

PART 1

Introduction

1.1 Forum activities

The concerted effort of various stakeholders resulted in the *International Forum for Rural Development in Somalia*, which had the aim of producing items of action and development strategies for rural areas in Somalia. The initiative was taken by Permanent Representatives of Somalia at the United Nations Agencies in Rome and the following actors: Department of Land and Agro-Forestry Systems of the University of Padova (Italy), the IFAD Division for Near East and North Africa and eight Somali intellectuals of the Diaspora.

During two working sessions - both held in Padova, on 25-26th October 2010 and 9-11th March 2011 - elements of analysis, evaluation and project planning have been raised. These are intended to be the core elements of this final report that will be presented in Rome at IFAD Headquarters in early September 2011, in the presence of Representatives of UN Agencies, Governments, non- governmental organisations (NGOs) and other International Development and Cooperation Agencies.

With reference to the items of action, it should be noted that, although the core topics of analysis were agriculture, livestock and forestry, other related components of the primary sector were not forgotten. Most importantly, the hypothesis was proposed that the primary sector won't develop a sustainable territorial economy, if the growth process is not harmonious and integrated,. This has led to the formulation of proposals, discussed among Forum members, with a prevailing emphasis on a short term focus on "agriculture, livestock and forestry", while other related sectors should be stimulated in the medium term, such as:

- land management and environment;
- rural handicrafts;
- basic health and hygiene;
- rural education and training;
- local institutions and governance.

From a methodological point of view, the items of action –in other words, development objectives that aim at increasing the quality of life of the Somali population– have been identified through an *ad hoc* participatory approach, involving representatives of the Somali Diaspora in Europe. Somali components of the Forum and IFAD experts have critically analyzed what researchers from TeSAF Department (University of Padova) have produced on the basis of an extensive literature analysis and field experience (part 2). This discussion was used to integrate, in the items of action, Somali's technical perspective, experience and knowledge (part 3).

The analysis and items of action creation refer to three geographical zones in Somalia: Northern, Central and Southern. In truth, this report is meant to focus on guidelines, analysis and project initiatives specifically intended for the Central-Southern areas of Somalia. It is worth noting that, because of a more solid socio-economic structure, diverse development projects are already successfully operating in the other two major areas of the country.

As a result a large number of items of action for development projects mainly relate to agriculture, livestock and forestry - as well as for other sectors instrumental to the development process, e.g. education, health, handicrafts etc. - were set-up. In relation to these items of action, Forum members have subsequently identified specific and coordinated projects. They are thought to be useful instruments for the Somali Government, which could consider the proposals formulated by the *International Forum on Rural Development for Somalia* as a proposed (or tentative) development strategy.

In the final section (part 4), a framework of analysis is proposed in regards to how international cooperation operated, operates and should operate in Somalia, in order to spur reflection about the current difficult socio-economic transition the country is experiencing.

1.2 The Forum and its stakeholders

The Forum is formed by a group of consultants from different sectors and with varied expertise; it is intended to assist organizations willing to promote project ideas in Somalia. The value added by Forum participants is to bring the following perspectives:

- Direct link with their local communities of origin;
- Thorough knowledge of that context;
- Cultural mediation between actors in international cooperation and the local population;
- Clear understanding of existing problems and socio-political dynamics; these are not always evident from the point view of international cooperation agencies.

The Forum also intends to engage in activities related to collection and analysis of data about the context in Somalia, as useful tools for international cooperation.

IFAD believes that the *International Forum for Rural Development in Somalia* has the full potential for promoting a new and original approach to rural development with the above-mentioned perspectives. Project proposals that emerged from the Forum embody innovation, especially considering the additional value of having a heterogeneous group of Forum participants:

- Intellectuals of the Somali Diaspora belonging to different clan groups, residing in various European countries and possessing professional skills in dealing with the rural world;
- Somalia's government representatives at the United Nation agencies established in Rome;
- Exponents of the Italian academic world;
- NGOs' representatives;
- International Organizations' representatives.

The Forum and its stakeholders are an opportunity to share various views that will emerge in the following sections. Both communal perspectives combined with operational project ideas for governmental and non-governmental agencies are of fundamental importance for what the Forum intends as development objectives and outcomes. The Forum is a starting point for a much wider debate about policy ideas, which are further explored in the following pages.

1.3 Somalia socio-political situation

Since the fall of Siad Barre's government in 1991, Somalia has been experiencing continuous political instability as well as manifested and latent conflicts. In performing geopolitical analyses of the country, symbol of the Horn of Africa, international analysts have progressively shifted their focus from investigating the causes of conflict to the factors that perpetuate Somalia's incessant instability, defined by some scholars as an "*enduring war economy*"¹ (Grosse-Kettler, 2004)². According to the same line of thought, this economy is related to specific internal and external interests within the Somali context; which implicitly and explicitly exploit economic opportunities deriving from the absence of government through high return rent-seeking behaviours.

In such a complex geopolitical and economic situation, international intervention has been ineffective due to opposed and polyhedral local interests; a context, according to Menkhaus (2007), definable as "Balkanized".³ Somalia can be counted as the first case where the International Community has considered the conflict within the nation-state as a main issue of international security, not complying with the principle of "sovereign equality of states" and disregarding the principle of people's self-determination. More specifically, the foremost interest on its part relates to humanitarian assistance, recognizing a new interpretation of international law including also the right of interference for humanitarian purposes. In this framework, resolution 751 from the United Nations Security Council initiated UNOSOM operations in August 1992, later renamed UNITAF (under US leadership) and UNISOM 2 (1993-1995).

Grosse-Kettler (2004) believes military intervention from the International Community has not reached its set objectives and has unintentionally sustained economic structures favouring a war economy. Most international aid, meant for military and civilian purposes, has ended up in the hands of opposed clans and their militias, fuelling a lucrative business⁴. Since the 1990s, there has been a progressive stabilization of such an economy, lacking a central government, yet extremely active in favouring polyhedral, informal and criminal economic activities along with governance systems based on clan relations.

In 2005-2006 an additional component entered the Somali struggle: the Supreme Council of Islamic Courts (SCIC). It spurred new conflicts especially in Southern and Central Somalia. In 2007, after harsh battles, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in a joint action with AMISON –peacekeeping corps under guidance of the African Union– obtained legitimacy in Mogadishu. In 2008, a new Peace Conference at Djibouti established an agreement between the TFG and the Alliance for Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), the latter is the moderate wing of Islamic Courts. Despite the agreement, Al-Shabaah Islamic Courts still control a wide section of Southern Somalia.

Recent information about the political situation in Somalia is the nomination of a new Prime Minister: Mohamed Abdullahi, ex diplomat in USA. He has begun his mandate by forming a new government of 18 ministers mainly from the Somali Diaspora abroad. The government controls 60%

¹ "Theories about war economies point to the perpetuating mechanisms and mutual relations between war and economy. According to the World Bank Research Development Group headed by Paul Collier, war and violence are economically motivated and individuals or groups use them to maximize profit" (Collier, 2000: 91-111) cited by Grosse-Kettler, S. (2004).

² Grosse-Kettler, S. (2004) "External Actors in Stateless Somalia. A War Economy and its Promoters". Bonn International Center for Conversion. Paper 39: 1-35.

³ Menkhaus, K. (2007) "Governance without government in Somalia". *International Security* vol. 31, no. 3: 74-106.

⁴ To guarantee, for example, security services to international actors on the part of local militia.

of the national capital and intends to call for national elections in 2011. Latest news (June 2011) attests to a new evolution of the political situation due to internal conflict among representatives of the TFG.⁵

1.4 IFAD Development strategy and perspectives

IFAD –being an international organization placed within the United Nations system– is strongly field-oriented and supports project initiatives for Somalia’s development, based on the following principles:

- Friendly-oriented approach towards the population benefiting from development projects
- Small-scale financing
- Swift achievements in the field
- Short-term impacts
- Special attention to water issues and how to increase farming and livestock productivity

IFAD is currently involved in three main activities: i) natural resources management; ii) rural development projects identification, design and implementation; iii) subsistence strategies to overcome the challenges of rural livelihoods.

IFAD’s work has given priority to Somaliland, where it has acquired experience in development projects and has fulfilled its commitments. The next objective is to extend IFAD’s operations to other contexts in Somalia, specifically where there are more critical social, economic and political issues.

IFAD’s Near East and North Africa team is presently engaged in the most heated areas of North Africa, Middle East and Eastern Europe; they are all affected by potential and existing conflicts, the impacts of which cause a strong deterioration of civil society’s livelihood. These conflictual conditions require a deep analysis of emergency and post-emergency situations along with short-, medium- and long-term development perspectives. Within this framework, the priority is to identify the causes of insecurity and the consequent operative approaches in order to reduce poverty, specifically in rural areas. For this purpose, IFAD specifically deals with the following categories of beneficiaries in order to fulfil its mandate: smallholders and poor rural communities.

The feasibility of IFAD’s interventions is usually reduced because of contextual instabilities. In this regard, it is under debate whether focused strategies through welfare schemes are the only effective ways to improve people’s conditions. The Near East and North Africa team’s opinion emphasizes the importance of favouring the development approach from the very beginning by means of investments with high probability of success.

In this regard, the widely discussed failure of International agencies in Somalia can be associated to their biased emphasis towards favouring welfare schemes. Thanks to their assistance, people’s urgent

⁵ Somali President Sharif Ahmed and Parliamentary Speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden met President Museveni in Kampala, following intense disagreements and tensions regarding extending the mandate of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) threatening Somalia’s peace process as TFG faces exit at the end of its term in August. The Prime Minister accused the Speaker of dishonesty, indecisiveness and failing to respect the will of the Somali government and people. Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201106250014.html>

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