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### Land and Conflict in Qardho District: Study of the Root Causes and Solutions

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*Land,  
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Land Use.*

Land conflict poses a significant challenge to sustainable development and peace in many districts, including the Qardho district of Puntland state, Somalia. This paper explores the root causes, effects, and potential solutions to land conflict in the Qardho district. The study was guided by three objectives, which included, A) To assess the root causes of land conflict in the Qardho district, B) To investigate the effects of land conflict in the Qardho district, and C) To propose possible solutions to the land conflict in the Qardho district. A total of 399 interviews and ten key informant interviews were conducted to gather insights from various stakeholders, including local council members, land brokers, court judiciaries, and community groups. Quantitative and qualitative research designs were both used in this study. Significant demographic characteristics of the research respondents indicate that 51.88% were male and 48.12% were female. This data presents the distribution of respondents across different age groups. The majority of respondents (61.15%) fall within the age range of 31 to 40 years, indicating a significant presence of individuals in this demographic category. Additionally, a substantial proportion of respondents (15.54%) belong to the 21-30 age group. The remaining respondents are distributed across older age categories, with 10.78% aged 51-60 years, 7.52% above 60 years, and a smaller proportion (5.01%) falling within the 41-50 age range. Overall, the data reflects a diverse age composition among the respondents, with a notable concentration in the 31-40 age group. The findings reveal that private land ownership, lack of a land registration system, weak institutional capacity, and ineffective regulations are among the primary causes of land conflict in Qardho. These conflicts manifest in various adverse effects, including mistrust among communities, clan conflicts, hindrance to investment and development, and exacerbation of natural disasters' impacts. Respondents proposed several solutions to address land conflict, such as implementing a land registration system, strengthening government institutions, utilizing geographical information systems, and fostering cooperation between local government and courts. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, local authorities, and stakeholders to develop effective strategies for resolving land conflicts and promoting sustainable development in the Qardho district and similar contexts.

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## INTRODUCTION

Throughout documented history, land disputes have been a common occurrence, with populations experiencing growth and environmental pressures exacerbating the perception of land scarcity, thereby intensifying the association between land and violent conflicts (N., 2004). Land frequently serves as a major catalyst for widespread violence and concurrently plays a pivotal role in efforts aimed at peace-building and economic reconstruction following conflicts. Particularly in impoverished societies, where prosperity and sustenance hinge upon land control and access, land emerges as a strategic socio-economic asset of significant importance (N., 2004).

Conflict and land are frequently intertwined, with disputes over land and its resources serving as either the primary cause or a contributing factor to conflicts. Land-related issues can reignite conflicts or impede efforts toward stabilization and recovery post-violence. Land is a multifaceted concept, both legally and conceptually complex, with various definitions depending on the context (UN-Habitat., 2018). This paper provides a comprehensive explanation of land, encompassing not only the Earth's surface but also what lies beneath and above it, along with all attached structures and natural resources. Considering the dynamic interactions of human involvement, land is intricately linked to economic, social, political, cultural, and historical

contexts. Therefore, land plays a crucial role in fundamental concepts such as peace and security, human rights, and development (UN-Habitat., 2018).

A land conflict is a social phenomenon involving a minimum of two parties with distinct interests in land property rights. These interests encompass the rights to utilize, administer, derive income from, restrict access to, transfer, and receive compensation for the land (Wehrmann., 2008.). Many developing nations and countries transitioning into new systems are presently dedicating resources to enhance their land administration, aiming primarily to establish a transparent and effective land market. An additional aim is to reduce land disputes by implementing operational land registration and cadastral systems. Nonetheless, past experiences demonstrate that addressing severe land conflicts requires more than just surveying, demarcation, and registration of land. This raises the question of delving into the underlying causes of land disputes and devising appropriate responses to mitigate them (Wehrmann., 2008.).

In terms of the classification of land conflict, The micro-societal level mirrors the interpersonal sphere, whereas the meso-societal and macro-societal tiers provide a finer breakdown of intersocietal conflicts (Wehrmann., 2008). This categorization based on the social aspect of land conflicts underscores the abundance and diversity of intrasocietal disputes relative to interpersonal

ones (although it does not specify their exact prevalence). While existing formal or informal conflict resolution mechanisms may suffice for interpersonal land conflicts, addressing intrasocietal conflicts is notably more complex, largely due to the entanglement of higher-level conflict resolution mechanisms within the conflict itself (Wehrmann., 2008).

While Somalia experiences rapid urbanization, with a significant portion of its population residing in rural areas, heavily reliant on land and its resources for sustenance and livelihood, land remains a crucial element for livelihood security and economic prosperity in the foreseeable future (Fund., 2021). While land has been identified as a primary source of conflict in Somalia, particularly in rural regions, its role as a conflict catalyst is often attributed to dysfunctional conflict management systems rather than its intrinsic value. In societies where land serves as a cornerstone of livelihoods, competition for its access and utilization is commonplace, necessitating effective governance and social organization mechanisms for its management. When such competition escalates into conflict, it is typically indicative of systemic failures or the influence of external factors (Fund., 2021).

There is a saying in Somali, “Ku qabso ku qaadi maaysid” which means, “If you claim it, you will not go without”. To grasp the intricacies of land-related conflicts in Somalia, it is crucial to recognize that land holds significance beyond its economic value, intertwining with clan identity and the distribution of political power (Fund., 2021). Land relations are deeply intertwined with notions of clan homeland and the role of clans in providing security in the absence of effective state governance. This complex interplay elucidates the strategic manoeuvres undertaken by communities to assert land claims and territorial control, aiming to influence power dynamics and resource allocation amid ongoing state-building endeavours (Fund., 2021). The nexus between land access, political power, and resource distribution complicates not only the resolution of land conflicts but also the negotiation of political settlements amid the transitional period. As

highlighted by Farah et al. (2002), the pivotal roles played by land and resources in politics create disincentives for negotiation among certain clans, who leverage control over land to secure favourable terms in future governance arrangements (Fund., 2021).

Comprehending the pivotal role of land in the conflicts observed across numerous nations can aid policymakers in formulating strategies to alleviate inter-group tensions, mitigate conflict, and potentially avert violence and the ensuing cycle of poverty. Neglecting to address these fundamental issues could heighten the likelihood of conflict and perpetuate impoverishment (Development., 2011.). Land serves as a focal point of competition in various intersecting dimensions: as an economic asset, a symbol of identity and social validation, and a domain of political significance. The nexus between land and conflict revolves around competition for land and its resources, which may involve diverse identity groups based on ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, or age (development., 2011.). When this competition encompasses groups rather than individuals, the risk of broader-scale violence escalates. While some conflicts directly stem from the land competition, land often serves as one among several contributing factors to conflict, alongside ethnic or religious tensions, and political marginalization (development., 2011.).

In Somalia, land governance mechanisms encompass three distinct yet interconnected systems: xeer (customary law), Islamic law, and state law. Xeer is widely understood not as a codified legal framework but rather as a collection of diverse clan agreements passed down orally through generations. Similarly, the involvement of religious elders and adherence to Islamic legal principles in land governance and dispute resolution are prevalent practices. Drawing from the Qur'an, the hadith, and scholarly consensus, Islamic jurisprudence forms the basis for this body of juridical and moral laws. Consequently, Somalia's land governance system is characterized by a complex interplay of authorities, incorporating the Xeer and Islamic systems alongside multi-tiered state land

governance structures where they are established, and the influence of influential individuals and factions (Institute., 2023).

As per the Land Law of 1975, the State retains ownership of all land, thereby granting it the authority to reclaim, redistribute, or assign land as it deems necessary. Additionally, the State operates its own agricultural enterprises. The inception of state-run farming initiatives dates back to the early 1970s, reflecting the government's adherence to socialist principles, which advocated for collective farming as a means to enhance agricultural productivity (Bruce, 1988). Consequently, state-owned farms were established with the aim of incentivizing citizens to form cooperative farming ventures. Law No. 40 of October 1973 was instrumental in fostering the growth of cooperatives by promoting and supporting their formation, leading to the establishment of numerous cooperatives among both agriculturalists and pastoral communities (Bruce, 1988).

Puntland, situated in the north-eastern region of the country, is recognized for its relative stability. Over the years, it has enacted various legislative measures concerning land governance (Institute., 2023). Notably, in 2000, the adoption of an Urban Land Law reaffirmed the state's ownership of all land, echoing the principles outlined in the Land Law of 1975 (Institute., 2023). However, in 2005, a new land law was introduced, sparking ambiguity regarding the delineation of responsibilities between the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Settlement and the district-level governments. Subsequently, in 2020, Puntland's Parliament ratified the Urban Land Management Law, marking a significant milestone by establishing clear directives for the governance and administration of urban land. Additionally, Puntland hosts a Land Dispute Tribunal designed to offer a more accessible and expedited resolution process for land-related conflicts, employing flexible procedures to ensure efficient dispute management compared to conventional courts (Institute., 2023).

## Statement of the Problem

Proper land planning and management is a key factor in reducing community conflicts at all levels: district, village, and state levels. Land use management helps in the control of the allocation of land to specific uses. This guarantees that resources are preserved for future generations. It reduces the environmental impact of economic activity and development.

Qardho district is one of the ancient settlements in the Puntland state of Somalia and is located at strategic points with friendly weather, fertile soil, and historic pasturelands that could make the city one of the most developed towns in Somalia's Puntland state. However, since private individuals took over the land, its utilization has been hampered by ownership disputes and misuse, where unplanned settlements were created on flood plains and pasturelands, roads and town plans are diminished and blocked by illegal buildings, and increased land ownership competition is expanding to the pasturelands. What could have been potential for its development now seems to be among the factors impeding the city's ability to grow and compete. Although these conflicts seem to be taking the form of security challenges at some points, this research only aims to examine the underlying causes, effects, and possible solutions for the land conflicts in the Qardho district.

## Objectives of the Study

The study examined three specific research objectives:

- To assess the root causes of land conflict in Qardho district.
- To investigate the effects of land conflict in Qardho district.
- To propose possible solutions to the land conflict in Qardho district.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY.

The study was carried out in Qardho district, located in the Puntland state of Somalia. The study involved a population of 152,711 population in

Qardho, as reported in the 2023 population data from the Food Security and Livelihood Analysis Unit (FSNAU). The research utilized a descriptive research design, chosen to provide a comprehensive and precise portrayal of the conflict and land situation in Qardho district of the Puntland state in Somalia.

The study's sample size was determined using Slovin's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)} = \frac{152,711}{1+152,711(0.05)^2} = 399$$

Where n -is the sample size, N -is the population size, and e- is the margin of error (0.05).

### Data Collection.

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A detailed literature review, ten interviews, and a structured questionnaire were employed during the data collection. The variables examined in the data

collection included demographics, law enforcement, land ownership, land registration system, institutional capacity, land administration, clan conflicts, geographical information systems, legal and administrative frameworks.

The validity of the research instrument was assured by seeking expert judgment, and the researchers aimed for a validity coefficient of at least 85%. The University's head of the research and development centre was consulted for expert guidance on constructing the questionnaire. Following the questionnaire assessment, the necessary adjustments were made, and the study's objectives were adjusted as needed.

The respondents of the study comprised local council members, land brokers, court judiciaries, religious leaders, women groups, village committees, diaspora members, pastoralists, elders, traders, landowners, and youth groups.

**Table 1: Categories of respondents**

Category of respondent	Number of respondents	Percentage (%).
Local council members.	20	5%
Land brokers.	15	4%
Court judiciaries.	10	3%
Religious leaders.	40	10%
Women groups.	30	8%
Village committees.	30	8%
Diaspora members.	16	4%
Pastoralists.	24	6%
Elders.	40	10%
Traders.	70	18%
Landowners.	90	23%
Youth groups.	14	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Data Analysis.

Stata statistical software was employed in the data analysis to generate percentages, frequencies, tables, and statistical conclusions that address the study objectives.

## FINDINGS/RESULTS.

### Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.

Table 2 presents a comprehensive analysis of the demographic characteristics exhibited by the

respondents of this study. It delves into several key aspects such as age, gender, level of education, experience, and marital status, shedding light on the diverse composition of the respondent population. The age distribution of surveyed respondents was categorized into distinct groups, revealing that the majority (61.15%) fell within the age bracket of 31 to 40 years, indicative of a predominant presence of individuals in this age range.



Additionally, the data highlighted a relatively equitable representation of male (48.12%) and female (51.88%) respondents, signifying a balanced gender distribution within the sample. In terms of educational attainment, the findings underscored a noteworthy proportion of respondents holding a bachelor's degree (41.60%), followed by those with educational backgrounds below the secondary level (24.56%). This suggests a relatively high level of educational attainment among the surveyed individuals.

Furthermore, the analysis of respondents' experience revealed that the largest contingent (57.89%) possessed 5-10 years of professional experience, while smaller cohorts reported 1-5 years (30.33%) or over 10 years (10.53%) of experience, indicating a varied spectrum of experience levels within the sample. Lastly, the examination of marital status unveiled that nearly half of the respondents were married (49.12%), closely followed by single individuals (46.37%). Meanwhile, a minority reported being divorced (4.01%) or widowed (0.5%), reflecting a diverse array of marital statuses among the surveyed population.

**Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents**

Variable		N	%
Age	21—30	62	15.54%
	31-40	244	61.15%
	41--50	20	5.01%
	51-60	43	10.78%
	Above 60	3	7.52%
Gender	Male	192	51.88%
	Female	207	48.12%
Level of education of the respondents	Masters	7	1.75%
	Bachelor	166	41.60%
	Diploma	56	14.04%
	Secondary level	72	18.05%
	Below secondary	98	24.56%
Experience of the respondents.	5-10 yrs.	231	57.89%
	1-5 yrs.	121	30.33%
	Above 10 yrs.	42	10.53%
	Below 1 yr.	5	1.25%
Marital status of the respondents.	Married	196	49.12%
	Single	185	46.37%
	Divorced	16	4.01%
	Widowed	2	0.5%

### Root causes of land conflict in Qardho District

Table 3 presents an analysis of the root causes of land conflict in the Qardho district, as perceived by respondents. It outlines various causes and the degree of agreement among respondents regarding each cause. The majority of respondents (99.25%) agreed that private land ownership is a cause of land conflict in the Qardho district. This suggests that issues related to property rights and ownership disputes may contribute significantly to conflicts over land. A substantial proportion of respondents (96.25%) agreed that the absence of a

land registration system contributes to land conflict in the Qardho district while only 3.75% of the respondents disagreed with this notion. This highlights the importance of establishing formal mechanisms for registering land ownership to prevent disputes and ensure clarity in property rights.

In addition, more than half of the respondents (99.24%) agreed that weak institutional capacity, characterized by inadequate land governance structures, is a major cause of land conflict in Qardho and less than 1% of the respondents

disagreed with this variable. This underscores the need for strengthening institutional frameworks and governance mechanisms to effectively manage land resources and mitigate conflict. A significant portion of respondents (98.75%) agreed that the absence of effective regulations and weak land administration contribute to land conflict in Qardho while less than 2% of the respondents disagreed with this variable. This suggests that deficiencies in regulatory frameworks and administrative processes may exacerbate tensions and disputes related to land.

Finally, a smaller percentage of respondents (8.27%) disagreed that the customary land dispute resolution system is a cause of land conflict. However, a considerable majority (91.73%) agreed that this system contributes to conflicts over land in the Qardho district. This implies that while customary mechanisms may play a role in resolving disputes, they may also be associated with challenges or shortcomings that fuel conflicts.

During the interviews, participants were questioned about the underlying causes of the land conflict in the Qardho district. According to their responses, several key factors emerged as significant contributors. These included the traditional land tenure system, which often leads

to disputes over land ownership, private land ownership as well as weak land governance and corruption within local institutions. Additionally, issues such as the disorganization of the local government, widespread poverty, and high levels of unemployment were cited as exacerbating factors. Lack of proper land registration procedures, instances of land grabbing, and encroachment were also identified as key drivers of conflict in the region. Overall, the responses highlighted the complex interplay of socio-economic, political, and institutional factors underlying the land conflict in the Qardho district.

*“Following the collapse of the government of Somalia, land ownership shifted to private individuals who viewed it as a valuable asset for generating income and sustaining their livelihoods. Consequently, there was a pervasive desire among these individuals to acquire extensive tracts of land for resale purposes. In some instances, land was sold without proper verification of ownership, leading to disputes and conflicts over land rights. Tragically, these conflicts resulted in loss of life, with many individuals losing their lives as a direct consequence of land-related disputes in the Qardho district.”*-Said one of the interview respondents.

**Table 3: Root causes of land conflict in the Qardho district.**

Causes	SA	A	SD	D
Private land ownership is one of the causes of land conflict in Qardho district.	121 30.33	275 68.92	0 0	3 0.75
The lack of a land registration system is one of the causes of land conflict in the Qardho district.	40 10.03	344 86.22	0 0	15 3.76
The weakness of institutional capacity (weak land governance) is one of the major causes of land conflict in Qardho.	197 49.37	199 49.87	0 0	3 0.75
The lack of effective regulations and weak land administration is one of the major causes of land conflict in Qardho.	121 30.33	273 68.42	0 0	5 1.25
The customary land dispute resolution system is one of the causes of land conflict.	16 4.01	350 87.72	0 0	33 8.27

Key: SA = Strongly agree, A = Agreed, SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree

### Effects of Land Conflict in Qardho District.

Data presented in Table 4 shows the responses of the participants regarding the effect of land conflict. This table presents the perceived effects of land conflict in the Qardho district, as indicated by respondents. It delineates various

consequences and the level of agreement among respondents regarding each effect. A significant majority of respondents (96.74%) agreed that land conflict fosters mistrust among neighbouring communities in Qardho while 3.26% of the respondents disagreed in this argument. This

suggests that tensions stemming from land ownership disputes could strain inter-community relations, exacerbating social rifts and impeding collaboration. Moreover, a notable proportion of respondents (81.46%) acknowledged that clan conflicts emerge as a prominent effect of land conflict in Qardho, underscoring the intricate link between land disputes and inter-clan tensions, which may escalate into broader conflicts detrimental to regional peace and stability. However, 18.55% of the respondents disagreed with this notion.

Additionally, a substantial portion of respondents (98.99%) agreed that land conflicts discourage investments and developmental endeavours, such as agriculture programs, in the Qardho district. This underscores the adverse impact of insecurity and instability on socio-economic advancement and livelihood opportunities for local communities. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of respondents (91.23%) affirmed that land conflicts impede town planning and expansion initiatives in Qardho while 8.77% of the respondents disagreed on this conception. This implies that unresolved land disputes could hinder urban development efforts, constraining infrastructural growth and urbanization processes within the district.

Moreover, the majority of respondents (97.24%) agreed that land conflicts exacerbate the

ramifications of natural disasters, such as floods, in the Qardho district while a lower percentage (2.76%) of the respondents disagreed with this row. This suggests that disputes over land ownership and resource utilization may heighten vulnerabilities to environmental hazards, intensifying the socio-economic repercussions of disasters on local communities. Overall, these findings underscore the multifaceted impacts of land conflict in Qardho, necessitating comprehensive strategies to address underlying grievances, promote conflict resolution, and foster sustainable development practices for the betterment of the region.

In the interview process, the respondents were asked about the effects of land conflict in the Qardho district. The respondents emphasized that the major effects of land conflict encompassed a wide range of social and humanitarian concerns. These effects included displacement of communities, heightened social tensions, increased insecurity, loss of life, significant human migration, and internal clan conflicts.

*"One of the most significant effects of the land conflict here is how it tears our community apart. It's not just about losing land; it's about losing trust and stability in our neighbourhood." Said one of the research interview respondents.*

**Table 4: The effects of land conflict in the Qardho district**

Effects.	SA	A	SD	D
Mistrust among neighbouring communities is one of the effects of land conflict.	91 22.81	295 73.93	0 0	13 3.26
Clan conflicts are one of the major effects of land conflict.	17 4.26	308 77.19	0 0	74 18.55
Land conflicts discourage investments and development e.g. agriculture programs.	135 33.83	260 65.16	0 0	4 1
Land conflicts hinder town planning and town expansion.	16 4.01	348 87.22	0 0	35 8.77
Land conflicts maximize the effects of natural disasters (floods) in Qardho district	158 39.60	230 57.64	1 0.25	10 2.51

*Key: SA = Strongly agree, A = Agreed, SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree*

### Possible Solutions to the Land Conflict in Qardho District

Data presented in *Table 5* shows the responses of the participants regarding the possible solutions to

the land conflict in the Qardho district of Puntland state of Somalia. The table above presents the possible solutions to land conflict in the Qardho district, as perceived by respondents. Each solution is assessed based on the degree of



agreement among respondents. 98.99% of respondents agreed that implementing a land registration system could be a solution to land conflict, and only 1% of the respondents disagreed with this view. This suggests that formalizing land ownership through registration may help clarify property rights and reduce disputes over land ownership. 99.25% of respondents agreed that bolstering government institutions in land governance and administration could mitigate land conflict. This implies that enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of government agencies tasked with land management may contribute to conflict resolution. 75.19% of respondents agreed that utilizing GIS and mapping of land could be a solution to land conflict. This indicates that employing technology for accurate land mapping may aid in delineating land boundaries and resolving disputes. 99.50% of respondents agreed that developing adequate policy, legal, and administrative frameworks for land ownership and control could address land conflict. This suggests that establishing clear and comprehensive regulatory frameworks may facilitate fair and transparent land governance.

Moreover, 98% of respondents agreed that fostering cooperation between local government and courts could mitigate land conflict while only 2% of the respondents disagreed with this notion. This highlights the importance of collaboration

between judicial and administrative bodies in resolving land disputes. 81.71% of respondents agreed that empowering law enforcement authorities could aid in land conflict management while 18.29% of the respondents disagreed with this notion. This implies that strengthening law enforcement agencies' capacity to enforce land-related laws and regulations may deter land-related offenses. 99.50% of respondents agreed that establishing specialized state-level agencies under the Ministry of Environment and Wildlife could be a solution. This suggests that creating dedicated agencies focused on land preservation may help manage conflicts related to land use.

Finally, in the interview process, respondents emphasized key solutions to address land conflicts in our community. They highlighted the importance of law enforcement to uphold land laws, implement sustainable land management practices, strengthen the land tenure system, promote community dialogue and conflict resolution mechanisms, enhance land governance and regulation, and foster social cohesion through inclusive development initiatives.

*"I believe that if we work together to enforce the laws, manage our land sustainably, and promote dialogue among our community members, we can find peaceful solutions to the land conflicts in Qardho- One of the interview respondents states this.*

**Table 5: The possible solutions to the land conflict in the Qardho district.**

Solutions.	SA	A	SD	D
A land registration system is one of the solutions to land conflict in Qardho district.	116 29.07	279 69.92	0 0	4 1.0
Strengthening government institutions in land governance and administration can be one of the major solutions to land conflict in Qardho district.	312 78.20	84 21.05	0 0	3 0.75
The use of geographical information systems (GIS) and mapping of land can be one of the solutions to land conflict in Qardho district.	94 23.56	300 75.19	0 0	5 1.25
Developing adequate policy, legal, and administrative frameworks of land ownership and control can be a crucial solution to the resolution of land conflict in Qardho district.	264 66.17	133 33.33	0 0	2 0.50
Cooperation between local government and courts can be one of the solutions to land conflict in Qardho district.	27 6.77	364 91.23	0 0	8 2.01
Capacitating law-enforcement authorities can be one of the solutions for land conflict management.	13 3.26	313 78.45	0 0	73 18.30
The establishment of specialized state-level agencies under the Ministry of Environment and Wildlife dealing with the preservation of pasturelands and forests can be one of the solutions.	300 75.19	97 24.31	0 0	2 0.50
<i>Key: SA = Strongly agree, A = Agreed, SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree</i>				

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study highlight the intricate character of land conflicts in the Qardho district, influenced by various elements such as historical land ownership structures, socio-economic factors, institutional capabilities, legal frameworks, and land registration, this a line with another study about the causes of land conflict in Puntland state of Somalia with the case for Garowe city which stated that Land conflicts stem from various sources, including social, economic, political, and institutional factors. Additionally, certain issues like tenure, clarity, corruption, and historical background cut across these categories. Take, for example, land tenure, which plays a significant role in exacerbating conflicts in Garowe. It contributes to uncertainties regarding ownership, boundary disputes, ambiguous access to land, and susceptibility to fraudulent transactions (Ali Saleban Jama1, 2018).

The respondents of this study strongly agreed (78.20%) that strengthening government institutions in land governance and administration can be one of the major solutions to land conflict in the Qardho district. This finding aligns with previous research on land conflict causes in Puntland state, particularly in Garowe city. In that study, over half (53.4%) of the surveyed individuals emphasized the importance of implementing effective policies to advance land rights within their community. Furthermore, nearly half (45.0%) of the respondents advocated transferring land ownership to the government as the optimal approach to promote land rights, a sentiment echoed during qualitative interviews (Ali Saleban Jama1, 2018).

The study indicates that a significant portion of respondents, comprising 49.37%, identified the weakness of institutional capacity, particularly weak land governance, as a major contributing factor to land conflict in Qardho. Conversely, a slightly higher percentage, 49.87%, also acknowledged this weakness as a cause. This demonstrates a strong consensus among respondents regarding the role of inadequate institutional capacity in driving land conflicts in

the area. Only a minimal proportion, representing 0.75% of respondents, did not attribute land conflicts to weak land governance. The findings of this study align closely with prior research on land and conflict dynamics in Jubaland. According to this study, inadequate governance, encompassing both state institutions and traditional and religious authorities, poses a significant challenge for Somalia and Jubaland alike (UN-Habitat, 2017).

The study indicates that a small percentage, specifically 4.01%, of respondents identified the customary land dispute resolution system as a cause of land conflict. In contrast, a significant majority, amounting to 87.72% of respondents, attributed land conflict to this system. This suggests a widespread recognition among respondents that the customary land dispute resolution system plays a central role in generating land conflicts. A minor proportion, representing 8.27% of respondents, did not consider this system to be a contributing factor to land conflicts. This discovery serves to validate a previous study on land and conflict in Somalia, which asserts that the difficulty in resolving land disputes stems from traditional institutions' inability to effectively address conflicts involving external interests that hold sway beyond community frameworks (Fund., 2021).

## CONCLUSIONS

The study on land conflict in the Qardho district has provided valuable insights into the root causes, effects, and possible solutions to the persistent challenges facing land management and governance in the region. Through a comprehensive analysis of demographic characteristics, root causes, effects, and potential solutions, several key findings have emerged. Firstly, the study highlighted the diverse demographic composition of the respondent population, with variations in age, gender, education level, experience, and marital status. These demographic insights underscore the importance of considering the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of stakeholders in addressing land conflicts effectively. Secondly,

the study identified multiple root causes of land conflict in the Qardho district, including private land ownership disputes, the absence of a land registration system, weak institutional capacity, ineffective regulations, and customary land dispute resolution systems. These findings emphasize the need for comprehensive strategies to address underlying grievances and strengthen land governance mechanisms. Thirdly, the study elucidated the multifaceted effects of land conflict, including mistrust among communities, clan conflicts, hindered investments and development initiatives, impeded town planning and expansion, and exacerbated vulnerabilities to natural disasters. These effects underscore the far-reaching socio-economic and environmental consequences of unresolved land disputes.

Finally, the study proposed various solutions to mitigate land conflicts, including the implementation of a land registration system, strengthening government institutions, utilizing GIS technology, developing policy and legal frameworks, promoting cooperation and coordination, empowering law enforcement authorities, and establishing specialized agencies. These recommendations provide a roadmap for policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders to work collaboratively toward sustainable land management and conflict resolution in the Qardho district.

In essence, addressing land conflicts requires a holistic approach that integrates legal, institutional, technological, and socio-economic interventions tailored to the specific context of the Qardho district. By adopting evidence-based strategies and fostering inclusive dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders, it is possible to overcome the challenges posed by land conflicts and promote equitable, resilient, and sustainable land management practices for the benefit of present and future generations.

### **Recommendations**

Given the findings and analysis demonstrated above, the study suggests the following recommendations: Given the high level of agreement among respondents regarding the

importance of a land registration system in mitigating land conflicts, it is recommended that the local government establishes and implements a formal system for registering land ownership. This would help clarify property rights, reduce disputes, and enhance overall land governance. To address weak institutional capacity in land governance and administration, efforts should be made to strengthen government institutions responsible for managing land resources. This may involve capacity-building initiatives, improved coordination between relevant agencies, and the allocation of sufficient resources to support effective governance practices.

Given the consensus among respondents on the potential of GIS and mapping of land to mitigate land conflicts, integrating GIS technology into land management processes should be prioritized. This would enable accurate mapping of land boundaries, identification of land use patterns, and enhanced decision-making in land allocation and management. To address gaps in policy, legal, and administrative frameworks governing land ownership and control, it is recommended that the local government develops and implements adequate regulations to regulate land transactions, resolve disputes, and ensure equitable access to land resources.

Enhancing cooperation between local government institutions, courts, law enforcement agencies, and community stakeholders is essential for effective land conflict management. Strengthening collaboration mechanisms, establishing dispute resolution mechanisms, and promoting dialogue among stakeholders can facilitate conflict resolution and prevent the escalation of conflicts. To address challenges related to law enforcement in land conflict management, efforts should be made to empower law enforcement authorities with the necessary resources, training, and legal mandates to enforce land-related laws and regulations effectively. Creating specialized state-level agencies under the Ministry of Environment and Wildlife focused on land preservation and management could provide dedicated expertise and resources to

address land conflicts and promote sustainable land use practices.

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