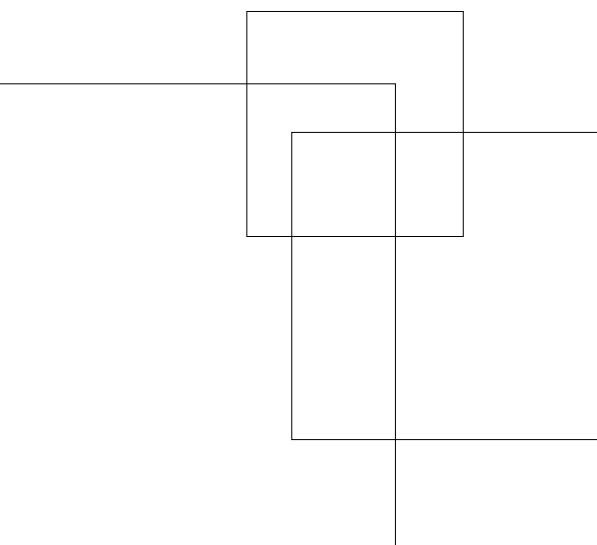




Employment programs and conflict in Somalia

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Abstract

This paper investigates the role played by employment programs in reducing willingness of people to engage in violence. From an analysis of qualitative and quantitative interviews with around 200 program beneficiaries in the districts of Bosasso (Puntland), Berbera (Somaliland) and Baidoa (South Somalia), it was found that the two analysed ILO employment programs, despite not having a direct peacebuilding goal, reduced support for violence among Somali youth beneficiaries, from 16 to 6 percent.

Three channels linking participation in the employment program to reduction in violence played a role in Somalia: the economic opportunity, contact and grievances. First, the analysis showed that the skills provided by the ILO employment programs had a positive impact on respondents' labour market outcomes. Secondly, the employment programs brought people together, and strengthened opportunities for dialogue among people from different clans and sub-clans as well as between men and women, broke down stereotypes and increased social cohesion. Finally, the inclusiveness and transparency of the ILO employment programs, which aimed to improve equality in opportunities, as well as the quality and rights at work, addressed individual grievance. Via these three channels, the employment programs reduced support for armed violence in Somalia. Policy recommendations for future action in Somalia are derived based on quantitative and qualitative analysis of the two employment programs.

Keywords: employment, skills, training, conflict

JEL Classification: O12, J24, K42, D74

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1 Introduction

Somalia is trying to achieve a path of stability and broad-based development, moving beyond decades of social unrest and armed conflict.¹ Elections took place in 2017 and the federal government of Somalia (FGS) officially launched a National Development Plan (2017–2019), which includes strategies to create more employment opportunities and decent work, particularly for the youth. The federal project has begun, with the formation of most Federal Member States (FMS) administrations. Recently, the country has also enjoyed increased financial investment from diaspora returnees and foreign companies and improved infrastructure around major transportation and business hubs.

Even with these positive developments, insecurity remains pervasive in many parts of the country. In Mogadishu, on October 14, 2017, two truck bombs detonated. These coordinated explosions killed more than 500 people, including children, and injured many more, making it the deadliest attack in Somalia in the past years (UNSOM). Despite increased efforts to establish a functioning central government, the recent attacks highlight Somalia's sustained vulnerability to violence.² Non-state armed groups have proven repeatedly their resilience. One source of this resilience is the effective recruitment and indoctrination of young people. According to the International Crisis Group, the number of young people—both men and women—who are willing to act on behalf of groups like Al-Shabaab is very high, especially considering the increased security activity (International Crisis Group, 2014). In addition, climate shocks, including droughts and floods, have negatively affected Somali's livelihood (ILO Somalia, forthcoming). This may in turn feed conflict in Somalia by exacerbating tensions between clans and boosting the role of non-state armed groups, including Al-Shabaab (Igarapé Institute).

While the National Development Plan (2017–2019), includes as one of its ten goals “increased employment opportunities and decent work particularly for the youth” as one way to address a structural

¹ From a legal point of view, the relevant definitions of the term “conflict” are found in International Humanitarian Law, which creates a distinction between: international and non-international armed conflict. The term ‘armed conflict’ was defined by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the Tadic decision, which suggested that “an armed conflict exists whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State.” (Prosecutor v. Tadic, (Appeals Chamber) (Case No. IT-94-1-A72), 2 October 1995, §70).

Somalia is involved in non-international armed conflict. Under Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, non-international armed conflicts are armed conflicts in which one or more non-governmental armed groups are concerned. Hostilities may occur between governmental armed forces and non-governmental armed groups or between these groups only. Two criteria are needed in order to understand whether a situation can be classified as non-international armed conflict. First, the hostilities must reach a minimum level of intensity. For example, when the government is obliged to use military force against the insurgents, instead of mere police forces. Secondly, non-governmental groups involved in the conflict must be “parties to the conflict”, i.e. they possess organized armed forces. For example, these forces have to be under a certain command structure and have the capacity to sustain military operations (ICRC casebook, <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/non-international-armed-conflict>).

For the purpose of this research the term conflict will be used instead of non-international armed conflict, in line with Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (N. 205).

². In the rest of the text we will use the term violence, but it should always be interpreted in the context of the current conflict situation of Somalia, i.e. armed violence.

driver of youth engagement in conflict³, questions remain about if and how employment and decent work decrease the appeal of armed opposition groups. In recent years there has been a surge in high-quality research on what actual policies can help to curb the risk of conflict. However, so far, as highlighted by Brück et al. (2016), there is a lack of knowledge on selection into violent behaviours; on the links between employment programs (i.e. any interventions that promote employment) and peace; and on which program designs maximise impact.⁴

Guided by ILO's Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation (No. 205) and the joint statement by ILO/PBSO/UNDP/World Bank (2016)⁵, we have undertaken research to help fill this knowledge gap, investigating whether employment programs affect the willingness of people to engage and support violence in Somalia. This research is also in line with the newly adopted ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019 recognising that "... conflict, disasters and other humanitarian emergencies in many parts of the world constitute a threat to (economic and social) advances and to securing shared prosperity and decent work for all " and "...decent work is key to sustainable development, addressing income inequality and ending poverty, paying special attention to areas affected by conflict, disaster and other humanitarian emergencies...".

The case of Somalia because of the depth and length of its crisis is a source of particular international concern. The ILO has created income-generating activities for Somali men and women, working hand in hand with local administrations, communities and the private sector, undertaking almost 50 employment projects in Somalia in the last ten years for a total budget of around \$50 million (ILO, DC Dashboard February 2019)⁶. Therefore, there is a great opportunity for learning whether ILO employment programs in Somalia reduced engagement and support for violence, thus contributing to peace and stability.

The analysis of qualitative and quantitative surveys of beneficiaries of two ILO employment programs (Joint Program Youth Employment Somalia (YES) and Youth for Change (Y4C)) will be performed in order to investigate whether and how the two ILO employment programs are affecting the willingness of people to engage and support violence in Somalia. This paper will focus on the training component of the two employment programs. The data collection are carried out in the districts of Bosasso in the north-eastern Bari Region (Puntland), Berbera in the north-western region of Woqooyi Galbeed (Somaliland) and Baidoa in the south Bai Region (South Somalia). This data is complemented with

³ FGS. 2016. National Development Plan: Towards Recovery, Democracy and Prosperity, 2017–2019. Mogadishu. In addition, Somalia's National Strategy and Action Plan for Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism asserts that "education, skills development and employment facilitation is an essential part of preventing violent extremism". The Federal Government of Somalia has taken initial steps to implement its obligations under United Nations Security Council and General Assembly Resolutions by adopting a National Strategy and Action Plan on Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism in September 2016 (Federal Republic of Somalia, 2016 "National Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism." Unpublished draft. Mogadishu.).

⁴In this report, employment program refers to interventions that promote employment. It includes interventions that provide participants with salaried job (creating jobs directly through for example public works as well as facilitating connections between participants and employers); all types of training that is aimed at increasing participants' employability (be it in salaried employment or self-employment); or interventions in support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs): this includes interventions aimed at supporting participants to set up their own businesses, as well as interventions aimed at directly supporting existing MSMEs. It should be noted that, according to our inclusion criteria, there are types of employment-related intervention that do not qualify, e.g. institutional capacity development or interventions aimed at creating a favourable macroeconomic environment for employment. This is because the report will focus on the micro foundations of peace.

⁵ ILO, UNDP, PBSO and World Bank (2016), Employment Programs and Peace.

⁶ Building on the century-long experience and added value in promoting decent work for peace, in 2016 the ILO launched the Jobs for Peace and Resilience (JPR) flagship program which contributes to more peaceful and resilient societies in fragile situations. Since 2017, the ILO has reinforced its presence through JPR programs in Somalia.

interviews with key informants (community leader, and representatives of youth, women, employers and workers) in the three districts as well as key national and international stakeholders, including UN agency management and program staff.

This research aims to offer evidence on the effectiveness of the employment programs to reduce youth engagement and support for violence in Somalia. The program contributes to the broader UN effort to efficiently and effectively use employment programs as a means to sustain peace and achieve SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). More broadly, the research contributes to the body of evidence on what works to reduce support for and engagement in violence in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

This paper first details existing theories on the links between employment programs and violence. Next, it provides background on the conflict and socioeconomic situation in Somalia. Then, it describes the two ILO's employment programs (YES and Y4C) and their implementation by ILO in the three selected Somalia's districts. It will be followed by a presentation of the study design and methodology. The paper then provides a discussion of the key findings. It closes with recommendations for practitioners and policymakers on how employment programs can be designed to reduce the appeal of armed opposition groups in Somalia and beyond.

2 Participation in employment and conflict

Various disciplines have worked to better understand the root causes of conflict, highlighting unemployment and decent work deficits as possible factors leading to it and decent work creation as a possible way to create safer societies in the aftermath of war (Collier, 2004; World Bank, 2011; ILO, 2016).⁷ In this section, the main reasons why people engage in different forms of violence and how these motives might change as a consequence of employment programs will be discussed. Secondly, the nascent, yet growing literature on the impact of employment programs on violence will be described.

2.1 Why people engage in conflict and how employment programs might interrupt it?

The literature on youth and violence has identified several ultimate and proximal factors that facilitate youth engagement in violence, including: material and non-material incentives (e.g. income, resources, protection or social status); inadequate and unequal education and skills; delayed transition to adulthood; injustice (e.g. socio-economic and political exclusion, and corruption); a legacy of violence; and trigger events (e.g. elections at the societal level and trauma at the individual level) (Hilker and Fraser 2009; OECD 2011; Korongo 2012; Mercy Corps 2011, 2015; Cramer 2015; IANYD – Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding 2016).

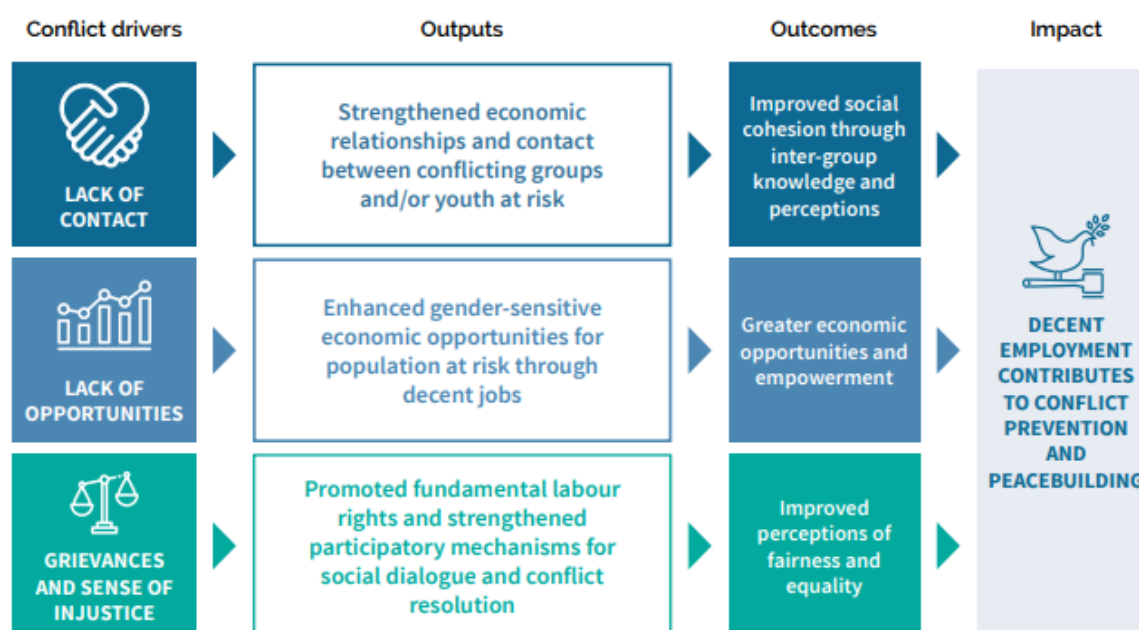
⁷ It is important to notice that the concept of 'conflict' is subject to diverse interpretations and definitions as found in disciplines such as social sciences, international relations, or economics. Without going into details of different classifications of conflict according to different variables, in social sciences, international relations, or economics different and at times overlapping definitions are adopted that do not necessarily coincide with legal ones. For example the term civil war has no legal meaning and in the literature, it is often used to refer to a non-international armed conflict (see ICRC <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/interview/2012/12-10-niac-non-international-armed-conflict.htm>). In this section we used the same terminology of the original paper analysed.

Tesfaye and Wolfe (2014) examined why youth in 13 sub-Saharan African countries support violence. They found that youth actively engaged in society⁸ were positively correlated with participation and willingness to participate in and support for violence in half of the countries; youth that *experienced corruption and perceived unfairness of the law* (or exclusion) were often associated with a greater risk of violence. *Unemployment and poverty* were strong predictors of violence in some countries, and a *history of attack in the household* was consistently positively associated with participation or willingness to participate in violence. In contrast, other research in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa found that *civic engagement* did not inform Arab youths' propensity to support violence, however, their *frustration with government institutions* did (Kurtz, 2012). Humphreys and Weinstein (2008) examined the determinants of participation in insurgent and counterinsurgent factions in Sierra Leone's civil war. They found that *poverty, lack of access to education, and political alienation* predict participation in both rebellion and counter-rebellion. Therefore, when trying to identify the drivers of violence, different factors will matter based on the social, economic and political context in each country and the type of violence prevalent.

Based on a comprehensive review of the academic literature and more than 450 employment programs in fragile situations, a joint statement by ILO/PBSO/UNDP/World Bank (2016) was elaborated, identifying three main channels through which employment programs can reduce conflict. Employment programs can contribute to peace and prevent conflict by, first, creating constructive contact between groups, thus overturning common stereotypes and improving inter-group knowledge and perceptions⁹; second, addressing grievances and perceptions of unfair treatment and inequality; and, third, fostering economic opportunities, which in turn reduces incentives for engaging in adverse behaviour and provides reasons to refrain from embarking on irregular migration (ILO, UNDP, UN PBSO and World Bank (2016); Brück et al. 2016; Brück et al. 2019).

⁸ Through community groups or political organizations, for example.

⁹ Okunogbe (2016) showed that in Nigeria a program, that sends randomly university graduates to different areas of the country, increases national pride and tolerance towards other ethnic religions if students were sent to states where their ethnic group is not the majority.

Table 1 Employment contribution to peacebuilding

Source: ILO (2019).

Despite the intuitions relating employment and conflict, the empirical support is quite scarce. Some macroeconomic studies showed correlation between unemployment and civil war. Urdal (2007) suggested that there is a correlation between youth bulges and violence, especially in contexts of unemployment and poverty. However, Cramer (2010), using simple descriptive statistical analysis, suggested that there is no clear pattern across countries connecting unemployment and onset of or casualty levels of conflict: unemployment rose before violence in Algeria and Egypt, but fell in Thailand or the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.¹⁰ A number of studies showed that joining armed groups can be an attractive option in the absence of other opportunities, supporting the *opportunity cost theory* (Justino, 2010; Walter, 2004)¹¹. However, Berman et al. (2011) argue that if there is an opportunity cost effect, it was not dominant in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines. Some of these disparities in results may be explained by the fact that not all types of violence are the same. Thus, a program that reduces individuals' involvement in crimes (Blattman and Annan, 2016), may not work in reducing involvement in political violence.

Some researchers show that motivations for joining violence are not restricted to the unemployed. Poor and exploitative working conditions, extremely low pay and a lack of formal mechanisms through which to express dissatisfaction all help create the conditions for violence (Stewart, 2015). For instance, Gutierrez Sanin (2008) showed that people joining violent organisations in Colombia's war were employed, often at above average wage. In the case of the FARC in Colombia many rebels were women working in the agricultural sector (Wood, 2003; Gutierrez Sanin, 2004). Cramer (2010) also suggested that in Sierra Leone it was not unemployment but the nature of employment that led youth to mobilise. Overall, Obeyesekere (1974) argues that more than 90 per cent of suspected insurgents were, before the rebellion, employed in low-paying jobs, underemployed, or unemployed. Evidence from Sri Lanka

¹⁰ Cramer (2010) also points out that data on unemployment, especially youth unemployment, in conflict prone countries is insufficient, although data collection have improved.

¹¹ The idea guiding the opportunity cost theory is that given the low opportunity cost of violence to the poor, they have a comparative advantage in violence. Those without access to legal, cooperative gainful employment are more likely to maximise their utility by recourse to violent conflict and extortion (Cramer, 2011).

showed that people victim of ethnic discrimination in labour markets engaged in conflict (Mayer and Salih, 2006).¹²

2.2 Do employment programs reduce conflict?

The literature has mainly focused on examining the causes and consequences of conflict (Blattman and Miguel, 2010), while evaluating policies to end it remains scarce.

Kurtz et al. (2018) finds that youth who received vocational training during an employability program (INVEST)¹³ and a cash transfer of 75 USD in Kandahar, Afghanistan, were 17 percent less likely to support armed opposition groups six to nine months after the end of the interventions. Those receiving cash transfers and vocational training reported improved perceptions of government performance, which they saw as being more responsive to their needs and thus they were less willing to participate in violence. However, Mercy Corps (2015b) found that the INVEST program alone in Southern Afghanistan has impressive economic impacts, but the impacts on peace and stability related outcomes are inconclusive.¹⁴ Major differences are seen in the impacts of INVEST on perceived position in society when controlling for gender. INVEST is observed to increase urban males' perceptions of their position in society by about 0.43 points, but decrease the same perceptions for urban females by 0.54 points. This difference is not unexpected given that there are deeply entrenched gender norms and behaviours in Helmand that adversely affect women. By most accounts, women have low social standing within their communities. The negative association between INVEST and female perceptions of positions within society may be attributed to the fact that women are more likely to feel constrained by these gender norms, and so reduce their own perception of their position after completing the INVEST program.

Blattman and Annan (2016) studied an agricultural training and counselling program in Liberia and found evidence that this did deter men from engaging in illicit labouring and from joining mercenary activity across the border in Côte d'Ivoire. Blattman et al. (2017) study the impact of eight weeks cognitive behavioural therapy and an unconditional cash transfer of 200 USD, on young men engaged in criminal behaviours in Liberia. When provided by itself, cash did not lead to any significant reductions in a range of antisocial behaviours including: selling drugs and other crime; engagement in fights; carrying of weapons; arrests; aggressive and hostile behaviours; or intimate partner violence. In the short-term, the cognitive behavioural therapy by itself did reduce, by 0.25 standard deviations, engagement across the full index of antisocial behaviours, while therapy and cash reduced them by 0.31 standard deviations. It is only when therapy and cash are given together these reductions were sustained after a year (0.25 standard deviations fall in anti-social behaviours with therapy and cash, compared to 0.08 standard deviations with therapy alone).

¹² The majority of company representatives from Colombo conceded that common business practices such as discrimination played a large role in how businesses can create conflict, through reinforcing structural dynamics, even unknowingly.

¹³ INVEST is a 36-month long skills development program designed to facilitate the reintegration of Afghan youth, women and internally displaced people (IDP) into communities by expanding their opportunities through enhanced vocational and life skills.

¹⁴ Peace and stability outcomes are: self-reported willingness to engage in violence, willingness to use violence against an unfair government decision, belief that the use of violence is justified and support for the Taliban. Participation in INVEST was found to significantly decrease youth's likelihood to engage in violence if provoked, but significantly increase their likelihood to use violence against an unfair law or state decision. Furthermore, participation in INVEST had no significant effect on beliefs regarding whether violence is ever justified. The results from the list experiment questions suggest that the participation in INVEST shows a slight but not statistically significant decrease in the support for the Taliban.

The government program, Youth Opportunity Program, in Uganda, where program participants received a cash grant of 400 USD to help unemployed individuals to transition into self-employment, aimed to promote both employment and social stability. Blattman et al. (2013) showed the Youth Opportunity Program had an impressive economic impact¹⁵, for both men and women. However, these economic gains are not matched by positive outcomes in term of stability, be it integration in community, engagement in collective action, engagement into antisocial behaviour or support of the government.

As far as Somalia is concerned, there is little research analysing the linkages between employment programs and violence. Tesfaye et al. (2018) analysed the impact of Somali Youth Learners Initiative (SYLI), a 5-year program started in 2011 and funded by the United States Agency for International Development. The program improved access and quality of education for more than 100,000 young people through construction and rehabilitation of schools and improved teacher training. The program also created community-engagement opportunities through student clubs and youth-led community-improvement initiatives. The SYLI is not an employment program, but it is still worth mentioning it, as it promotes education and thus employability. The authors found that both SYLI-supported secondary education and SYIL-supported secondary education combined with civic engagement opportunities pulled youth in south and central Somalia and Puntland away from supporting violent groups. The results hold for both men and women, although the effect on women were more pronounced. Possible explanations are the increased optimism about future job prospects, confidence in the use of nonviolent means to achieve change and increased confidence in state and federal government.

To sum up, there are mixed findings on the impact of employment on conflict and even less is known on the policies responses to promote peace. There is good empirical evidence that employment programs can support labour market outcomes even in conflict-affected countries, but less clear positive impact of programs on peacebuilding, despite the strong theory of change linking employment programs to peacebuilding. This suggests there is need for more systematic learning on the relationship between employment programs and peacebuilding. This research is continuing the joint effort, indicated in the joint statement of ILO/WB/UNDP/PBSO, to learn about effective employment programs for peacebuilding. The paper will focus on the training component of two ILO's employment programs to investigate whether the participation in the training reduced support for armed groups and via which channel.

¹⁵ The program increased business assets by 57%, work hours by 17%, and earnings by 38%. Many program beneficiaries also formalize their enterprises and hire labour.

3 Background on the conflict and socio-economic situation in Somalia

Somalia serves as a particularly interesting case study to examine the complex relationship between conflict and employment, given the protracted crises experienced and the high, especially among youth, level of unemployment, underemployment and decent work deficits. Therefore, Somalia is one context where empirical research on the effectiveness and efficiency of employment programs as a means to sustain peace and achieve SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) is very important.

3.1 The conflict in Somalia

Somalia gained independence from the United Kingdom and Italy in 1961. In 1969, Mohamed Siad Barre staged a coup against the elected government of the United Republic of Somalia and took power. In 1991, the military regime under the leadership of Siad Barre was overthrown, instigating the ongoing conflict. Rival warlords began fighting, leading to chaos throughout most of the country and the breakaway of the two northern regions Somaliland and Puntland. In 2006, the Islamic Court Union (ICU), a coalition of Islamist organizations, took over control of the capital, Mogadishu. This led to the intervention of Ethiopian and African Union troops. The current government continues to fight against al-Shabaab, the former youth wing of the ICU and, today, an independent armed group. Due to the chaos, pirates began operating off the coast of Somalia around 2005.

Somalia topped the 'Fragile State Index' from the Fund for Peace (FFP) for six years in a row (2008-2013).¹⁶ In 2012, the first formal parliament in over 20 years was affirmed, and the first presidential elections since 1967 took place. In February 2017, the country elected a new government under President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, also known as Farmajo. While initially planned as a one person one vote national poll of all adults, an electoral college system was used due to security concerns.

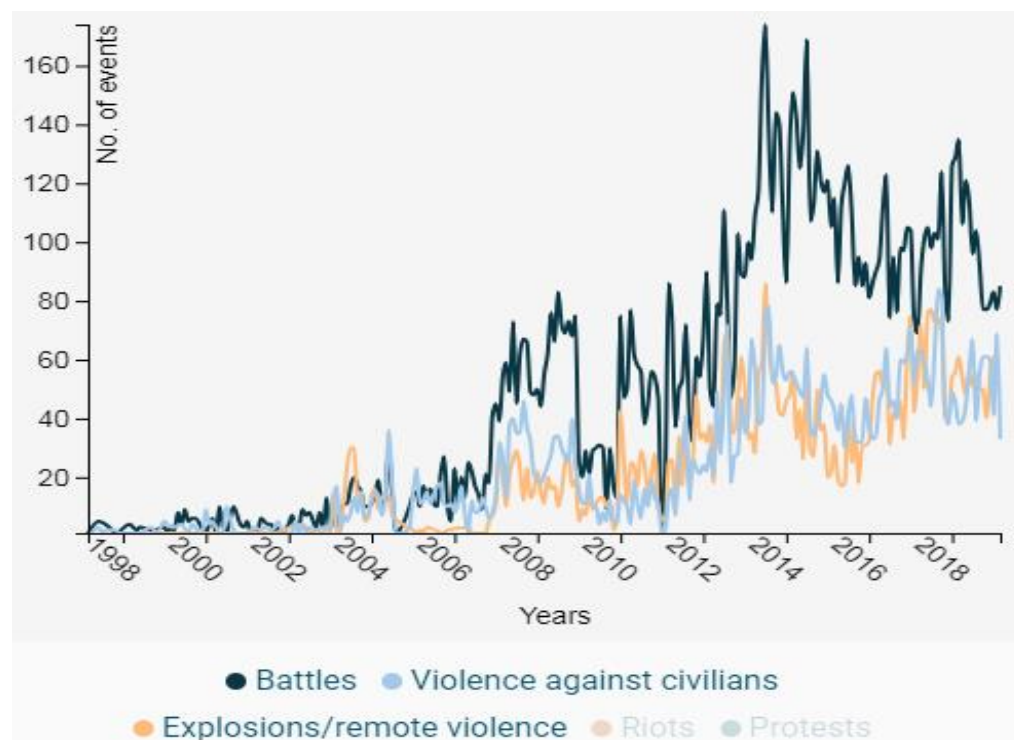
3.1.1 Events and fatalities

The Somali government is engaged in a non-international armed conflict on its territory against non-state armed groups, most notably Al Shaabab. It is supported by African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the United States of America. Somalia remains one of the most insecure places in the world. Given the severity of the conflict in Somalia, it constitutes a crucial case study, where theories for peacebuilding should work if they want to claim validity.

Figure 1 depicts the trends in the last 20 years, in Somalia, for three violent events: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians.¹⁷ There is an upward trend for all the three types of violent events, however battles are the most prevalent events.

¹⁶ Available at: <http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/data/>.

¹⁷ See ACLED (2017) for definition.

Figure 1: The evolution of violent events in Somalia¹⁸

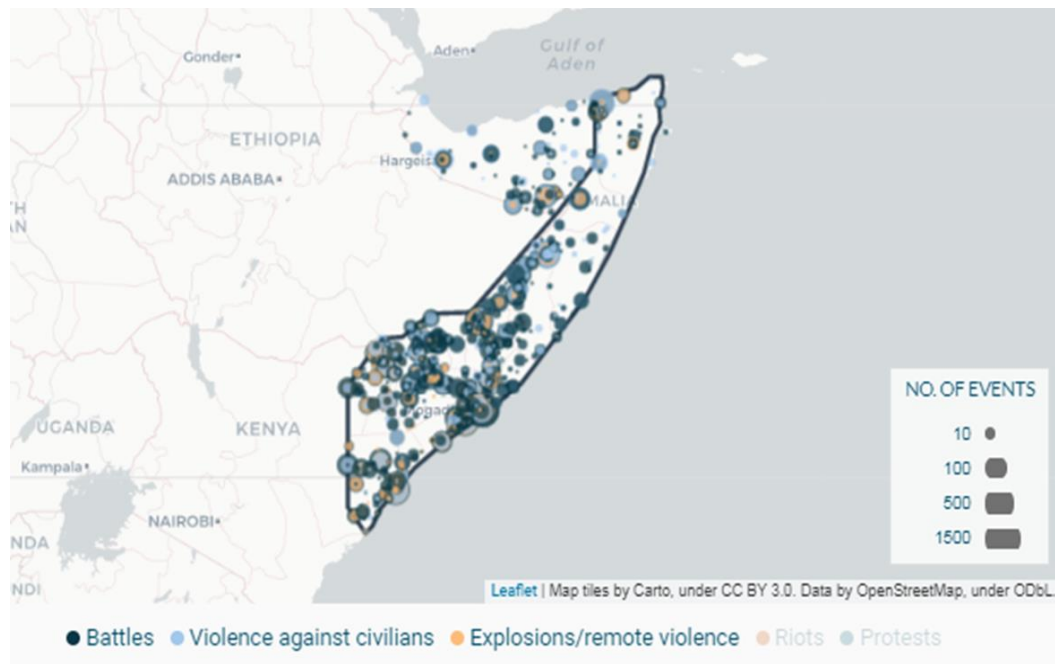
Source: ACLED¹⁹, 1998-2019

¹⁸ Violent events includes: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians (see ACLED (2017)).

¹⁹ ACLED – Armed Conflict Location and Event Data – is a conflict dataset that collects reported information on internal political conflict disaggregated by date, location, and actor. ACLED collects the dates, actors, types of violence, locations, and fatalities of all reported violence and protest events across Africa, South Asia, South East Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Latin America. Violence and protest includes events that occur within civil wars and periods of instability, public protest and regime breakdown. ACLED currently codes nine types of events, both violent and non-violent, that may occur during a period of violence and disorder. Visit acledata.com for more information.

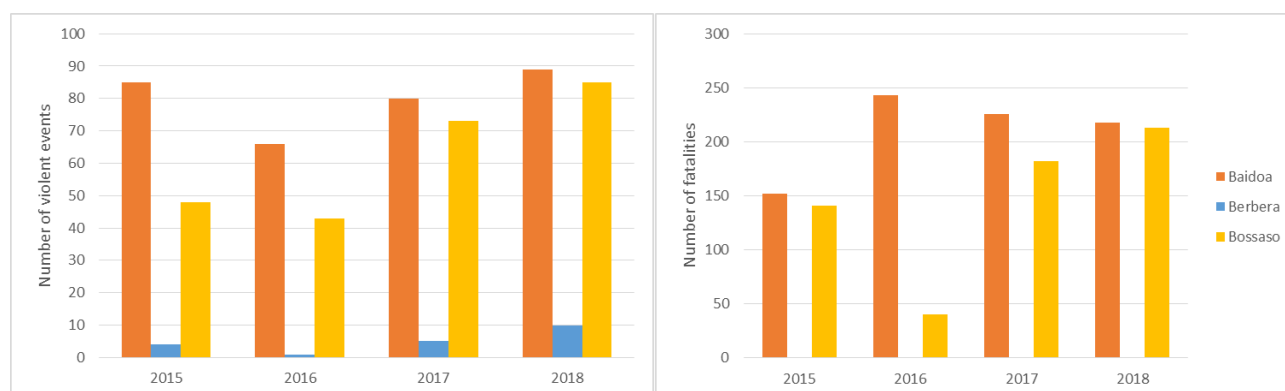
Figure 2 below depicts the distribution of violent events, within Somalia between 1997 and 2019. Violent events seem to be more concentrated in the south-central Somalia, while Somaliland (north-west) and Puntland (north-east) are relatively less affected by conflict. In particular, most of the violent events are taking place in South and South-West of the country, and alongside the border with Ethiopia. The Banadir region is very affected by the conflict due to the presence of the capital, Mogadishu.

Figure 2: Distribution of violent events in Somalia



Source: ACLED, 1997-2019.

Looking at the number of violent events (left chart in Figure 3) and fatalities (right chart in Figure 3) between 2015 and 2018 in the three districts (Baidoa, Bosaso and Berbera) where qualitative and quantitative data collection was undertaken, it is clear that there is a lot of heterogeneity in the level of exposure to violent events (Figure 3). In Baidoa there are on average 80 violent events and 210 fatalities per annum between 2015 and 2018 and the level of violent events and fatalities did not change much over this period. Compared to Baidoa, in Bossaso there are a slightly smaller number of violent events (62) and fatalities (144) per annum over the same period. In contrast, Berbera is significantly less affected by violent events, with on average 5 violent events per annum and no fatalities, between 2015 and 2018. The different exposure to violent events of the three districts will be exploited in the empirical analysis in Section 6.

Figure 3: Violent events and fatalities in Baidoa, Berbera, Bossaso, 2015-2018

Source: Author's calculation based on ACLED, 2015-2019²⁰

Conflict can have specific impacts for special need groups such as women, children, disabled people, ex-combatants, refugees and displaced persons, migrant and indigenous people (ILO, 2016). The ongoing conflict in Somalia has had a particularly severe impact on young Somali women, who face even greater challenges regarding their engagement in labour markets, governance, peacebuilding efforts, and reconciliation processes.

3.1.2 Armed groups

Al-Shabaab, which translates to “the youth”, is an organised armed group fighting to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state in Somalia. Since 2010, Al-Shabaab is the main perpetrator of violence in Somalia. During the past decade, Al-Shabaab has fluctuated in strength and territorial control. In 2009–10, the group controlled most of central and southern Somalia, including parts of Mogadishu and the major port city Kismayo. Since 2011, Al-Shabaab has suffered a series of significant territorial and strategic setbacks (Felter et al. 2013). Recent estimates suggest the group has 7,000–9,000 fighters.²¹ Today its internal reach is limited mostly to rural parts of South Central Somalia.

Al-Shabaab is an organised group. It has a leadership, currently organized under Ahmad Umar (Council on Foreign Relations, 2019). A sort of enforcement mechanism for enforcing internal rules seems to exist, as ‘action would be taken’ against persons disobeying ‘the rules’. Al-Shabaab collects taxes in the areas it controls. Other sources of fundings include racketeering, piracy, kidnapping (Council on Foreign Relations, 2019). Al-Shabaab also claims that it brings law and order to territories under its control, carries out investigations into violations committed by other forces and disarms militias (Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2244 (2015): Somalia, UN doc S/2016/919, 28 September 2016, §9). The United Nations reported that more than 4,500 civilians were killed or injured in Somalia between January 2016, and October 2017 and Al-Shabaab was responsible for 60 percent of these casualties (United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, 2017). Intense fighting between the Somali National Army, supported by AMISOM and the US, and al-Shabaab is still ongoing, with regular attacks carried out throughout the country.

In addition to Al-Shabaab, Somalis face violence from a mix of other internal and external actors. Clan and sub-clan structures, which define Somali identity and drive Somali politics, fought to fill the power void left after the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991. In fact, in Somalia between 2000 and 2010,

²⁰ In 2019 we have only data up to May 2019, this is explaining the lower level of events in 2019 showed in the Figure 3.

²¹ BBC News (2017) “Who Are Somalia’s al-Shabab?”. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15336689>

there were more activity of rebel organisations fighting each other or killing civilians than engaging with government troops.²² As a general rule, violent confrontations took place primarily in rural areas over access to resources, such as grazing land or water, as well as the control of critical infrastructure and local cultural order. Thus, reducing the focus on violence to direct clashes between the government and rebel troops may reduce our understanding of civil strife (Raleigh et al. 2010). In recent years, Somalia faced more conflict between the forces of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Al-Shabaab, especially in southern Somalia. However, these inter-clan conflicts continue today, with different groups aligned with their politicians seeking economic and political control. The 2017 United Nations report attributed 13 percent of casualties between 2016 and 2017 to clan militias (United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, 2017).

Further, there have been numerous documented cases of national and international security forces injuring and killing civilians. The same UN report attributed 4 percent of casualties to AMISOM and 11 percent to state actors, including the police and army.

There is a difference in the prominence of armed actors in Somaliland, Puntland and South central Somalia. Somaliland, Berbera in particular, has been able to maintain a semblance of peace and stability over the past few decades, and clan based grievances over resources have been exploited to foment violence. In contrast, Baidoa and partly Bossaso have experienced violent events mainly by Al Shaabab. In the analysis, we will exploit the heterogeneity in the level of violent events and type of armed actors among Baidoa, Bossaso and Berbera to investigate whether there are differences in the effectiveness of employment programs in reducing violence in these three areas.

Men are generally more engaged in violence; however women often support violent groups. Therefore, it is important to empower women and reduce their support for violent groups to promote peace.

3.2 The socio-economic situation in Somalia

Somalia is affected by a number of factors that are relevant for this study: youth bulge, high unemployment and decent work deficits, armed conflict and extreme weather events. The lack of decent work opportunities is often cited as one of the main drivers of people to support violence in Somalia (World Bank, 2018). Thus, it is important to have a sense of the employment situation in Somalia before analysing the effect of the ILO employment programs.

The lack of nationally produced, systematic statistics (including labour market information) in Somalia is well documented and makes this research challenging, but at the same time extremely important. The last government-led labour force survey was carried out in 1982, whereas the last census (whose results were published) was conducted in 1975 (ILO, 2014). In recent years, some multilateral organizations have made efforts to collect up-to-date socio-economic data: notable examples include a labour force survey conducted in 2014 by ILO²³, the 2014 Population Estimation Survey led by the UNFPA, and high-frequency poverty surveys conducted by the World Bank.²⁴ Although these studies have generated

²² The major Somali clans Darod, Dir, Hawiye, Isaaq and Rahanweyn are divided into different subclans, which in turn have a number subdivisions. Violence mostly occurred on the subclan and subdivision level. Recently, particularly Hiraan, Sool, Lower Shabelle and Togdheer regions were affected by clan-related violence.

²³ The Labour Force Survey (LFS) conducted by the ILO in 2014 was carried out in 21 districts within 5 regions (Lower Shabelle, Banadir, Middle Shabelle, Bay, Hiran) in Somalia. Fieldwork for the LFS 2014 was carried out over a 30 day period from 1st July to 6th August 2014. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Federal Government of Somalia. The ILO is conducting a LFS in 2019.

²⁴ See Pape and Wollburg (2019) for innovative methodologies to collect data in Somalia.

extremely useful information, they often use divergent methodologies and varied sampling frames - therefore, their data is not always comparable, and the information collected usually responds to the imperatives of the commissioning organization. Notwithstanding the lack of systematic data, the following sections outline some of the broad contours of Somalia's economy, as they relate to employment, relying on pre-existing data, which was collected through a desk review process.

Somalia's population is the youngest of the African continent overall and youth are at the same time an opportunity and a threat.²⁵ Around two-third of Somalia's population is under the age of 30 and this youth bulge will continue to increase, as a result of decades of high fertility rates (UNFPA, 2016). Somali women have on average six children over their lifetime, which significantly increases their domestic care duties.

Somalia has some of the lowest socio-economic indicators in Sub-Saharan Africa.²⁶ Income inequality and disparities are very pronounced, with poverty being much more pronounced in rural than in urban areas. The Gender Inequality Index for Somalia is 0.776 (with a maximum of 1 denoting complete inequality), placing Somalia at the fourth highest position globally (UNDP, 2014).

Labour market outcomes in Somalia are highly gendered. According to the latest employment survey, Somalia has a labour force participation rate of 66 per 100 population, which is higher compared to other countries, which have experienced civil war (ILO, 2014)²⁷. However, female labour force participation is almost half that of men. This is largely due to the patriarchal nature of society and customs, which restrict the participation of women in a number of areas (UNDP, 2014). In addition, safety concerns—particularly in urban public spaces and public transport—restrict the mobility of girls and women.

The agricultural sector employs 45.9 percent of the employed people 15 and older, with 25.2 percent in crops cultivation, 9.4 percent in herding, 4.0 percent in fishing, and 7.2 percent in other agriculture related activities (ILO, 2014). The service sector, in particular money transfer, telecom and construction, has emerged recently, while manufacturing sector remains sluggish. The largest proportion of employed people are in elementary occupations (41 per cent), especially among women (ILO, 2014). Although women are benefiting from increased economic opportunities, many women still work in menial positions, involving sacrifice, risk and humiliation, and often only making enough money to sustain themselves and their families (UNDP, 2014).

Somalia has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the world, and very low education indicators. However, in Somalia, measures of unemployed youth are less relevant than measures of employed youth. Among the poor, few can afford to be unemployed, as there is no government led social protection for unemployed persons. Focusing on the unemployment rate thus fails to take into account this reality. As a result, vulnerable forms of employment and working poverty are widespread. The level of vulnerable employment is high in Somalia given that own account workers and contributing family workers account for 40 per cent of total employment, 35.6 per cent among men, and 53.3 per cent among women (ILO, 2014)²⁸. The ILO estimates underemployment to be at 25 percent, without

²⁵ A great number of these youth "have only known war and conflict" (World Bank, 2018b).

²⁶ Results of the High Frequency Survey (2016) indicated that on average 69% of the Somali live below the poverty line of \$1.9 per day

²⁷ The Labour Force Survey for Somalia has been conducted in all districts of Benadir and the districts of Jowhar, Balcad, Afgoye, Marca, Baidoa and Beled Weyn, with the support of the Federal Government of Somalia.

²⁸ Own account workers hold self-employment jobs and do not engage employees on a continuous basis while contributing

taking into consideration the widespread phenomena of “discouraged workers”, predominantly young people who are available and willing to work but have given up searching for jobs (ILO; 2014).

Security risks and restricted civic space impose clear limits on what people can do and their freedom to organize publicly. Around 90 per cent of the employed are not covered by any trade union (ILO; 2014). The Federation of Somali Trade Unions (FESTU) highlighted the climate of violence and impunity, non-recognition of unions in Ministries, and requirement of previous government endorsement for registration of unions, not respecting the “Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)”. Somalia has a weak history of independent tripartite structures, and therefore, social dialogue mechanisms remain under-developed (ILO Somalia, forthcoming). However, the situation is slowly improving (see for example the recent tripartite workshop held in Mogadishu for the revised Labour Code).

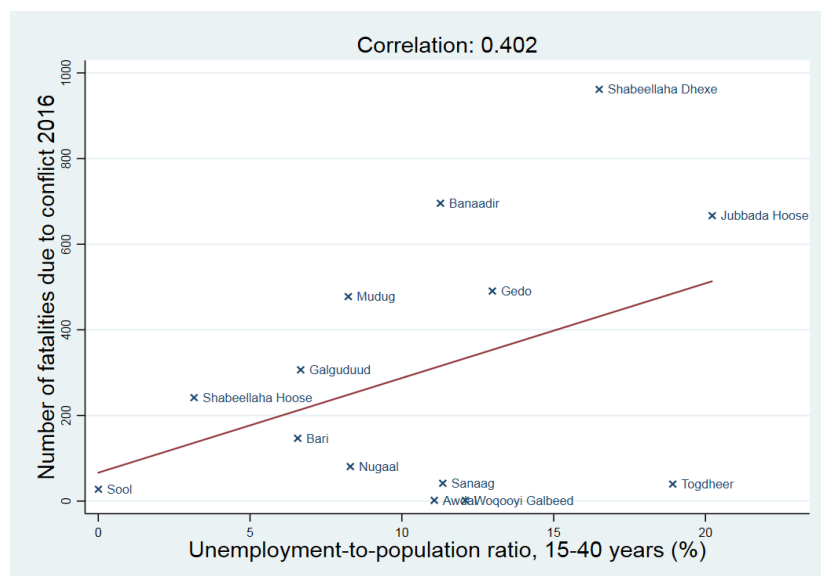
There is no formal and government led social protection program in Somalia. Around 96 per cent of the employed indicated that they are not covered by any employment insurance scheme (ILO; 2014). The government has identified social protection as its priority but the institutional capacity to implement such a program is limited. In the absence of a formal social protection system, households in Somalia rely on three sources to cope with shocks and vulnerabilities: remittances from family and friends; community based traditional safety nets and redistribution mechanism; and social protection interventions implemented by international organizations.²⁹

Lack of employment opportunities and decent work deficits, especially in the absence of social protection measures, are a significant source of frustration for the youth. High levels of unemployment and decent work deficits have led some youth to join militant groups, while others tried to migrate in Somalia.

Figure 4 shows the clear positive correlation between unemployment-to-population ratio and the number of fatalities due to violent events across Somalia. This supports the idea that conflict, unemployment and decent work deficits are linked through a “vicious cycle”. The regions where there was higher unemployment are the ones that experienced the highest number of fatalities, suggesting that unemployment and underemployment can be catalysts for conflict. At the same time, conflict can have severe implications for the world of work, in terms both of availability and quality of jobs. On the demand side, conflict is a strong deterrent to investment and an obstacle to business activity, which could decrease employment opportunities. On the supply side, increased mortality and disability rates result in a diminished work force, while also depressing the overall skills level. Decent work can be a critical factor in breaking this circle and can lay the foundations for the construction of stable communities (ILO, 2015).

family workers hold self-employment jobs in an establishment operated by a related person with a too limited degree of involvement in its operation to be considered a partner.

²⁹ Remittances are estimated at around USD 1 billion per year and Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Somalia almost quadrupled in recent years, reaching USD 1.7 billion in 2017 (OECD –DAC)

Figure 4: Number of fatalities and unemployment-to-population ratio 15–40 years, by region

Source: Authors' computation based on GALLUP and ACLED, 2016

3.3 The additional threat of climate change

As a result of climate change and other forms of environmental degradation, projections point towards an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and disasters (IPCC, 2014). Somalia is highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, particularly droughts but also floods. A growing body of evidence shows a causal relationship between extreme weather events and conflict at the global level (Harari and Ferrara, 2018; Hsiang et al. 2013). In the Somalia context, Maystadt and Ecker (2014) found that droughts trigger conflict through decreased livestock prices which, in turn, leads to losses in livestock income and thus reduced average purchasing power of Somalis households.³⁰

Climate change can feed conflict in Somalia by exacerbating tensions between clans; boosting the ranks and role of non-state armed groups, including al-Shabaab; and increasing migratory flows. First, climate change can sharpen disputes over already-scarce resources between warlords. While Al-Shabaab has conquered large pieces of the country's territory, clan elders still wield considerable power, dominating the political system. In this sense, the severe droughts can cause disruptions to water access, high rates of malnutrition, disease outbreaks, and food insecurity, leading to tension and even open disputes between clans. In a country facing this set of challenges, resources like food and water are not only a basic need but also a source of power.

Second, there is a relationship between the proliferation of armed groups (mainly al-Shabaab) and the severe droughts in Somalia. The group has been successful in attracting young people who are affected by famine and food insecurity and who face no job prospects. Those youth end up joining the armed group in a bid to survive. Third, migration has become more complex due to climate change. In 2016, at least one million Somalis were internally displaced, exposed to protection risks, discrimination, and gender-based violence. This may well spur tensions between groups.

The rise in global temperatures caused by climate change will also make the phenomenon of "heat stress" more common. Heat stress endangers the safety of workers and reduces their productivity,

³⁰ A one standard deviation increase in drought intensity and length increases the likelihood of conflict by 62%.

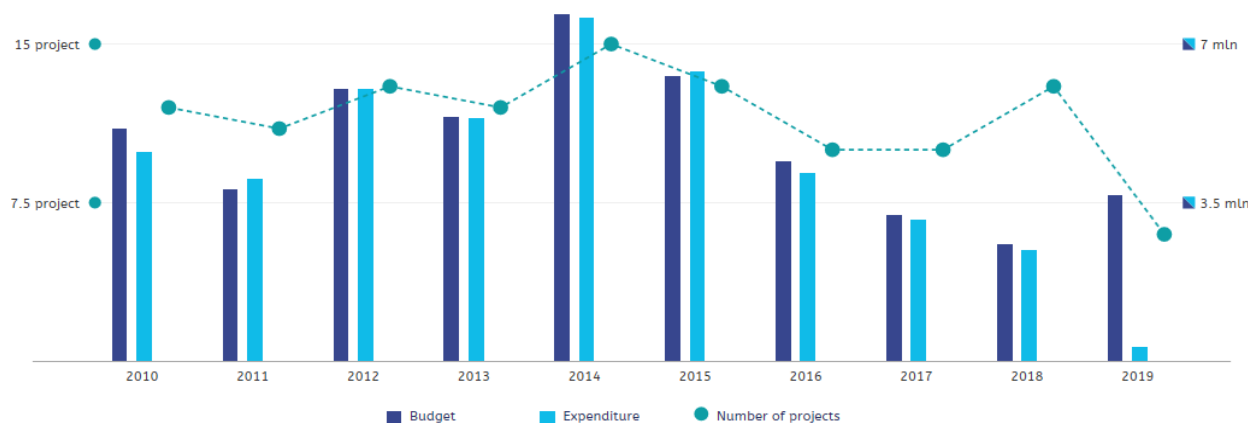
especially for workers in agriculture and construction sector. The negative effect of rising temperature on labour productivity is very pronounced in Somalia. Somalia is projected to lose more than 5 per cent of total working hours due to heat stress by 2030, a productivity loss equivalent to more than 172.000 full-time jobs (Kjellstrom et al, 2019). This is due to Somalia's increasing exposure to extreme heat, its economic structure, in which a large share of the population works in the agriculture sector and the scarcity of resources to adapt to increasing heat levels (Kjellstrom et al, 2019). The loss of full-time jobs and livelihood due to heat stress might contribute to the decision to migrate or engage in conflict.

4 ILO employment programs in Somalia

In a difficult national context characterized by limited financial, technical and institutional capacities, the ILO and its tripartite constituents have implemented a number of activities, with some results achieved in the areas of employment and enterprise development, contributing to peace and stability in Somalia. Through working with Government and social partners, the ILO programs in Somalia promotes rights at work, generates gainful employment opportunities, enhances social protection and strengthens dialogue on work related issues.³¹

The ILO has undertaken almost 50 projects in Somalia in the last ten years for a total budget of around \$50 million (ILO, Dashboard February 2019). These projects have mainly focused on employment promotion through employment intensive infrastructure development, community-based cash for work and enterprise promotion. The programs have also promoted employability through vocational training, and some have focused on preventing child recruitment, including children that are associated with armed groups.

Figure 5: ILO programs in Somalia



Source: ILO, Dashboard February 2019

From the 50 ILO programs in Somalia, a shortlist of employment programs was created based on the following criteria. We selected on-going programs or programs that ended recently (after 2010), as this facilitated the interaction between the research team and program beneficiaries; and programs relatively

³¹ The ILO has initiated the Jobs for Peace and Resilience (JPR) in Somalia. The JPR program combines employment intensive investments, technical, vocational and entrepreneurial skills trainings, employment services and local economic development approaches in a coherent and context-specific manner. See details of the program on the ILO website, at https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/WCMS_495276/lang-en/index.htm

big, with a total project budget above \$1 million. We included only interventions falling into one or more of the following categories of intervention:

1. Labour-based interventions (LB): this includes any type of intervention that aims at providing participants with salaried jobs. This includes programs that create jobs directly (for example, through cash-for-work schemes or public works) as well as programs that facilitate connections between participants and employers
2. Vocational training interventions (VT): this includes all types of training that are aimed at increasing participants' employability (be it in salaried employment or self-employment). We also include here training follow-up support such as job placement services for trainees.
3. Interventions in support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs): this includes interventions aimed at supporting participants to set up their own businesses, as well as interventions aimed at directly supporting existing MSMEs.

After applying all these filters, we are left with 23 projects. For all these projects, we went through documentation to see which projects are most relevant and well-documented. After a careful discussion with project officials, implementing partners and ILO office in Somalia, two ILO employment programs were selected: Joint Program Youth Employment Somalia (YES) and Youth for Change (Y4C). These programs are employment programs with an *unintentional* peacebuilding aim.³² These programs have employment outcomes, but are conflict sensitive, ensuring that design, implementation and outcomes do not undermine peace or exacerbate conflict³³, and contribute to peace where possible (within the given priorities). The programs recognise the centrality of youth in fostering stability in Somalia, so both programs target "youth at risk", i.e. youth involved or at risk of becoming engaged in violent activities.

The YES program strategy was to contribute to sustainable employment creation while also providing immediate livelihood opportunities for young men and women through the implementation of three interlinked program components: value chain development, capacity development through vocational and skills training, and developing productive infrastructure through cash for work.

The Y4C program engaged youth who are involved or at risk of becoming engaged in violent activities. The program beneficiaries are selected to participate in training to improve their employability and they are employed through employment intensive projects.

Both YES and Y4C employment programs have been implemented in collaborations among other UN partners, including UNCDF, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNOG, UNIDO and UNICEF. The research will analyse the effectiveness of the employment program, implemented by the ILO, in reducing support and engagement in violence in Somalia, even if it is not the proposed outcome of the program. The analysis focused only on the training component of the program and not on the labour based component as we could not contact a sufficient number of program beneficiaries of the labour based component.

Table 2 highlights the main characteristics of the ILO employment programs analysed in this paper.

The research will analyse the effectiveness of the employment program, implemented by the ILO, in reducing support and engagement in violence in Somalia, even if it is not the proposed outcome of the

³² There is the implicit goal of reducing engagement in conflict in Somalia, by providing youth with decent jobs.

³³ Do not harm concept.

program.³⁴ The analysis focused only on the training component of the program and not on the labour based component as we could not contact a sufficient number of program beneficiaries of the labour based component.

Table 2: ILO employment programs

Project title	project status	Partner Name	ILO policy Outcome	Start date	End date	type of intervention (LB, VT, SME)	primary employment focus	peace building focus	beneficiaries	outcomes
Federal Government of Somalia and United Nations joint programme on youth employment (YES)	Active	Multi Partner Trust Fund Office, UNDP.	More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects	01/08/2015	01/06/2019	LB, VT	yes	no	youth at risk (15-34 years old)	tackling the key constraints of six value chains
										Enhanced longerterm employability of 20,000 youth
										Rehabilitate infrastructure through short term jobs for 30,000 youth
Youth for Change Joint Initiative (Y4C)	finished	Multi Partner Trust Fund Office, UNDP	Promoting sustainable enterprises	01/04/2015	03/03/2017	LB, VT, SME	yes	no	youth at risk (15-34 years old)	Increased ability of administrations to identify and address crime
										children and youth gain social skills
										Employability of target group enhanced (male and female).

Source: author's computation based on projects' documents.

4.1 Y4C and YES in Baidoa, Berbera and Bosasso

Skills, whether obtained through formal education or technical training, are essential for increasing the productivity and sustainability of enterprises and the employability of workers. In Somalia there is an overall skills deficit. There is minimal formal vocational training among the population and most of the training is concentrated in urban areas and dominated by males.

Program participants to YES and Y4C in Bosaso, Baidoa and Berbera participated to a market-driven skills program that trains young men and women at risk³⁵— including local residents, returnees, and IDPs—in a range of vocational trainings and life skills.³⁶ Skills development was tailored to the needs and aspirations of the young Somalis as well as the needs of the private sector.³⁷

Since women face additional religious, cultural, and social constraints, a certain percentage of program beneficiaries of YES and Y4C are young Somali women in order to ensure adequate representation.³⁸ In addition, the YES program addressed barriers and constraints to female participation in vocational

³⁴ In principle, the employment program can reduce the willingness of people to engage in violence without achieving the proposed outcome (enhance long-term employability). This is what Bruck et al (2018) call the “program effect”.

³⁵ Single or female headed households, households living below the poverty line or in an IDP camp, illiterate, with disability, unemployed and underemployed were given priority in the selection.

³⁶ Skill development initiatives do not only focus on hard, job-related skills, but also on “soft skills” that are deemed more and more important by employers and are needed for the personal growth of youth. “Soft skills” like leadership, personal financial planning, communication and information technology will encourage development of positive attitudes needed for employment. Other useful life-skills include health information, civic engagement, protection of rights and political inclusion. Psychosocial counselling and support services are necessary for youth who have been victims of violence and need re-integration into society and are mainstreamed within the life-skills package.

³⁷ For example in the YES program, the strategy was to develop a comprehensive skills package for youth from different socio-economic backgrounds in order to deliver competency-based training programs which respond to the needs of Somali employers, as identified during the value chain study.

³⁸ At least 30 % of all program beneficiaries need to be women for YES.

training through, for instance, making literacy and numeracy training a standard part of skills development programs; increasing female trainers and staff in TVET courses; making demand-driven training more appropriate and relevant to female trainees by increasing gender orientation of market research or facilitating safe access to training by providing transport.

Program beneficiaries of Y4C participated in trainings on basic electrical installation, tailoring, business, beauty salon, mobile repairing and carpentry. Program beneficiaries of YES programs acquired skills in ICT, garment making, banking, media/printing, energy, construction, hospitality, retail and logistics. The programs' primary goals are to help vulnerable youth develop skills that are most in demand in the local labor market and to support them with economic opportunities through three-to-six-month training courses.³⁹

Overall, while there were high levels of satisfaction among youth beneficiaries of the training programs, some stakeholders highlighted that the training packages were too short to impart skills development in a meaningful way, especially if the training was targeting the most disadvantaged youth who are likely to have very limited formal education.

ILO's employment programs provided an opportunity to better understand if and how improved access to employment opportunities influence young Somalis' support for armed opposition groups and acceptance of the use of violence to achieve political goals. This study will allow us to understand whether the effect of the same program persists across different contexts (Somaliland, Puntland and South Somalia). In addition, the short-term effect and medium-term effect of the employment programs will be analysed,⁴⁰ comparing the effect of Y4C program, which finished a couple of years ago, with the YES program, which finished at the end of 2019. This will provide some hints on the sustainability of the results in the long term.

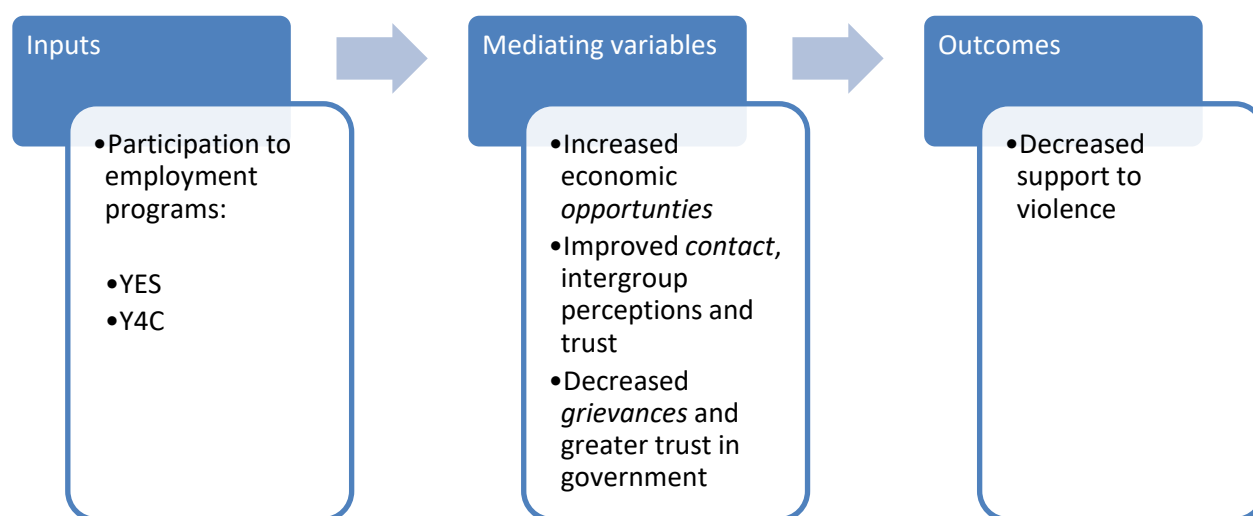
5 Research design and methodology

This study seeks to understand if the ILO's employment programs (YES, Y4C) contributed to the reduction of Somalis' support and engagement in violence, building on the methodology developed in ILO (2019).⁴¹ The research aims to provide evidence on the different impacts of selected programs on reducing conflict and increasing stability in Somalia, allowing us to understand what the channels are and which program works better. More broadly, the research contributes to the body of evidence on what works to reduce support for and engagement in violence in fragile, conflict-affected contexts. Figure 6 illustrates the hypothesized pathways between the ILO employment programs and the level of support for the use of violence in Somalia.

³⁹ ILO did a skills gap analysis to identify the knowledge gaps in the industry, including identification of local TVET institutions capable of providing the required training.

⁴⁰ Short-term effect is the effect up to 1 year after the participation in the training. Medium term effect is the effect between 1 and 3 years after the participation in the training.

⁴¹ The literature emphasizes that perceptions is the first aspect of behaviour and highlight that there is a strong link between conflict attitudes and actual conflict conduct ((Rummel, 1976 ; Linke et al. 2015).

Figure 6: Linkages between employment programs and violence

Source: Author computations based on ILO (2019)

Based on the theories of change (Figure 6), which identifies potential connections between unemployment and decent work deficits as drivers of violence, and decent work as a way to reduce conflict and increase stability, three main hypotheses will be tested:

- Hypothesis 1. The program has reduced youth support and engagement in violence, through improvements in economic outcomes (*opportunity cost theory*)
- Hypothesis 2. The program has reduced youth support and engagement in violence, through positive interactions between different clans, sub-clans, communities and gender (*contact theory*)
- Hypothesis 3. The program has reduced youth support and engagement in violence, through improved perceptions of government and reduced real or perceived inequalities (*grievances theory*).

We examine the contribution of the ILO employment programs in diminishing support for violence in Somalia by using qualitative and quantitative evidence. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to ascertain if attitudes had changed as a consequence of participation in the employment programs. A mixed methodological approach was adopted for this study, as suggested by ILO (2019), incorporating: literature and document review; key informant interviews (KIIs); focus group discussions (FGDs); and a survey of program beneficiaries. The data sourced using these five methods were triangulated with each other and thematically analysed to produce the paper.

Mixed methods research can be especially useful in fragile and conflict affected settings. These settings pose a particular challenge in terms of data collection from individuals. During a crisis for instance, respondents may not accurately remember specific pre-crisis conditions, making the measurement of human welfare impacts over time difficult (Puri et al., 2017). Additionally, self-reporting errors may be correlated with the severity and frequency of crisis conditions. In such settings, the importance of utilising multiple methods of quantitative and qualitative data collection become crucial to mitigate the inherent challenges to information bias in humanitarian settings.

Despite the difficulties in collecting data in Somalia, Table 3 provides a snapshot of the number of interviews collected in the three areas of Somalia (Puntland, Somaliland and south-central Somalia),

between January and February 2019, from the hired research firm⁴². As shown in Table 3, in Baidoa interviews were conducted for both the ILO employment programs. While, in Berbera the YES was analysed, and in Bosaso only the Y4C program. A total of 32 individuals were interviewed with qualitative questionnaires, representing a cross section of stakeholders (community elder, representative from the youth, women, trade union and private sector) as well as program beneficiaries. A total of 175 program beneficiaries responded to the quantitative survey.

Table 3: Number of interviews, by method, district and ILO employment program.

Region		South Somalia		Somaliland	Puntland	TOTAL
District		BAIDOA		BERBERA	BOSASO	
Employment program		YES	Y4C	YES	Y4C	
Quantitative		50	40	37	48	175
Qualitative	Programme beneficiaries	3	3	3	3	12
	Key informants	5	5	5	5	20

Source: Author's computation

5.1 Quantitative survey

Data collection occurred very recently, between January and February 2019 and was carried out by a hired research firm.⁴³ A pilot was conducted to test the data collection tool in Mogadishu, after which the survey was finalised and translated into Somalis dialects. A total of 175 program beneficiaries participated in the survey in three areas of Somalia: Baidoa, Berbera and Bosaso. Within each of the three locations, program beneficiaries were invited to take part in a face-to-face survey.

Our predictor variable is participation in one of the ILO employment programs.⁴⁴ Our primary outcome variable (support for violence) measured as self-reported willingness to justify the use of violence by armed opposition groups⁴⁵. Given our interest in pathways, we also included three hypothesized mediating variables, in line with ILO (2019): labour market outcomes, intergroup contact and grievances. The survey questions used to define these mediating variables and outcome variables are detailed in Annex I.

⁴² The selection of the consultancy firm to collect the data in the field is very important. The company we selected had vast experience collecting data in Somalia. Teams of three interviewers and one field supervisor, travelled together to the three areas: Baidoa, Berbera and Bosaso. The field supervisor is there to ensure the quality control of the data collection. The data collection took approximately 4 weeks.

Before the data collection, the interviewers were trained on both the qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, ensuring the Somali translation is well understood and agreed on a format of asking the questions which are sensitive to the Somali context. Interviewers were also trained on the draft format of the questionnaire on Open Data Kit to ensure accuracy. The team conducted a mock pre-test to verify the ease of asking the questions and difficulties with the tools were adjusted. At the beginning of each day, the team collecting the data had a debrief session, solving problems that arose in the previous day.

⁴³ The study used face to face quantitative questionnaires. Responses were captured on Open Data Kit (ODK) using android telephones. The advantages of using telephones is that there are automated correction, it is fast, data are readily available, GPS can be included and photos taken. The disadvantages of using telephones for the collection of data is that they can run out of battery, can break and there is a risk of theft.

⁴⁴ For both YES and Y4C, we only interviewed youth who received the training component of the employment program.

⁴⁵ We recognize that correlations between attitudes toward violence and actual violent actions are often weak. However, as an individual's engagement in violence, is a rare event even in Somalia, it is difficult to gain a reliable measure of participation in violence. Our best approximation of engagement in violence is therefore obtained by asking people about their willingness to justify the use of violence by AOGs.

We compare the responses of program beneficiaries before⁴⁶ and after their participation in the ILO employment program. For the employment programs analysed no baseline survey was available, so we asked program participants to recall their situation before participation in the employment program and we compared this with their current situation.⁴⁷ However, it is crucial that for future employment programs, baseline surveys are conducted in order to evaluate more rigorously the impact of the program.

5.2 Qualitative interviews

Twelve program beneficiaries were interviewed in three locations in South Central Somalia (Baidoa), Puntland (Bosaso) and Somaliland (Berbera) during January and February 2019. In addition, twenty key informants (community elder, youth representative, women representative, trade union representative, private sector representative) were interviewed in the same locations. In each location, the three program participants and the five key informants for each ILO employment program were randomly selected from the community to be interviewed.

In each case, the one-to-one interviews were structured around key questions, including the overall impact of the employment program, information on mediating variables (economic opportunities, contact among different groups and grievances) as well as on conflict. The interviews were conducted in Somali and moderated by the contracted research firm⁴⁸. Facilitators used an interview guide that incorporated open-ended questions. Qualitative interviews allowed us to dig deeper into the results of our quantitative survey, by having participants explain their perceptions and attitudes in respect to peace in a more flexible way.

The ILO research team reviewed the interview transcripts and identified the main themes. These themes were then mapped onto the survey results and hypotheses to pinpoint areas of agreement and disagreement between the data sources, as well as identify alternative explanations.

6 Discussion of key findings

The survey analysis compares the same program beneficiaries of either YES or Y4C before and after the participation to the ILO training program with respect to their attitudes towards violence, as well as mediating variables (economic opportunities, contact and grievances). The survey analysis will be complemented by key informant interviews.

⁴⁶ To obtain information on outcome and mediating variables before the participation to the employment program, recall questions were asked, as no baseline survey was conducted before the implementation of the program.

⁴⁷ Several comparative studies (for example, Deaton and Grosh [2002]; Belli, Stafford, and Alwin [2009]) have concluded that recall, when carefully designed and implemented, can be a useful estimating tool with predictable and, to some extent, controllable errors, and a potentially valuable way to reconstruct baseline data.

⁴⁸ The gender aspect was taken into account. Women beneficiaries were interviewed by women.

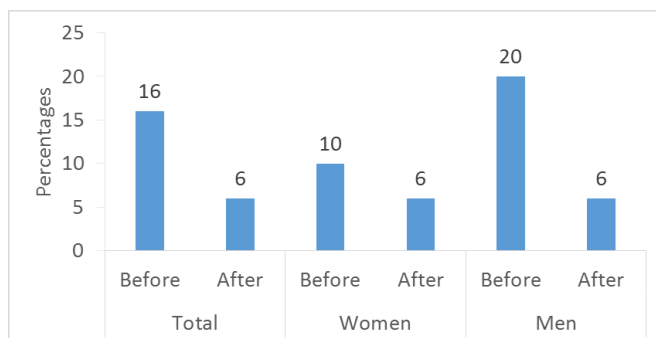
6.1 Does access to employment programs reduce support for violence?

The results show that beneficiaries of either the YES or Y4C employment program reduced support for violence⁴⁹. The share of program beneficiaries that reported it is justified for an armed group to use violence to get better services for people or fight against corruption declined significantly from 16% to 6%, a decrease by more than half (Figure 7). Similarly, the share of beneficiaries that think it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause also decreased from 37% to 27% (

⁴⁹ Violence has a specific meaning in the context of Somalia. In the questionnaire we used the term violence to indicate the involvement of people in the current conflict situation of Somalia. The term violence is simple, so that people can understand it, and not too specific (we could not ask directly about the support for Al Shaabab as it is too sensitive). In order to measure the support for violence we used questions similar to the one used in Tesfaye et al. (2018) in order to increase comparability of our study. In fact an often cited problem in the literature looking at the impact of employment programs on conflict is the heterogeneity in outcomes variables that reduce comparability across studies.

Figure 8).⁵⁰

Figure 7: Program beneficiaries that justify the use of violence from an armed group, before and after participation in employment program



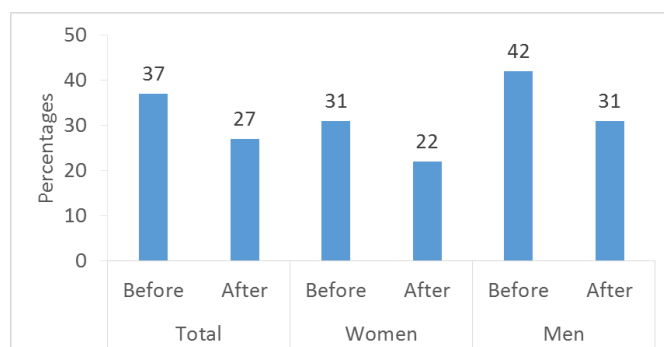
Source: author's calculation

These results held among both men and women program beneficiaries. However, the level of support for violence is lower for women than men. This is particularly noteworthy given the active roles women and girls play within armed opposition groups, including Al-Shabaab, and the limited attention women and girls often receive from practitioners and policymakers focused on stabilization and violence reduction in fragile and conflict-affected states. It is worth noting that a higher share of women beneficiaries⁵¹ compared to men responded “do not want to answer” to the questions related to support for armed groups, suggesting they are more concerned by the security situation, even after assurance from researchers that responses will be treated with confidentiality.

⁵⁰ We cannot claim there is causality between participation in the program and reduction in support for violence. However, it is important to notice that the level of violent events in Baidoa, Bosaso and Berbera did not change significantly while the programs were implemented (i.e. between 2015 and 2018, see section 3.1 for more detail). This suggests that the reduction in support for violence found among program beneficiaries, may well not be found among non-beneficiaries. The best way to test this claim is however to collect data on program non-beneficiaries.

⁵¹ Around 10 percent.

Figure 8: Program beneficiaries that agree it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause, before and after participation in employment program



Source: author's calculation

The share of participants who would use violence to fight against an unfair law or an unfair decision from the government is quite low (around 9%) and it did not change significantly after the participation in the program.⁵²

In agreement with the previous results, around 70% of the program beneficiaries agreed that program participation is associated with a decrease in participation in and support for violence. However, women are slightly less optimistic about the positive effect of the programs on the support and engagement of participant in violence.

Among key informants, training is one of the most cited factor for preventing violence. Youth who participated in key informant interviews highlighted the positive safety consequences of the employment program. A youth representative in Baidoa declared:

“The program changed the life of the trainees completely because they changed from people who made the streets unsafe and were a threat to the safety of the public, to people who can be relied upon by society. However a few did not mend their ways.”

The skills acquired gave the youth an opportunity to passage out of the unlawful activities to a suitable way of life in the society. Youth who participated in key informant interviews cited not only vocational skills but also life skills among the most influential factors capable of reducing support for violence in Somalia. A key concern for the post-conflict situation in Somalia is that youth—which represent the vast majority of the population—are the most vulnerable to easy manipulation by violent groups because they are less able to think critically and thus more receptive to the messages (through radio, public forums and meetings, and social media, such as Twitter and YouTube) of groups as Al-Shabaab. Having life skills enable youth to think critically and thus make youth more resistant to recruitment efforts by armed groups. The YES and Y4C program combined technical and non- technical trainings. Interviewees stressed the importance for youth to know about the risks and dangers associated with violence, with for instance awareness raising forums. Life skills training also aimed to build the confidence and self-esteem of youth, particularly young women and girls who lacked formal education and training.

⁵² However, the share of participants who did not want to respond decreased after the program, especially for men.

In addition, the interviewees stressed the important positive externalities that employment programs created:

“...the streets become safer because the rehabilitated youth started rehabilitating the others on the streets. “

The employment programs seem to have a positive effect beyond program participants. This is extremely important, as benefits for participants are not necessarily benefits for the whole of society. For example, it is possible that non-participants suffer negatively as a consequence of the intervention, casting shadows over both the true effectiveness of the program and the ‘do no harm’ principles.

Overall the Y4C and YES employment programs seems to have a peacebuilding impact, even if it is not the main aim of the intervention. In addition, the positive effect of the employment programs seems to be sustainable in the medium term, as the results hold for beneficiaries of the Y4C, which finished around 1 year ago. However, this is only suggestive evidence and it is very important to conduct tracer studies some years after the end of the program in order to properly test the sustainability of the employment program.

6.2 Why access to employment programs reduce support for violence?

Our analysis next tries to identify why access to employment programs resulted in reduced support for violence among program beneficiaries. We analysed the three pathways described in the theory of change in section 5.

6.2.1 Change in economic opportunities

Training is an important step toward gaining employment. Program participants said their peers were more likely to engage and support armed opposition groups when they did not have jobs because the opposition group promises much-needed salaries. The struggle to earn an income is the major reason why the youth engage in illicit activities, so they will not participate in these activities if they find some means to earn an income.

Women beneficiary of Y4C in Bosaso:

“...youth do bad things because they have no alternatives means of earning an income...The skills acquired during the training can prevent someone from engaging in bad activities because you have something to do to earn a livelihood”

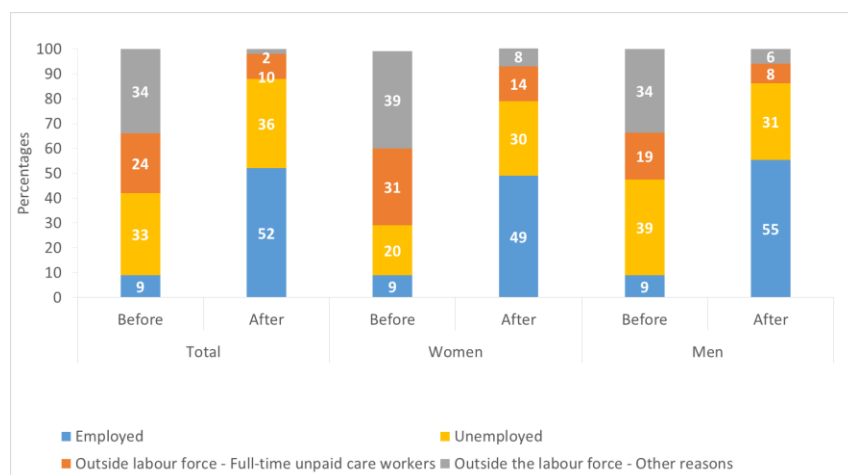
The skills provided by ILO programs had a positive impact on respondents’ income and livelihood as the majority of respondents interviewed after the program were able to find employment. The inactivity rate of beneficiaries of YES or Y4C decreased from 34 per cent, before the participation in the program, to a mere 2 per cent once the program ended (Figure 9). Program participation decrease their involvement in full-time unpaid care work from 24 per cent to 10 per cent, for both men and women. This is a very positive finding as in Somalia many young people are not in employment even though they would be ready to work, but have given up looking for a job. These discouraged young people are often worse off than the unemployed and should be in the forefront of policymakers’ minds. Unsurprisingly, disillusionment and low social cohesion often accompany this demographic reality.

It is also worth noting that the share of women beneficiaries outside the labour force decreased substantially from 39 per cent to 8 percent after the employment program (Figure 9). The women

beneficiaries declared that the training gave them skills and opportunities that they did not think to have as women, improving their labour market participation. A women beneficiary of Y4C in Bosaso said:

“Before the program, I never imagined that I will be able to go to a training or learn something good because women are not allowed to go out alone, especially if they are going to a place where they will mix with men.”

Figure 9: Labour force status of program beneficiaries, before and after participation in employment program



Source: Authors' calculation

At the same time, the share of beneficiaries unemployed increased slightly after the program, possibly due to the fact that program participants are now more optimistic about the future and thus are actively looking for a job. Key informants highlighted that, after the participation in the program, youth are more optimistic about the future work opportunities. A program participant of YES in Baidoa stated:

“The future looked dark for me before I joined the YES project/program however since I completed my vocational training component-electrical skills, it looks bright and I could never be more optimistic. Due to the program, I look forward to be a successful electrician in near future. Further, it changed my perception towards labour market as my skills are high sort after by people who need my service.”

However, it is important to take into account that this optimism might transform into grievances if people do not get the expected decent work in the near future. This is why it is crucial to conduct a tracer study and interview participants again in the future in order to investigate the long-term effect of the program.

The share of program beneficiaries employed increased from 9 per cent to 52 per cent after the program, of which 73 per cent are self-employed. These positive effects on employment of the programs are held for both men and women. Therefore, there is convincing evidence that ILO employment programs can boost labour market outcomes and income in a complicated and conflict affected country, such as Somalia.⁵³

⁵³ Unfortunately, we could not include information on working conditions as it is very difficult to have reliable recall answers on these issues. However, some researchers show that motivations for joining violence are not restricted to the unemployed. Poor and exploitative working conditions, extremely low pay and a lack of formal mechanisms through which to express dissatisfaction all help create the conditions for violence (Stewart, 2015). Therefore, in future evaluation of employment programs it is important to include a section on decent work deficits, as the quality of work affects the support for violence.

Furthermore, 94 per cent of those employed declared the program helped to find the current job or develop their business. The main help from the program was due to: skills development (41%), apprenticeship access (30%), helping participants create their own enterprise (22%), and support accessing employment opportunities (12%). For example, a program beneficiary of Y4C in Baidoa explained how he found his current job:

“The vocational training component of the program introduced me to my instructor who gave me an employment at his garage in Baidoa after he saw my potential in the field of auto mechanic.”

However, some program beneficiaries claimed that financial support is also needed to allow them to set up business and exploit the full potential of the employment program. A youth in Baidoa declared:

“The skills acquired in the program can prevent people engaging in illicit activities if they are put in good use. The trained youth should be assisted to settle down and implement what they have learned.”

The majority of program beneficiaries use the life skills, but the other skills require equipment to implement. Many beneficiaries needed help to use the vocational skills. A young woman participating in the Y4C in Bosaso said that:

“...I did not manage to buy a sewing machine, but at times I help friends who have machines and they give me some small money, like two dollars, depending on the amount of work. ... Sewing machines are expensive, even the used ones costs 50 dollars... I did not get a lot of income because I do not have a sewing machine “.

Persistent difficulty in credit access and lack of infrastructure such as a reliable electricity grid should be considered when designing employment programs, as these constraints might limit opportunities of program beneficiaries once the training is completed. Thus, it could be important to complement the training with cash transfer that allow people to buy instruments to set up their business.

Interestingly, the reduction in the support for violence is only slightly stronger for people that are employed after the program compared to those unemployed or outside the labour force. One possible explanation for this finding is that the training raised optimism on future employment opportunities among beneficiaries independently on whether they are currently employed or not. This optimism may well translate into reduction in support for violence. However, if the expectations on future job opportunities are not met in the near future, the training may spur even more conflict. Therefore, it is crucial to have a follow-up study to analyse the long-term effect of the program.

Overall, the fact that there is not a big difference in the reduction in support for violence between beneficiaries employed and unemployed (or outside labour force) after the program suggests that contact and grievances channels are playing an important role in reducing violence in Somalia.

6.2.2 Change in contact

In Somalia, the main line of division is based on clans and sub-clans.⁵⁴ Individual preferential biases, for instance, towards their clan or sub-clan coupled with discriminatory behaviour towards the others can act as a catalyst for conflict. Not surprisingly, real or perceived discrimination in access to economic, educational, justice opportunities and natural resources, especially among youth, has been cited as a potential driver of conflict in Somalia. During key informant interviews many Somali spoke

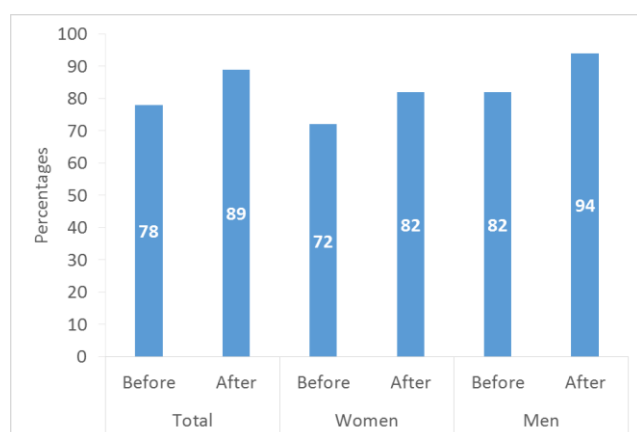
⁵⁴ In section 2 we saw that the violence mostly occurred on the subclan and subdivision level.

about their frustration with how access to work and justice was determined by favouritism within the clan structure. This frustration can lead to support for violent acts.

Participation in the employment program had several benefits in term of reducing biases towards different groups, because it brings together people from different clans, sub-clans and gender, strengthening opportunities for dialogue among these groups and breaking down stereotypes, thus alleviating social tensions.

The YES and Y4C employment program increased the quantity of interactions between people from different clans or sub-clans, from 77 per cent, before the program, to 90 per cent afterwards (Figure 10).⁵⁵ This result holds for both women and men, although women in general interact less with other clans and sub-clans.

Figure 10: Program beneficiaries that personally interacted with people from another clan or sub-clan in the last three months, before and after participation in employment program



Source: Authors' calculation

A program beneficiary of YES in Baidoa stated that the vocational training facilitated the exchange of ideas, ideologies and expectations, regardless of their clans and sub-clans, during practical and lecture sessions.⁵⁶ People interacted at the training centre also during tea and lunch breaks. For 83 per cent of those who interacted with people from another clan in the last three months, the interaction was linked to the program, especially the training (64 per cent) or meeting/dialogue (45 per cent). In addition, the frequency of interaction increased. The share of program beneficiaries interacting daily or several times a week with other clans increased from 60 per cent to 80 per cent.

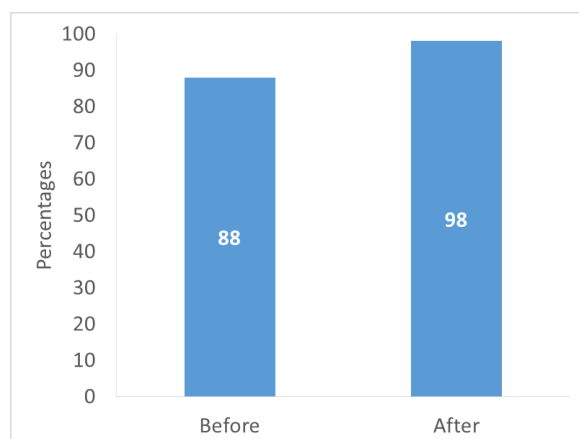
Not only did a greater number of program participants interacted with other clans and sub-clans, but more importantly, the quality of the relationship improved. The share of program beneficiaries that described their relationship with members of other clans as “Good” or “Very good” increased from 88 to 98 percent (Figure 11).⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The participation in the program changed behaviours of the participants.

⁵⁶ The interviewed termed it FAddiKuddirir (open discussion of the youth for the youth).

⁵⁷ In order to reinforce these findings, it would be helpful to use a natural-field behavioural game on a public goods dilemma to measure intergroup cooperation (see for example Dawop et al. (2019)) to measure actual behaviours. It would be helpful also to measure trust between groups with direct questions on trust (such as whether the person feels comfortable with engaging in activities with other clans) or with indirect endorsement experiment. In addition, intergroup cohesion can be measured directly, asking whether people are willing to help their neighbours across ethnic lines, or indirectly with indirect list

Figure 11: program beneficiaries that describe the relationship with members of another clan or sub-clan as good or very good, before and after the program



Source: author's computation

Participation in the program also increased trust among clans, as people shared common spaces and thus are more likely to develop friendship. As stated by a program participant in Bosaso:

“The program has created interfamily linkages that cannot be easily broken...Good relationships were developed after the training since we become friends”

The positive aspect of this training is that it offers an opportunity to stimulate contact between different clans, without placing such contact at the heart of the activities in question. When the tension among different groups is put at the centre of the contact, it can produce undesirable side-effects, such as lowering welfare in other dimensions (Cilliers et al. 2016). The quality and type of contact, in addition to the fact of contact taking place at all, is important. In addition, the training was administered very well as program participants did not experience any discrimination.

In addition to clan based biases, gender based biases are also very important in Somalia. Many studies highlighted the critical importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery and building resilience.

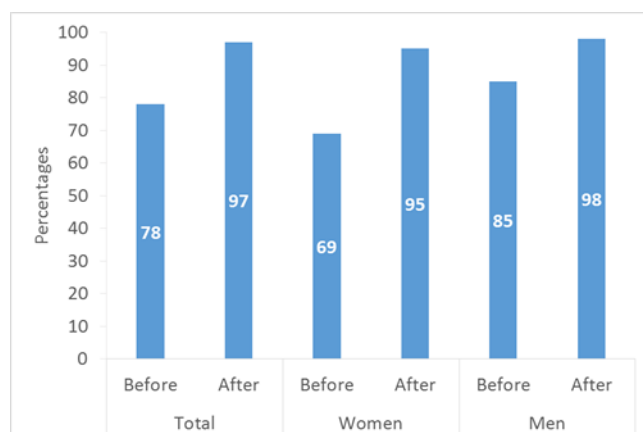
Gender inclusiveness was an integral part of both YES and Y4C program. The programs led to reduction of prejudices and gender stereotypes. Boys and girls are trained jointly and active engagement with the other gender is built-in both life-skills and technical training courses. The training improved the quality of interactions between men and women. The share of program beneficiaries, both men and women, which described their relationship with members of other sex as “Good” or “Very good” increased from 78 to 97 per cent (Figure 12).⁵⁸ The increase was bigger for women than men. A woman beneficiary of YES in Bosaso stated:

“I never used to interact with boys. I used to think they are dangerous. But now I have seen they are good and polite boys who can treat girls with respect.”

experiment (see Dawop et al. 2019 for an example in the case of Nigeria).

⁵⁸ In this context we only measured the changes in attitudes. It would be very useful to complement these findings with actual behavioural changes (trust game for example).

Figure 12: program beneficiaries that describe the relationship with members of other sex as good or very good, before and after the program



Source: Authors' calculation

A man beneficiary of Y4C confirmed:

"I used to think that women cannot mix with us and I did not know they think in the same way because we were always told that women are like children. But when I saw how they were presenting reports and making arguments, it changed my view completely."

The improved contact between men and women is an important step toward women empowerment, as a man beneficiary of YES in Baidoa stated:

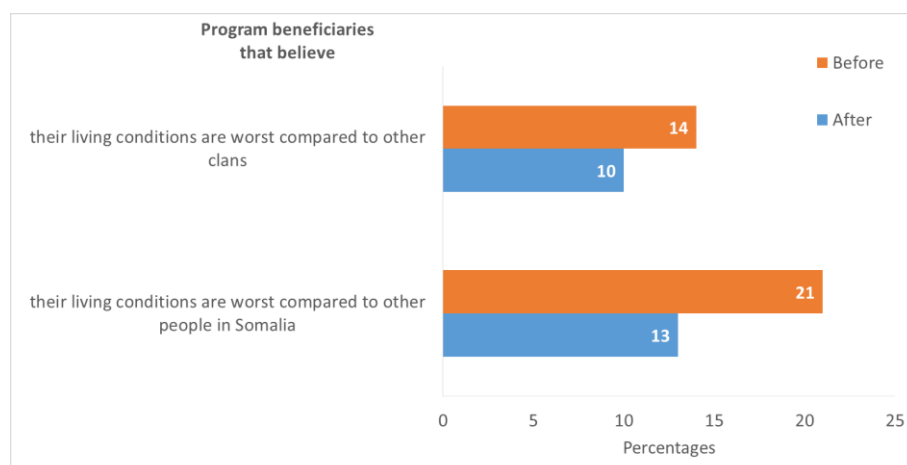
"Before the program, I never thought women have equal right and employment to men and only belong at home, especially at the kitchen. I also perceived women as men's property however, the vocational training components of the program changed my views on these narrative. I now believe what men can do a women can do better"

Overall, the employment programs improved the quantity and quality of interaction between people from different clans and sub-clans as well as between men and women.

6.2.3 Change in grievances

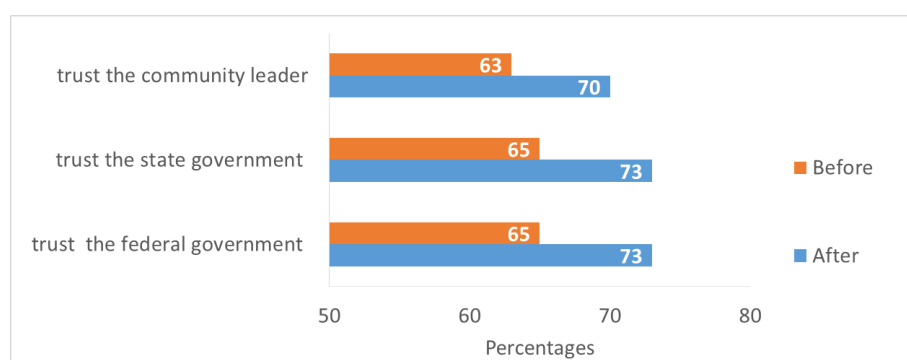
Real or perceived discrimination in access to economic and educational opportunities, especially among youth, has been cited as a potential driver of conflict (Mercy Corps, 2015b). Somalia has deeply embedded inequalities with respect to access to opportunities. The children of the political and economic elite study abroad in foreign schools and universities and return with easier access to NGO and government jobs, while most of the average young people have minimal, if any, access to basic education, which is of poor quality. The most marginalized youth (minority clans, politically unconnected youth, or young women) describe being routinely cheated by employers who tend to underpay them and/or treat them poorly, with no avenue to appeal. These horizontal inequalities create grievances that can spur support for violence.

Participation in the program has substantially reduced grievances of program participants. Survey results show that participation in the ILO employment program improved subjective evaluation of living conditions compared to other groups (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Program beneficiaries' perceptions towards horizontal inequalities, before and after the program.

Source: Authors' calculation

The program also increased participants' confidence in the government at both the federal and state levels (Figure 14). One possible explanation for the improved trust in the government is that program participants may see the government supporting the employment opportunities through the Y4C and YES, a service that they want and they envisage as the government's responsibility. The YES and Y4C employment programs are among the first UN programs in the country which work jointly with the Federal Government of Somalia in the planning and implementation of the proposed interventions. The programs were implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), Regional Member States, the private sector, civil society organizations and bilateral development partners. Program beneficiaries highlighted the visibility of government officials throughout the programs.

Figure 14: Program beneficiaries' perceptions towards the government, before and after the program.

Source: Authors' calculation

A young woman in Bosaso said:

"People now trust the government because they have seen it cares about the idle youth in the society who have no skills and income since they have brought them training"

However, despite this improvement in confidence in the government, some of the interviewed youth continue to have a negative perception of the performance of the national and local government. An interviewee in Baidoa said that:

“People still do not trust their government due to inequality of jobs offered by them, especially the young men and women.”

The program beneficiaries highlighted that the program has been administered in a fair way, with beneficiaries usually selected from different villages by the village elders. However, a proportion of the youth in key informant interviews highlighted their frustrations with how access to work was determined by favouritism within clan structure rather than a fair selection process. More concretely, there is a belief that having the right skills is not enough because the person with the right connection will get the job instead.

6.3 What works better to prevent support for violence?

This section is divided into two parts. First it compares the effects of the same employment program in different areas of Somalia: the effect of YES in Baidoa and Berbera, and the effect of Y4C in Baidoa and Bosaso. We exploit the fact that different areas face different security situations, to understand whether and how the effectiveness of the employment program is affected by the insecurity level. Secondly, we compared the effect of two employment programs (YES and Y4C) in the same area, Baidoa, in order to compare the short-term versus medium-term effect of the employment programs. We exploited the fact that the Y4C program finished in 2018, while the YES program ended only very recently (in 2019) in Baidoa. Interviewing all program beneficiaries between January and February 2019, we can investigate the medium-term effect of the Y4C program and the short-term effect of the YES program in Baidoa. Within each subsection, we present the results from the survey paired with relevant qualitative data when appropriate to answer one main questions: Were the interventions effective in reducing the propensity to support violence?

Comparing the effect of the Youth for Change program on support for violence in South Somalia (Baidoa) and Puntland (Bosaso), it suggests that the effect was more pronounced in Bosaso.⁵⁹ As shown in Section 3, both Baidoa and Bosaso are deeply affected by the conflict however, Baidoa is slightly more influenced by violent events between 2015 and 2019.

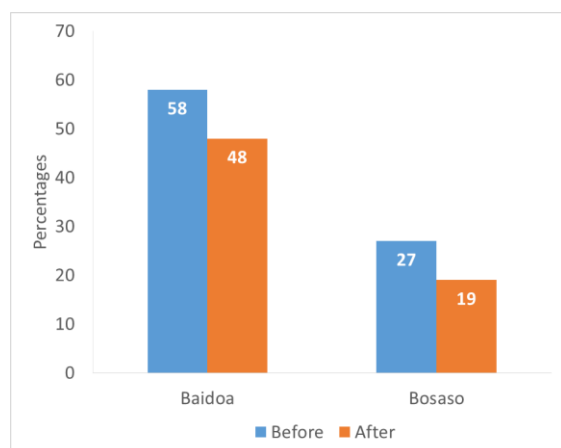
The program beneficiaries of Y4C interviewed in Baidoa were youth below 30 years old, with a low level of education (96% completed up to primary education). The majority of them are part of the same clan (Rahaween), which is prevalent in this area, but they are part of different sub-clans. The Y4C's program beneficiaries in Baidoa received a training for around 5 months and the program finished more than 1 year ago, so we can investigate the medium-term effect of the employment program.

Similarly, the program beneficiaries of Y4C interviewed in Bosaso were youth below 35 years old, with a low level of education (83% completed up to primary education). There is a high share of displaced people participating in the employment program in Bosaso. Program beneficiaries are part of different clans and sub-clans. The Y4C's program beneficiaries in Bosaso received a training between 4 and 5 months and the program finished around 1 year ago.

⁵⁹ It is important to note that tracing the Y4C program respondents was difficult as the project phased out one to two years ago and some of the beneficiaries have migrated.

The share of program beneficiaries that agree it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause decreased after the participation in the Y4C program in both Baidoa and Bosaso (Figure 15). The percentage change was more significant in Bosaso, where the initial level of support for violence was smaller (from 27 to 18 percent).

Figure 15: program beneficiaries that agreed it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause, before and after participation in employment program, Baidoa and Bosaso



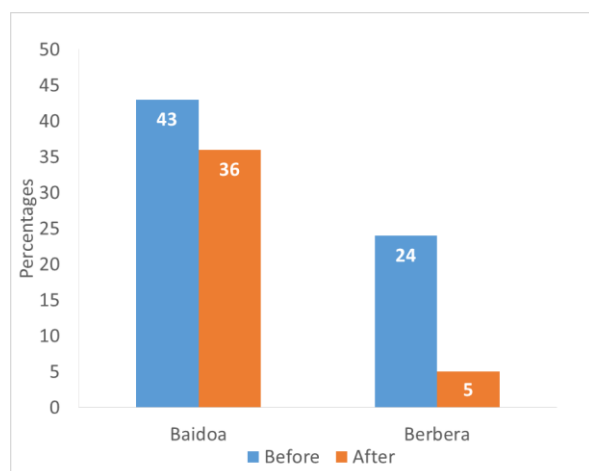
Source: author's calculation

Similarly, comparing the effect of the YES program in South Somalia (Baidoa) and Somaliland (Berbera), it suggests that the results are stronger in Berbera. Baidoa is more affected by violent events between 2015 and 2019 than Berbera (see section 3).

The program beneficiaries of YES interviewed in Baidoa were youth below 25 years old, with a low level of education and from the same clan (Rahaween), but different sub-clans. The program beneficiaries in Baidoa received a training for around 4 months and the program finished between 6 months and 1 year ago, so we can investigate the short-term effect of the employment program. Likewise, the program beneficiaries of YES interviewed in Berbera were youth below 40 years old, with a medium level of education (51% completed secondary education) and are part of different sub-clans within the same clan (Isaq). The YES's program beneficiaries in Berbera received a training around 1 year ago.

The share of program beneficiaries that agree it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause decreased more in Berbera than in Baisoa after the YES program (Figure 16).

Figure 16: program beneficiaries that agreed it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause, before and after participation in employment program, Baidoa and Berbera



Source: Authors' calculation

The divergence in impact of the employment program on support and engagement in violence could be explained by the different security and socioeconomic situations in Somaliland (Berbera) versus South Somalia (Baidoa) and Puntland (Bosaso). Somaliland is more peaceful and more economically developed and has a functioning government, while the other two regions are less stable and less developed. People residing in violent areas of Somalia are likely potential victims of torture, rape and killings from both al-Shabbab and security forces. Therefore, the impact of the employment program is weaker in areas that are more violent (Baidoa) because individuals living in contexts of chronicle violence may well take decisions to support armed opposition group or not depending on more immediate factors. For example, if people were victims of torture, rape, abuse and killing by Al-Shabbab, they will be more likely to decrease the support to armed groups. However, if people were victims of state or international forces⁶⁰, they will be less likely to reduce support for armed opposition group.

Comparing the change in support for violence in Baidoa for program beneficiaries of YES (short-term: 6 months) and Y4C (medium-term: 1 year), it suggests that the employment programs reduce support for violence both in the short- and medium-term. The effect of the training in reducing support for violence seems to be sustained in the medium-term. However, the use of a tracer study would be useful to check whether the program is sustainable in the long-term.

6.4 Limitations

Two of the major limitations encountered during the data collection in Somalia included movement restrictions and language barriers. Key informants and program beneficiaries did not speak English, but different Somali dialects. In mitigation, the national consultant conducted the interviews in the Somali dialects based on the questionnaires provided by the ILO and then translated the informants' responses for the benefit of the team leader. However, it is important to be aware of the fact that within the translation process some nuances of qualitative interview can be lost.

⁶⁰ See section III for more detail on the armed groups in Somalia.

The specific context of insecurity in Somalia posed several challenges for implementing the data collection. Somalia's challenging security context informed our choice of the communities sampled for both the qualitative and quantitative components of the study.⁶¹ None of the sites included were considered inaccessible due to security, which could influence how youth perceive armed opposition groups and the Somali government. We decided to focus on urban areas in Baidoa, Bosaso and Berbera districts, as many rural areas are difficult to reach. Even most accessible areas held potential risks to the safety of field staff and survey respondents, so that time spent in these areas had to be minimized. To address security concerns, the survey adapted logistical arrangements, and questionnaire design to limit time on the ground.

The villages where the respondents lived were very far from each other and this made the data collection exercise very demanding, especially given the difficulties in movement within many areas of Somalia. In addition, the cost related to the movement of staff conducting the interviews in the field is a very high portion of the total cost, as special measures need to be taken to ensure security.

Another major challenge in data collection was the unavailability of respondents, especially beneficiaries of Y4C program, which finished around 1 year before the data collection. Widespread violence had forced many people to flee to safer locations, this is a problem common in many conflict-affected settings. Most of the Y4C respondents' phones were switched off. Therefore, it is important in similar contexts to get the list and contact details of program participants well in advance. In a conflict setting it is even more important to collect multiple means of contacting respondents for follow-up. For example, it would be useful during the baseline to collect contact details of not only the beneficiaries but also their household members as they can help in tracking the beneficiary in follow-up surveys.⁶²

The limitations of the quantitative research design stems from four basic shortcomings. First, because this was an ex-post evaluation, we did not have baseline data. This prevented us from rigorously assessing the impact of the program. In order to address the lack of baseline data, we relied on recall questions. It is reasonable to expect people to recall major life changes (Mavrotas and McGillivray, 2009). However, in future evaluation, it is important to plan ahead and conduct baseline survey so that it is possible to compare beneficiaries before and after the participation in the program.

Second, there could be some social desirability bias, as respondents may distort their beliefs on sensitive questions such as attitudes towards violence, contact between clans/sub-clans or grievances, due to social desirability. We rely on self-reported survey responses to measure our respondents' support to violence, contact and grievances outcomes.⁶³ It would be useful to complement our findings measuring each outcome with multiple survey questions, both directly and indirectly, to overcome social

⁶¹One strategy to address this issue is to collect data remotely by calling or messaging respondents on their mobile phones, given the high level of use of phones in Somalia, and not visit dangerous areas. A growing body of literature explores the use of mobile technology in this context (e.g. Demobynes and Sofia, 2016; Dillon, 2012; Firchow and Mac Ginty, 2016). However, questions related to delicate topics as violence are often not feasible via phone surveys.

Another possible solution is to use satellite imagery and other geo-spatial data. See for example Pape and Wollburg (2019) for the use of satellite imagery and other geo-spatial data to estimate poverty in inaccessible areas of Somalia.

⁶² See for example Burundi Priority Survey in 1997-2007-2012.

⁶³ Tesfaye et al. 2018 showed that direct and indirect survey questions on political violence in Somalia lead to similar results. However, it is possible to use list experiment or random assignment techniques in the future to test the validity of our results (see for example Tesfaye et al. 2018).

desirability biases. Indirect endorsement experiments or list experiments are often used in the literature together with direct survey questions (Dawop et al. 2019).⁶⁴

Third, concepts like contact, grievances and propensity to violence are difficult to measure through surveys, thus the qualitative interviews were necessary. Some questions are particularly sensitive, such as those related to the use of violence or clans, so the response rate was quite low, especially for women.⁶⁵ In conflict setting it is decisive to get local advice about appropriate ways to ask about sensitive information and to ensure confidentiality and safe storage of data, as respondents may be especially nervous about their personal information getting into the wrong hands.

In addition, we did not manage to interview program non-beneficiaries as a control group. This is why the quantitative analysis is complemented by a qualitative analysis. The cumulative effect of these limitations is that this study cannot claim to identify causal explanations. In future evaluation, however, it would be helpful to also interview non-beneficiaries to yield more robust results.⁶⁶

Regarding the qualitative investigation, researchers were able to conduct key informant interviews only with 32 people. As a result, the qualitative findings, if assessed on their own, should be seen as a collection of insights provided by a group of young people in Somalia. Some of the respondents refused to have their voice, pictures, video taken due to security concerns even after assurance from researchers that it will be treated with confidentiality.

Despite these limitations the paper managed to provide initial evidence of the effect of employment programs on peacebuilding in a complicated and conflict affected country as Somalia.

7 Conclusion and recommendations

This paper provides evidence of ILO employment programs, despite not having a direct peacebuilding goal, reducing support for violence among Somali youth beneficiaries. When investigating the reasons that may explain why employment programs interventions may reduce support for violence, and thereby improving stability, we found that three channels play a role in the context of Somalia: the economic opportunity, contact and grievances.

The paper suggested that ILO employment programs can boost labour market outcomes and income in complicated and conflict affected country as Somalia. The skills provided by ILO employment programs in Somalia had a positive impact on respondents' labour market outcomes, for both men and

⁶⁴ See for example Dawop et al. (2019) for the use of indirect endorsement experiment to measure trust or indirect list experiment to measure intergroup cohesion between pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria.

For example, endorsement experiment asked respondents how much they would support a water policy if it was endorsed by a farmer organization (asked of pastoralists), if it was endorsed by a pastoralist group (asked of farmers), or if no endorsement was mentioned (the control condition posed to both pastoralists and farmers). The difference in support between the endorsed policy and the unendorsed policy is a measure of bias for or against that group. The list experiment included three or four item list and asked the respondent how many of the items would make him or her upset. The only difference between the three-item version and the four-item version was the addition of an item related to the attitude of interest. The three-term list included "when your football team loses a match," "increases in the price of gasoline," and "lack of rainfall." To measure intergroup attitudes, the authors added the following item to the four-item list: "when I have to interact with [farmers/pastoralists] in the market." The difference in the average number of items that upset people is interpreted as the proportion of people within a group who are upset by this additional item.

⁶⁵ To increase the response rate of women, women interviewers interviewed women beneficiaries.

⁶⁶ The data on non-beneficiaries are important to have a more rigorous impact evaluation of the program. RCTs or Propensity Score Matching can be used to assess the impact of the program, when there is a control group.

women. The majority of respondents interviewed after the program were either employed or unemployed and optimistic about future work opportunities. The share of program participants employed increased substantially, while those outside the labour force decreased significantly after the program. The higher opportunities in the labour market (either obtained or expected) reduced their support for violence.

Secondly, the trainings from YES and Y4C brought people together, and strengthened opportunities for dialogue among people from different clans and sub-clans as well as between men and women broke down stereotypes and increased social cohesion. In particular, the quantity and quality of interaction between sub-clans improved after the participation in the training. The program improved women empowerment, raising the quality of interactions between men and women. Finally, the inclusiveness and transparency of the ILO employment programs, which aimed to improve equality in opportunities, livelihoods, as well as the quality and rights at work, addressed individual grievances. Program participants increased trust in the government as they saw their government acting in their interest via the employment program. This in turn reduced support for armed opposition groups.

The study also finds suggestive evidence of the positive externalities the employment program had also on non-beneficiaries, in terms of reducing their support of violence. This finding bolsters the case that employment programs present a high return to their initial investment.

As with any empirical research, we must not draw overly broad generalizations from this study but rather use it as the basis for adapting programs and testing new approaches. The case of Somalia provides some important insights regarding the activities that performed well, those that did not, and some of the reasons for the outcomes obtained. It is hoped that these insights will inform future projects focusing on the prevention of violence among youth, in Somalia and beyond. Based on the analysis of the effect of the ILO employment programs on support for violence in Somalia, we highlighted a number of recommendations for practitioners and policymakers on how the employment programs can be designed to best reduce the appeal of armed opposition groups and violence in Somalia and beyond.

The analysed ILO employment programs were based on the idea that results can be achieved only through working in close collaboration with the government. The inclusion and visibility of government officials throughout the programs was crucial for the improved trust in government among program beneficiaries and thus reduced support for violence.

The ILO employment programs focused on both technical and non-technical trainings. It is important that skill development initiatives do not only focus on hard, job-related skills, but also on “soft skills” that are deemed more and more important by employers and are needed for the personal growth of youth. It is noteworthy that key informants in the three districts analysed see a need for life skills to support youth critical thinking and be less receptive to the armed groups’ messages. This, in turn, can discourage youth from joining and support violent groups.

Program participants and key informants declared that the ILO employment programs were administered in a fair way. Program participants received a similar treatment, without discrimination based on gender or clan. For example, the ILO employment programs gave a special attention to women, so that a certain share of program beneficiaries were women. This is very important as frustrations over favouritism within clan structure or gender can act as a driver of grievances that can ultimately result in violence.

Our analysis also highlighted that it is important to create more opportunities for young people to apply what they have learned. Efforts to expand skills for youth should be coupled with linkages between

those receiving the training and potential employers to help ensure better market absorption of future graduates, leading to better livelihood opportunities and outcomes. This is extremely important because program participants are very optimistic about future job opportunities immediately after the program and the risk of raising expectations that are not met in the future can even increase the willingness of people to engage in violence.

According to youth groups interviewed in Bossaso, Baidoa and Berbera, one of the main challenges that they faced was lack of capital. Skills training should be complemented with financial support to ensure that the beneficiaries can put into practice what they learned during the training.

The analysis also found that the level of violence is affecting the effectiveness of the employment program in reducing support for violence. The overall results are driven by the effects seen in less violent areas. More generally, the results indicate that broader contextual factors influence the ability of employment programs to succeed in reducing support for violence. Insecurity, the political environment, and economic growth continue to be important dynamics that shape the nature of conflict in Somalia. Without changes to these broader dynamics, the success of potentially impactful employment programs will be limited. Therefore, more international cooperation is required to achieve results.

Finally, more investment is needed to rigorously measure the impact of employment programs on peacebuilding in order to: increase learning among practitioners and donors on how to implement employment programs effectively and which approach present the best return on investment; make the case for continued and increased funding for employment programs with peacebuilding outcomes.⁶⁷ Further research is needed to corroborate these results, using baseline and end-line survey to better analyse the causal impact of the training, using endorsement experiments or other behavioural economics techniques to get truthful responses from beneficiaries and analysing whether the results are sustainable in the medium and long term.

⁶⁷ Rigorous impact evaluation should have a baseline and end line survey of both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Both experimental and quasi-experimental designs can be used.

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Appendix

Table 1 : Survey questions used to calculate the engagement and support for violence

Willingness to engage in violence	Would you currently use violence to fight against an unfair law or unfair decision from the government?	1. Yes 2. No 3. I do not want to answer
Willingness to engage in violence before program	Would you have used violence to fight against an unfair law or unfair decision from the government, before joining the program?	1. Yes 2. No 3. I do not want to answer
Support for violence	Do you currently agree that it is justified for an armed group to use violence to get better services for people or fight against corruption?	1. Yes 2. No 3. I do not want to answer
Support for violence before program	Would you have agreed that it is justified for an armed group to use violence to get better services for people or fight against corruption, before joining the program?	1. Yes 2. No 3. I do not want to answer
Support for violence	Do you currently agree it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause?	1. Yes 2. No
Support for violence before program	Would you have agreed that it is sometimes necessary to use violence for a political cause, before joining the program?	1. Yes 2. No
Support for violence	Do you think program beneficiaries decreased their support to the use of violence against civilians for a political cause?	1. Yes 2. No
Engage in violence	Do you think program beneficiaries decreased their use of violence for a political cause?	1. Yes 2. No
effect	Do you agree that the project decreased the support and/or the use of violence against civilians for a political cause?	1. Yes 2. No

Table 2: ACLED Event Types

General	Event Type	Sub-Event Type
Violent events	Battles	Armed clash
		Government regains territory
		Non-state actor overtakes territory
	Explosions/Remote violence	Chemical weapon
		Air/drone strike
		Suicide bomb
		Shelling/artillery/missile attack
		Remote explosive/landmine/IED
		Grenade
	Violence against civilians	Sexual violence
		Attack
		Abduction/forced disappearance
Demonstrations	Protests	Peaceful protest
		Protest with intervention
		Excessive force against protesters
	Riots	Violent demonstration
		Mob violence
Non-violent actions	Strategic developments	Agreement
		Arrests
		Change to group/activity
		Disrupted weapons use
		Headquarters or base established
		Looting/property destruction
		Non-violent transfer of territory
		Other

Source: ACLED