Mogadishu municipality government to other urban areas of the country. Another opportunity is for both TIKA and Turkish NGOs to consider how they can actively support the creation or strengthening of local governance structures, including at the community level, as part of the delivery of Turkish development projects.²⁷⁹ Indeed, supporting the capacity of beneficiaries to manage aid resources could prove an indispensable tool in taking on more conflict-sensitive approaches.

Build on existing opportunities beyond Mogadishu

The increasing engagement of TIKA outside of Mogadishu presents a significant turning point for Turkey’s role in Somalia. There are clear benefits for Turkey’s soft power and ability to act as a neutral actor promoting reconciliation. There is a keen appetite for the type of aid Turkey provides in Mogadishu. This is especially the case with hard infrastructure projects considered to be more tangible than aid from other donors.²⁸⁰ There already exist structures to guide the delivery of Turkish aid in these regions –

²⁷⁷ Focus group discussion, Garowe, 15 February 2014.

²⁷⁸ Focus group discussion, Hargeisa, 9 February 2014.

²⁷⁹ Interview, Nairobi, 18 February 2014.

²⁸⁰ Focus group discussion, Hargeisa, 9 February 2014.

such as the Puntland Development Plan or the Somaliland National Development Plan – which have been formed through relatively participatory and inclusive processes. Those Turkish NGOs that are considering scaling up their assistance in Somalia should follow TIKA's example and explore how to best reach locations beyond Mogadishu.

3. Construct stronger partnerships around peace

The multi-track approach to Somalia, which has included prominent roles for a variety of Turkish public agencies, NGOs and private sector actors, creates possibilities for a more holistic approach to helping address cycles of conflict, crisis and underdevelopment within Somalia. Opportunities exist for all of these actors to work with and alongside one another in a way that is focused around peace. Furthermore, the multi-track approach could be extended to include partnerships with non-Turkish actors, including Somali civil society and other international aid agencies.

Carefully manage commercial actors and make economic interests transparent

In general, many Somali stakeholders interviewed voiced support for the multi-track approach that draws commercial ties in addition to aid as a means of catalysing development. They saw this as an efficient method of delivering more sustainable results than a purely aid-focused approach. For example, an official from the President's Office suggests that Turkish aid brought stability to Mogadishu, which has in turn brought interest from Turkish companies, which in turn supports stability.²⁸¹ The Somali president himself has argued that Turkey “has brought in business that changed the face of Mogadishu and encouraged its entrepreneurs to come to the city and transform state enterprises, including returning the port and the airport to profitability.”²⁸²

Nonetheless, significant risks need to be managed. TIKA's use of commercial actors to implement development projects, whether Somali, Turkish or international, requires careful oversight while transparent and openly competitive processes and links to relevant international/UN risk management structures will be vital to ensuring that such an approach is seen as fair and does not end up repeating the patterns of the past. Specifically, commercial tenders should be conditional on contractors conducting meaningful risk assessments. Indeed, the Turkish government should make clear to Turkish companies that the principles of conflict sensitivity apply to commercial operations as much as they do to aid. Reference could be made to existing global principles, such as those developed by the UN Global Compact or the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Finally, it needs to be recognised that Turkey's own economic objectives may not always be perceived as compatible with the government's stated commitment to promoting development for the benefit of all Somalis. The government needs to be transparent about where its commercial interests start and end.

Make peace the focal point of the multi-track approach between the state and civil society

The other aspect of Turkey's multi-track approach in Somalia, coordination between state and civil society actors, holds significant promise for efforts to support peace. Yet it appears that efforts to maximise its effectiveness on the ground, including through deploying a range of ‘civilian capacities’, have not matched aspirations. While Turkish NGOs should be free to pursue independent initiatives, a stronger partnership between official and civil society actors could be catalysed around the promotion of peace in as it was in response to the famine in 2011. Formal opportunities for discussion between different government agencies and NGOs should be created in both Mogadishu

²⁸¹ Interview, Mogadishu, 24 February 2014.

²⁸² *Op cit.* President Sheikh Mohamud (2015).

and Ankara. This will not only facilitate coordination, but allow for the sharing of information and lessons learned. In the spirit of a true two-way partnership, Turkish civil society actors must have opportunities to shape the government's strategy and ensure that it is reflective of a wider set of perspectives outside of the state and genuinely multi-track.

Develop partnerships with Somali NGOs

While there are several examples of existing partnerships, one area where both the Turkish government and NGOs could also maximise their impact is by working more closely with local NGOs, which Somali civil society actors argue will provide them with guidance on local needs and extend their reach to other areas of the country.²⁸³ Indeed, some suggest that as Turkey extends its reach into new areas such as Somaliland, where there is already substantial civil society capacity, it should avoid directly implementing projects but instead use the opportunity to support local NGOs and support sustainability and local ownership.²⁸⁴ Again, there are clear considerations to be made with regard to the benefits and costs of direct implementation. Furthermore, as many in Somali civil society are quick to stress, Turkish aid agencies will need to choose their partners carefully and transparently in a way which is informed by sufficient knowledge of conflict dynamics and the role of different actors.

Work alongside and with other international donors

While not necessarily the fault of Turkish officials or NGOs, the past low levels of engagement between them and other international actors need to be addressed. At a basic level, this will enhance development effectiveness. But there are added benefits. In the words of one aid worker, “we need to complement one another's strengths and mitigate our weaknesses – this is what effective coordination means.”²⁸⁵ Turkish approaches to aid delivery in Somalia have differed in some ways from that of others, meaning that the potential for mutual strengths to be accentuated through coordination is significant. Turkish actors have considerable experience to acquire from those who have been engaged in Somalia at a significant scale for a sustained period. On the other hand, other international actors could benefit from understanding how Turkish agencies have managed their recent but ambitious engagement in Somalia, what challenges they have faced and how these have been overcome. Other donors may soon follow in the footsteps of Turkish aid agencies, expanding the ambition of their own development projects while increasing operations on the ground.

It is welcome that Turkish NGOs state that they will increasingly seek to participate in aid coordination structures, notably in humanitarian clusters. Given its reputation with Somalia, Turkey's government is well-positioned to take a confident approach to active partnership with other countries. Somali stakeholders frequently recommend that Turkey shares its approach to aid with other donors and encourages them to follow its example. Meanwhile, some Nairobi-based donors have not only urged Turkey to take part in coordination processes, but in some cases to lead them.²⁸⁶ There are clear opportunities for Turkey's government to work with and through existing coordination structures, as it has already been doing to some extent with regard to the Somali Compact. Implementation of the New Deal's principles into practice through the Compact has been challenging in the Somali context, but the framework remains the most useful tool for bringing together international and Somali stakeholders around a common set of objectives.²⁸⁷ It merits Turkey's full participation.

²⁸³ Interview, Mogadishu, 24 February 2014.

²⁸⁴ Interview, Hargeisa, 11 February 2014.

²⁸⁵ Interview, Nairobi, 18 February 2014.

²⁸⁶ Interview, Nairobi, 6 February 2014.

²⁸⁷ For an overview of some of the challenges related to the implementation of the Compact to date, see Saferworld and World Vision (2014), *Strengthening the New Deal from the Bottom Up: Perspectives on the Somali Compact and Somaliland Special Arrangement (SSA)* (London: Saferworld).

Conclusion

Turkey's aid to Somalia

TURKISH OFFICIALS MAKE CLEAR that they have invested their aid in Somalia for the long run. Official assistance has shifted from humanitarian relief to the provision of bilateral development aid primarily focused on physical infrastructure and the health and education sectors. Capacity building and direct budget support has also been provided to the Federal Government for statebuilding. Turkish officials believe that they have been more willing than other donors to provide development aid despite ongoing insecurity. They have built close relations with senior figures in the Federal Government who they believe should have full ownership over development in their country.

Turkish NGOs in Somalia are varied in size, mandate and history. In general, they have focused on humanitarian relief but have also increasingly provided services, supported training, constructed infrastructure and delivered charitable donations, primarily in the health and education sectors. Many have delivered their aid directly through Turkish staff and volunteers on the ground, though they are increasingly working through Somali partner organisations and focusing on capacity building. Their aid has also largely been focused on Mogadishu.

Turkey is certainly a popular country in Somalia. Its engagement is perceived by many to have changed the aid landscape. But the honeymoon period will not last forever and, for their part, Turkish aid agencies are starting to suffer from 'Somalia fatigue'.²⁸⁸ Moreover, whether the Turkish government and NGOs can sustain past levels of funding to Somalia is an open question, with crises such as that in Syria distracting attention and resources. This is an important question given the high regard in which Turkish aid is generally held by Somalis and the huge expectations placed on Turkey as a result. Indeed, moderating these expectations to avoid a straining relations and weakening Turkey's diplomatic credibility appears to have already been a challenge for the emerging donor.²⁸⁹ In Mogadishu, there are some criticisms that not all Turkish aid promises have been fulfilled while both Somaliland and Puntland have seen little of the aid that Turkish officials have publicly committed to for over two years now.²⁹⁰ To re-energise the relationship, Turkish aid actors will need to reassess their roles and keep improving how they engage.

²⁸⁸ *Op cit.* Özkan (2014), p 48.

²⁸⁹ *Op cit.* ICG (2012), p 1.

²⁹⁰ In Mogadishu, there are some criticisms that not all Turkish aid promises have been fulfilled, for example regarding the building of a new parliament or providing new citizen IDs. Meanwhile, both Somaliland and Puntland have for some time been promised aid by the Turkish government. For example, after meeting the Puntland president in October 2012, Turkey reportedly promised to build airports, roads, and upgrade education and health facilities in Puntland. Participants in a focus group discussion held in Somaliland state that "We had high expectations but still we don't have anything". While things may soon change, in the past two years few of these expectations appear to have been met. It is unlikely that Turkish officials are entirely to blame: political leaders are bound to exaggerate what promises they have secured. Interview, Nairobi, 7 February 2014, focus group discussion, Hargeisa, 9 February 2014, Garowe online (2012), 'Turkish officials meet with Puntland President', *Garowe Online*, 1 October 2012 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210020020.html> accessed on 22 October 2012.

Dynamics within Somalia will greatly shape how Turkish aid evolves in the future: an improved political and security situation would no doubt create opportunities for continued evolution in the direction of development and statebuilding, while a continued deterioration of the humanitarian situation could force Turkish aid agencies to revert to past practice. More broadly, it needs to be remembered that Somali stakeholders are not passive recipients of aid. As with the country's future direction, it will be Somalia's leaders, officials and civil society that should and must primarily influence the impact of Turkish aid. Nonetheless, this report has identified several risks and opportunities for Turkish aid actors in Somalia. Addressing these risks and capitalising on the opportunities could represent the next progressive step in the evolution of Turkey-Somalia relations and, once again, demonstrate the rising power's ability to alter the aid landscape for good.

Risks faced

Overall, a rush to deliver not only humanitarian aid but also development assistance on a significant scale without strong knowledge of the context or sufficient levels of consultation with Somali stakeholders may have left both Turkish officials and NGOs open to risks. As with all donors in Somalia, these include the diversion of aid into the war economy and the manipulation of aid by authorities and armed groups. The close relations built with leaders in the Federal Government may have led to the capture of Turkish aid by an elite, impacted on political dynamics within the country and afforded opportunities for corruption. Meanwhile, the concentration of aid to Mogadishu has risked exacerbating conflict dynamics, while undermining Turkey's soft power in the rest of the country. Redressing this unbalance will itself prove a risky endeavour. The links between Turkish aid and commercial actors have been subject to criticism. Finally, low levels of coordination between different Turkish aid actors and with other international donors have created risks of their own.

Opportunities ahead

Given Turkey's identity and positive reputation in Somalia, various opportunities exist for both official and civil society aid agencies to leverage their assistance in support of peace. A conflict-sensitive approach could prove a useful framework for focusing future development projects in this direction while ensuring that any harmful impacts of aid are minimised. Conflict-sensitive approaches and practice will require a deeper understanding of the context based on conflict analysis and consultation with a wider number of Somali stakeholders. Turkish agencies will also need to be willing to adjust projects based on their potential impact on this context. While opportunities to reduce aid diversion into the war economy certainly exist through the direct delivery approach, if agencies begin to reduce their physical presence on the ground greater attention will need to be paid to preventing these risks.

Aid projects that Turkish aid actors are currently supporting, whether in the infrastructure, health or education sectors, could be leveraged to support peacebuilding alongside development objectives. Direct support could be provided for Somali-led peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives, including through sharing Turkish expertise developed in other contexts. The Turkish government should focus on accountable, inclusive and legitimate political processes within its support for statebuilding while continuing to encourage Somalia's leaders to work with one another and the wider public towards a sustainable political settlement. Taking a stand on corruption and making itself more accountable – especially with regard to its direct budget support – will be important for the Turkish government. Facilitating mediation between Mogadishu and regional authorities while providing careful assistance for the creation of a federalised system of governance also offers significant opportunities for Turkey's government to support peace. Pro-actively supporting civil society and citizens to play a bigger role in statebuilding and reconciliation processes might also prove a positive contribution, as too could support for bottom-up and localised

institution building. Meanwhile, there are positive prospects for the delivery of Turkish aid to both Puntland and Somaliland. A shared focus on promoting peace could be used to catalyse greater effectiveness of the multi-track approach between the Turkish government and civil society organisations.

Implications for international donors

In addition, the effectiveness of assistance can be improved through higher levels of engagement between Turkish and other international donors. There are already some similarities between Turkey's approach and that of the majority of Somalia's traditional donors. For example, while generally more risk averse to providing direct budget support, traditional donors have, like Turkey, placed statebuilding at the centre of their engagement. Like Turkey, traditional donors increasingly see a role for commercial relations in promoting development alongside the provision of aid.²⁹¹ Furthermore, many traditional donors have provided aid to the country in a similar manner to Turkey in the past, for example delivering relief aid directly or supporting physical infrastructure projects. Some of these approaches continue today, but development and humanitarian policies among traditional donors have since changed, with an increased preference of working through Somali organisations and promoting soft infrastructure and good governance.

Despite these parallels, it is clear that many from Somalia's government and civil society view aid from Turkey in a relatively positive light. Although it is starting to change, the presence and visibility of Turkish aid workers in Mogadishu has been contrasted to the perceived sequestration of other international donor staff to Nairobi. Rightly or wrongly, this has been buttressed by the belief that what Turkey is delivering – for example roads or hospital construction – is more tangible than the types of projects supported by traditional donors.

On the one hand, as has been noted, there are clear downsides for traditional donors to revert to such an approach. For example, it is questionable whether it should be outside donors that are perceived to be delivering development to Somali people; or whether infrastructure projects can drive sustainable development without more fundamental changes in the responsiveness of the government to the needs to citizens. On the other hand, traditional donors need to also be honest about the limited positive impact their assistance has had in Somalia to date and confront the fact that many in the country have come to view the traditional 'aid industry' with a degree of cynicism.

As such, there is significant room for discussion and genuine mutual learning between Turkey and other donors. Greater levels of engagement would allow them to identify how their different approaches can be complementary, and how promising initiatives could be jointly scaled-up – as is potentially the case with Turkey's nascent deployment of experts and civilian capacity. Nevertheless, all donors, including Turkey, need to recognise that while aid is crucial in humanitarian crises, in conditions of continued insecurity and violent conflict it cannot alone catalyse peace and development. There are risks of further entrenching the political economy of conflict in Somalia and cycles of periodic crisis. The damaging effects of such dynamics can be positively influenced only by coherent political, security, economic and development engagement by all outside actors, and aid cannot be an effective substitute for a coherent strategy, or ignore these wider considerations, if it is to have positive results. As such, and given that they face many of the very same risks, any engagement between Turkey and other international donors on aid must put its potential impact on peace and conflict dynamics at the centre of the conversation.

²⁹¹ See for example, with regard to the United Kingdom, Chonghaile, CN (2014), 'UK-Somali links raise concern as UN alleges corruption and arms deals' in *The Guardian*, 18 November 2014 and Townsend M & Abdinasir T (2012), 'Britain leads dash to explore for oil in war-torn Somalia' in *The Observer*, 25 February 2013.

Implications for aid to conflict-affected states and humanitarian diplomacy

The changes that have underscored Turkey's rise to date will continue to define it in the future. Shifting regional and global dynamics, related to the continued fallout from the Arab Uprisings or wider geopolitical transfers of power, will inevitably shape Turkey's international role. The nature of political stability and economic growth within Turkey will also matter greatly. These international and domestic dynamics are difficult to forecast and Turkey's continued rise is by no means assured. However, it seems likely that the country will remain a key player in its wider region and, partly based on this, a prominent actor in international relations.

This role will continue to play out in the conflict-affected states where significant Turkish aid will be focused. Somalia has confirmed the benefits to Turkish aid agencies of having a presence on the ground in conflict zones and avoiding the sequestration or removal of aid workers. However, the fluctuating security situation in the country has forced some to withdraw and demonstrated the limitations of such an approach. Furthermore, the reliance on Turkish workers and direct delivery has potentially come at the cost of building Somali capacities.

While political and ideological conditions on Turkish aid are rejected and support for statebuilding is perceived to be apolitical, the realities are that aid has a political impact in Somalia however it is designed. This does not infer that Turkey must adopt a politicised approach to its aid, but does suggest that greater sensitivity should be paid to the fact that statebuilding conceived as a technical exercise will not automatically work in favour of peace. Without sufficient levels of national reconciliation, an inclusive political settlement and accountable and legitimate political processes, statebuilding will be a conflict-driving process – and aid makes a big difference to the relative power, influence and motivations of all political stakeholders.

In other conflict-affected contexts, such as Afghanistan, Turkey has sought to build capacity, especially of recipient state institutions, by deploying both civil servants and civil society actors to provide expertise. This civilian capacity appears not to have been maximised in the Somali context. While insecurity will no doubt create restrictions, this approach appears to offer greater benefits and fewer risks than direct budget support in countries such as Somalia. The approach could be further developed and refined in partnership between Turkish state and non-state actors, including NGOs, universities and think tanks.

More broadly, Turkey's recent experience in Somalia could help enlighten and further develop the concept of humanitarian diplomacy. As one Turkish diplomat notes, "Turkey is learning, and it is learning fast."²⁹² Four implications from the Somalia case stand out for policymakers:

- **Allow aid to work for peace:** There is a need for Turkey to create a much more explicit focus on conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding within its emerging national aid strategy, with its aid agencies being given a mandate to integrate a focus on peace into their objectives and strategies. This will help to maximise the impact of its humanitarian and development assistance which is increasingly being focused on conflict-affected states.
- **Make aid coherent with other streams of engagement:** There is a need for the provision of development aid to be more coherent with and closely tied to the other dimensions of the Turkish government's broader engagement in conflict-affected states, including mediation efforts and its role in the security sector.
- **Strengthen the multi-track approach:** Cultivating a two-way partnership of coordination and consultation with civil society actors through a shared focus on addressing conflict and insecurity could help make the multi-track approach an effective reality that maximises the use of Turkey's civilian capacity.

- **Look beyond host states:** While establishing strong relationships with host governments, as Turkey has done in Somalia, the focus of engagement should also be on people and the views of a broader set of stakeholders, including civil society groups. In order to create more responsive governance systems over the long run, legitimacy, accountability and inclusiveness should be placed at the centre of support for statebuilding.

Through cementing these principles within the concept of humanitarian diplomacy, Turkey may well be better placed to promote stability in its wider region. In this regard, while also uncertain, the experience of Somalia could be another contributing factor shaping Turkey's rise.

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COVER PHOTO: The flags of Somalia and Turkey fly at Aden Abdulle International Airport, Mogadishu, as the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, arrives for an official visit.

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