

In an environment where a serious information asymmetry exists on the skills of workers and the location of job vacancies, these social connections are crucial in linking job seekers and employers. Of course this is heavily biased towards youth with effective (and profitable) social connections that they can utilise when needs arise.

What next?

Looking at education and the labour market experiences, it is true that educated youth in Somaliland face many challenges. I would argue, however, that they equally have many opportunities. As Somaliland continues to develop and as the government takes steps to streamline the higher education sector and correct inefficiencies in the labour markets, youth employment outcomes will continue to improve. In addition, Somaliland youth in general are surrounded by very supportive social/clan structures that if pushed in certain directions could prove very beneficial for youth development. With the right incentives, clan efforts could be channelled towards youth-oriented activities such as creating youth trust funds for entrepreneurial ventures.

To really understand youth employment in Somaliland, we have to move away from categorizing youth as being employed and unemployed. Social/cultural understanding on what it means to be employed and unemployed is crucial for the creation of effective and targeted interventions. Equally important is an in-depth understanding of youth categories and how they interact with the labour markets. Understanding social processes within the labour markets is also vital given that labour markets are made up of people who reflect how society functions.

In addition, the government, with the help of development partners, youth organisations and higher education institutions, needs to launch awareness programmes that will work towards educating Somalilanders about their economy and the functions of and opportunities within labour markets. This could help young people form realistic expectations about

the types of jobs they can secure. Youth and society's perceptions about the economy and the labour markets in general are possibly one of the most powerful and effective tools to improve job allocation in the economy.

The fact that two-thirds of Somaliland's population are young people means the country's major strength lies in this demographic trend especially given the fact that Somaliland is in its early years of reconstruction and development. What is crucial for the Somaliland government is to ensure that the right policies and programmes are put in place to capture the energy and enthusiasm of youth especially in their efforts to access higher levels of education and employment. Somaliland youth exude confidence and need to be given an opportunity to rise to the challenge of helping Somaliland develop in spite of its lack of international recognition. Involving youth will not only give them a sense of pride and nationalism, but will also help reduce the large number of them leaving Somaliland every day, through dangerous means, hoping to find meaningful life elsewhere.

Finally, the Somaliland government, the Somalia government, the African Union and the international community need to make a decision on the status of Somaliland very soon. Transforming the Somaliland economy into one capable of generating the required levels of jobs, will require significant investment into sectors that are traditionally avoided by development agencies and small scale investors (i.e. large infrastructure projects). Postponing the outcome of recognition or some other type of legal status has crucial implications for the long-term development of the country and subsequently to the livelihood of a large percentage of the population; the youth. Although recognition arguments are usually formed on past grievances, current and future implications of lack of it need to be brought to the table and discussed openly and frankly. In my opinion, the Somaliland youth should hold responsible all the above named parties for helping them realize their right to decent livelihoods.

The Litigant

Ali Jimale Ahmed

He was frail, emaciated, and gaunt from years of harsh life that had made him trek the length and breadth of the Somali deex plains. It was a Friday morning when he came to visit us in our village, in one of the corners of the capital. We used to call our corner a dark alley, because all the surrounding, more affluent areas were lit, while our village, in the heart of the town, was thirsty for electricity. An older friend of mine used to call it Harlem. I didn't understand his meaning at the time, but nevertheless it sounded exotically appropriate. Harlem. My friend had heard about Harlem from an old Mennonite teacher. A congenial old lady with freckles dotting the landscape of her still pretty face, my friend would reminisce. At times, he would flaunt a song or two he learned in her class. My favorite was "Old MacDonald had a farm," which, to my utter surprise, my mother, through me, also liked. Tell your friend, she would say each time I did a rendition of the song, complete with gestures and onomatopoeic grunts, to sing to his teacher, a song of the Arlaadi. And without waiting for an answer, she, in her crooning voice would sing of the virtues of beans, and of the daunting task of warding off a neighbor's cattle from scouring the field.

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To us kids, an ode to beans was the furthest from our minds, as that did not ignite our imagination. I vaguely remember my older friend's Mennonite teacher's comment to my mother's ode to beans: she described it, he said, as a kind of graffiti. That was a strange kind of comment, I thought, since graffiti was what I saw splashed on walls with chevaux de frise on top to discourage trespassers. (Cheval de frise was, I learned in high school, an ingenious idea to embed razor spikes into the top of the wall surrounding

a house for protection. For some odd reason that I cannot explain, the spikes reminded me of my mother's description of scarecrows.) My mother's stories about beans and sca-

recrows did not appeal to me or my friends. We liked to hear stories spun about far away places. And Harlem was one such place. Sometimes, I pronounced it as Harram, the Arabic word for "sinful and forbidden." Harram, excuse me Harlem, was in America and it sure sounded like a sinful place, a forbidden corner in the midst of the Big Apple. The Apple, according to my knowledgeable friend, was another name for New York City. Anyway, it intrigued me that our corner had similar characteristics with other corners of the world. After all, we weren't alone living in the midst of darkness, squalor and filth. There was something international about squalor and filth-dwelling, I reasoned.

Each Friday, well let me put it this way, every other Friday, my parents used to invite all, or almost all the elders of the village to a bun session. Coffee beans were cooked in seething hot sesame oil or butter ghee. The eldest man was to eat first. Most of the time it was Grandfather Madaq. Well, to be sure, he wasn't my grandfather, but we were told to call him that out of respect. Grandfather Madaq was in his early 80s and childless. Actually, he never got married, which made most of the community; I mean those who were old enough to gossip and talk about certain stuff, either fear or pity him. It was also reported that he never lost his first baby teeth. Some kind of mystery was associated with that, but it was always beyond our youthful understanding. I personally liked Grandfather Madaq a lot, and that, I think, was why my mother always invited him to our house.

This particular Friday, though, Grandfather Madaq wasn't anywhere to be seen. Perhaps, I thought, someone else had invited him to another house. He was such an affable and good-natured person that you couldn't dislike him. This Friday, my mother told me to spread the praying mat for a new visitor. When he sat down, he told me to come close to him and he started patting my hair. At first it didn't feel strange or funny, but after some time, I thought something wasn't right. His hand would fall on two different parts of my head at the same time, or that was what I thought was happening. I wasn't brave enough to look up as I didn't want him to notice my unease. Then a cup of tea was brought to him, but for some strange reason my mother put the cup on the floor. That was very unlike my mother. At least, she never put the cup on the floor for Grandfather Madaq. Well, I thought, what's in the grass will have to come into the open. Why don't I wait and see. It was rude; at least that was what we were told, to make a visitor uncomfortable with either our words or our actions. The cup lay just where my mother had put it for a long time, which also was unusual. Grandfather Madaq and even the other visitors, and believe me there were many of them, didn't let their tea cool off for so long. Grandfather Madaq would grasp his cup with both hands, taking it directly from my mother's hands, and then hold it up to his temples. I thought our guest this Friday must either have had a cup of tea earlier or wasn't an avid tea drinker. Again this was a strange thing to understand, because most people in my community, especially the elderly, drink many cups of tea each day with lots of sugar. Rag waa shaah, dumarna waa sheeko. (This was a kind of sententious saying concocted by males in the community. I don't want to digress here, but in high school we had a classmate of mixed Somali and African-American parentage. She was funny, and with her American twang, she would say: "Rag waa shah, dumarna waa shaqo." Her bold inscription appropriated the saying, and gave it a new twist: In her interpretation of the saying, men were still avid tea drinkers, but women in the new rendition were not weavers of idle stories, but a hard-working and diligent lot. I liked her a lot. Well, that's me now talking, but I should not opine in my story. My views should remain my private views, and should not intrude into the story. Miss Block, my fifth grade teacher from Florida, once asked me to account for my use of

parenthetic sentences. Apparently, I could be carried away by their lure. That is what I have just done. Miss Block's admonition, "Do your parenthetic sentences qualify or amplify your intentions?" has become a second habit. I'd better return to my story lest I confuse both of us.) I was saying, to satisfy my curiosity, I was tempted a couple of times to remind our visitor of the cup of tea, but I thought perhaps my mother or even my father, that is, if he comes home from the house of his junior wife this early, would remind the visitor of his cup of tea. And then I thought perhaps Mother forgot to put the necessary spices in the tea. You know how old people are sometimes meticulous about what they drink. Perhaps, unable to smell cardamom, ginger, and cloves, he let his tea sit on the floor untasted lest he "disturb" his host, who should have the sense to understand that this was the reason he didn't drink it in the first place.

About half an hour later, my mother brought the bun in a wooden kurbin dish with a wooden spoon. No sooner had she put it on the floor than our visitor held the wooden spoon in his right hand. So I was right. Awliya Allah! He couldn't hold on to the spoon. Each time he tried to dip it in the bowl, he made a mess. I was really terrified to watch him struggle with the spoon. I didn't keep my gaze on him, as that would invite my mother's disapproval. And you wouldn't want my mother to be mad at you! She might even throw whatever is in her hands at you. Allah, how good she was at feinting with the left hand. Fear, however, didn't make me stop looking at him with some sidelong glances. I couldn't understand why my mother didn't help him eat his food, or even let me help him eat. I thought my mother didn't like our visitor this Friday. But then why invite him in the first place?

When he ate what he could, my mother gave him some money and he left showering our house with blessings. He was sweating profusely, which was reasonable, I thought, after what he had gone through to feed himself.

Later in the day, in the shade of our verandah, my mother, sensing my curiosity, explained to me certain things about the visitor. As a young man, Aw Madag (that was his name) had been a very energetic person. His father Muddawi had a lot of children, both male and female. My mother's mother was one of his many daughters. Aw Madag, like the rest of his brothers,

looked after the camels and cattle of his father. But this visitor was different from the rest of his peers. As a young man he would always sneak off to the nearest town and visit the colonial courts in session. He, of course, didn't understand the language in use, but he was greatly fascinated with the procedures he witnessed. Soon after that, he developed a proclivity for suing other people. The practice got out of hand after the death of his father. Rumor has it that one evening his mother tried to stop him from taking to court one of her relatives. Aw Madag was so involved with the case that he forgot who he was talking to. With one blow, he hurled his own mother on to the ground and proceeded with his case, which he won. It was said that on the third morning after that incident, he woke up with both his hands shaking. It was a form of paresis that never left him since.

Desperate for money to live on, he became an even more compulsive suer. It was reported that one day his oldest son fell from a tree and broke his arm. The poor boy came crying to his father in excruciating pain. When he told him of his injury, Aw Madag asked the kid:

Who threw you from the tree?

No one.

Who was with you on the top of the tree?

No one.

Who was playing on the ground below?

No one.

Was there any one in the vicinity?

No.

Could you see anyone looking in your direction, even from afar?

No.

Impatient with his son's answer, Aw Madag shouted at him, "Couldn't you even name one single person in this large community as the culprit? May you die for death is what you deserve."

After that incident, no one in the community wanted to have anything to do with him or his household. The neighborhood kids were warned by their parents to keep away from Aw Madag's children. I guess his house became another Harlem, where kids from other neighborhoods weren't allowed by their parents to venture or stray into.

Many people thought that Aw Madag would refrain from practicing this alien tradition once its propagators left this country for good. But it wasn't to be. In fact, on the night of independence, it was rumored that he was scheming to renew a case which the outgoing Italian Magistrate had ruled against him. As one of his neighbors once commented, "Ayax teg, eelna reeb," meaning, "Don't be fooled by the migration of the locust. They leave their larvae behind."

Five years ago, in our corner, while on vacation from my boarding school, I heard older men at a tea shop talking about what had become of Aw Madag. He died peacefully in his bed in the same dark corner of the city. But what intrigued them were his last words, addressed to his children. "you remember the brown calf that was run over by Soofakali's truck... (hiccup)...I was to appear in court the day after tomorrow... (hiccup)...all legal documents are in my white jacket... (hiccup)...if you are my legitimate sons, don't let him off the hook, fight to the last."



Haddad in Al-Hayat, 2009
(Quelle: <http://andreassozpol.blog.de>).

Banipal Magazine of Modern Arab Literature

Banipal Magazine of Modern Arab Literature showcases works by contemporary Arab authors in English translation, from wherever they are writing and publishing. An independent magazine, founded in 1998, by Margaret Obank and Iraqi author Samuel Shimon, Banipal's three issues a year present both established and emerging writers through poems, short stories and excerpts of novels, plus book reviews, critical essays and author interviews. Its current 46 issues present an unparalleled archive of Arab literature in translation.

Each issue has a main theme, recent ones being 80 New Poems, Writers from Palestine and Twelve Women Writers. Banipal 47's focus, meanwhile, is Fiction from Kuwait. The issues also include a Guest Writer/ Guest Literature feature with works by non-Arab authors as part of Banipal's mission to promote intercultural dialogue. These have so far included writers from South Korea, Vietnam, Romania, Germany, France and Slovenia.

Last year Banipal celebrated fifteen years of bringing contemporary Arab authors into the canon of world literature. Adonis described it as "Not merely a bridge between two cultures but . . . a laboratory that illuminates the styles of modern Arabic writings", while Anton Shammas declared it "the most open, daring, democratic and attentive magazine of modern Arabic literature". Tetz Rooke has commented: "Banipal has become a beautiful library and a bibliographic gold mine for anyone interested in modern Arab writing" and from Stefan Weidner: "Nowhere in Western languages do I learn more about contemporary, really contemporary Arab literature than in Banipal. The real advantage of your, no! – of our!, magazine, however, is not that it is ABOUT Arab literature, but that it IS Arab literature."

Banipal is available both in print and digital editions, offering an invaluable research resource for all students and readers of Arabic and Comparative Literature. For all information on subscribing, either as an individual or institution, go to: <http://www.banipal.co.uk/subscribe/>. www.banipal.co.uk has a full catalogue of all back issues, plus selected texts and book reviews from each issue and an overall index of contents. An individual digital subscription is just £18 a year worldwide and a print subscription for Europe is £31.50.

Preis für Freiheit und Menschenrechte 2013

Die Berner Stiftung für Freiheit und Menschenrechte verlieh am 5. November im Berner Rathaus den Preis 2013 an die somalische Übersetzerin und Kulturvermittlerin Leyla Kanyar, Gründerin des Somalischen Integrationsvereins der Ostschweiz und die Schweizer Juristin Tilla Jacomet, Leiterin der Rechtsberatungsstellen des HEKS für Asylsuchende in den Kantonen St. Gallen, Appenzell und Thurgau.

Der Doppelpreis symbolisiert den Zusammenhang zwischen Menschenrechtsfragen im Ausland und in der Schweiz. Die Stiftung ehrt damit das besondere Wirken zweier Frauen, die sich für Asyl suchende Menschen in der Schweiz engagieren und setzt damit ein Zeichen für die vermehrte Beachtung der Menschenrechte im Asylbereich.

Leyla Kanyare, 1971 in Somalia geboren, kam auf der Flucht vor dem Bürgerkrieg in Somalia mit ihrem Mann und ihren zwei Kindern 1991 in die Schweiz. „Ich versuchte dann, möglichst schnell die deutsche Sprache zu erlernen, um mich mit den Leuten austauschen zu können“. Sie arbeitet darauf als Dolmetscherin für ihre Landsleute in Spitälern, in Schulen, beim Sozialamt, Gerichte, Polizei bei der Familienberatung und bei der Rechtsberatungsstelle für Asylsuchende, und musste feststellen, dass viele SomalierInnen in der Schweiz aufgrund ihrer traumatischen Erlebnisse während des Bürgerkrieges es schwer hatten, sich in der Schweiz zurecht zu finden. So gründete sie 2005 den Somalischen Integrationsverein der Ostschweiz (SIVO). „SomalierInnen haben kaum eine Chance, sich hier einzuleben, wenn niemand ihnen erklärt, wie das Leben hier funktioniert“.

www.freiheit-und-menschenrechte.ch

Lettre ouverte de *Médecins sans Frontières* Pourquoi MSF a décidé de quitter la Somalie

Dr. Unni Karunakara

Le 14 août 2013, nous Dr. Unni Karunakara est Président international de Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). Il n'y a aucun pays au monde où les risques sont aussi élevés. Les nombreux commentateurs sur Twitter qui ont fait remarquer qu'MSF est réputée pour sa persévérance à travailler même dans les conditions les plus difficiles ont raison. Mais, MSF aussi a ses limites. Et nous avons atteint nos limites en Somalie avec l'enchaînement de meurtres et d'enlèvements au cours de ces cinq dernières années. En décembre 2011, deux confrères ont été brutalement abattus à Mogadiscio. Leur meurtrier, qui avait été poursuivi en justice, reconnu coupable et condamné à 30 ans de prison, a été libéré au bout de trois mois. Deux autres collègues enlevées deux mois plus tôt à Dadaab viennent à peine d'être libérées il y a de cela quelques semaines. Elles ont été retenues en otage pendant 21 mois dans le centre sud de la Somalie. Ces deux évènements nous ont assésés les derniers coups.

Je vais tenter de vous l'expliquer. Tout d'abord, MSF n'est pas une organisation qui se permet de commenter les évolutions politique ou économique. Nous sommes d'abord et surtout concentrés sur la santé des populations et leur possibilité d'accéder aux soins. Dans cette optique, et en nous référant à nos activités largement réparties dans le pays, les nouvelles ne sont tout simplement pas bonnes. Une grande partie de la population somalienne vit quotidiennement avec la malnutrition, la maladie et la souffrance. Elle a peu de chance de trouver des soins de qualité quand elle en a besoin. Nous nous sommes battus pour apporter ces soins dans quasiment tout le pays, au prix de nombreux compromis. Nous avons dû par exemple engager des gardes armés pour protéger nos structures de santé et notre personnel, un procédé auquel nous n'avons recours nulle part ailleurs.

Malgré cette mesure exceptionnelle, nous avons subi plusieurs attaques, dont des enlèvements et l'assassinat de 16 de nos membres. Il y a eu aussi quantité de menaces, de vols et d'intimidations en tout genre.

Soyons clairs. L'expression « entités en Somalie » ne renvoie pas seulement aux Shebab, bien qu'ils aient pouvoir et autorité dans la plupart des