



**MASAF  
INSTITUTE**  
*for Strategic Studies*

**Assessment Report:**

# **THE ROLE OF THE NOOR FOUNDATION SOMALIA IN ADVANCING PUNTLAND EDUCATION**



**July, 2024**

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# INTRODUCTION:

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This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the Noor Foundation Somalia's "the Foundation" role in advancing education, fostering community resilience, and promoting peacebuilding in Puntland. The primary objective is to thoroughly review the Foundation's historical and current contributions, reassess its significant achievements, and examine its impact in advancing towards achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The report identifies the challenges it has faced, document the progress it has stimulated within the community, and provide strategic recommendations. These insights will contribute to the strategic realignment of the Foundation's initiatives, ensuring enhanced effectiveness and sustainability in its future endeavors.

The preparation of this report extended over a three-month period, from April 1 to June 30, 2024. It involved a team of researchers from Masaf Institute for Strategic Studies, who conducted field visits to the operational areas of the Foundation including Dharjaale, Timirshe, and Xiriir in Iskushuban District; Canjeel in Ballidhidin District; and Gurur in Qandala District, Bari Region. The field visits have been conducted in May 2024. Structured interviews have been administered with 177 stakeholders, including students, educators, parents, traditional elders, and school administrators to gather diverse perspectives on the Foundation's impact and operations. Furthermore, individual and group interviews have been conducted with three of the founders, who are based in the United Kingdom, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, to gain insights into the Foundation's strategic vision and challenges from its leadership.







*Photos depicting the visit by researchers from the Masaf Institute to various areas served by the Noor Foundation Somalia from May 1<sup>st</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.*

Finally, the report delivers a comprehensive analysis of the Foundation's activities, detailing a strategic framework for its leadership. It aims to make a significant contribution by documenting the Foundation's historical milestones and achievements, thereby guiding the strategic direction of its future long-term initiatives. Through this detailed assessment, the report seeks to ensure the preservation of the Foundation's legacy while providing actionable insights for its continued growth and impact.



# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NOOR FOUNDATION SOMALIA

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Following the collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991, the country faced severe social and economic upheavals. During this tumultuous period, literacy rates dropped from 70% in 1980 to a mere 24% by 1990, reflecting a stark educational decline.<sup>1</sup> The number of operational schools drastically decreased, leading to a notable 32% drop in student enrollment.<sup>2</sup>

Education in Puntland, during this period, was predominantly managed and controlled by local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Consequently, the education system became heavily reliant on foreign aid. Interestingly, starting in the 2000s, a notable shift occurred as community-based educational initiatives began to emerge. This transition marked a significant movement towards more localized and sustainable educational efforts, reflecting a growing determination within the community to take ownership of their educational future.

In 2004, the educational landscape in Puntland was markedly underdeveloped, with only 54,170 students enrolled across primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. This enrollment figure was significantly below expectations, especially compared to the 71,573 students enrolled in Somaliland during the same period.<sup>3</sup> The majority of educational funding in Puntland, at that time, was sourced from UNICEF and other international NGOs.<sup>4</sup>

However, during this period, the emergence of privately owned schools in Puntland signaled a shift. These institutions primarily operated within major urban centers, leaving rural areas underserved. Furthermore, the educational quality provided by these schools frequently failed to meet internationally recognized standards, as their primary focus was on offering immediate, albeit temporary, educational relief rather than establishing sustainable long-term solutions.

Recognizing the critical challenges faced by education in Puntland, intellectuals, community leaders, business community and diaspora initiated the Noor Foundation Somalia, a decisive, creative, and self-reliant endeavor. This initiative was conceived to address the severe educational deficiencies in Puntland, which posed a substantial threat to the future of the children, women and youth in the region. The Noor Foundation's mission has been stressed to eradicate illiteracy, expand educational opportunities to remote areas, and protect children from the perils of civil conflict, piracy, and other threats that has been considered eminent.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the foundation has emerged as a beacon of hope, striving to transform the educational landscape of Puntland.

Established on January 16, 2009, the Noor Foundation Somalia emerged from the unwavering dedication of intellectuals and philanthropists committed to enacting effective measures for community advancement. This pioneering initiative is designed to furnish educational opportunities to countless children residing in the rural and peripheral urban areas of Qandala, Iskushuban and Ballididin districts in Bari Region of Puntland, and Boocame district of SSC-Khatumo, Somalia. It is purposefully focused on eradicating illiteracy and fostering high-caliber education.<sup>6</sup>

The genesis of the Noor Foundation can be attributed to the concerted efforts of the local populace, led by an array of scholars, religious leaders, entrepreneurs, civil society members, women's organizations, and youth groups. Additionally, the diaspora community of the region has significantly played a leading role in the establishment and operationalization of the foundation by offering strategic direction and financial backing.



Initially, the Noor Foundation operated as an informal non-governmental organization, bolstered by support from diverse community sectors. The foundation's current and prospective initiatives are predicated on principles of transparent community self-reliance.”<sup>7</sup>

The primary mission of the foundation is to organize and raise community awareness about the importance of education, using a community investment model. Additionally, the foundation works on advancing community-based education by directly managing funds collected from the community. Most of the people served by the foundation view it as engaged in exploring and creating modern methods to lay the foundation for high-quality education.

The foundation has been visioned to fighting illiteracy and creating educational opportunities for school age kids in remote rural areas and towns, enabling them to compete with their peers within Puntland and Somalia in general. The strategic goal of establishing the foundation is contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>8</sup>, which are considered fundamental for global peace and prosperity.

The endeavors of Noor Foundation Somalia extend well beyond the realm of educational development, encompassing a wide array of initiatives such as community awareness programs, the promotion of self-reliance, poverty alleviation, and the dissemination of kindle of knowledge throughout Puntland. Dedicated to these noble objectives, the foundation has committed itself to the establishment and management of schools across Puntland.



Thus, Ali Fahiye Geeddi, the first school to work under the helmet of the foundation has commenced its operations in Qandala in 2009. Since its inception, the foundation has concentrated on nurturing and educating local communities, with a particular emphasis on primary and intermediate education during its initial years.

However, the foundation administers nine (9) schools, which include primary, intermediate, and high schools. As illustrated in Table (1), several of these institutions also provide kindergarten education and Quranic studies.

**Table 1:**

### Schools administered by Noor Foundaiton Somalia

#	School Name	Established	Location	Level
1.	Ali Fahiye Geddi	2009	Qandala	High
2.	Haji Abdullahi	2011	Ballidhidin	High
3.	Dawaarig	2013	Xariiro, Iskushuban	High
4.	Said Abdullahi Salah Deer	2020	Dharjaale, Iskushuban	Intermediate
5.	Canjeel	2015	Canjeel, Ballidhidin	High
6.	Haji Mohamed Muse	2021	Gurur, Qandala	High
7.	Sheikh Nur Ali Olow	2012	Timirshe, Iskushuban	High
8.	Tuurmasaale	2023	Tuurmasaale, Ballidhidin	Intermediate
9.	Dan	2024	Dan, Boocame	Intermediate

As elaborated in the table, the foundation currently administers six high schools and three schools at the level of intermediary, underscoring its strong commitment to ensuring that students achieve the educational levels they deserve and progress towards higher education.



While the foundation's operations are primarily funded through a community self-reliance model, a nominal fee is collected from parents who are considered financially convenient. This practice is aimed at ensuring that the schools are able to cover necessary expenses and carry out essential educational activities in the most efficient manner. However, based on its strategic goals, the foundation has undertaken significant role in this regard by assuming most of the financial burden in its responsibilities.

To facilitate the payment of school fees, the foundation has implemented flexible payment systems, easing the financial load on parents and students. As Abdulqadir Ahmed Tuube, a co-founder of the foundation, articulated:



To emphasize the importance of education to the community, we engineered a a solution for students struggling with payments, and suggested that families could bring their herds to cover the fees at the end of each school year”<sup>9</sup>

In Bari region where the foundation operates, social and economic conditions were significantly low at the time. The establishment of the foundation has been challenged by self-interested groups who used to previously benefit from the ongoing inter-clan tensions, and the community's reliance on NGO-funded schools.

For example, in Qandala in 2009, the foundation faced substantial challenges, which sometimes required inventing informal approached to deal with. Describing the establishment of Ali Faahiye Geeddi School, Mr. Isse Haji recalled how their initiative has been challenged:



After deciding to operationalize the first school, we were compelled to hire individuals who weren't even part of our organization to ensure the school functional. Today, awareness has improved, and no one dares to oppose our educational initiatives because the community has witnessed the positive outcomes of our efforts.”<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, the Foundation played a crucial role in bolstering the economic infrastructure in the areas it operates. Through the establishment of a robust job market, the foundation has empowered numerous graduates from its schools to embark on entrepreneurial endeavors that make significant contributions to the local economy. For Instance, Mariya Abdullahi, an alumni of Noor Foundation schools, expressed how she contribute to the local economy:



”I had the privilege of being one of the first two female graduates from Haji Abdullahi School in Ballidhidin back in 2018. After accomplishing and I am now a successful business women in Ballidhidin”<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 2:**

**Data on a Selection of Esteemed Individuals After Whom  
Schools of the Noor Foundation Somalia Are Named:**

#	SCHOOL NAME	NAMED AFTER THE LEADER
1.	ALI FAHIYE GEDDI	<b>ALI FAHIYE GEDDI ROBLE - CALANGUBE (1850-1956)</b> Calangube, was one of the highest-ranking officers of the Daraawiish movement in the Bari region who challenged the Italians in Qandala with unwavering and dedicated colonial resistance.
2.	HAJI ABDULLAHI	<b>BEELDAAJE HAJI ABDULLAHI BEELDAAJE MOHAMED BEELDAAJE ISMAIL (1910-2004)</b> Was a traditional leader remembered for his advocacy for Somali unity and adherence to Islamic principles. He served as a member of SYL Committees (1941-1949), and later as member of parliament (1960–1969). He played a crucial role in establishing Puntland in 1998.
3.	DAWAARIG	<b>HAJI MOHAMED ISMAIL DAWAARIG (1910-2009)</b> Was a scholar, traditional leader, distinguished elder, and a social leader, whose name and reputation were deeply embedded within the broader Somali community, particularly among the people of Puntland. He played a significant role in the struggle for independence and served as the SYL representative for the Iskushuban district. He was renowned for his eloquence, wisdom, and peacemaking competences.
4.	SAID ABDULLAHI SALAH DEER	<b>SAID ABDULLAHI SALAH DEER</b> Was a renowned businessman characterized who significantly contribute to the wellbeing of the society, including but not limited to, pioneering water supply projects in Bosaso and Qandala. He also played a critical role in Puntland establishment in 1998. He was a paragon of patriotism, public service, volunteerism, and courage.

5.

**HAJI MOHAMED MUSE**

**HAJI MOHAMED MUSE SAMATAR MOHAMUD (1913-2010)**

Was an esteemed elder in and around Qandala district. He was among the founders of Gurur district in the Qandala district. He is remembered for his role in the excavation of water wells, which greatly benefited the local communities. One notable example is the Taajane well, for which the community remains profoundly grateful until now.

6.

**SHEIKH NUR ALI OLOW**

**SHEIKH NURUDDIN ALI OLOW (1915-1995)**

Was a distinguished Islamic scholar, belonging to the first generation of the Islamic Awakening in Somalia. He acquired Islamic knowledge in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. He is the founder the Islamic Movement in Somalia, and played a pivotal role in propagating Islamic teachings through various means, but finally jailed and exiled by the military regime.



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# ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NOOR FOUNDATION

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The establishment of the Noor Foundation coincided with a period during which most schools in Puntland have been beneficiaries of a student nutrition program funded by the Puntland Ministry of Education and the World Food Programme (WFP). This program was designed to provide food support and educational materials to schools, thereby aiming to increase the enrollment rates of school-aged children.<sup>12</sup>

The Foundation has significantly revitalized the diminishing hope for education and community self-reliance in these vicinities. Its commencement has catalyzed a notable increase in the engagement of non-governmental organizations and community groups in community self-reliant initiatives, supported financially by the diaspora. These organizations are now actively involved in key sectors such as education, healthcare, reconstruction, and overall development initiatives in the region.

The impact of the foundation extends to enhancing community awareness, promoting environmental stability, and fostering economic self-reliance and conflict resolution. The foundation's contributions in these areas have been substantial and widely recognized. The local populace acknowledges the profound benefits they have reaped from Noor Foundation's presence, highlighting its pivotal role in driving development and resilience within the community.



I wholeheartedly commend the Foundation for their outstanding contributions to our educational development. Their commitment to promoting education has significantly transformed our village.<sup>13</sup>

Despite challenges, the Foundation is now widely recognized for its significant achievements and development across various sectors. The most critical areas where the foundation has made substantial contributions include education, community self-reliance, and peacebuilding.



## 1. EDUCATION

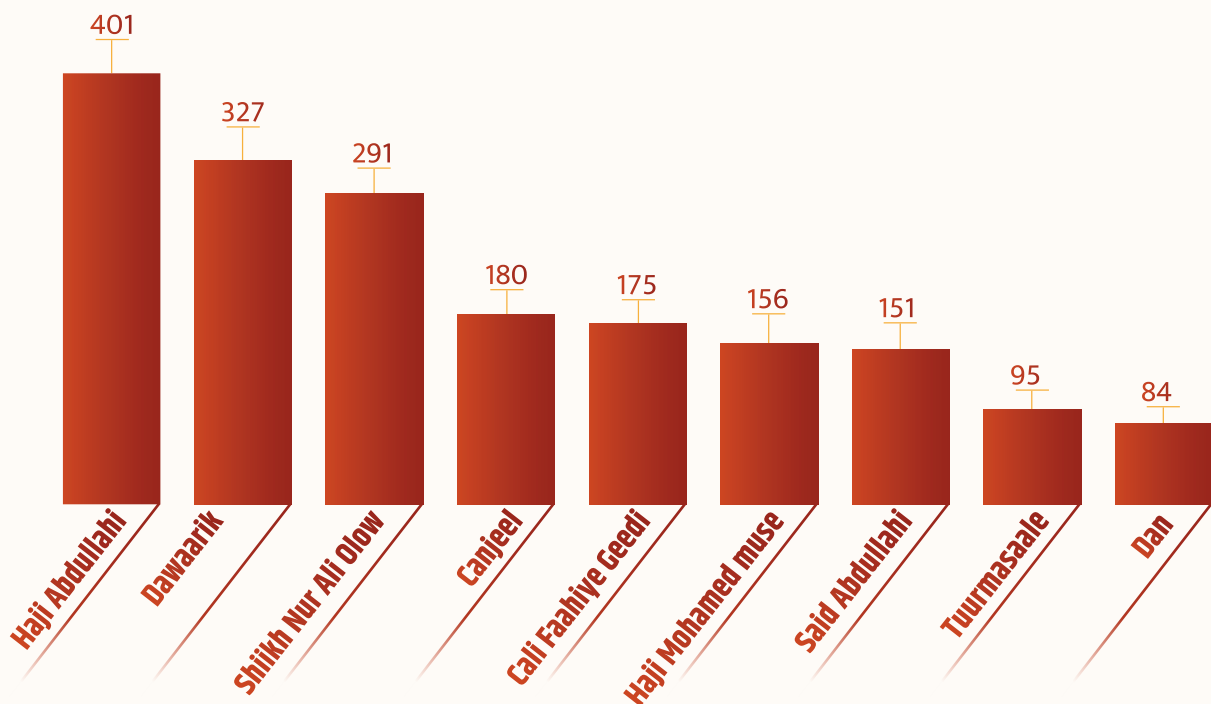
Noor Foundation Somalia's focus has been primarily on education. Since establishing its first school in Qandala in 2009, there has been a consistent effort to provide education to children and improve educational facilities in Bari region. After fifteen years, the community now possess solid trust on the foundation's educational initiatives and offer support to its endeavors.

In addition, the foundation brought unprecedented educational opportunities to the communities and areas that previously lacked high schools. For example, Qandala now has its first-ever high school, whereas, before the civil war, education only went up to intermediate school.

Currently, Noor Foundation supports 1,860 students across nine schools, encompassing primary, intermediate, and high schools. Chart 1 below details the schools supported by the foundation and the respective number of students enrolled.

Chart 1:

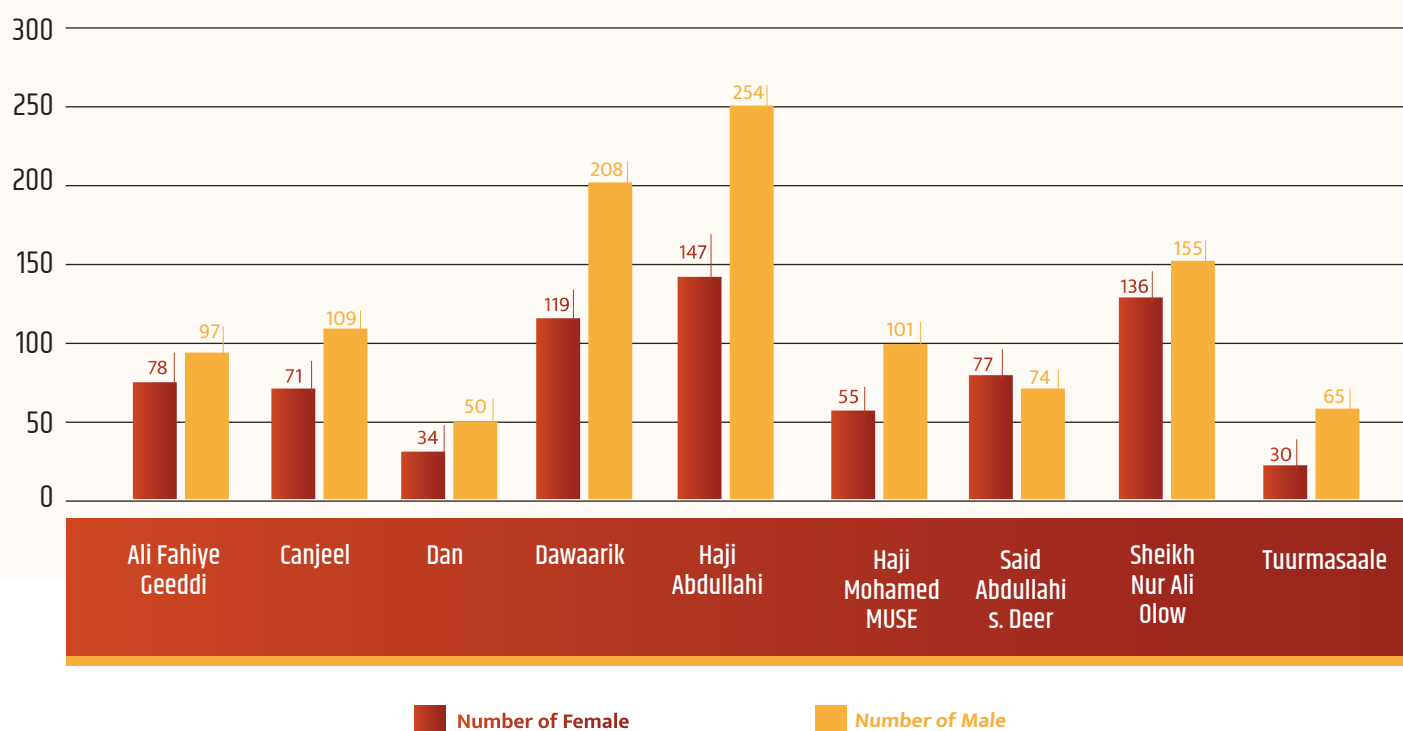
**Number of students at Nuur Foundation Schools (Total number 1,860).**



In Somalia, empirical evidence spanning several years have consistently revealed a disparity in education between boys and girls. For instance, in 2022, the estimated ratio of girls' access to education in Somalia was 0.84,<sup>14</sup> indicating that the likelihood of a girl being enrolled in school is 16% lower than that of a boy facing the same circumstances, thus, showing a significant gender disparity in the schools.

Based on data from the Noor Foundation Somalia schools, there are 747 female students currently enrolled, representing 40.2% of the total number of student. This figure highlights the significance placed on girls' education within the communities served by the Noor Foundation Somalia. Chart 2 presents an illustration of the girls to boys ratio at the schools run by the foundation. The boys-to-girls ratio of Noor Foundation Somalia schools stands at 0.67, which means that boys are more likely than girls to enroll in Noor Foundation Somalia schools, while chances of girls of the same circumstances are considered lower.

In line with these facts, it is worth noting that this proportion stands at a level of attention that has positively made the public awareness of girls' education, but, it is certain that there is a need for specific programs that implements approaches that can promote girls enrollment in schools. Based on this it is imperative to create special support programs for girls to increase the number of girls in Noor Foundation Somalia schools, in order to at least reach the estimated total boy-to-girl ratio in Somalia of 0.84.



**Chart 2:**

## Number of female students in Noor Foundation schools

Prior to the establishment of the Noor Foundation, teacher recruitment has been characterized by bias, predominantly influenced by clan affiliations, which failed to advance the overarching educational interests and quality requirements. There was a notable absence of proper oversight and accountability mechanisms to ensure the quality of education for students and merit-based recruitment procedures for teachers and administrators. The inception of the foundation marked a pivotal shift, significantly elevating the awareness and prioritization of educational quality, particularly concerning the future prospects of students in its schools.



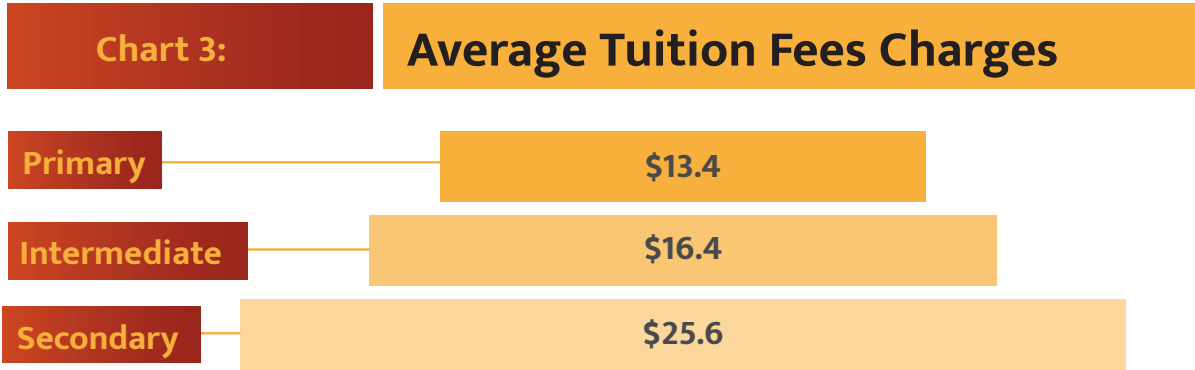
“We have realized prioritizing four foundational pillars that underpin success of our initiatives: identifying ideal learning environment, the recruitment of qualified educators, excellent curriculum, and the transparent financial management.”<sup>15</sup>

The educational standards at Noor Foundation schools stands at exceptionally commendable level, as demonstrated by the impressive rankings in quality assessments of schools in Puntland. In 2017-2018 school year, Haji Abdullahi High School in Ballidhidin secured the top position among the ten most quality schools in Puntland.<sup>16</sup> Haji Abdullahi High school continued to excel, ranking ninth among the top ten schools in Puntland in the 2019-2020 school year. These achievements clearly illustrate the Noor Foundation's crucial role in maintaining relevant quality standards within its network of schools.

Noor Foundation runs a total of nine schools, with a staff of 72 dedicated and professional teachers. Globally, the standard teacher-student ratio is 1:23, meaning that each teacher educates a maximum of 23 students per class.<sup>17</sup> However, many regions in the world, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, do not meet this ratio. For instance, the average teacher-student ratio in Sub-Saharan African countries is estimated to be 1:42.<sup>18</sup>

In comparison, the average teacher-student ratio in primary schools across Somalia is 1:36, which is relatively favorable compared to the ratios observed in other Sub-Saharan African countries. However, Noor Foundation schools have an even more impressive average teacher-student ratio of 1:25.<sup>19</sup> This suggests potentially higher educational quality and improved student performance, contributing to the high rankings of Noor Foundation schools in Puntland's educational quality assessments.

In Somalia, private schools provide 90% of the education, with only 10% of schools being publicly funded by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) or federal member states (FMSs).<sup>20</sup> Consequently, A recent study reveled that Somali parents bear the cost of their children's education. For example, in 2017, parents in Somalia collectively spent nearly \$24 million on education, whereas public schools received only \$3.7 million in funding.<sup>21</sup>



As highlighted in the introduction section of this report, Noor Foundation schools charge tuition fees that are generally below the average of the fees charged by schools in the same localities. Chart 3 illustrates the average tuition fees for primary, intermediate, and high schools under the Foundation's administration.<sup>22</sup>

One of the notable achievements of the foundation is that several of its schools have achieved financial self-sufficiency, which enabled to cover all their operational expenditures. This milestone signifies a heightened public awareness of the importance of investing in education and the schools' capability to sustain themselves.

Furthermore, the foundation has significantly influenced students' willingness to remain in their local districts and localities. For instance, intermediate school students prefer to attend high school within their local areas, and high school graduates showed a strong interest in attending local universities.<sup>23</sup>

Another remarkable achievement of the Foundation is its self-sufficiency in terms of teaching staff. A significant number of the teachers at Noor Foundation schools are its same alumni who pursued further education and have returned to contribute their knowledge to their communities. Notably, three of the Foundation's schools are currently administered by graduates of Noor Foundation schools. Additionally, other graduates have successfully provided educational services to the community, including establishing kindergarten centers, primary schools, and various businesses.

## 2. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE:

Throughout its existence, Noor Foundation Somalia has had a profound impact on public awareness in the communities it serves, with a specific focus on fostering self-reliance. Recent studies revealed a significant increase in awareness among the people of Puntland for the public good, leading to strong support and active participation in educational institutions and initiatives.<sup>24</sup>

The economic contributions of the foundation are extensive and diverse. Many businesses in these areas have been established by the foundation's students and/or alumni. Prior to the Foundation's establishment, such entrepreneurial ventures were almost unimaginable due to the low levels of education and awareness at that time. The Foundation's transformative effect on the local economy shows its effective strategies in empowering communities through education.

The impact of the Foundation's alumni extends beyond education and entrepreneurship, reaching various social and public service sectors. For example, Abdullahi Aweye, a distinguished alumnus, currently serves as the Chairman of Education in Ballidhidin district. Additionally, nearly ten (10) students and graduates from Noor Foundation schools secured positions in local councils during the Puntland elections on May 25, 2023. These engagements highlight the Foundation's substantial role in developing leaders who can contribute to public service.

Furthermore, Noor Foundation Somalia has played a crucial role in establishing social and community development organizations. One notable example is the Midnimo Voluntary Organization, which is a sister institution with Noor Foundation that has common philosophy and intention to contribute to the greater good.<sup>25</sup> It has successfully undertaken various development projects, such as drilling wells, constructing and repairing critical infrastructure, and developing essential roadways. These initiatives highlighted broader commitment to improving quality of life and promoting sustainable development in the communities.



The Foundation's educational impact is further demonstrated by the significant improvements in local academic standards. The implementation of a strong curriculum and the recruitment of qualified educators have led to remarkable achievements in student performance. For instance, this assessment study revealed that Noor Foundation schools consistently rank among the top in regional examinations, showcasing their dedication to academic excellence.

This assessment uncovered that the foundation's comprehensive approach encompasses education, economic empowerment, social engagement, and infrastructural development. This holistic strategy not only raises awareness but also fosters a culture of self-reliance and active community participation. The Noor Foundation's legacy in Puntland and beyond is defined by its ongoing commitment to creating sustainable, empowered, and self-reliant communities.

### 3. **PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION:**

Public service, collective responsibility are internationally recognized conceptions that compress the obligatory social duties of various organizations and institutions. Although these concepts have emerged since World War II, it gained significant prominence in late 2000s.<sup>26</sup>

The strategic objectives of the foundation demonstrate its steadfast commitment to peacebuilding, conflict resolution, community development, poverty alleviation, and creation of economic environment that best suits the community's endeavors.<sup>27</sup>

Anchored by a profound sense of ethical responsibility and strategic guidance, Noor Foundation has been instrumental in community peacebuilding and conflict resolution among clans, which directly impacted the wellbeing of areas it operates. Such interventions were crucial, as unresolved conflicts threaten the education of students and the socio-economic stability of the community. This approach underscores Noor Foundation's dedication to contributing to the achievement of SDGs, which are central to its strategic mission.

These efforts are considered strategic in terms of community development and peacebuilding; and are actually with the global agenda of sustainable development, emphasizing the Noor Foundation's role as a key player in the regional advancement and stability of the communities it serves. The institution's comprehensive approach not only addresses immediate needs but also lays the groundwork for long-term socio-economic development and resilience.



Isse Haji Farah Yusuf



Abdirisak Beeldaaje Abdullahi



Abdulkadir Ahmed Tube

Some founders of the Noor Foundation in Somalia were interviewed by researchers from the Masaf Institute via Zoom between May 1<sup>st</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.



# CHALLENGES

Education in Somalia faces significant challenges, including limited financial capacity of parents, substandard curriculum quality, shortage of qualified educators, and inadequate financial and physical infrastructure.<sup>28</sup> Recent studies support the fact that the absence of a unified educational policy, inconsistent curricula, and limited access to educational resources are major obstacles to education in Puntland, exacerbating educational disparities within the region.<sup>29</sup>

Despite the notable achievements and substantial contributions of Noor Foundation Somalia to education, social and economic development, it continues to suffer challenges that impede its activities. These obstacles impact both the internal operations and external aspects of the Foundation. Internally, the Foundation grapples with issues such as limited funding, logistical constraints, and recruitment and retention of qualified staff. Externally, it faces challenges including political instability, security concerns, and socio-economic barriers prevalent in the communities it serves.

The current challenges faced by the Foundation include:

## 1. Security Constraints:

The evolving security dynamics in various areas of Bari region had a profound impact on the educational initiatives run by Noor Foundation Somalia. These districts are particularly vulnerable to clan conflicts, tensions, and various acts of insecurity. This instability lead to the displacement of students, parents, and teachers, and a pervasive sense of insecurity that negatively affects local education systems. Consequently, this causes considerable decline in student enrollment and increased concerns among parents regarding the safety and well-being of their children.

Canjeel School serves as a clear example of these challenges. In 2020, the school had an enrollment of 254 students. However, by 2024, this number had decreased to 180, mainly due to unrest and significant security dynamics in the surrounding area. This decline in enrollment highlights the broader impact of security issues on the educational environment, underscoring the difficulties faced by the foundation in ensuring consistent and high-quality education in these vulnerable regions.

Additionally, the physical infrastructure of schools often sustains damage during conflicts, requiring additional resources for repairs and reconstruction, which strains the Foundation's financial and logistical capacities. Furthermore, the broader socio-economic impact of instability exacerbates the situation. Families affected by conflicts often face economic hardships, reducing their ability to afford educational expenses and leading to increased dropout rates. The socio-psychological effects of living in conflict zones also contribute to a less conducive learning environment, ultimately affecting student performance and overall educational outcomes.

Besides, the sense of insecurity extends to the broader community, influencing parental attitudes towards education. Concerns about the safety of their children prompt many parents to relocate, further decreasing the student population and disrupting the educational continuity of the community. This cyclical effect of conflict and displacement creates a challenging environment for the foundation to operate within, necessitating innovative and resilient strategies to sustain its educational programs.

## 2. Climate Factors:

Climate change is widely recognized as a significant global challenge that affects various sectors, including education. In Somalia, the impact of climate change on education is predominantly evident.<sup>30</sup> The effects of recurring floods and prolonged droughts have had a detrimental effect on the accessibility and quality of education for children, particularly in areas where Noor Foundation Somalia operates. These conditions discourage students from attending schools during rainy and high temperature seasons.

However, Somalia appears to be gearing up to prevent and tackle climate change challenges, and has put in place its own measures and initiatives to tackle climate change, and reduce the impact it may have on critical sectors such as education, health and public service delivery.<sup>31</sup>

The cyclical nature of droughts and floods in the region has led to displacement, economic decline, and damage to school infrastructures. Such adverse effects rendered educational facilities unfunctional. The lack of kindergarten, first, and second-grade classes at Haji Abdullahi School in Ballidhidin is considered an evidence of parents' concerns about enrolling kids at the appropriate age due to climate safety reasons.

In 2021, the Cyclone Gati storms in Bari and Sanaag regions had a significant impact on the local population,<sup>32</sup> resulting in a decline in student attendance due to the destruction of shelter and infrastructure. This incident highlighted the urgent need for climate-resilient infrastructure and adaptive educational strategies. Similarly, the spring rains of May 2024 had an devastating impact on the economic infrastructure and social life of the Qandala and Alula districts,<sup>33</sup> further disrupting educational activities and demonstrating the interconnectedness of climate change impacts across different sectors.

Thus, it is imperative for Noor Foundation Somalia to work towards creating an educational environment that can adapt to the changing climate conditions. This may include constructing flood-resistant school buildings, utilizing the existing early warning systems for natural disasters, and integrating climate education into school curricula to raise awareness among students and communities. By addressing the immediate and long-term impacts of climate change, Noor Foundation and similar organizations can play a crucial role in ensuring that education remains accessible and resilient despite the environmental challenges faced by the region.

### 3. Insufficient Resources:

Schools in Somalia face a decline in interest in teaching as a profession. Schools affiliated with Noor Foundation Somalia are not an exception here. Financial difficulties, and limited educational resources adds to the list of challenges in the Puntland. Recent studies indicated that teaching is no longer considered an attractive career choice within the community due to financial constraints and discipline issues.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, this may lead to a considerable shortage of qualified teaching professionals, particularly female teachers in regards t the current situation. Teaching profession is widely dominated by male educators in overall Somalia. Internally, all teachers in the foundation's schools are male.

Although some schools have achieved financial self-sufficiency, it is important to acknowledge that the foundation still encounters financial obstacles that require immediate and sustainable solutions. The data from this assessment have found that the schools are yet to achieve a complete overall self-sufficiency, as the fees collected from students do not fully cover the expenditure related to teachers, educational materials, and school activities.<sup>35</sup>

On the other hand, the shortage of the number of classrooms caused unfit conditions that has negatively impacted the quality of education. Many schools are being forced to operate in makeshift structures that do not have sufficient facilities or essential educational equipment. This problem is made worse by the lack of educational materials, such as books, laboratory equipment, and teaching aids. As a result, the educational process is greatly limited in its scope and effectiveness.

### 4. Use of Technology:

Since the 2000s, technology has played a pivotal role in advancing education in Somalia. Terms such as ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and edtech (educational technology) are prominently referenced in the National Communications Act (2012, 2017), National Education Act (2018), National Communications Policy (2019-2024), National Education Policy (2020), and National Education Plan (2022-2024). The Federal Government of Somalia, along with its international partners, has increasingly focused on providing opportunities for elementary, primary, and high schools to access technology and digital educational resources.<sup>36</sup>

The integration of computers and other technological skills is recognized as fundamental to the quality of education and the cognitive development of students.<sup>37</sup> However, researchers visiting Noor Foundation schools found that most lacked computer centers to facilitate students' learning and use of essential technological skills. As a result, students have had to seek computer literacy outside their schools.

Moreover, lack of laboratories, computer equipment, and resources related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education presents significant challenges for Noor Foundation schools. The lack of emphasis on STEM subjects within the curriculum further worsens the situation, contributing to a decline in students' critical thinking skills. This deficiency potentially lowers the overall quality of education, producing graduates who are ill-equipped for the modern job market and contemporary life skills.



## 5. Power and Energy:

Somalia currently lacks national electricity service provider, relying instead on private entities utilizing low-capacity fuel generators. Consequently, electricity costs are substantially higher compared to neighboring countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia.<sup>38</sup> Presently, only 45% of the Somali population has access to electricity, with the nation's power generation capacity at approximately 300MW. However, projections indicate that Somalia's energy demand will escalate to 4,600MW by 2037.<sup>39</sup>

Despite Somalia's significant potential for harnessing solar energy, attributed to its equatorial position, community adoption of solar power remains minimal. This underutilization is due to factors such as a lack of awareness, prohibitive initial setup costs, and inadequate foundational infrastructure to support solar energy initiatives.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, reliable access to energy is indispensable for the operation and advancement of educational institutions, as well as for the effective daily administration of schools. The advantages of energy accessibility for education are extensive, encompassing the creation of secure and conducive learning environments, the facilitation of technological resource utilization, and the operation of science laboratories and essential modern educational apparatus.

In the areas where Noor Foundation Somalia operates, there is a persistent demand for stable energy and electricity. For example, Timirshe community, which hosts a school serving nearly 300 students, suffers from a lack of electricity. Similarly, the Dawaarik school in Xiriiro frequently experiences power shortages, severely disrupting educational activities.<sup>41</sup>

The urgent necessity for a reliable power will significantly influence the strategic direction of the foundation. The current lack of reliable electricity infrastructure adversely impacts the quality of education, limits the integration and utilization of technology, and hinders the development of essential digital literacy skills among students. This underscores the critical need for addressing energy deficits to enhance educational outcomes and equip students with the necessary competencies for the modern world.



"Some of the schools managed by Noor Foundation Somalia, visited by researchers from the Masaf Institute between May 1<sup>st</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024."

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- 1.** Redesign Leadership Structure: The leadership structure of the Noor Foundation should be comprehensively reviewed and redesigned to streamline decision-making processes and effectively guide the Foundation's strategic direction. This will enhance organizational efficiency and responsiveness to emerging challenges and opportunities.
- 2.** Establish Computer and Science Laboratories: High schools within the Foundation should establish computer labs and science laboratories. This will enhance students' education by adapting to modern educational methods and equipping them with essential technological and scientific skills.
- 3.** Mandatory Basic Computer Education: Basic computer education should be mandatory for all high school students. This initiative will ensure that students acquire fundamental digital literacy skills necessary for their academic and professional futures.
- 4.** Strengthen Primary and Nursery Education: A specialized system should be developed to strengthen primary and nursery education. This could include offering free lower-level classes to increase accessibility and early educational enrollment.
- 5.** Acquire Competitive Schools: The foundation should strive to incorporate other existing schools in the surrounding areas under its administration. This acquiring strategy will reduce unproductive competition and promote a unified approach to educational excellence.
- 6.** Encourage Girls Education: A dedicated system should be established to encourage girls' education, such as reducing fees by 25% and conducting community awareness programs and forums. Such measures will promote gender equality in education and improve girls' enrollment and retention rates.
- 7.** Enhance Teachers' Professional Capacity: career development programs should be implemented for schoolteachers, including seminars in locations outside their immediate work areas, such as Bosaso and Garowe. These programs will enhance teachers' skills and broaden their professional perspectives.
- 8.** Establish Adult Education Opportunities: Noor Foundation Somalia should create educational opportunities for adults to enhance community awareness and local livelihood skills. This initiative will contribute to the overall socio-economic development of the communities served by the Foundation.

9. **Introduce Job Rotation System:** A job rotation system should be established to rotate teachers among different schools within the Foundation. This will promote social interaction, increase teachers' skills and expertise, and foster a collaborative educational environment.
10. **Familiarize Mandatory Subject Specialization for Teachers:** To maintain high professional standards, it should be mandatory for teachers to have a specialization in the subjects they teach. This requirement will ensure that students receive high-quality instruction from knowledgeable educators.
11. **Improve School Transportation Solutions:** Provide special school bus vehicles for schools to transport students from distant locations, particularly during the rainy season, ensuring uninterrupted access to education. A nominal fee could be charged if deemed necessary.
12. **Renovate Schools:** Undertake comprehensive renovation of schools to ensure that each institution has at least eight classrooms, one computer lab and two administrative offices, providing a conducive learning and working environment.
13. **Improve Energy Efficiency:** Equip each school with a unique solar energy system that meets the school's needs, ensuring a reliable and sustainable electricity supply. Prior to that, schools should allocate sufficient financial resources to purchase necessary power needs from private energy service providers.
14. **Launch Technical and Vocational Education Training:** Vocational institutes should be established in areas where the Noor Foundation operates to teach high school graduates essential skills that reflect local needs, such as Animal Husbandry, Electricity, and Medical Nursery. These institutes shall prepare students for the job market and support local economic development.
15. **Implement Gender Policy for the Foundation:** A comprehensive gender policy should be established to encourage the education of girls and recruitment of female educators. This could include ensuring that at least one female teacher is present in each school. Such a policy will promote girls' education and potentially attract additional support for the Foundation's initiatives.
16. **Establish University:** Noor Foundation should consider the long-term goal of establishing a university in Qandala to further expand educational opportunities for the community.

## **FINANCE :**

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17. **Tailor Fee Structures:** The fees collected from students should be customized to address the specific needs of each community, ensuring affordability and accessibility while meeting local school requirements.
18. **Develop Annual Financial Plans:** the Foundation should set an annual financial plan aimed at promptly addressing school expenditures. Each school should adopt a customized pre-agreed school budget for its operations which aligns with the overall strategic goals of the Foundation.

- 19.** Introduce Centralized Financial Management System: The Foundation should implement a centralized financial system to manage all school funds, while simultaneously addressing the individual financial needs of each school to ensure equitable resource distribution.
- 20.** Establish School Funds: Each school should establish a transparent financial contribution fund, offering an opportunity for the community members to donate specifically towards the school's development and enhancement.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND PEACEBUILDING:**

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- 21.** Develop New Partnerships: Agreements should be established to foster partnerships with international organizations and educational ministries at both state and federal levels. It is crucial to appoint a qualified consultant with expertise in financial management and partnership development to facilitate these collaborations.
- 22.** Launch Income-Generating Initiatives: The Foundation should launch tailored techniques and programs outside of the traditional school environment to serve as sources of income. It is advised to begin with service-based endeavors that require minimal investment, thereby ensuring sustainable revenue streams without significant upfront costs.
- 23.** Enhance Involvement in Conflict Resolution: Implement long term conflict resolution mechanisms to address the presence of armed clan militias in the area, safeguarding students, teachers, and educational resources.
- 24.** Hire Conflict Prevention Experts: Appoint a dedicated conflict resolution expert knowledgeable about local tribal dynamics to monitor and prevent conflicts before it happen; and will implement resolution techniques if a conflict arises.
- 25.** Strengthen Community Relations: Enhance the relationship between traditional elders and administrators by establishing a robust information-sharing system and fostering genuine connections.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION :**

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- 26.** Enhance Strategic Communication: Organize a meeting to showcase the Foundation's achievements over the past 15 years in locations with substantial expatriate support (e.g., UK, Oman, or UAE).
- 27.** Establish Social Media Presence: Launch targeted social media and digital campaigns to raise awareness about the Foundation's work and its impact on education and community development. Use platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to share success stories, updates, and educational content.



# CONCLUSION:

This report presents a comprehensive reassessment of the activities and challenges faced by the Noor Foundation. The analysis is based on data collection conducted by Masaf Institute within the foundation's operational areas.

Data collection included structured interviews with students, teachers, and administrators in the foundation's schools, as well as informant interviews from community elders, business leaders, and the founders of Noor Foundation Somalia. The findings of this report will enable a strategic realignment of the foundation's short- and long-term objectives, promoting effective solutions and practical approaches to modernize its leadership and operations.

The report highlights the foundation's achievements in education, community resilience, and peacebuilding. Currently, the foundation runs nine schools, comprising both primary and secondary levels, with a total student population of 1,860, including 747 girls and 1,113 boys. These schools employ 72 teachers, supported by an additional 10 staff members responsible for administrative, security, and other specialized tasks. This demonstrates the significant positive impact the foundation has had on the communities it serves.

However, the foundation faces several challenges that directly affect its operations. These challenges arise from both internal factors and external working and environmental conditions. Key challenges include security concerns, climate related challenges, technological limitations, resource constraints, and energy shortages.

The report provides strategic recommendations that must be promptly implemented to achieve the sustainable development goals that the foundation tends to accomplish. These recommendations specifically address the core activities and strategic plans of the foundation, guiding its management in developing operational and financial plans crucial for achieving its objectives.

Finally, it is crucial to highlight that the local community has an urgent need for additional services aimed at improving educational quality, adapting to digital skills, and enhancing self-reliance awareness. Noor Foundation seems now well positioned to play a prominent role in meeting the diverse needs with a specific focus on education and advancing the global Su sustainable development goals.



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