



**THE ROLE OF URBAN GREEN SPACES IN PROMOTING PEACE AND
RECONCILIATION: THE CASE OF MOGADISHU**

Muse Abdirahman AHMED

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(M. Sc. Thesis)

Muse Abdirahman AHMED

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the potential of urban green spaces in fostering peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu the capital of Somalia, a city deeply impacted by long standing conflict and political instability. It aims to reveal how urban green spaces like parks and community centres can play a role in enhancing social cohesion and promoting peacebuilding in post-conflict environments. By utilising qualitative and quantitative approaches such as comprehensive literature review, surveys of residents, and interviews with various stakeholders including community leaders, government officials, urban planners, and the youth, the study assesses the effectiveness of these spaces in facilitating social interactions, dialogue and community solidarity within Mogadishu. It also examines the challenges involved in establishing and maintaining these spaces. The results emphasise the positive effects of urban green spaces on mental well-being, community unity and economic prospects while acknowledging obstacles to their successful implementation. This study contributes to an understanding of urban green spaces as essential components in the peacebuilding process, providing valuable insights for policy formulation and urban development initiatives in conflict affected areas. It underscores the importance of integrating green spaces into urban planning strategies to foster lasting peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu.

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BARIŞ VE UZLAŞMAYI TEŞVİK ETMEDE KENTSEL YEŞİL ALANLARIN ROLÜ:

MOGADIŞU ÖRNEĞİ

(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)

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ÖZET

1. Giriş

Somali'nin başkenti Mogadişu, onlarca yıldır çatışma, siyasi istikrarsızlık ve şiddetin ortasında yer almaktadır. 1991 yılında Cumhurbaşkanı Siad Barre'nin devrilmesi, Merkezi Hükümetin çöküşü ile güç ve kontrol için savaştan klan temelli milislerin ortaya çıkmasına yol açmış ve Mogadişu'da huzursuzluk başlamıştır. Şehir, hizip savaşlarının ve savaş ağalığının merkez üssü haline gelmiş ve bu da yaygın yıkım, yerinden edilme ve can kayıplarıyla sonuçlanmıştır (Elmi, 2010).

Kentsel yeşil alanlar (KYA), parklar, bahçeler ve rekreasyon alanları dahil olmak üzere bir şehir içinde bitki örtüsüne ayrılmış alanlar olarak tanımlanmaktadır. KYA, rekreasyon, dinlenme ve sosyal etkileşim alanları sağlayarak şehirlerde yaşam kalitesini artırmada çok önemli bir rol oynamaktadır (Taylor ve Hochuli, 2017; Braubach ve diğerleri, 2017). Somali'nin başkenti Mogadişu gibi çatışmalardan etkilenen şehirlerde, KYA'nın rolü daha da önemli olabilmektedir. Bu alanlar, sakinler arasında sosyal uyumu, diyalogu ve topluluk duygusunu teşvik ederek barış inşası ve uzlaşma için mekanlar olarak hizmet edebilmektedir.

Problemin tanımı

Şiddet ve çatışma tarihi ile karakterize edilen Mogadişu şehri, çatışma sonrası toparlanma ve uzlaşma sürecinden geçmektedir (Elmi, 2010). Bu süreçte, KYA'nın barış ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmedeki rolü, literatürde yer alan ancak nispeten az çalışılan bir konu olarak önem kazanmaktadır. KYA'nın sosyal uyum ve diyalog için katalizör olma potansiyeli kabul

edilmekle birlikte, Mogadişu'daki etkinlikleri, zorlukları ve fırsatları hakkında kapsamlı bir anlayışa ihtiyaç vardır.

Araştırmanın amacı

Bu çalışma, Mogadişu'daki KYA'ın barış inşası çabalarını ve uzlaşmayı kolaylaştırmadaki rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Alt amaçlar şu şekilde ifade edilebilmektedir:

- 1- Mogadişu'nun KYA'ın barışı teşvik etmedeki etkinliğini incelemek.
- 2- Mogadişu'daki KYA'ın uzlaşmayı kolaylaştırmadaki faydasını değerlendirmek.
- 3- Mogadişu'da KYA'ın yaratılması ve yönetiminde karşılaşılan zorlukları ve engelleri anlamak.

Barışın teşviki ve uzlaşmanın kolaylaştırılması için parametreler:

Bir topluluk ve birlik duygusu yaratmak, sosyal etkileşimleri ve diyalogu teşvik etmek, rekreasyonel faaliyetler için fırsatlar sağlamak ve zihinsel refahı artırmak ve stresi azaltmak (barışın teşvikini incelemek için parametreler olarak) (Chiesure, 2004; Yıldırım ve diğerleri, 2020; Simpson ve diğerleri, 2023).

Diyalog için tarafsız ve kapsayıcı alanlar yaratmak, kültürel alışverişi ve anlayışı teşvik etmek ve ekonomik fırsatları ve toplumsal kalkınmayı teşvik etmek (uzlaşmanın kolaylaştırılma düzeyini anlamak için parametreler olarak) (Mercy Corps, 2011; Altpeter, 2016; Devine ve diğerleri, 2020).

Araştırmanın önemi

Çalışma, yeşil alanlar ve sosyal uyum arasındaki bağlantıya yön veren kavramsal çerçeveye yaptığı katkı nedeniyle önem taşımaktadır. Bu alandaki sınırlı literatür, yeşil alanların çatışma sonrası toplumlarda barış inşası çabalarına nasıl yardımcı olabileceğinin araştırılması gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır.

Ek olarak, çalışma, Mogadişu'daki toplulukların çatışma döneminden sonra karşılaştıkları zorlukları teorik yönlerle inerek anlamaya ve ele almaya odaklanmaktadır. Yeşil alanların

potansiyelini barış ve uzlaşma için bir katalizör olarak kabul etmektedir. Bu araştırma alanında toplanan ve analiz edilen veriler, sosyal uyumu teşvik etmek ve çatışma sonrası yeniden yapılanmaya yardımcı olmak için bir kaynak olarak hizmet edebilmektedir.

2. KYA ve Barış İnşası İlişkisi

Çatışma sonrası toplumlarda genellikle derin yaralar kalmaktadır. Yeniden inşa, altyapı ve güvenliğin acil ihtiyaçlarına odaklanır, ancak çok önemli bir unsur sıklıkla göz ardı edilmektedir: kamusal alanların barışı ve topluluk uyumunu teşvik etme gücü. Kamusal alan kavramı, parklar, şehir meydanları, sokaklar, sahiller ve toplum merkezleri gibi çeşitli kentsel ve kırsal alanları kapsamaktadır. Kamusal alanların tanımı, toplumun gelişen ihtiyaçlarını ve kentsel gelişim uygulamalarını karşılamak için zaman içinde değişmiştir. Kamusal mekanların önemli özellikleri arasında herkes için erişilebilir olması, kapsayıcılığı, işlevselliği ile sosyal etkileşimleri ve aktiviteleri teşvik etmesi yer almaktadır.

Kamusal alanlar, sadece boş zamanın geçirilmesinin ötesinde büyük faydalar sundukları için topluluklar için çok önemlidir. Sadece refahı artırmakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda güçlü bir topluluk kimliği duygusunu da besleyen rekreasyon, fiziksel egzersiz ve kültürel ifade için fırsatlar sunmaktadır. Bu alanlar, toplulukları birbirine bağlayan tüm temeller olan etkileşimi teşvik ederek, fikirleri paylaşarak ve bağlantılar kurarak çeşitli insan grupları için önemli buluşma noktaları olarak hareket etmektedir. Ancak, bu alanların kalitesi çok önemlidir. İhmal edilen veya kötü yönetilen alanlar, anti-sosyal davranışlara yol açabilir ve toplumun refahında bir düşüşe sebep olabilmektedir. Öte yandan, iyi planlanmış ve bakımı yapılmış kamusal alanlar, sakinleri, ziyaretçileri ve yatırımları çeken ve nihayetinde çevredeki bölgenin ekonomik, sosyal ve çevresel yönlerini şekillendiren canlı merkezler haline gelmektedir.

Çatışma sonrası ortamlarda, kamusal alanlar barış ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmek için etkili araçlar olarak hizmet edebilmektedir. Bu bağlamdaki avantajlarından biri, sosyal uyumu teşvik etme yetenekleridir. Yeşil parklar ve şehir meydanları gibi toplanma noktaları, çeşitli grupların etkileşime girmesine, birlikte etkinliklere katılmasına ve bağlantılar kurmasına olanak tanımaktadır. Bu paylaşılan etkileşim, geçmişteki bölünmelerin veya çatışmaların ötesine geçen bir aidiyet duygusunu ve kolektif bir kimliği beslemektedir. Bu alanlar, farklı

geçmişlere sahip bireyleri bir araya getirerek, çatışmaların ve bölünmelerin neden olduğu boşlukları kapatmaya yardımcı olmaktadır.

KYA, bir şehir içinde parklar, bahçeler ve rekreasyon alanları dahil olmak üzere bitki örtüsüne ayrılmış alanlar olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu alanlar, çevresel sürdürülebilirliği teşvik etmek, şehirlerin estetik çekiciliğini artırmak ve sakinlere fiziksel ve zihinsel rahatlama alanları sağlamak için çok önemlidir. Barış inşası bağlamında, KYA, sosyal uyumu ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmede çok yönlü bir rol oynayabilmektedir. Bu roller şu şekilde tanımlanabilir:

1. Sosyal Etkileşimi Teşvik Etmek: KYA, farklı geçmişlere sahip bireylerin etkileşimde bulunabileceği tarafsız ve kapsayıcı mekanlar sağlamaktadır. Bu alanlar, topluluk üyeleri arasında güven ve anlayış oluşturmak için gerekli olan gayri resmi sosyal etkileşimleri teşvik etmektedir. Mogadişu gibi sosyal bölünmelerin çatışmalarla daha da kötüleştiği bir şehirde, KYA diyalogu kolaylaştırarak, farklı gruplar arasındaki boşlukları kapatabilmektedir (Jennings ve Bamkole, 2019).
2. Topluluk Katılımını Teşvik Etmek: KYA'nın geliştirilmesi ve sürdürülmesi, topluluk üyelerini işbirlikçi projelere dahil ederek sahiplenme ve sorumluluk duygusunu teşvik edebilmektedir. Bu kolektif çaba, topluluk bağlarını güçlendirerek, birlik ve iş birliği duygusunu teşvik edebilmektedir.
3. Zihinsel Refahı Artırmak: Yeşil alanlara erişimin stresi, kaygıyı ve depresyonu azalttığı gösterilmiştir. Sakinlerin yüksek düzeyde travma ve ruh sağlığı sorunları yaşayabileceği çatışma sonrası ortamlarda, KYA zihinsel refahı ve dayanıklılığı destekleyen terapötik bir ortam sağlayabilmektedir (Van den Berg ve diğerleri, 2007).
4. Rekreasyon Olanakları Sağlamak: KYA, spor, yürüyüş ve piknik gibi rekreasyonel aktiviteler için alanlar sunmaktadır. Bu faaliyetler enerji için olumlu çıkışlar olarak hizmet ederek, olumsuz davranışlarda bulunma olasılığını azaltabilmektedir. Rekreasyonel faaliyetler ayrıca sosyalleşme ve topluluk oluşturma için fırsatlar sunmaktadır (Cerin ve diğerleri, 2008).

5. Ekonomik Kalkınmayı Teşvik Etmek: Bakımlı KYA, yerel ekonomiye katkıda bulunarak ziyaretçileri ve işletmeleri çekebilmektedir. Ayrıca, gıda satıcıları ve zanaatkarlar gibi küçük ölçekli girişimcilik için fırsatlar sağlayarak ekonomik istikrarı ve kalkınmayı daha da teşvik edebilmektedir (Gies, 2009).

3. Mogadişu'nun Tarihi, Çatışması ve Kentsel Yapısı

637.540 kilometrekarelik bir alana yayılan Somali Cumhuriyeti, 1960 yılında eski İngiliz Somaliland ve İtalyan Somali'nin birleşmesiyle kurulmuştur (Nelson, 1982). Sınırlarını Aden Körfezi, Hint Okyanusu, Etiyopya, Kenya ve Cibuti ile paylaşmaktadır (Mbugua, 2006). Askeri bir darbe Somali'yi 1969'da demokratik bir cumhuriyete dönüştürmüştür, ancak 1978'de Cumhurbaşkanı Mohamed Siyad Barre'nin Küba güçlerinin yardımıyla Etiyopya birliklerine karşı acımasız bir çatışma başlatmasıyla önemli aksiliklerle karşı karşıya kalmıştır (Zoppi, 2015).

Mogadişu'daki çatışmaya genel bakış

1991'de Siyaad Barre'nin askeri yönetiminin devrilmesinden sonra, Mogadişu çeşitli güvensizlik aşamalarıyla karşılaşmıştır. Geçici Ulusal Hükümet [Transitional National Government (TNG)], özellikle Villa Somali'yi (Başkanlık Sarayı) General Mohamed Farah Aideed'in milislerinden devralmakta başarısız olmuştur. İslami Mahkemeler Birliği [Islamic Courts Union (ICU)] yerel güvenliği sağlamış, savaş ağalarını marjinalleştirmiş ve şehir barikatlarında yaygın soygun ve şiddeti azaltmıştır. ICU, o sırada TNG'nin merkezi olan Baidoa'yı ele geçirmeye çalıştıktan sonra, Abdullahi Yusuf (TNG Başkanı) Etiyopya'nın müdahalesini istemiştir. Etiyopya askerleri ICU'yu mağlup etmiştir, onları Mogadişu da dahil olmak üzere kalelerinden uzaklaştırmış ve özellikle Bakara pazarı gibi bölgelerde sivil nüfusu terörize etmiştir (Bakonyi ve Chonka, 2023).

2012 yılında geçici bir hükümetten resmen transfer olan Somali Federal Hükümeti, 2013 yılında Cumhurbaşkanı Hassan Sheikh Mohamud yönetiminde barış inşası çabalarına odaklanan Yeni Anlaşma Anlaşması'nı benimsemiştir. Bununla birlikte, başkentteki Somali Federal Hükümeti ile gelişmekte olan bölgesel Federal Üye Devletler arasındaki gergin ilişkiler nedeniyle uygulama tökezlemiştir. Ayrıca, Başkan Farmaajo'nun 2017'den 2022'ye

kadar olan görev süresi, federal hükümet ile federal eyaletler arasındaki gerilimin artmasına neden olmuş ve bu da siyasi uzlaşmayı geciktirmiştir (Chonka ve diğerleri, 2023).

Yıllar içinde Mogadişu

Somali'nin güneydoğu kıyısında, Afrika Boynuzu'nda yer alan Mogadişu, Birleşmiş Milletler Nüfus Fonları'na göre 2014 yılında 1.650.227 nüfusa sahiptir, ancak eski Belediye Başkanı Hassan Mohamed Hussein Mungab, Mogadişu ve çevresini kapsayan Banadir Bölgesi için 3,6 milyonluk bir nüfus olduğunu iddia etmiştir (UN-Habitat, 2016). Mogadişu, Afgooye ve Balad'dan geçen iki önemli yolun Mogadişu'da birleştiği Orta ve Aşağı Shabelle bölgesine yakındır ve bir zamanlar tarım için çok önemli olan sulama planları, yetersiz bakım ve yatırımlar nedeniyle artık faaliyet dışı kalmıştır.

Afgooye ve Balad'ı Mogadişu'ya bağlayan yolların harap durumunda ortaya çıkan iç savaşlardan kaynaklanan zorluklar, şehirler arası ve şehir dışı ulaşımı ciddi şekilde engellemektedir (Yusuf ve diğerleri, 2022). Türk Hükümeti, yollar ve hastaneler de dahil olmak üzere önemli altyapı projeleri yürüterek şehrin yeniden inşasına yardımcı olmuştur. Dahası, Mogadişu'nun karmaşık anlatısı, her biri şehrin tarihi yolculuğunun canlı bir resmini çizen dört farklı sektörde ortaya çıkmıştır. Şehrin MS 900 civarında doğuşu olan Hamar Weyne, geleneksel bir Arap estetiği sergileyen yerel kaynaklı mercan bloklarından yapılmış yapıları sergilemektedir (Scikei, 2017).

Kentsel peyzaj, geniş araç sokakları, kavşaklar ve palmiye ağaçlarıyla çevrili kaldırımlarla İtalyan sömürge yönetimi ile karakterize edilen 1900 ve 1934 arasındaki döneme kadar uzanmaktadır. Mogadişu, 1930'ların sonunda kuzeye doğru ilk kentsel genişlemesini yaşarken anlatı daha da gelişmektedir. Burada, Sovyet tarzı blok binalar, çeşitli mimari kalıntılarla aynı alanı paylaşmaktadır (Puzo, 1972).

Mogadişu'nun güney kısımları uluslararası havaalanına ve modern derin su liman tesislerine ev sahipliği yapmaktadır, ancak tanınan sınırların ötesinde, genişleyen, planlanmamış bir genişlik ortaya çıkmaktadır. İtalyanlar 1920'lerde Hamar Weyne yakınlarında hükümet binaları ve bir katedral inşa etmiştir. Sömürge valisi, 1929'da şehrin ilk şehir planının hazırlanmasını emretmiştir. Anlatı, 1937'de ikinci bir şehir planının formülasyonuna ve

onaylanmasına tanık olarak gelişmektedir. İddialı proje, fahiş maliyetler ve özel yer vergisi baskısının olmaması nedeniyle erteleme ile karşı karşıya kalmıştır (Arecchi, 1984).

Mogadişu, bir başkent olma vaadini yerine getirmiş, ancak bir Avrupa şehir modelini Somali toplumsal dinamiklerine nakletmeye yönelik yanlış yönlendirilmiş bir girişim, şehrin gerçek potansiyelini boğmuştur. Bağımsızlıktan sonra, şehrin büyümesi, yerel yönetim tarafından yaygın geçici arazi tahsisini içermiş ve bu da kademeli konut bozulmasına yol açmıştır. Mogadişu'nun etrafında bir gecekondu mahallesi genişlemiş, başkenti kumul kuşağı boyunca sarmış ve kentsel alandaki boşlukları doldurmuştur (Unruh, 2002).

1962'de Birleşmiş Milletler (BM), Somali Hükümeti'nin 55 uygun fiyatlı apartman binası ve 215 kentleşmiş arsa inşa etmesine yardımcı olmuş, ancak nüfus artmaya devam etmiş ve tıkanıklık, yetersiz hizmetler ve kötü hijyen gibi kritik sorunlara yol açmıştır. Siad Barre'nin devrimci hükümeti, 74.000 kişiyi barındıran 10.000 kalıcı konut ve 149.000 nüfuslu yaklaşık 20.000 geçici konut inşa ederek düzenli sermaye geliştirme göreviyle karşı karşıya kalmıştır. 1972'den 1974'e kadar olan dönemde, Case Popolari semtinde fiyatı 2.500 doların üzerinde olan 300 daire inşa edilmiştir. Bu daireler orta sınıfa fayda sağlamıştır. Dahası, 1970'ler, bir derin su limanı ve ABD uydu fotoğraflarını kullanarak kentsel alanların araştırılması da dahil olmak üzere önemli altyapı gelişmelerine tanık olmuştur (National Housing Agency, 1965, aktaran Arecchi, 1984).

2016 yılında Mogadişu'da kapsayıcılık, sosyal çeşitlilik, kompakt bir şehir formu ve uygun maliyetli kalkınmayı vurgulayan çağdaş planlama girişimleri başlatılmıştır. Hedeflenen fonları, yerelleştirilmiş planları ve altyapı yatırımlarını almak için altı temel kalkınma bölgesini belirleyen kompakt bir şehir planı geliştirilmiştir. Bu yaklaşım, mevcut kamu tesislerinden yararlanarak ve yeni alanlara erişilebilirlik sağlayarak şehrin büyümesini yönlendirmektedir. İkinci bir strateji olarak, kentsel hizmetlerde kendi kendine yetecek ve kentsel nüfus artışına uyum sağlayacak uydu kentler kavramı geliştirilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, bu yeni mahallelerde iş mevcudiyeti konusunda endişeler ortaya çıkmakta ve Afgooye Koridoru gibi mevcut altyapıyı zorlamaktadır (UN-Habitat, 2016; Petrella ve diğerleri, 2020).

Mogadişu'nun kamusal ve yeşil alanları

Mogadişu'daki kamusal alanların yetersizliğine katkıda bulunan önemli bir faktör, uzun süreli çatışmaların neden olduğu büyük hasardır. Yıllarca süren iç savaş, isyanlar ve milis çatışmaları şehrin parklarını, şehir meydanlarını ve rekreasyon alanlarını harabeye çevirmiştir. Birçok kamusal alan ya yok edilmiş ya da özelleştirilmiş, bu da topluluk toplantıları için alanları ortadan kaldırmıştır (Rift Valley Institute, 2017).

Buna ek olarak, Mogadişu'daki kentleşme ve nüfus artışı, kamusal alanın kullanılabilirliğini çok sınırlı hale getirmiştir. Somali'nin dünyanın en hızlı kentleşen ülkelerinden biri olduğu ve Mogadişu'nun diğer şehirlere göre en fazla nüfusa ev sahipliği yapması nedeniyle bu artışın yükünü taşıyacağı söylenmektedir (Aubrey ve Cardoso, 2019). Her çatışma durduktan sonra insanlar güvenlik ve fırsatlar için şehre göç ettikçe, konut ve ticari alanlara olan talep artmıştır. Sonuç olarak, kamusal alanlar ve yeşil alanlar, artan nüfusun acil ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için genellikle ihmal edilmiştir. Öncelik, kamusal alanların yaratılmasını veya korunmasını gölgede bırakarak konut ve ticari gelişmelere doğru kaymıştır.

Mogadişu'daki kamusal alanlar ve anıtlar

Somali'nin başkenti Mogadişu'daki Meçhul Asker Mezarı (Daljirka Dahsoon), uluslarını savunmak için hayatlarını feda eden Somalili askerlere bir saygı duruşu niteliğindedir. Eski parlamento binasına yakın bir konumda yer alan bu anıt, savaşın üzerinden 22 yıl geçtikten sonra 2012 yılında tadilatın geçmiştir (Baldwin, 2018). Kentte, Ahmed Gurey, Hawo Tako ve Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan gibi önde gelen Somalili şahsiyetlerin yanı sıra Dhagah Tuur ve Somali Gençlik Birliği'nin (SGB) anısına başka heykeller de bulunmaktadır.

Hawo Tako, SGB'nin aktif bir katılımcısıydı ve 1948'de Mogadişu'da kendisi de dahil olmak üzere 14 Somalilinin hayatını kaybettiği ve topluluğunu korumaya çalışan ayaklanmalarda yer almıştır. 1977 yılında, onun anısına, Cumhurbaşkanı Siad Barre'nin desteğiyle Somali Demokratik Kadın Örgütü kurulmuştur. Bu örgüt Hawo Tako'yu onurlandırmıştır, ancak bazı kaynaklar onun İtalyanların öldürülmesini önlemeye çalışırken öldürüldüğünü öne sürmektedir. Cumhurbaşkanı Siyad Barre'nin saltanatı sırasında Mogadişu'da onu tasvir eden bir heykel dikilmiş ve yakın zamanda Cumhurbaşkanı Farmaajo tarafından bu heykellerde tadilatlar yapılmıştır (İbrahim, 2021). Bu yere yakın oturma yerleri yok, ancak

Mogadişu'nun tanınmış yerlerinden biri olduğu için sivillerin toplantıları burada gerçekleşmektedir.

Seyyid Muhammed Abdulle Hassan, 7 Nisan 1864'te İngiliz Somaliland'ın Zülbahante bölgesinde doğmuş ve 21 Aralık 1920'de Etiyopya'nın Imi kentinde vefat etmiştir. Seyyid Muhammed, İngilizler tarafından "Deli Molla" olarak bilinen önde gelen bir Somalili dini ve milliyetçi liderdi ve Somali'deki İngiliz, İtalyan ve Etiyopya sömürge güçlerine karşı yirmi yıl süren bir silahlı direnişe öncülük etmiştir. Seyyid Muhammed, sömürge yönetimine karşı büyük direnişi ve aşiret bölünmelerini aşan Müslüman kardeşliğe dayalı birleşik bir Somali vizyonu nedeniyle modern Somali milliyetçiliğinin öncüsü olarak kabul edilmektedir. Ek olarak, sözlü bir şair olarak yeteneklerinden dolayı büyük saygı görmektedir (Britannica, 2024). 2019'da, Hawo Tako'nun heykeline benzer şekilde, Seyyid Muhammed'in heykelleri de Cumhurbaşkanı Farmajo tarafından yeniden dikilmiş ve son zamanlarda, vatandaşların ihtiyaç duyduklarında toplanıp dinlenebilecekleri bir kamusal alan haline gelmesi için orada birkaç oturma alanı yapılmıştır (Enformasyon, Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019).

FAO'ya (2015) göre, Mogadişu ile aynı alanı kaplayan Banaadir Bölgesi'nin alanı 213.049.420 m² ve Mogadişu'daki KYA'nın alanı 5.140.990 m²'dir. Mogadişu'nun nüfusunun resmi kaynaklara göre 2,5 milyon olduğu tahmin edilmektedir (Banaadir Regional Administration, t.y.). Bu rakamlara göre, kişi başına düşen kentsel yeşil alan 2,06 m² dir. Bu miktar, Dünya Sağlık Örgütü (2012) tarafından önerilen kişi başına minimum 9 m² yeşil alan veya kişi başına 50 m² KYA olan ideal alan ile karşılaştırıldığında çok düşüktür.

2,5 milyondan fazla insanın yaşadığı bir şehir için (en az tahmin), kamusal alanlar, özellikle KYA çok yetersizdir. 2014 yılında UN-Habitat tarafından yapılan (Çağlin vd., 2014) ve araştırmacı tarafından rekreasyon alanlarının etiketleriyle güncellenen bu haritaya göre Mogadişu'daki KYA çok azdır. Araştırmacının şehir hakkındaki bilgisine göre Mogadişu'daki en dikkate değer KYA Darusalam Bahçe Parkı (108.366 m²), Barış Bahçesi Parkı (23.470 m²), Mogadişu Turist Köyü Parkı (21.320 m²) ve Banaadir Bahçe Parkı'dır (11.198 m²). Bu parkların tamamı özel mülkiyete aittir ve belediye tarafından yönetilen KYA bulunmamaktadır.

Kamusal ve yeşil alanların olmaması Mogadişu'nun sosyal uyumunu olumsuz etkilemektedir. Bu alanlar, topluluk etkileşimini, kültürel alışverişi ve rekreasyonu teşvik etmede çok önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Ayrıca, insanların bir araya gelmeleri ve birbirleriyle sosyal bağlantılar kurmaları ve boş zaman etkinliklerinin tadını çıkarmaları için bir platform görevi görmektedir. Bu alanların yetersiz mevcudiyeti, canlı ve uyumlu bir toplumun gelişmesinin önünde bir engeldir (Degan, 2018).

Bununla birlikte, kamusal ve yeşil alanların geri kazanılması ve Mogadişu'nun kentsel ortamının yeniden canlandırılması, farklı paydaşlar arasında büyük miktarda taahhüt, kaynak ve iş birliği gerektiren karmaşık bir süreçtir. Mevcut alanları fiziksel olarak rehabilite etmenin yanı sıra, bu aynı zamanda kentsel planlama, altyapı geliştirme ve toplum katılımını da içermektedir.

4. Araştırma Metodolojisi

Bu tezde kullanılan araştırma metodolojisi, kapsamlı bir literatür taraması, anketler ve görüşmeler yoluyla veri toplama ve veri analizini içermektedir. Çalışma, Mogadişu'da KYA'nın rolü hakkında farklı bakış açıları toplamak için topluluk liderleri, hükümet yetkilileri, şehir planlamacıları ve gençlerle birlikte çalışmaktadır. Bu karma yöntem yaklaşımı, KYA ile ilişkili etki ve zorlukların kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılmasını sağlamaktadır.

Literatür taraması

Literatür taraması, KYA'nın kentsel ortamlarda, özellikle çatışmalardan etkilenen bölgelerdeki rolüne ilişkin mevcut araştırmaları araştırmaktadır. KYA'nın barış inşasını ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etme potansiyelini vurgulayan teorik çerçeveleri ve pratik vaka çalışmalarını incelemektedir. İnceleme ayrıca mevcut literatürdeki boşlukları belirlemekte ve bu çalışmanın Mogadişu bağlamında uygunluğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Veri toplama

Veri toplama hem nicel hem de nitel yöntemleri içermektedir. Anketlerden, kullanıcıların KYA algıları ve kullanımları hakkında veri toplamak için yararlanılmaktadır. Anketler,

ziyaret sıklığı, faaliyet türleri, algılanan faydalar ve KYA ile ilgili zorluklar hakkında sorular içermektedir.

Anketlere ek olarak, topluluk liderleri, hükümet yetkilileri, şehir planlamacıları ve gençlik temsilcileri dahil olmak üzere kilit paydaşlarla derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmaktadır. Bu görüşmeler, KYA'nın sosyal uyum ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmedeki rolünün yanı sıra bu alanların yaratılması ve sürdürülmesinde karşılaşılan zorluklar hakkında ayrıntılı bilgiler sağlamaktadır.

Veri analizi

Anket ve görüşmelerden toplanan veriler hem istatistiksel hem de tematik analiz yöntemleri kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Anketlerden elde edilen nicel veriler, KYA'nın kullanımı ve algılarındaki eğilimleri ve kalıpları belirlemek için analiz edilmektedir. Görüşmelerden elde edilen nitel veriler, KYA'nın barış inşasındaki rolüyle ilgili temel temaları ve içgörülerini belirlemek için tematik olarak analiz edilmektedir.

5. Araştırma Bulguları

Bu çalışmanın bulguları, KYA'nın Mogadişu'daki zihinsel iyi oluşu, topluluk birliğini ve ekonomik fırsatları olumlu yönde etkilediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Aynı zamanda, sosyal etkileşim, diyalog ve eğlence etkinlikleri için alanlar sağlayarak güvenlik ve kapsayıcılık duygusuna katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, çalışma aynı zamanda güvenlik endişeleri, finansman sınırlamaları ve yönetim sorunları gibi bu alanların yaratılması ve sürdürülmesinde önemli zorlukları da tanımlamaktadır.

KYA'nın olumlu etkileri

1. Zihinsel İyi Oluş: Çalışma, KYA'ya erişimin sakinlerin zihinsel sağlığını önemli ölçüde iyileştirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Ankete katılanlar, yeşil alanlarda vakit geçirdiklerinde kendilerini daha az stresli ve daha rahat hissettiklerini bildirmektedir. Bu, birçok sakinin travma ve zihinsel sağlık sorunlarından muzdarip olduğu çatışma sonrası bir ortamda özellikle önemlidir.

2. Topluluk Birlięi: Çalışma, KYA'nın sakinlerin etkileşimde bulunması için tarafsız alanlar sağlayarak sosyal uyumu teşvik ettiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu etkileşimler, topluluk üyeleri arasında uzlaşma için gerekli olan güven ve anlayış oluşturmaya yardımcı olmaktadır. Ankete katılanlar, KYA'nın insanları bir araya getiren topluluk etkinliklerini ve toplantılarını kolaylaştırmadaki rolünü vurgulamaktadır.

3. Ekonomik Fırsatlar: Bakımlı KYA, ziyaretçileri ve işletmeleri cezbederek yerel ekonomiye katkıda bulunmaktadır. Gıda satıcıları ve zanaatkarlar gibi küçük ölçekli girişimciler, bu alanlarda artan yaya trafiğinden yararlanmaktadır. Ek olarak, KYA mahallelerin estetik çekiciliğini artırabilir, potansiyel olarak mülk değerlerini artırabilir ve daha fazla yatırım çekebilmektedir.

KYA oluşturma ve sürdürmedeki zorluklar

1. Güvenlik Endişeleri: Mogadişu'da KYA'nın oluşturulması ve sürdürülmesindeki başlıca zorluklardan biri güvenlidir. Aşırılık yanlısı grupların varlığı ve şiddet tehdidi, sakinleri bu alanları kullanmaktan caydırmaktadır. KYA'nın güvenliğini sağlamak, hükümet, güvenlik güçleri ve toplum arasında koordineli çabalar gerektirmektedir.

2. Finansman Sınırlamaları: KYA'nın geliştirilmesi ve sürdürülmesi için finansal kaynak gereklidir. Sınırlı finansmana ve çok sayıda rakip önceliğe sahip bir şehirde, KYA için yeterli kaynak tahsis etmek zorluklar içermektedir. Bu çalışma, kamu-özel ortaklıkları ve topluluk liderliğindeki girişimler gibi yenilikçi finansman mekanizmalarına duyulan ihtiyacı vurgulamaktadır.

3. Yönetişim Sorunları: KYA'nın başarılı bir şekilde uygulanması ve yönetilmesi için etkili yönetim şarttır. Ancak Mogadişu, zayıf yönetim yapıları ve farklı paydaşlar arasındaki koordinasyon eksikliği ile ilgili zorluklarla karşı karşıyadır. Yönetişim mekanizmalarının güçlendirilmesi ve şeffaflık ve hesap verebilirliğin sağlanması, KYA'nın sürdürülebilir gelişimi için çok önemlidir.

6. Tartışma

Mogadişu'daki KYA'lar ve bunların barış ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmedeki rolleri hakkındaki bu çalışma, KYA'ların mevcut durumları, zorlukları ve fırsatları hakkında değerli bilgiler sunmaktadır. Sonuçlar, KYA'ların toplum tarafından algılanmasının ve takdir edilmesinin altını çizmekte ve çoğunluğu güzellikleri, önemleri ve şehrin sakinlerinin yaşam kalitesini iyileştirme potansiyelleri için minnettarlıklarını ifade etmektedir.

Ankete katılanların sosyo-demografisi, özellikle katılımcıların yüzdeleri, nüfusun ilçelere dağılımına doğrudan yansımamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, en fazla katılımcı sayısı, diğer tüm ilçeler arasında 4. ve 6. en büyük nüfusa ev sahipliği yapan iki ilçe olan Hodan ve Warta Nabadda'da ikamet etmektedir. Diğer bir neden ise Hodan ilçesinin şehir merkezinde yer alması ve insanların toplandığı birçok kamusal alanın burada bulunmasına bağlanabilmektedir. Bu, çalışmaya katılmaları istenen sakinleri, bu alanları deneyimledikleri ve bu konuda görüşlerini sunabilecekleri için kabul etmelerini teşvik edebilmektedir. Ayrıca, Warta Nabadda, Hamar Weyne'ye komşudur ve en önemli yeşil parklardan ikisinin, yani Barış Bahçesi Parkı ve Banaadir Bahçesi Parkı'nın bulunduğu Hodan'a yakındır.

Ayrıca, Kaaraan, Heliwaa ve Dharkenleey'deki nüfusun yüzdesi toplam nüfusun %23'ü olmasına rağmen, aynı bölgelerdeki katılımcıların ankete katılım oranı %10'dan azdır. Bu bölgeler şehrin çeperlerinde yer aldığından ve hiçbirinde halka açık yeşil parklar bulunmadığından, bu, ankete yanıt vermeye istekli katılımcı sayısının düşük olmasını açıklayabilmektedir. Dayniile, şehrin çeperinde yer alan bir başka ilçedir, ancak istekli katılımcılar %7 idi, bu da nüfusunun yüzdesi (% 4) ile uyumludur ve en tanınmış parklardan ikisi orada bulunmaktadır.

Bir kavram olarak kent hakkı, insanlara bir kentin kaynakları üzerinde eşit hakların tanındığı, kentin yönetimine katılmalarına izin verildiği ve kentsel alanlardaki sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel çeşitliliğin teşvik edildiği bir teori olarak tanımlanabilmektedir. Henri Lefebvre tarafından tanıtılan ve David Harvey gibi yazarlar tarafından genişletilen bu kavram, toplumun tüm üyelerinin kendilerine verilen eşit haklarla kentsel ortamları kendi yararlarına değiştirebilmeleri, kullanabilmeleri ve uygun hale getirebilmeleri gerektiğini belirtmektedir. Bu kavram üç ana sütunun altını çizmektedir: mekansal olarak adil kaynak dağılımı, siyasi faillik ve sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel çeşitliliktir (Patel ve diğerleri, 2016)

Mogadişu'daki KYA olarak parkların planlanması ve geliştirilmesine kent hakkı kavramı uygulanarak, parkların her sınıftan insan için nasıl erişilebilir ve faydalı hale getirilmesi gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır (Moreno ve diğerleri, 2017). Yeşil alanların eşit dağılımı, park bulunmayan veya çatışmalardan etkilenen alanlar da dahil olmak üzere şehrin farklı bölgelerinde parkların geliştirilmesini gerektirmektedir. Bu, topluluğun tüm üyelerinin rekreasyon, rahatlama ve sosyal etkileşim şansına sahip olmasını garanti etmektedir. Şu anda Mogadişu'da durum böyle değildir ve parklar, şehrin farklı mahallelerine dağıtılması konusunda önceden düşünülmeden ticari olarak kurulmaktadır.

Buna ek olarak, kent hakkı, kentin kentsel planlamasını etkileyen kararlara insanların katılımını da gerektirmektedir. Mogadişu'da bu, nüfusun yeşil alanların oluşturulmasına, geliştirilmesine ve yönetimine katılması gerektiği anlamına gelir, böylece nüfusun tercihlerini yansıtır. Bu nitelikteki katılımcı kentsel planlama, mekânın kullanımında ve bu alanların sürdürülebilirliğinde insanlar arasında sorumluluğu teşvik etmektedir. Bir diğer önemli bileşen ise kapsayıcı yönetiştir; bu, toplumun tüm üyelerinin, özellikle de savunmasız olanların kentsel gelişim sürecine katılma yeteneğidir. Ne yazık ki Mogadişu'da da durum böyle değildir ve genel olarak kentsel alanların ve özellikle de var olmayan yeşil alanların yaratılması ve yönetimine toplum katılımı bulunmamaktadır.

Lübnan'ın Beyrut ve Trablus kentlerinde Naamani ve Simpson (2021) tarafından yapılan bir araştırma, KYA'ların kurulması ve sürdürülmesi konusunda kamuoyu bilincinin önemini ortaya koymuştur. Bu durum, bu çalışmanın bulguları ile doğrudan uyumludur. Beyrut'ta, NAHNOO adlı bir örgüt, savaştan sonra şehrin en büyük yeşil alanı olan "el-Horsh"u yeniden açmak için bilinçlendirme kampanyaları aracılığıyla halkın desteğini toplamıştır. Kampanya başarılı olmuş ve yeşil alan nihayet Temmuz 2017'de tamamen yeniden açılmadan önce, 2015 yılının Eylül ayında yalnızca Pazar günleri yeniden açılmıştır.

Kolombiya şehirlerinde yapılan bir başka ilgili çalışma, kamusal alanların, özellikle de KYA'ların barış inşası faaliyetleri için ortamlar olarak rolünü araştırmış ve bu yeşil alanların kullanıcılara boş zaman etkinlikleri, sosyal etkileşimler ve çevre bilinci gibi avantajlar sunduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Çalışmamızın önerilerini destekleyerek, toplumu KYA'ların planlanması, tasarımı ve bakımına dahil etmenin önemi vurgulanmıştır (Nail ve Erazo, 2018).

Şehit düşen askerleri anmak ve barışa ulaşmanın bedelini halka hatırlatmak için yapılan anıt örneklerinden biri, Türkiye’de Gelibolu Yarımadası Tarihi Alanı’dır. Türkiye, tarihin en şiddetli savaşlarından birinin yaşandığı Çanakkale ilinde sekiz buçuk ay süren bir savaşın ardından 18 Mart 1915’te müttefik devletlere karşı Çanakkale Deniz Zaferi’ni kazanmıştır. Gelibolu Savaşı’nın gerçekleştiği tarihi Gelibolu Yarımadası, şehitlikleri, anıtları ve kaleleri ile bir açık hava müzesi olarak ziyaretçilerini ağırlarken, müzelerde ise her biri Türk askerinin kahramanlık hikayesinin yer aldığı savaş malzemeleri sergilenmektedir (Hürriyet Daily News, 2021)

Mogadişu’nun Meçhul Askerin Mezarı ve Gelibolu’daki anıtlardan, her ikisi de ülkelerini savunan askerlerin fedakarlıklarını onurlandığı için paralellikler çizilebilmektedir. Bu anıtlar aynı zamanda zorlu savaşların ve ülkede barışı korumanın öneminin hatırasına da hizmet etmektedir. İki anıt arasındaki önemli fark, Gelibolu Yarımadası’ndaki anıtta 60.000 askerın isimlerinin, ölümlerinin anısına 1.670 beton levhaya yazılmış olmasıdır (Atabay ve diğerleri, 2016). Mogadişu’daki anıtta kişilerin adı yer almamaktadır, ancak görev başında ölen her kahramanı temsil etmektedir.

Bununla birlikte, Mogadişu’da KYA’ların geliştirilmesini ve verimli yönetimini engelleyen çok sayıda engel bulunmaktadır. En büyük zorluklardan biri, yeşil alanlar için belirlenmiş alanların eksikliğine ve bunların kurulması için öngörülere yer veren bir kentsel planın olmamasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu sorun, nüfus artışı ve plansız kentsel genişleme nedeniyle ortaya çıkan arazi kıtlığı nedeniyle daha da kötüleşmekte ve bu da KYA’lar için uygun yerlerin güvence altına alınmasını zorlaştırmaktadır.

Diğer bir engel, KYA’lara yapılan yatırım ile ilgilidir. Hükümet, potansiyel avantajlarına rağmen yeşil alanlar yaratmaya veya sürdürmeye öncelik vermeyebilecek rekabet eden önceliklerle karşı karşıyadır. Ekonomik mücadeleler, KYA’lara yatırım kapasitelerini daha da kısıtlamaktadır. Ayrıca, yerinden edilmiş bireylerin yeniden yerleştirilmesi gerekliliği gibi kaynak sınırlamaları, bu alanların geliştirilmesindeki engellere katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Benzer şekilde, Lübnan’da yürütülen çalışmada KYA’ların yönetimi ve sürdürülmesi ile ilgili zorluklar vurgulanmıştır. Yetersiz finansman, sınırlı paydaş koordinasyonu ve KYA’ların planlamaya dahil edilmesindeki yetersizlikler, kısıtlamalar olarak tanımlanmıştır (Naamani ve Simpson 2021). Mogadişu’da karşılaşılan zorluklar, burada karşılaşılanlara

benzerdir ve planlamanın, yatırımın ve toplumu yeşil alanların geliştirilmesine dahil etmenin önemini göstermektedir.

Benzer şekilde, Kolombiya'daki çalışma da marjinal gruplar için bakım, güvenlik ve erişilebilirlik ile ilgili konulara dikkat çekmiştir. Bu engeller, tüm sakinlerin bu alanlara erişebilmesini ve bunlardan yararlanabilmesini sağlamak için alan geliştirme stratejilerinin gerekliliğinin altını çizmektedir (Nail ve Erazo 2018).

Bu zorluklara rağmen, Mogadişu'da KYA'ların geliştirilmesi ve kurulması için belirlenmiş fırsatlar vardır. Böyle bir fırsat, toplulukları bu alanları planlamaya ve yönetmeye dahil etmektir. Yeşil alanlar, sakinleri sürece dahil ederek onların ihtiyaç ve tercihlerini daha iyi karşılayabilmekte, sahiplenme duygusunu ve uzun vadeli sürdürülebilirliği teşvik etmektedir. Diğer bir yol ise kuruluşlar ve STK'larla ortaklıklar kurmaktır. Bu kuruluşlar, yeşil alanları geliştirme ve bakımına yardımcı olmak için destek, finansman ve uzmanlık sunabilmektedir.

Ayrıca, KYA'ların faydaları konusunda halk arasında farkındalık yaratmak çok önemlidir. Birçok kişi, bu alanların şehirlerde sağlıklarına, esenliklerine ve genel yaşam kalitelerine nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu tam olarak kavrayamamaktadır. Farkındalığı artırmak, KYA'lar için destek toplamaya yardımcı olarak, bunların kurulması ve bakımı için daha fazla savunuculuğu teşvik edebilmektedir.

Çalışmanın bazı sınırlılıkları vardır. 385 kişilik örneklem büyüklüğü güvenilir bir yöntem kullanılarak belirlenirken, bulguların Mogadişu'nun tüm nüfusuna nasıl uygulanabileceği konusunda endişeler olabilmektedir. Ek olarak, çalışmada anketlere büyük ölçüde güvenmek önyargılara neden olmaktadır. Yanıtlayanlar istemeden bilgi verebilmekte (kendi kendine raporlama yanlılığı) veya soruların nasıl çerçevelendiğinden etkilenebilmektedir (yanıt yanlılığı). Diğer bir sınırlama ise, yeşil çatılar, sokak ağaçları ve hatta kent ormanları gibi potansiyel olarak önemli diğer KYA'ların çalışmada değerlendirmeye alınmamış olmasıdır. Bu çalışmada yalnızca parklara odaklanılmıştır. Diğer yeşil alanların da sakinlerin refahı, şehir sürdürülebilirliği ve barış ve uzlaşmanın teşviki üzerinde etkisi olabilmektedir. Son olarak, çalışmanın kesitsel yaklaşımı, algıların, tutumların ve davranışların zaman içinde nasıl geliştiğini anlama yeteneğini sınırlayarak belirli bir andaki verileri yakalamaktadır. Yeşil alanların sakinlerin refahı, genel şehir gelişimi ve bunların barış ve uzlaşmayı teşvik

etme üzerindeki etkileri üzerindeki kalıcı etkilerini incelemek için boylamsal çalışmalar yürütmek gerekli olacaktır.

7. Sonuç ve Öneriler

Bu çalışma, uzun süreli çatışma ve siyasi huzursuzluğun damgasını vurduğu bir şehir olan Mogadişu'da barış ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmede KYA'ların rolünü araştırmaktadır. Çalışmada, kapsamlı bir literatür taraması, anket ve paydaşlarla görüşmeler gibi farklı araştırma yöntemleri aracılığıyla, KYA'ların çatışma sonrası bir ortamda sosyal uyumu, diyalogu ve topluluk dayanışmasını nasıl geliştirebileceği araştırılmıştır. Sonuçlar, KYA'ların zihinsel iyi oluş hali / sağlık, topluluk birliği / sosyal etkileşimler ve ekonomik fırsatlar üzerindeki önemli etkisini vurgularken, aynı zamanda güvenlik, finansman ve yönetimle ilgili zorlukları da ele almaktadır.

Çalışma, KYA'ların çeşitli grupların birbirleriyle etkileşime girebilecekleri ve gerilimleri azaltabilecekleri tarafsız alanlar sunarak barış inşasında rol oynadığını doğrulamaktadır ki bu benzer ortamlarda yapılan önceki araştırmalarla tutarlı bir bulgudur (Braubach ve diğerleri, 2017). KYA'lar, farklı geçmişlere sahip bireyler için toplanma noktaları sağlayarak, sosyal boşlukları kapatmaya ve topluluklar arasında ortak bir kimlik ve anlayış geliştirmeye yardımcı olmaktadır. KYA'ların bu işlevi, kamusal alanların çatışma sonrası uzlaşma çabalarında hayati önem taşıdığı, çatışmadan etkilenen bölgelerden elde edilen bulgularla rezonansa girmektedir (Nail ve Erazo, 2018).

Ayrıca, KYA'ların sağlık üzerindeki olumlu etkisi, barış inşası ve sağlığın teşviki ve geliştirilmesine ikili katkılarını vurgulayan mevcut literatürle pekiştirilmektedir. Yeşil alanlara erişim, daha düşük stres seviyeleri, daha iyi ruh hali ve daha iyi genel zihinsel refah ile ilişkilendirilmiştir (Turner-Skoff ve Cavender, 2019; Simpson ve diğerleri, 2023). Bu avantajlar, uzun süreli şiddet ve istikrarsızlığın duygusal etkisinin derin olabileceği çatışmalardan sonra Mogadişu gibi yerlerde özellikle önemlidir. KYA'lar, bireylerin stres ve travmadan kurtulmaları için bir sığınak sunarak toplumun iyileşme sürecine katkıda bulunmaktadır (Henderson-Wilson ve Weerasuriya, 2017; Poulsen ve diğerleri, 2018).

Dahası, bu alanlar turizm ve yerel işletmeler aracılığıyla fırsatlar yaratmakta ve bu da önceki barış inşası çalışmalarında kapsamlı bir şekilde keşfedilmemiş benzersiz bir yön

katmaktadır. Bakımlı parklar ve rekreasyon alanları turistleri cezbedebilirken, yerel pazarlar ve küçük işletmeler bu ortamlarda gelişebilmektedir (Spencer ve Nsiah, 2013; De Bruyn ve diğerleri, 2018). Bu ekonomik faaliyet sadece yerel geçim kaynaklarını sürdürmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda bölgenin genel istikrarını ve büyümesini de artırmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, güvenlik sorunları, finansman kıtlığı ve bakım sorunları gibi zorluklar, daha geniş kentsel gelişim literatürüyle uyumlu engeller oluşturmaktadır (Nail ve Erazo, 2018).

Çalışma sonuçlarından yola çıkılarak bazı öneriler ortaya konmuştur. Her şeyden önce, toplumsal uyum düzeyini artıracak faaliyetler ve girişimler yürütmek çok önemlidir. İnsanları bir araya getiren festivaller, yerel pazarlar ve kültürel etkinlikler, toplulukların bölge sakinleri için başarılı etkileşim bölgelerinin oluşumuna nasıl dahil olabileceğinin mükemmel bir örneğidir. Örneğin, El Salvador'da parklarda kültürel performansların ve etkinliklerin düzenlendiği "Öğleden Sonraları Birlikte" gibi programlar uygulanabilmektedir. Bu tür etkinlikler genellikle şehrin kültürel çeşitliliğini kutlar ve bölge sakinlerine birbirlerinin geleneklerini takdir etme ve onlardan öğrenme fırsatları sunarak karşılıklı saygı ve anlayışı teşvik etmektedir. İkinci olarak, kamu ve özel sektör arasında ortaklıklar kurmak, KYA'ların kurulması ve korunması için sürdürülebilir finansman sağlayabilir ve uzun vadeli sürdürülebilirliklerini garanti edebilmektedir. Bu tür ortaklıklar, devlet kurumları, kar amacı gütmeyen kuruluşlar ve özel şirketler gibi paydaşların kaynaklarını ve bilgilerini kullanabilmektedir.

Üçüncüsü, toplulukları katılımcı yöntemlerle KYA planlamasına ve bakımına dahil etmek, bölge sakinleri arasında bir sahiplenme ve hesap verebilirlik duygusunu teşvik ederek daha bakımlı ve daha canlı kamusal alanlar sağlamaktadır. Toplumun karar alma süreçlerine katılımı, KYA'ların bölge sakinlerinin ihtiyaç ve tercihlerini karşılamasını sağlayarak önemlerini ve ömürlerini artırmaktadır. Ayrıca, sosyal entegrasyonun bazı özellikleri KYA'ların tasarımına dahil edilmelidir. Oturma alanları, parkı kullanan insanlar arasındaki iletişimi mümkün ve kolay hale getiren daireler halinde düzenlenebilirken, topluluk panoları, topluluktaki olaylarla ilgili bilgi yayınlamak için kullanılacak bülten panoları görevi görmektedir. Satranç veya masa tenisi masaları gibi belirli oyun alanları, gündelik etkileşimler ve dostça yarışmalar için fırsatlar sunmaktadır. Bu tür tasarım özellikleri, insanların parktaki kişilerarası ilişkilerini geliştiren diğer insanlarla etkileşime girme isteklerini artırmaktadır.

Ayrıca, Travma Sonrası Stres Bozukluğu (TSSB) olan katılımcılar için tasarlanmış bahçecilik atölyeleri veya programları, terapötik değerin yanı sıra amaç ve topluluk duygusu bulabilecekleri yerlerde düzenlenmelidir. Bu programlar, katılımcıların egzersizlere aktif katılım, benzer deneyimleri paylaşan diğer kişilerle bağlantı kurma ve yeşil alanları temizlemeyi içeren fiziksel çalışmalar yapma yoluyla toplumun yararlı üyeleri olmalarını sağlamaktadır.

Son olarak, pazarlar ve küçük işletmeler için alanlar sağlayarak KYA'lar içinde girişimciliği teşvik etmek, yerel büyümeyi artırabilir ve daha büyük barış inşası çabalarına katkıda bulunan işler yaratabilmektedir. Bu alanlardaki ekonomik faaliyetler sadece yerel halk için gelir sağlamakla kalmayıp, aynı zamanda sosyal bağlantıları ve topluluk bağlarını da teşvik etmektedir. Örneğin, pazarlar, farklı geçmişlere sahip bireylerin bir araya geldiği, birliği ve ekonomik iş birliğini teşvik eden canlı buluşma noktaları haline gelebilmektedir.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma, KYA'ların Mogadişu'da barış ve uzlaşmayı teşvik etmede oynadığı rolleri vurgulamaktadır. KYA'lar, birliği besleyerek, ruh sağlığını iyileştirerek ve ekonomik fırsatlar sunarak şehirlerde barış inşası stratejilerinin temel unsurları olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Belirlenen zorlukların hedefe yönelik çözümlerle ele alınması, bu alanların etkisini artırabilir ve bu da onları çatışma sonrası bölgelerde kentsel büyüme ve barış çabaları için hayati hale getirebilmektedir. Bu çalışma, KYA'ların barış inşası çabalarına nasıl yardımcı olabileceğinin tanınmasına katkıda bulunmakta ve benzer ortamlarda çalışan politika yapımcılar ve uygulayıcılar için pratik tavsiyeler sağlamaktadır.

Gelecek çalışmalar için öneri

Bu araştırmanın ağır eğilimli nicel yaklaşımı, KYA'ların etkisini tam olarak ölçme kapasitesini sınırlamaktadır ve Mogadişu'ya odaklanması, bulgularının diğer çatışma sonrası şehirlere ne kadar geniş bir şekilde uygulanacağını etkileyebilmektedir. Bununla birlikte, elde edilen içgörüler Mogadişu'da ve benzeri durumlarda planlama çabalarına ve barış inşası projelerine rehberlik edebilmektedir. Gelecekteki çalışmalarda, araştırmacılar ağır eğilme nitel bir yaklaşımla farklı araştırma yöntemlerinin bir kombinasyonunu kullanabilmektedir. Örneğin, 6'dan fazla kişiyle yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeleri Mogadişu'daki her bölgeyi hedefleyen anketlerle birleştirmek, KYA'larla bağlantılı avantajlar ve zorluklar hakkında bütünsel bir bakış açısı sunabilmektedir. Diğer kamusal alan türleri ve KYA'lar gelecekteki

alıřmalara dahil edilmeli ve bu alanların barıř ve uzlařmayı teřvik etmedeki genel etkisini anlamak iin parklarla sınırlı olmamalıdır.



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SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The symbols and abbreviations used in this study are presented below, along with their explanations.

Symbols	Explanations
m²	Square meters
Abbreviations	Explanations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SYL	Somali Youth League
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nation
UN-HABITAT	United Nation Habitat
UGS	Urban Green Space

1. INTRODUCTION

For decades Mogadishu, Somalia's capital city, has been in the midst of conflict, political instability and violence. The 1991 overthrow of President Siad Barre, which led to the collapse of the Central Government and the emergence of clan-based militia fighting for power and control, is a factor in Mogadishu's unrest. The city became the epicentre of factional fighting and warlordism, resulting in widespread destruction, displacement, and loss of life (Elmi, 2010).

During the conflict, Mogadishu witnessed intense battles, indiscriminate shelling, and armed clashes among rival factions. The absence of effective governance structures allowed militias and extremist groups to gain a foothold in the city, worsening the security situation and posing a significant challenge to peace and stability (Bradbury and Healy, 2010). However, after the transformation of Somalia from a transitional government to an official federal government in 2012, various initiatives were made by the federal government and Banaadir Regional Administration to tighten up the security of the capital and make it more and more stable throughout the years (Wasuge et al, 2023).

In conflict-ridden regions, such as Mogadishu, the restoration of peace and reconciliation among communities is a complex and multifaceted process that requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders (Björkdahl, 2013). One significant aspect that has emerged as a catalyst for peacebuilding is the creation and revitalisation of public spaces. Public spaces such as parks, town squares, and community centres play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion, dialogue, and healing in post-conflict societies (Gaffikin and Morrissey, 2011). A simple example could be seen in Ambon and Poso in achieving conflict reconciliation through the use of public spaces such as schools, markets and coffee shops (Sari and Azecharie, 2020).

Urban green spaces (UGSs) have also been used to create community bonds and social cohesion in many cities around the world. Grassroot initiatives in cities in El Salvador and South Africa have utilised UGSs to foster peaceful cities and in one case decrease the rate of homicide and theft by 33% and 45% respectively in Sonsonate, El Salvador (Nail and Erazo, 2018).

This study aims to explore the role of UGSs in promoting peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu by using quantitative and qualitative approaches. Literature review was done systematically on the use of public spaces especially UGSs in the process of peacebuilding in post-conflict context through the experience of different cities around the world and its applicability on Mogadishu. Questionnaires were collected online from 385 residents of Mogadishu and Interviews were also conducted with various (6) stakeholders including a community leader, two government officials, two urban planners and an environmental activist to capture their experiences on Mogadishu's UGSs and to better understand the effects of UGSs on their lives and the level of impact it has on the process of peace and reconciliation.

Problem situation / Description of the topic

Public spaces and UGSs have been looked at as spaces that could foster social cohesion and resolve conflict through a process of reconciliation in different studies in various countries such as Türkiye (Hacıoğlu, 2020), Indonesia (Sari and Azeharie, 2020), Lebanon (Naamani and Simpson, 2021) and Colombia (Nail and Erazo, 2018). In Izmir, Türkiye, a study was conducted on social sustainability of Inciralti City Forest. It was concluded that UGSs provide support to a few of the fundamental principles required to guarantee social sustainability. Certain themes—like participation, human rights, and a sense of belonging—develop in response to social interactions and their resulting social bonds. It was also concluded that if UGSs become open areas that are used by all citizens equally and without bias, it provides equal opportunities for everyone, supports themes of equity and poverty, and plays a crucial role in establishing conditions that are conducive to social interactions (Hacıoğlu, 2020). Similarly, a study conducted in Ambon and Poso in Indonesia that sought to evaluate application of the public space model as a medium of conflict reconciliation concluded that the level of success of reconciliation efforts through the use of public spaces hinge on not overlooking the importance of the role of the government and community leaders. It also suggests that reconciliation could be achieved not only in physical spaces but also in virtual spaces (Sari and Azeharie, 2020). Moreover, in Lebanon, the potential of public spaces in Beirut and Tripoli were examined as a venue for peacebuilding. A movement in October of 2019 sought to reclaim the public spaces in Lebanon which in turn increased the accessibility of these spaces and it succeeded in providing essential

opportunities for varied engagement across political, social, and gender divides (Naamani and Simpson, 2021).

Furthermore, looking at the fact that the average of green space per inhabitant in Bogota the capital of Colombia was 3.9 m² per inhabitant in 2018 instead of the 10 to 15 m² argued for generally suggests that a lot of effort should be made in order to influence public policies and persuade Colombian decision-makers to allocate a larger share of local budgets to urban natural areas and ecosystems. Moreover, past literature on green spaces suggests that by concentrating territorial policy on public green areas, lasting peace can be achieved since these spaces provide opportunities for resilience, well-being, and reconciliation (Nail and Erazo, 2018).

The city of Mogadishu, characterised by a history of violence and conflict, is undergoing a process of post-conflict recovery and reconciliation. In this context, the role of UGSs in promoting peace and reconciliation remains relatively understudied. While there is recognition of the potential of UGSs as catalysts for social cohesion and dialogue, there is a need for a comprehensive understanding of their effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities in Mogadishu. To better evaluate the role of UGSs in promoting peace and facilitating reconciliation in Mogadishu, parameters should be introduced. The parameters for examining the promotion of peace of these UGSs are: Creating a sense of community and unity, fostering social interactions and dialogue, providing opportunities for recreational activities enhancing mental well-being and reducing stress. Moreover, the parameters for understanding the level of facilitation of reconciliation of these UGSs are: Creating neutral and inclusive spaces for dialogue, encouraging cultural exchange and understanding and promoting economic opportunities and community development.

Purpose of the research

This study aims to examine the role of the UGSs in Mogadishu on facilitating peacebuilding efforts and reconciliation. The sub-objectives could be stated as:

- 1- To examine the effectiveness of Mogadishu's UGSs in promoting peace
- 2- To evaluate the usefulness of the UGSs in Mogadishu in facilitating reconciliation.
- 3- To understand the challenges and barriers faced in the creation and management of UGSs in Mogadishu.

Importance of research

Although the benefits of green spaces for public health are well documented, research on their role in peacebuilding is limited. This study fills a gap by investigating how green spaces can promote social cohesion and aid in peacebuilding in post-conflict societies such as Mogadishu. It emphasises the role of green spaces as catalysts for reconciliation and provides useful information for post-conflict reconstruction. The research completes knowledge gaps, providing insights into Mogadishu's unique context and informing long-term peace planning policies. The study aims to broaden understanding while also inspiring urban development and peace-building initiatives in Mogadishu.

Limitations

This research acknowledges certain limitations. Due to the researchers' location in Türkiye throughout the study period, data collection relied on resources in Mogadishu and online tools. While the sample size of 385 survey respondents was statistically sound based on cited literature, generalisability to the entire Mogadishu population may not be applicable. Additionally, the study's primary data collection method, surveys, introduces potential biases. Respondents might unintentionally misreport information or be swayed by question phrasing. Furthermore, the research focuses exclusively on urban green parks, but it is acknowledged that there are other significant public spaces such as town squares and beaches or even other green infrastructures like green roofs, street trees and urban forests. These alternative spaces could also influence resident well-being, urban sustainability, and peacebuilding efforts.

2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEACEBUILDING AND URBAN GREEN SPACES

2.1. Introduction

The aftermath of conflict often leaves deep scars on a society. Rebuilding focuses on the immediate needs of infrastructure and security, but a crucial element frequently goes overlooked: the power of public spaces to nurture peace and community healing (Naamani and Simpson, 2021). The concept of public spaces covers a variety of urban and rural areas such as parks, town squares, streets, waterfronts and community centres. The definition of public spaces has changed over time to meet the evolving needs of society and urban development practices. Important characteristics of spaces include being accessible to everyone, promoting inclusivity, functionality and encouraging social interactions and activities (Aktar, 2017).

Public spaces are essential for communities as they offer great benefits beyond just leisure. They provide opportunities for recreation, physical exercise and cultural expression which does not only enhance well-being but also foster a strong sense of community identity. These spaces act as important meeting points for diverse groups of people by promoting interaction, sharing ideas and building connections, which are all the foundations that binds communities together. However, the quality of these spaces is critical. Neglected or poorly managed areas can lead to anti-social behaviours and contribute to a decline in the community's well-being. On the other hand, well planned and maintained public spaces become lively hubs that attract residents, visitors and investments, ultimately shaping the economic, social and environmental aspects of the surrounding region (Beck, 2009; Nasution and Zahrah, 2012; Li et al., 2022).

In post-conflict environments public spaces can serve as effective tools for promoting peace and reconciliation. One of the advantages is their ability to foster social cohesion. Gathering spots such as green parks and town squares, allow diverse groups to interact, participate in activities together and form connections. This shared interaction nurtures a feeling of belonging and a collective identity that goes beyond past divisions or conflicts. By bringing individuals from different backgrounds, these spaces help bridge the gaps caused by conflicts and divisions (Naamani and Simpson, 2021; Mngutyo, 2021)

While scholarly literature is rich with evidence of the positive impact of green spaces on public health and well-being, a surprising gap exists when it comes to their potential contribution to peacebuilding. Existing research, however, offers tantalising hints of this connection (Braubach et al., 2017; Nail and Erazo, 2018; Mancus and Cambell, 2018; Wan et al., 2021). Studies on tree-planting initiatives in conflict-ridden cities like Belfast (Johnston, 1995; Shimada and Johnston, 2013; 2015) and Hiroshima (Cheng and McBride in Tidball and Krasny, 2014), suggest a link between urban greenery and reconciliation. The act of planting a tree becomes a symbolic gesture of hope for the future, a shared act of nurturing life amidst the devastation (Zinck and Eyber, 2013; Patterson, 2022).

Moreover, UGSs serve as meeting grounds beyond their symbolic value allowing members of divided communities to come together participate in shared activities and establish connections. Public parks in particular act as gathering spots known as "third places" fostering social bonds outside of the home and workplace to enhance social capital and trust (Salih and Ismail 2018). Mitrovica in Kosovo could be taken as an example—a city divided by ethnicity. After the Kosovo War, a project to revitalise and expand the city's green areas united Albanians and Serbs in a joint effort contributing to reconciliation (Strbac et al., 2023). The potential of green spaces for peacebuilding could also be seen in recent studies that indicate that exposure to nature can influence our empathy, cooperation skills and conflict resolution abilities. Elements for post conflict reconciliation (Fido, 2020). Research published in the journal *Environment and Behaviour* revealed that individuals exposed to environments showed increased compassion towards others and were more inclined towards prosocial behaviour (Goldy and Piff 2020). Collectively these findings underscore the importance of prioritising green spaces as central components of post conflict reconstruction strategies rather than mere afterthoughts. By making investments in public parks, community gardens and urban forests, decision makers and urban planners have the opportunity to foster healing, build trust and ultimately establish long lasting peace (Jensen and Lonergan 2012).

Furthermore, the symbolic power of green spaces created in the wake of war holds immense value as they serve as physical manifestations of the healing process and testaments to a collective commitment to a future free from conflict (Inglis and Brazier, 2008). World War I memorials in Australia, such as parks and avenues of trees, stand as sombre testaments to the past, reminding future generations of the horrors of war (McShane, 2009; Hedger, 1995). Similarly, spaces like Parque de la Amistad, straddling the Polish-Czech border, become

powerful symbols of reconciliation between former adversaries (Carey, González and Gläβel, 2022).

This chapter explores the relationship between peacebuilding and UGSs through examining specific parameters and presenting examples from various contexts around the globe and exploring the ways in which these spaces can serve as catalysts for promoting social cohesion, healing trauma, and mitigating conflict in diverse urban settings.

2.2. Right to the City and Right to Public Spaces

The Right to the City is fundamental to the concept of human rights and social justice in urban setting as it involves the right of all inhabitants of cities to access resources, services and opportunities that cities provide. The Habitat III Policy Paper outlines this right as encompassing three main pillars: That is, spatially just resource distribution, political agency, and socio-economic and cultural difference. These pillars are intended to solve major problems of the modern world as the increase of urbanisation rate, poverty, social exclusion, and environment threats (The Global Platform for the Right to the City, 2016).

Spatially just resource distribution is the provision of resources for the usage of the urban space and opportunities in a fair manner. This entails providing all inhabitants of the city, in any socio-economic class, with the basic need of having shelter, basic commodities and services, and other opportunities in cities. It is aimed at developing city environments which allow for equal access to quality living standards of all members of society. It includes not only the material environment where people live and work, their shelters and utilities, but also more intangible social needs of cities and communities, including cultural development, cultural diversity, and social inclusion (Moreno et al., 2017).

Political agency is defined as the capacity of residents of a city to make choices concerning matters that impact their lives. This pillar focuses on the principles of transparency, responsibility, and data shared in the management of cities. That is why the concept implies the participation of all inhabitants as social and political subjects, providing them with the ability to realise the full content and meaning of citizenship. This entails that the policies being formulated involve marginalised groups and the poor inhabitants of urban areas in the

decision-making processes that affect the use and management of the urban spaces (Patel et al., 2016).

The third pillar, socio-economic and cultural diversity, focuses on the protection of cultural and socio-economic diversity in the context of cities. This includes support for inclusive economy, pro- rural-urban relations, support for city-regions, and city-town cooperation conservation of ecosystem. It also entails the encouragement of creative arts and use of culture for societal emancipation to foster social capital and safer cities (Patel et al., 2016).

Moreover, it is evident that public space plays a significant role in the fulfilment of the Right to the City. Gregory Smithsimon (2015) describes public spaces as the core of civil liberties and the internationally accepted human rights. These spaces afford opportunities for people to come together and engage in commerce, work, travel, socialise and express themselves freely. The rights to public space include the rights to freedom of assembly and association, freedom of expression, the right to information, political participation as well as the right to live in a peaceful society.

However, the privatisation of public areas is a major threat to these rights. When governments or private firms try to regulate or restrict people's access to public domains, then the rights of the city dwellers are being denied (Moroni and Chiodelli, 2014). Smithsimon (2015) claims that free speech rights have to be acknowledged even if the spaces are privately owned but publicly accessible. He advocates for protecting the public spaces and making sure that each community should have functional public spaces in which the citizens can freely exercise their rights.

Furthermore, it is equally important to consider private spaces as an essential aspect of people's lives in urban environments. Moroni and Chiodelli (2014) state that private spaces have contributed immensely to describing and prescribing what a city is. The distinction between public and private space can be based on ownership, right of access, and use of the area of space where the activity takes place. Houses, cafes, restaurants, shops, etc., are essential components of cities and their ultimate functionalities are social and economical. These spaces usually serve as complement to the public spaces in that they offer social interaction, business and entertainment. Moreover, some of the uses that were normally

found in public domains, including social interaction and political debates, have shifted to private domains and virtual environments, particularly the internet.

According to Habitat III Policy Paper, there exist the following governance challenges that require to be met for the Right to the City to be realised. They are: inadequate decentralisation, lack of resources, insufficient capacity, and poor frameworks for engaging with civil society and stakeholders. In the same manner, the expansion of extensive metropolitan areas is altering the spatial character of cities and presenting new difficulties to urban and country management (The Global Platform for the Right to the City, 2016).

To overcome these challenges, the paper introduces a concept of new urban governance which should be democratic, inclusive, multi-scalar and multi-layered. This framework should ensure an equitable development, the non-exploitation of the natural resources, and the development of a new economy where social emancipation and achievement are stressed more than the profit. It should also ensure territorial equity in that it links up cities and rural areas and provides services to all (Moreno et al., 2017).

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) must be implemented by local and subnational governments and requires adequate funding and human capital. National governments should facilitate metropolitan governance and ensure that the local and regional government participate in the reform process. Also, a vibrant and active civil society is crucial hence the need for appropriate and efficient participation instruments to enhance people's freedom and involvement of all the occupants (The Global Platform for the Right to the City, 2016).

2.3. The Definitions and Classifications of UGSs

Understanding the definitions and classifications of these spaces within the urban environment is essential for exploring the link between UGSs and peacebuilding. The term "urban green space" encompasses a diverse range of vegetated areas within the city limits (Taylor and Hochuli, 2017; Braubach et al., 2017). These spaces transcend the traditional image of expansive public parks, encompassing everything from grand public gardens to modest streetside planters. They can be meticulously designed landscapes or embrace a more natural aesthetic, mimicking native ecosystems with a focus on indigenous flora and informal pathways (Moulay et al., 2018).

Crucially, the distinction between UGSs and open spaces hinges on the presence of vegetation. Open spaces, such as town squares or vacant lots, offer a respite from the built environment but lack the ecological benefits associated with plants. Urban green areas however provide benefits. Plants act as a filter purifying the air we breathe by removing pollutants. Moreover, trees and vegetation play a role, in regulating city temperatures helping to counteract the heat island effect caused by heavy development (Wu et al., 2016; Vuckovic et al., 2017; Augusto et al., 2018; Sturiale and Scuderi, 2019).

2.3.1. Classifications of UGSs

When it comes to classifying UGSs there are various factors to consider beyond just their size and upkeep. Exploring these aspects allows for an understanding of these spaces.

Accessibility

One key aspect is the distinction between private and public areas. Public spaces like parks and community gardens serve as neutral meeting grounds where people from backgrounds can come together fostering unity and a sense of belonging (Wan et al., 2021). These shared areas encourage engagement and cooperation while providing residents with a connection to nature and community spirit (Rao, 2021). In contrast though, private green spaces may enhance well-being and create microclimates within cities but their restricted access could potentially widen social disparities (Włodarczyk-Marciniak, Sikorska, and Krauze, 2020; com, 2023).

Function

UGSs can also be categorised based on their function. Recreational parks designed for use with amenities such as sports fields, playgrounds, and walking trails promote exercise, social bonding and community engagement (Röbbel, 2016). Contemplative gardens, designed for relaxation and introspection may include soothing features such, as water elements tranquil seating spots and selected plants (Steele, 2023). These areas play a role in reducing stress promoting wellness and fostering a sense of tranquillity (Olszewska-Guizzo et al., 2022). Additionally, bioswales manage rainwater flow while introducing pockets of greenery; green roofs and vertical gardens on structures aid in insulation lowering energy usage and offering

homes for pollinators (Bowen and Lynch, 2017). Understanding how green spaces function helps tailor initiatives aimed at promoting peace to circumstances. Recreational parks could host sports tournaments or cultural events to support peace-building efforts; on the hand contemplative gardens are well suited for activities like reconciliation processes, meditation sessions or mindfulness workshops (Braubach et al., 2017).

Integration with the built environment

Although green roofs and vertical gardens are small scale projects individually, they make contributions to a city's overall green infrastructure. Green roofs assist in regulating building temperatures mitigating runoff issues and providing habitats for pollinators. Vertical gardens soften the appearance of building exteriors while enhancing air quality and establishing a link to nature for urban residents living in densely populated areas (Vicuña and Ormaza, 2021). Trees lining streets and sidewalks offer shade benefits, alongside pollution reduction advantages while enhancing the aesthetics of landscapes. Furthermore, they help maintain street temperatures and foster pedestrian friendly surroundings. All of the mentioned types of green spaces could be categorised based on their integration with the built environment (Kabisch et al., 2015; Yildirim et al., 2020).

By understanding these classifications, we can grasp the roles that UGSs play in promoting peace within cities. This knowledge enables targeted actions and the development of spaces that effectively support peacebuilding efforts, in settings. Ultimately an organised and strategically planned network of green spaces can serve as a valuable tool for enhancing social unity, and environmental health and creating a more peaceful urban atmosphere (Kruize et al., 2019; Dipeolu et al., 2020; Wan et al., 2021).

2.4. The Role of UGSs in Promoting Peace

The aftermath of conflicts can leave societies vulnerable. Reestablishing trust and nurturing coexistence present a challenge. Peacebuilding steps in to bridge this gap. It involves an endeavour encompassing all the methods and stages necessary to transform broken relationships into a foundation of trust (Castro-Sanchez and Rognvik, 2016; Neufeldt et al., 2020; John, 2024).

Traditional peacebuilding initiatives adopt a tiered approach. Lederach (1997) classifies these approaches as top-down out and bottom-up strategies. The top-down approach focuses on peace agreements negotiated among leaders with the assistance of international organisations such, as the United Nations (Caplan, 2020). Although this method can quickly stop conflicts by dealing with power struggles it may fail to recognise the role that local communities play in maintaining peace over time. An example of this is seen in Somalia's peace negotiations post-1992. These negotiations focused on high-level talks, among factions disregarding the needs and influence of communities resulting in a fragile peace that later collapsed (Vision of Humanity, n.d.; Bojicic-Dzelilovic and Martin, 2018; United Nation Volunteers, 2022).

On the other hand, the grassroots approach empowers communities as significant drivers of change. This community driven strategy relies on initiatives led by citizens as demonstrated in countries, like Ethiopia and the Philippines, where grassroots movements push leaders for resolutions. In Somalia, this approach aligns perfectly with the tradition of elders guiding reconciliation dialogues. Here, the community takes ownership of the peace process, fostering a more sustainable and inclusive peace. Community members could participate in workshops facilitated by elders, learning about forgiveness and conflict resolution skills. This empowers them to become active peacebuilders within their own social circles (John et al., 2018; Muluken, 2020; JumaAgaya, Ungaya and Okuto, 2021).

However, a truly sustainable peace requires a multifaceted approach that recognises the strengths of both top-down and bottom-up strategies. While top-down approaches can offer a swift ceasefire, reconciliation efforts must extend beyond elite negotiations. International actors can play a supportive role by providing resources and training, but ultimately, successful peacebuilding hinges on the commitment and collaboration of the communities themselves. Just as a strong building requires a solid foundation and supportive walls, lasting peace requires a combination of high-level agreements and a strong foundation built on community ownership and reconciliation (Collier et al., 2008; Verdeja, 2017; Gul et al., 2020).

UGSs, encompassing parks, community gardens, and even street trees, can function as significant peacebuilding tools within cities. This section explores how these spaces contribute to a sense of community, social interaction, recreation, and mental well-being –

all essential elements for fostering peace (Chiesure, 2004; Yildirim et al., 2020; Simpson et al., 2023).

2.4.1. Cultivating a sense of community and unity

One of the keyways in which UGSs contribute to creating a sense of community and unity is by providing a shared environment where residents can connect with one another on a personal level. Whether it's through participating in organised events, enjoying leisurely strolls, or simply relaxing in a peaceful setting, individuals have the chance to interact with their neighbours and build relationships based on common interests and experiences. This sense of connection and belonging helps to break down barriers between people and fosters a greater sense of solidarity within the community (Wu et al., 2023).

The positive influence of UGSs on community cohesion extends beyond shared events and celebrations. These spaces can act as catalysts for resident-driven initiatives, fostering a sense of collective ownership and responsibility. Community gardens, for example, empower residents to work together towards a common goal, cultivating a sense of shared purpose and accomplishment. The success of these projects fosters trust and collaboration, strengthening social bonds within the community (Tracey et al., 2020).

A great example of community led initiatives for UGSs could be seen in war-torn Mogadishu, where organisations like "Ubaxa Caasimadda" (The Flower of the Capital) used simple acts like tree planting and public art to beautify neglected areas (Arab.org, n.d.). These initiatives foster a sense of ownership and belonging, crucial steps in rebuilding a sense of community shattered by conflict. Young people become active participants in shaping their city's future, replacing feelings of despair with a sense of agency and hope (Shaw et al., 2014).

Similarly, Medellin, Colombia provides an illustration of how community driven change can unfold. The tragic killing of a ballet dancer in a park sparked a reaction among residents. Family and friends transformed the area into a platform for expression showcasing the influence of creativity (Betancur, 2016). This initiative led to the establishment of the "Butterfly Wings" Foundation in 2011. The foundation advocates for reimagining spaces as centres of artistry and social unity especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Their goal

is to reclaim areas from violence and inject them with a revitalised sense of purpose (Nail and Erazo, 2018). Nonetheless the beneficial impact of spaces can diminish when societal or economic challenges take root. Abandoned and unsafe public spots can evolve into hotspots for activities and social discord ultimately eroding the unity they were meant to foster (Schertz et al., 2021).

A study carried out in El Salvador in 2009 exemplifies this trend (Jiménez, 2010). The study revealed that an alarming 90% of participants felt unsafe in settings leading to a majority (63%) choosing to avoid these areas entirely. Once envisioned as locations for relaxation, public squares and parks were now viewed as centres for drug dealings and theft contributing substantially to an atmosphere of insecurity. The author infers that when safe and easily accessible recreational areas are lacking, young individuals become more vulnerable to the influence of organisations (Jiménez, 2010).

In disadvantaged neighbourhoods, UGSs can have an impact on community development because these areas often do not have high quality recreational facilities or green spaces available. Establishing a park or community garden can act as a catalyst for revitalising neighbourhoods. Residents who take pride in and feel ownership of their space are more inclined to contribute to maintaining safety and peace within their community. This investment in the environment nurtures a sense of shared responsibility and diminishes potential sources of social discord (Rao, 2021; Burt et al., 2021).

2.4.2. Encouraging social interactions and dialogue

UGSs play a role in promoting interactions and discussions among communities. These spaces can be purposely designed to foster dialogue and community bonding. For example, incorporating elements like seating areas arranged in circles, community notice boards and specific game zones such as chess or ping pong tables can naturally create opportunities for conversations and connections. Playgrounds designed for people of all ages offering features to accommodate different abilities can help create connections between generations and promote social inclusivity (Canedo-Garcia et al., 2017; Jarrott et al., 2021).

UGSs also have the potential to initiate conversations that address tensions within communities effectively. These green areas serve as grounds for hosting guided discussions

on sensitive subjects. Community leaders can utilise parks or gardens to organise workshops on conflict resolution or peace dialogues encouraging dialogue and collaborative problem solving among groups. For instance, a park could facilitate a conversation on gang violence bringing together residents, law enforcement officials and former gang members in a setting to exchange perspectives and brainstorm solutions. By offering a platform for communication and empathy building, green spaces play a role in healing conflicts and nurturing a more harmonious future for the community. The ability to bridge divides and cultivate understanding is fundamental in laying the groundwork for enduring peace (Jennings and Bamkole, 2019; Hoffman, 2019; Dipeolu et al., 2020).

2.4.3. Providing opportunities for recreational activities

Promoting recreational activities in urban environments by supporting physical exercise and outdoor pursuits is another advantage of UGSs. Spaces like designated walking paths, jogging trails and sports facilities play a role in promoting physical activity, which is key to maintaining good health and lowering the risk of chronic illnesses (Twohig-Bennett and Jones, 2018; Braubach et al., 2017; Kato-Huerta and Genneletti, 2023).

The versatility of spaces in catering to recreational needs holds significant importance in densely populated urban settings. In areas where access to spaces is limited parks serve as essential outlets for residents to break free from the confines of their homes and apartments and participate in physical activities. This not only enhances well-being but also helps reduce stress levels and release pent up energy leading to a more serene and peaceful neighbourhood environment (Lackey et al., 2019; Wicks, 2022).

A study conducted across 32 communities in Australia revealed a link between easy access to parks and other recreational areas with increased engagement in physical activities. Particularly young adults aged 18-35 reported levels of activity when they had convenient access to such spaces (Cerin et al., 2008).

2.4.4. Enhancing mental well-being and reducing stress

Research indicates that immersing oneself in nature can have an impact on the nervous system. Natural surroundings offer an escape from city life allowing people to reconnect

with nature and experience moments of peace amidst the hustle and bustle of living. Simple activities such as strolling through a park listening to birds chirping or admiring trees can lead to lower blood pressure, heart rate and reduced levels of the stress hormone cortisol. This physiological response contributes to feelings of tranquillity and reduced anxiety, supporting mental well-being which is crucial for fostering harmony (Turner-Skoff and Cavender, 2019; Gear et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2023).

Moreover, studies suggest that having access to green spaces can help mitigate the effects of stressful situations. A comprehensive study conducted in the Netherlands by Van den Berg et al. (2007) revealed that individuals living near green areas reported lower stress levels after facing adversity compared to those with limited exposure to nature. This suggests that exposure to nature may offer protection for mental health. Similarly, Barton and Pretty (2010) carried out research in the UK highlighting the advantages of activities in green areas on mood and self-confidence. These discoveries emphasise how green spaces can help enhance mental strength and emotional well-being.

The mental health advantages of city spaces are especially vital in neighbourhoods dealing with economic challenges. People living in these areas often face increased levels of tension due to issues from poverty, joblessness and violence. Access to green spaces offers a retreat from these stressors and a secure setting to promote mental health (Henderson-Wilson and Weerasuriya, 2017; Bloomfield, 2017; Kingsley, 2019).

Green spaces also have a role in addressing trauma. For communities healing from violence or conflict, exposure to nature can offer a feeling of safety and protection. The healing aspects of nature can aid individuals in processing experiences and fostering recovery. Engaging in activities such as nature strolls, gardening workshops or organising programs tailored for individuals struggling with PTSD in community parks can provide a space for connecting with nature and one another (Poulsen et al., 2018; Bettmann et al., 2021; Kuhfuß et al., 2021).

2.5. The Role of UGSs in Facilitating Reconciliation

Reconciliation lies at the core of the peace building journey. It breaks down the hostility and distrust that fuel cycles of violence paving the way for enduring peace rather than just a

fragile ceasefire. The importance of reconciliation lies in promoting empathy and understanding, enabling adversaries to view each other through a lens of humanity rather than hostility (Seu and Cameron, 2013).

In communities in Africa, their traditions which are rooted in resolving conflicts offer tools for promoting peace. Respected elders play a role within their societies commanding both respect and trust. Leveraging this capital, they mediate disagreements and guide conflicting parties towards reconciliation efforts. Elders from a community torn apart by conflict are typically held in regard by all factions and they typically host peace negotiations under a designated tree – a familiar and symbolic setting that encourages impartiality. In these discussions the elders serve as mediators facilitating dialogues that promote empathy and understanding to bridge divides. This strategy builds upon established frameworks fostering feelings of legitimacy and involvement in the peacebuilding endeavour (Tafese, 2016; Irene, 2018; Muluken, 2020).

UGSs can also function as reconciliation grounds within cities that suffer from conflict and divide between residents. This section explores how these spaces act as neutral and inclusive spaces for dialogue, encourage cultural exchange and promote economic opportunities and community development which are important components for facilitating reconciliation (Mercy Corps, 2011; Altpeter, 2016; Devine et al., 2020).

2.5.1. Neutral and inclusive spaces for dialogue

Public spaces in general play a significant role in facilitating reconciliation and fostering dialogue among diverse communities within urban environments. In a study conducted in Indonesia's Ambon and Poso it was concluded that public spaces hold immense potential as platforms for fostering reconciliation and disseminating messages of peace (Sari and Azeharie, 2020). This stems from their inherent function as facilitators of interaction and social integration. Schools, markets, and coffee shops – to name a few examples – provide neutral ground where individuals from diverse backgrounds can come together. This regular interaction fosters a sense of common ground and understanding, which can be crucial in the aftermath of conflict. Additionally, public spaces can be strategically utilised to spread messages of peacebuilding. Community leaders, artists, and educators can leverage these

spaces to promote tolerance, forgiveness, and a shared vision for a peaceful future (Sari and Azeharie, 2020; Elfversson et al., 2023).

Furthermore, green spaces can provide a safe haven for marginalised communities who may feel ostracised in other public spaces. Community gardens, for instance, can offer a platform for these groups to come together, share experiences, and build social connections. This sense of security and belonging empowers individuals to engage in dialogue and participate in the broader peacebuilding process (Draper and Freedman, 2010; Alaimo et al., 2010; Veen et al., 2015; Tracey et al., 2020).

Additionally, the design and layout of UGSs can play a role in facilitating reconciliation by promoting inclusivity and accessibility for all members of the community. Through incorporating features such as wheelchair-accessible pathways, multilingual signage, and gender-inclusive facilities, these spaces ensure that everyone feels welcome and valued, regardless of their background or identity. UGSs also help to foster a sense of belonging and acceptance through creating environments that are designed with the needs of diverse communities in mind which in turn could lay the foundation for genuine reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts (Berto, 2014; Braubach et al., 2017; Kingsley, 2019).

2.5.2. Encouraging cultural exchange and understanding

UGSs can become microcosms of cultural exchange, fostering understanding not just through passive interaction, but through active celebration of diversity. Green Parks, for example, can serve as a place to showcase traditional planting techniques or incorporate culturally significant plants alongside familiar favourites. This not only beautifies the space but also provides opportunities for knowledge sharing and appreciation of different agricultural practices. Cultural festivals held in parks can showcase music, dance, and cuisine from various backgrounds, offering a vibrant platform for residents to experience the richness and depth of other cultures (Hogan, 2003). These exchanges have the power to challenge stereotypes, build empathy, and create a shared sense of identity among community members. The presence of cultural landmarks or public art installations within UGSs can also act as conversation starters, inviting people to learn about the histories and narratives represented (Gouveia, 2023).

Green spaces can also serve as open-air museums, showcasing historical landmarks or public art installations that represent different cultural narratives. Educational programs offered within parks, such as guided tours focusing on the cultural significance of specific plants or historical markers, can further deepen understanding and appreciation of the city's diverse heritage (Staub, 1992; Zhang et al., 2019).

El Salvador and South Africa, grappling with the long shadow of conflict for decades, offer compelling case studies. Despite significant resources poured into traditional peacebuilding efforts, the potential of UGSs remains largely untapped. However, projects like "Afternoons Together" in El Salvador stand as beacons of hope. This civil society initiative utilises public parks as platforms for cultural events promoting peaceful coexistence. The results have been remarkable, with a significant decrease in crime rates in targeted areas (Amuprev in Nail and Erazo, 2018; Larson and Ogletree, 2019). These findings suggest that public parks can be more than passive spaces; they can be catalysts for positive social interaction, fostering a sense of shared identity and trust within communities (Shepley et al., 2019).

2.5.3. Promoting economic opportunities and community development

The obvious aspect of the economic benefits of UGSs lay in the rise of property values and attraction of tourism (Gies, 2005). Well-designed parks and public spaces can act as incubators for innovation and entrepreneurship. Open-air markets held in parks provide a platform for local artisans and food vendors to showcase their products, fostering the growth of small businesses and stimulating the local economy (Flyr and L. Koontz, 2023). Additionally, community gardens can serve as training grounds for urban agriculture initiatives, providing individuals with the knowledge and experience to launch their own small businesses or secure jobs in urban farming enterprises (Ohmer et al., 2009; Cochran and Minaker, 2020).

Additional ways in which UGSs promote economic opportunities is by attracting visitors and tourists to the area. Whether it's through the allure of scenic parks, botanical gardens, or cultural landscapes, these green spaces draw people from near and far to explore and enjoy their offerings. As visitors spend money on parking, concessions, souvenirs, and other amenities, they inject new revenue into the local economy, supporting businesses and

generating income for residents (Spencer and Nsiah, 2013; De Bruyn et al., 2018; Ayu and Diswandi, 2023).

Moreover, the presence of well-maintained and accessible UGSs can enhance property values and attract investment in surrounding neighbourhoods (Klingberg et al., 2017; Yildirim et al., 2020; Kato-Huerta and Geneletti, 2023). Research has shown that proximity to parks and green spaces is often associated with higher property values and increased demand for housing. As property values rise, homeowners and businesses may see an increase in their equity and investment returns, further contributing to the economic prosperity of the community (Gies, 2005).

As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, Mogadishu faces a significant deficit of parks and green spaces relative to its population density. This lack coincides with the recent emergence of youth gangs responsible for a rise in crime, including robberies (Chonka et al., 2023). A compelling link can be drawn between the absence of positive outlets for young people's energy and time and their involvement in criminal activity. The creation of well-designed green spaces could offer more than just recreational benefits. It has the potential to contribute to a decrease in unemployment by providing opportunities for community-based projects and activities, thereby channelling youthful energy into positive pursuits (Kwon et al., 2013).

South Africa's experience following apartheid provides another valuable insight. Two initiatives demonstrate the power of green spaces to bridge social divides (Masuku, 2015; Safer Spaces, 2016). The Community Work Programme addressed unemployment by offering temporary jobs in park maintenance, empowering individuals while they searched for permanent positions. The Helenvale regeneration project tackled safety concerns, fostering a sense of community ownership over public spaces and infrastructure. Both initiatives aimed at revitalising neglected areas, promoting a sense of shared responsibility and the ability for residents to reclaim control over their environment (Carmona, 2018; Lu et al., 2021; McPhearson et al., 2021).

3. MOGADISHU'S HISTORY, CONFLICT AND URBAN STRUCTURE

3.1. Introduction

Established in 1960, the Republic of Somalia (Figure 3.1.) formed through the union of former British Somaliland and Italian Somalia, after both of them became independent separately. Spanning 637,540 square kilometres (Nelson, 1982) and housing approximately 17 million people (The World Bank, 2022), the country shares its borders with the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti (Mbugua, 2006). However, the Pan-Somali independence movement aspires to a more expansive territory, exceeding 1 million square kilometres. This envisioned realm includes Djibouti, a former French colony, and substantial regions currently administered by Ethiopia and Kenya—specifically, the Ogaden and Hawd, and the Northeastern Frontier, respectively. The emblem of the republic (Figure 3.2.) prominently features a five-pointed star, symbolising the collective dream of a 'Greater Somalia,' emerging from the unification of these five distinct territories (Zoppi, 2015).

A pivotal turning point in Somalia's history occurred in 1969 when a military coup transformed the nation into a 'democratic republic.' This political shift aligned Somalia with the Soviet bloc until 1978. It was in that period that President Mohamed Siyad Barre initiated a brutal conflict against Ethiopian troops, assisted by Cuban forces, with the aim of conquering the Ogaden and Hawd plateau. Unfortunately, the Somalis faced substantial setbacks, resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of men and the abandonment of advanced weaponry supplied by the USSR (Ododa, 1985). As a result of this conflict, there were 1.3 million refugees in the country in 1979 and the credibility of the government that took the role of the protector of the Pan-Somali nationalism was questioned (Ahmed, 1999).

Fast forward to the contemporary landscape, Somalia stands in a new geopolitical context. Presently, military support flows from Turkey and the African Union, reflecting the evolving alliances and partnerships shaping the nation's trajectory (Farah, 2023; The Defense Post, 2024).



Figure 3.1. Somalia and Mogadishu (Rift Valley Institute, 2017)

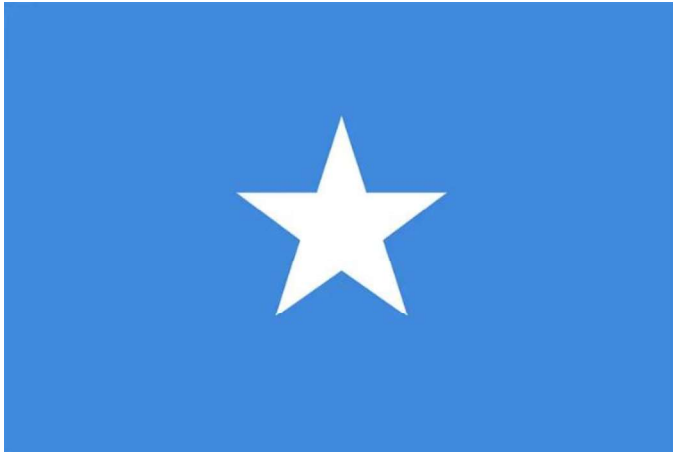


Figure 3.2. The Flag of Somalia (Smith, 2023)

3.2. Overview of the Conflict in Mogadishu

Following the ousting of Siyaad Barre's military rule in January 1991, Mogadishu encountered various phases of insecurity. The militias that took control of the city started to crack and battle over how to share the power. As a result, people avoiding the war were displaced and they started to seek refuge in areas where their clan controlled. Unfortunately, these conflicts occurred simultaneously with a drought that caused a great humanitarian crisis in which the first humanitarian intervention of the United Nations came into place (Bakonyi and Chonka, 2023). In the early 2000s, warlords with armed militias divided the capital into two, relying on clan elders and militias for security (Elmi and Barise, 2006). Despite the establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG) in Arta, Djibouti in 2000, it struggled to assert control, particularly failing to take over Villa Somalia from General Mohamed Farah Aideed's militias (Farah, 2016). Reconciliation conferences organised by IGAD, led by Ethiopia and Kenya, involved various stakeholders including warlords which at the end sought the election of Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as the President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004 after over two years of conferences in Eldoret and Embgathi in Kenya (Barnes and Hassan, 2007).

In the same era, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) emerged as an alternative form of governance challenging warlords. This loose organisation of Sharia courts, originating in Mogadishu, expanded across south-central Somalia by 2006. Fondly remembered by many in the capital, the ICU effectively provided local security, marginalised warlords, and reduced common robbery and violence at city roadblocks (Deforche, 2013).

Around late 2006, the ICU's attempt to seize Baidoa, the interim seat of the foreign-backed TFG, led to Abdullahi Yusuf seeking Ethiopian intervention. Ethiopia, concerned about an Islamist government at its border and supported by the US amid the Global War on Terror, promptly invaded Somalia. Ethiopian forces defeated the ICU from Mogadishu to regions like Beledweyne to Kismayo (Carter and Guard, 2015). Their extensive security operations, marked by indiscriminate mortar fire, terrorised the civilian population, especially in areas like Bakara market, where ICU forces sought refuge. In this period, Mogadishu residents endured death, injury, property loss, and displacement to the city's outskirts or abroad (Amnesty International, 2008).

Following the break-up of the ICU, a militia called Al Shabaab emerged as a counter-resistance to the Ethiopian forces and successfully reclaiming significant south-central territory. After the election of President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed (a former leader of the ICU) in 2009 in Djibouti, his government with the support of AMISOM, an African Union 'peacekeeping' mission, engaged in a battle against Al Shabaab, ultimately driving them out of the capital in late 2011. By 2012, Mogadishu hosted the internationally acknowledged yet fragile Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), which, under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud, embraced the New Deal Compact in 2013, focusing on peacebuilding efforts (Chonka et al., 2023).

The subsequent years saw slow progress and it wasn't until May 2017, three months after President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo's election, that a political agreement on the National Security Architecture and an international security pact materialised in London. Unfortunately, implementation stumbled due to strained relations between the FGS in the capital and emerging regional Federal Member States, as highlighted by Somali Dialogue Platform (2024).

The tensions between the federal government and the federal states heightened during President Farmaajo's term from 2017 to 2022, impeding national political reconciliation and destabilising the delicate political settlement established in 2012. This discord not only delayed reconciliation progress but also jeopardised the prospect of holding the much needed one-person-one-vote elections (Chonka et al., 2023).

3.3. Mogadishu Throughout the Years

Mogadishu, situated on Somalia's southeastern coast in the Horn of Africa, lies at 2°4' north latitude and 45°22' east longitude and currently is made up of 16 districts (Figure 3.3.) (Adawe et al., 2024). In the 19th century, it served as one of several harbours on the extensive sandy coast connecting the Arabian Peninsula to Zanzibar (Alpers, 1983).

In 1950, Mogadishu housed around 47,000 people, a number that grew to 66,000 by 1955 during the Italian Trust Administration. By the end of the trusteeship in 1960, the population reached 94,000 (Abdulle et al., 2016). Presently, accurate population figures for Mogadishu are unavailable. In 2014, the United Nations Population Funds (UNPF) estimated it at 1,650,227 (Table 3.1.), but former Mayor Hassan Mohamed Hussein Mungab contested this, asserting a population of 3.6 million for the Banaadir Region, where Mogadishu is located (UN-Habitat, 2016). The official website of the Banaadir Regional Administration- which is the administrative body that governs Mogadishu and covers the same area as Mogadishu- states that the population of the city is 2.5 million (Banaadir Regional Administration, n.d.).

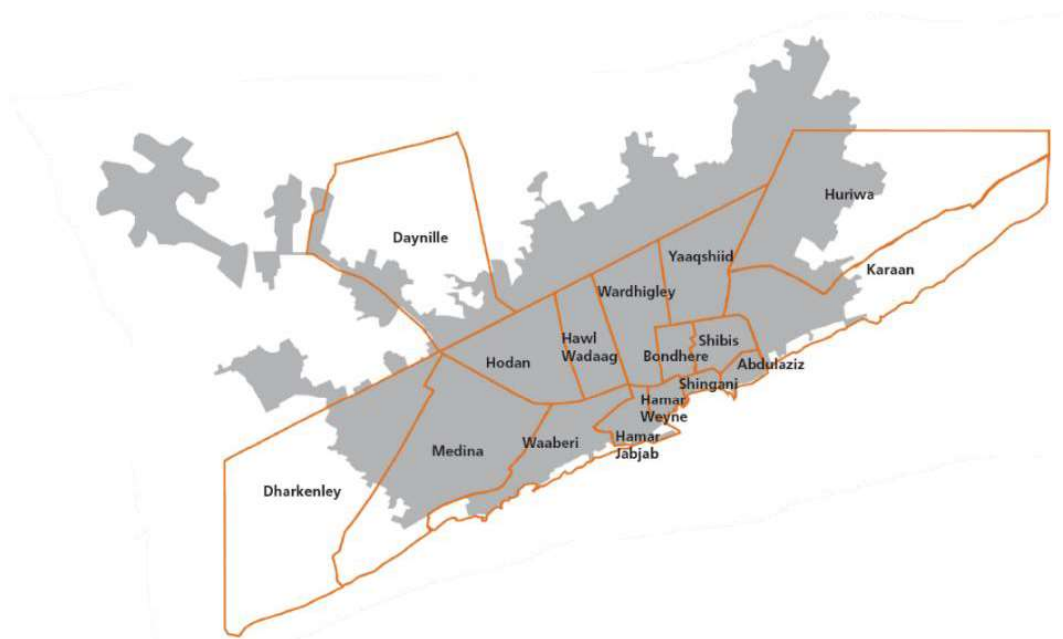


Figure 3.3. Districts of Mogadishu (UN-Habitat, 2016).

Table 3.1. Population estimates of Mogadishu in 2014 (UN-Habitat, 2016).

District	2014 pop est. UNPF	Area HA	Density people/HA
Abdi-Aziz	40,566	98	414
Bondhere	111,964	141	794
Deynille	60,006	1,954	31
Dharkenley	75,047	2,218	34
Hamar Jab-Jab	66,529	189	352
Hamar-Weyne	79,307	86	922
Hawl Wadaag	71,625	391	183
Hodan	131,094	636	206
Huriwa	79,510	2,197	36
Kaaraan	225,548	1,506	150
Shibis	146,038	209	699
Shingaani	44,622	55	811
Waaberi	93,141	599	155
Medina	91,760	1,500	61
Wardhigley	98,186	533	184
Yaaqshiid	235,284	583	404
Mogadishu (total)	1,650,227	12,895	128

At the start, the city of Mogadishu was chosen to be next to a reef formation which served as an anchorage and the original buildings were made on a bit high promontory for defensive purposes (Puzo, 1972). Presently, it is close to the potentially high-yielding Middle and Lower Shabelle (Besteman and Cassanelli, 2003) in which two pivotal roads that go through Afgooye and Bal'ad converge within Mogadishu (Figure 3.4.). These roads serve as vital trade arteries, facilitating economic connections to Ethiopia and Kenya (Chonka et al., 2023). The hilly terrain diverts the road to Kismaayo away from the coastal path, redirecting it through Afgooye and inadvertently transforming it into a bustling corridor with expanding settlements. Urban sprawl is expected to persist in this region, giving rise to a network of villages (The World Bank, 2020).

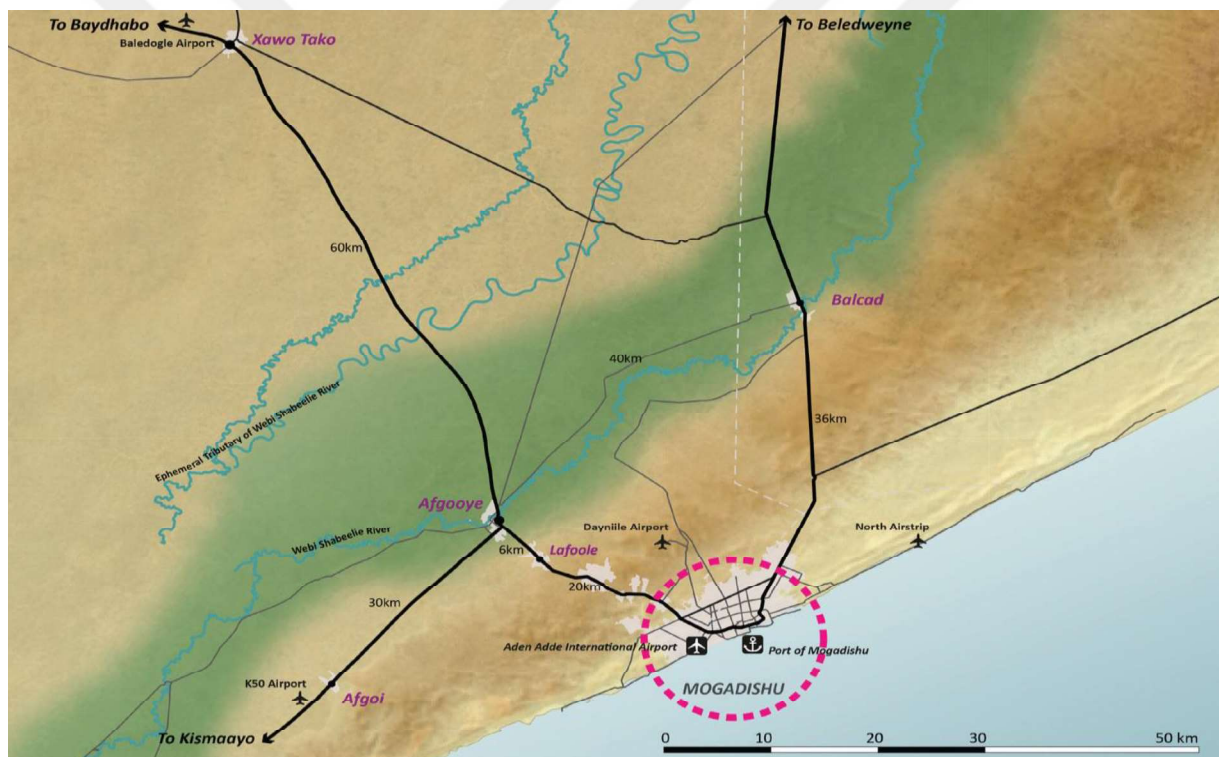


Figure 3.4. Mogadishu in the region (UN-Habitat, 2016).

Despite the optimistic trajectory of urban expansion, the lasting impact of the civil war continues to impede economic resurgence. The once-operational irrigation schemes crucial for agriculture now went out of operation due to insufficient maintenance and investments (ICED Facility, 2019). The lifeblood of Mogadishu, the Afgooye and Bal'ad corridors, not only links the city to fertile hinterlands but also forms international conduits connecting Mogadishu to Ethiopia (Katala and Chiegina, 2019) and Kenya (Mmari, 2013). Any

disruption or congestion along these corridors would directly jeopardise Mogadishu's economic prosperity, underscoring the significance of these routes.

Furthermore, the challenges stemming from the civil wars manifest in the dilapidated state of the roads connecting Afgooye and Bal'ad to Mogadishu, severely hindering inter-city transportation. The assistance of the Turkish government has played a pivotal role in rebuilding both internal and external tarmac roads, rejuvenating crucial infrastructural projects (Yusuf et al., 2022). Notably, a Turkish company successfully completed the Mogadishu-Afgooye tarmac road with funds from the Qatari government, while ongoing construction efforts are underway for the Mogadishu-Bal'ad-Jowhar Road, reflecting a testament to the collaborative efforts fostering the city's revival (ICED Facility, 2019).

Mogadishu's intricate narrative unfolds through four distinctive sectors, each painting a vivid picture of the city's historical journey. At the heart lies Hamar Weyne, the city's genesis around 900 AD, credited to Arab founders. This original enclave, nestled along the Indian Ocean, showcases structures crafted from locally sourced coral blocks, exhibiting a traditional Arab aesthetic replete with archways, latticework, and elaborate wooden doors. Its narrow, labyrinthine streets, predominantly sandy or block-laden, serve as pedestrian havens, weaving a tapestry of complexity for non-residents. Amidst this architectural tapestry, intermittent open spaces host vibrant markets and commerce. Adjacent to Hamar Weyne, the district of Shangani mirrors its predecessor's irregular street arrangement and is adorned with numerous mosques of diverse ages and sizes (Figure 3.5.) (Scikei, 2017).



Figure 3.5. Mogadishu before 1920 (Arecchi, 1984).

In a chronological stride, the urban landscape extends to the period between 1900 and 1934, characterised by Italian colonial administration. This phase births a sector exuding colonial charm, with wide vehicular streets, intersections, and palm-fringed sidewalks. The layout adopts an angled grid pattern, its streets paved but showing signs of wear (Figure 3.6.). Within this zone, fragments of Portuguese influence linger, notably in the form of a resolute lighthouse tower (Puzo, 1972).

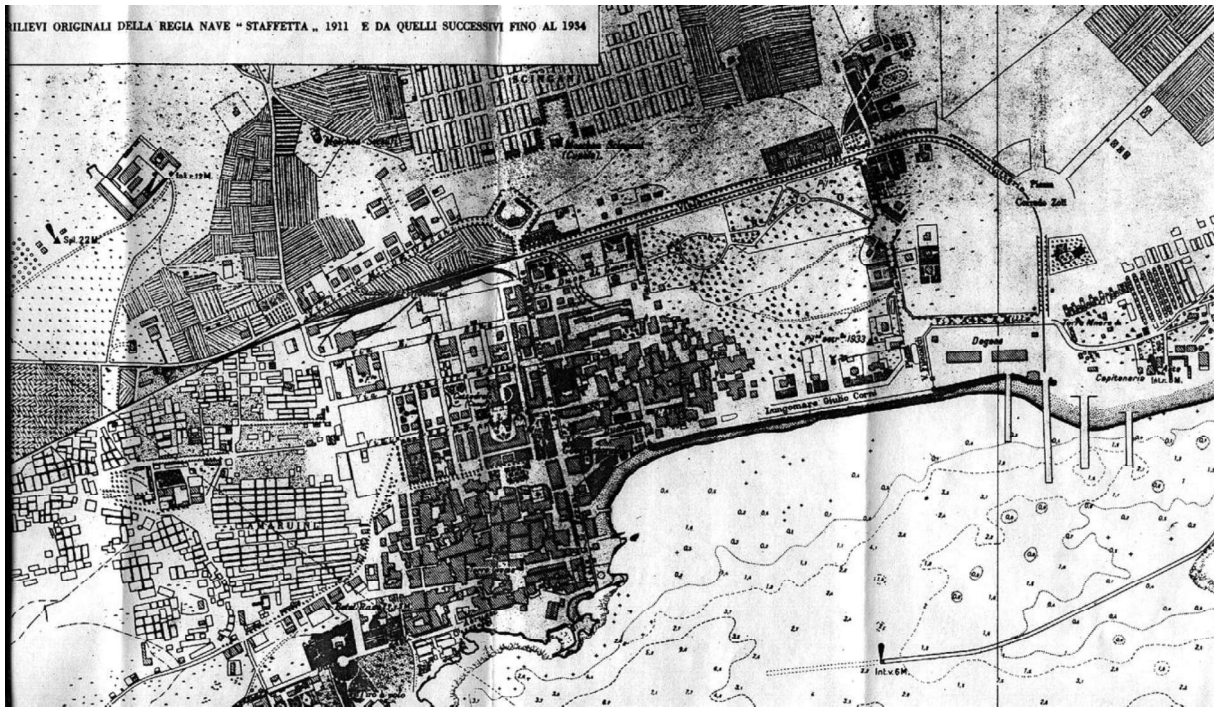


Figure 3.6. Mogadishu 1920-1940 (Arecchi, 1984).

The narrative evolves further as the city experiences its first urban expansion towards the north at the end of the 1930s. Nestled within the dunes enveloping the urban centre, this growth extends through regulated subdivisions, starting with Shibis and Bondheere villages, indicative of Mogadishu's indigenous quarters. The post-colonial socialist era, commencing after independence in 1960, shapes the majority of the commercial city outside the colonial area and Hamar. Here, drab Soviet-style block buildings, several stories high, share space with diverse architectural remnants, including large Arab-style residences enclosed within walled compounds (Unruh, 2002).

This evolving urban panorama extends to the present, with Mogadishu's southern parts housing the international airport and modern deepwater port facilities (Figure 3.7.). Over the last three decades, however, planned city extensions have been notably absent. Beyond the recognised boundaries, a sprawling, unplanned expanse unfolds, nearly three-quarters the size of the planned area (Hassan et al., 2023). Toward the outskirts, settlements take shape from local materials, creating a mosaic of residences and shops (Unruh, 2002). The streets remain sandy, and the primary mode of travel is very limited public transportation (Adam, 2023).

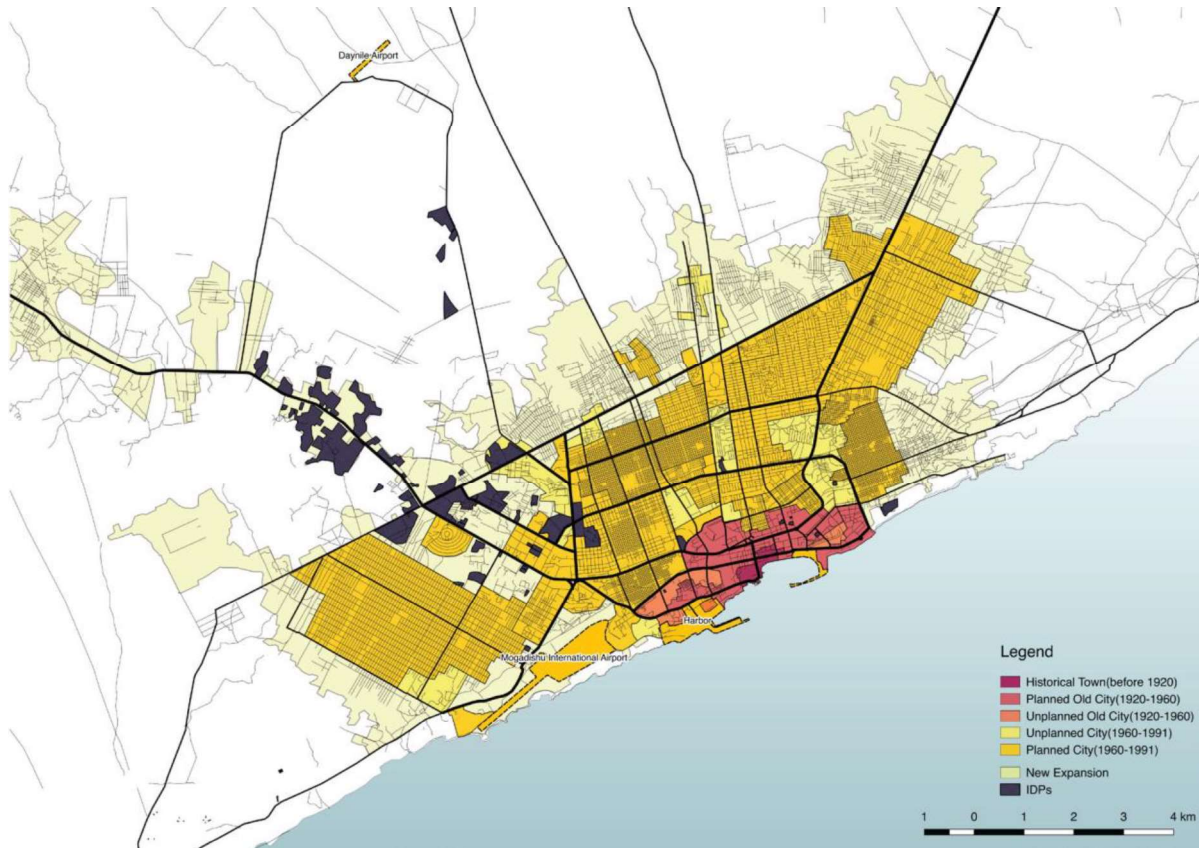


Figure 3.7. Chronological map of Mogadishu (UN-Habitat, 2016).

3.4. Urban Planning in Mogadishu

Near Hamar Weyne, the construction of governmental buildings and a cathedral marked the first big projects made by the Italians in the 1920s. Before that, in 1910, building endeavours outside the city boundaries were also carried out by them during its colonisation of the city. After seeing the number of projects carried out by them without direction, the colonial governor at the time ordered the preparation of the first town plan of the city in 1929 (Figure 3.8.) (Puzo, 1972).

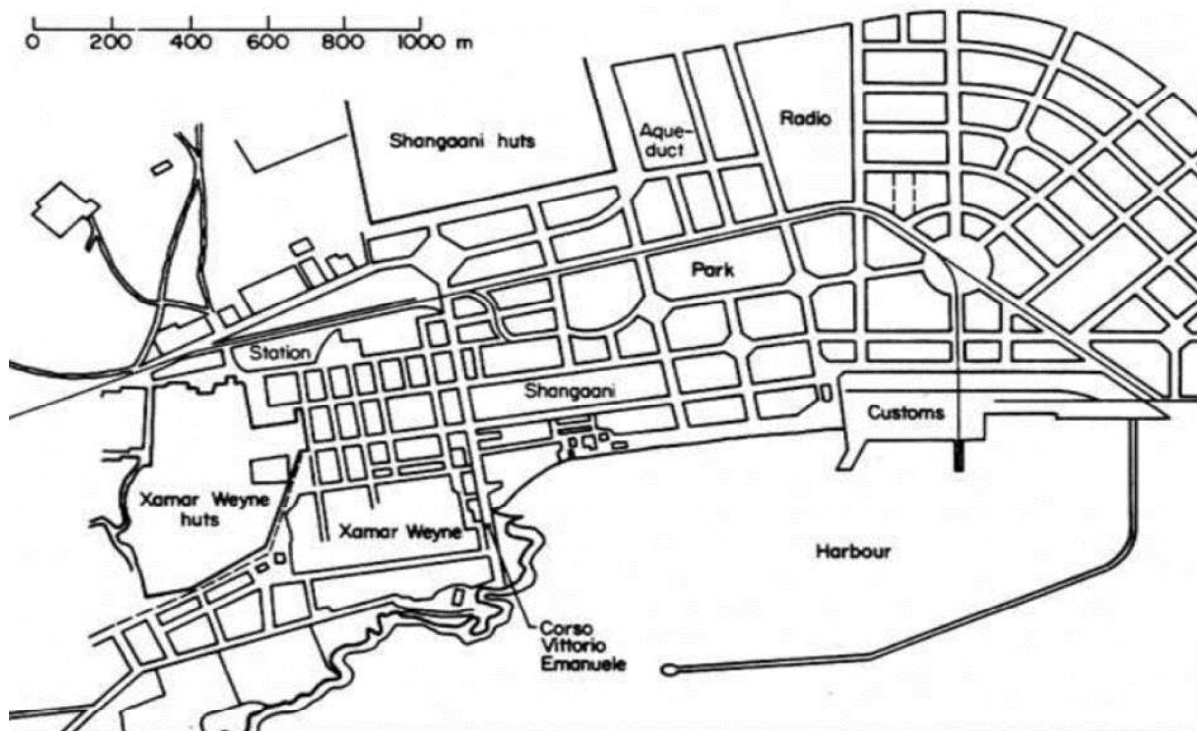


Figure 3.8. Mogadishu's city plan by Comi (1929) (Arecchi, 1984).

This proposed plan had a grid layout (Earle, 2021), necessitating the demolition and clearance of the existing land. The proposed transformation involved creating a commercial and service hub for the colonial city near the harbour, while the indigenous population would be relocated to the periphery, residing in humble huts (Arecchi, 1984).

The narrative evolves in 1937, witnessing the formulation and approval (1938) of a second town plan, eventually accompanied by adaptations to the original road network. Engineer Tuccimei offered a revised version, albeit unofficially endorsed. Despite the persistent plan to overhaul the pre-Italian occupation quarters, the ambitious project faced postponement due to exorbitant costs and a lack of private ground-tax pressure. Consequently, only partial implementation unfolded, materialising in the form of a wide street cutting through the Shangaani district (Scikei, 2017).

Back in 1960, Mogadishu, at its independence, held the promise of blossoming into a capital city, anchored by the rich cultural references of Hamar Weyne and Shangaani at its core. The cityscape featured municipally owned land, instantly available for development. However, a misguided attempt to transplant a European city model onto Somali societal

dynamics, coupled with a post-independence population boom (Figure 3.9.), stifled the city's true potential (Unruh, 2002).

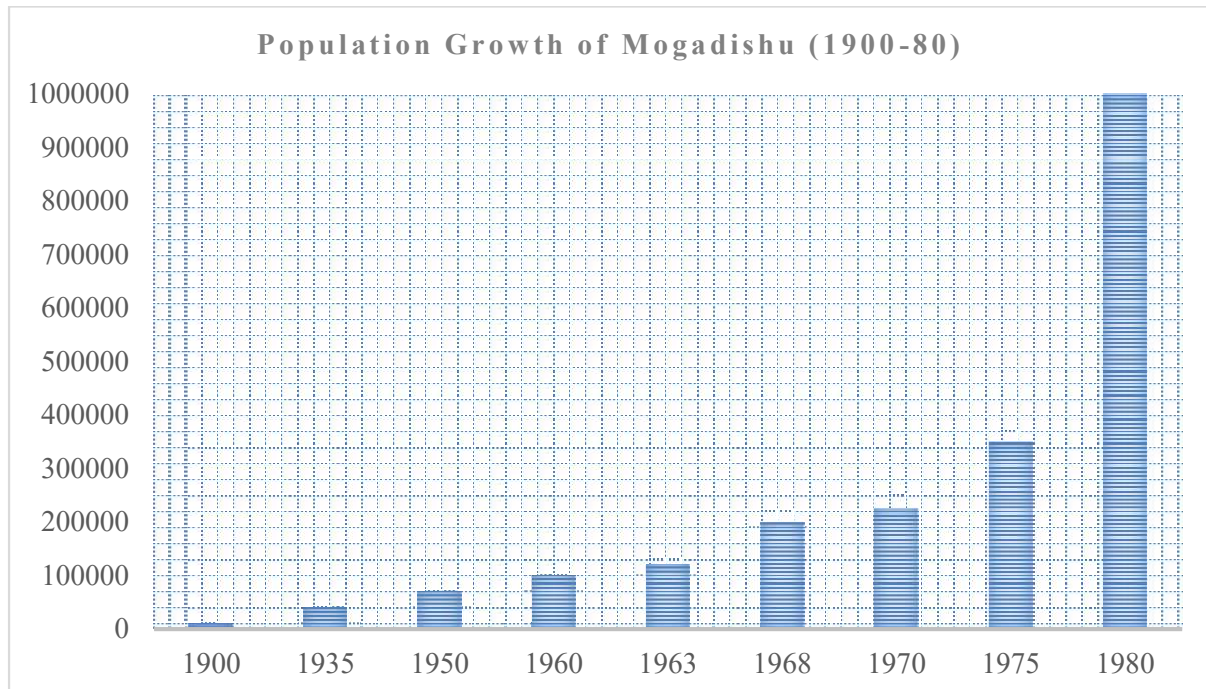


Figure 3.9. Population growth of Mogadishu (1900-1980) (Arecchi, 1984).

In 1962 the UN with the help of the Somali Government embarked on a project for cheap housing. The subsequent creation of the National Housing Agency (NHA) in 1965 helped the construction of 55 affordable apartment buildings west of Mogadishu. In the same period, the NHA developed 215 urbanised plots, trading them at approximately \$1 per square metre. The population more than doubled in 1970 compounded by natural calamities, conflicts, and a lack of strategic planning, propelled increasing waves of families with minimal resources into the immigration to the city. The outskirts experienced an annual population growth rate exceeding 10%, leading to critical issues such as congestion, inadequate services, and poor hygiene (National Housing Agency, 1965, as cited in Arecchi, 1984).

The revolutionary government, taking charge in 1969, faced the task of orderly capital development. In 1970, the city covered 1,500 hectares, likely expanded to 7,000-8,000 hectares in the 1980s. A census in 1970 showed 10,000 permanent dwellings housing 74,000 people and nearly 20,000 temporary dwellings with 149,000 inhabitants. With less than 200,000 people in permanent dwellings, the imbalance exacerbates urban congestion and

outskirts decay, necessitating an urgent, large-scale, low-cost housing construction program (PADCO, 1983; Arecchi, 1984).

After gaining independence, the town's growth involved widespread temporary land allocation by the local government. Residents constructed their homes or shanties based on their economic status, leading to gradual housing deterioration. A shantytown expanded around Mogadishu, enveloping the capital along the dune belt and filling spaces within the urban area. Moreover, in 1970, a Five-Year Plan proposed urban development north of Mogadishu, aiming to double the urban area and accommodate 250,000 new inhabitants. The plan included residential settlements, industrial establishments, and a 10-kilometre highway enclosing the town. However, it lacked a defined urban form for individual sectors (Puzo, 1972).

During the period from 1972 to 1974, a noteworthy housing initiative unfolded in the Case Popolari neighbourhood, witnessing the construction of 300 apartments in a new quarter named the 'African Village.' These apartments, priced at over \$2,500, reflected a broader trend where urban improvements predominantly benefited the middle class, given their ability to meet the initial financial requirements (National Housing Agency, 1972, as cited in Arecchi, 1984).

The 1970s also witnessed significant infrastructural developments, including the construction of a deep-water harbour and an offer from Italian and German cooperation organisations proposing a modern town plan for Mogadishu and its environs, pending a final decision (Figure 3.10.). Additionally, a survey of urban areas was conducted using US satellite photographs, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the evolving urban landscape (PADCO, 1983).

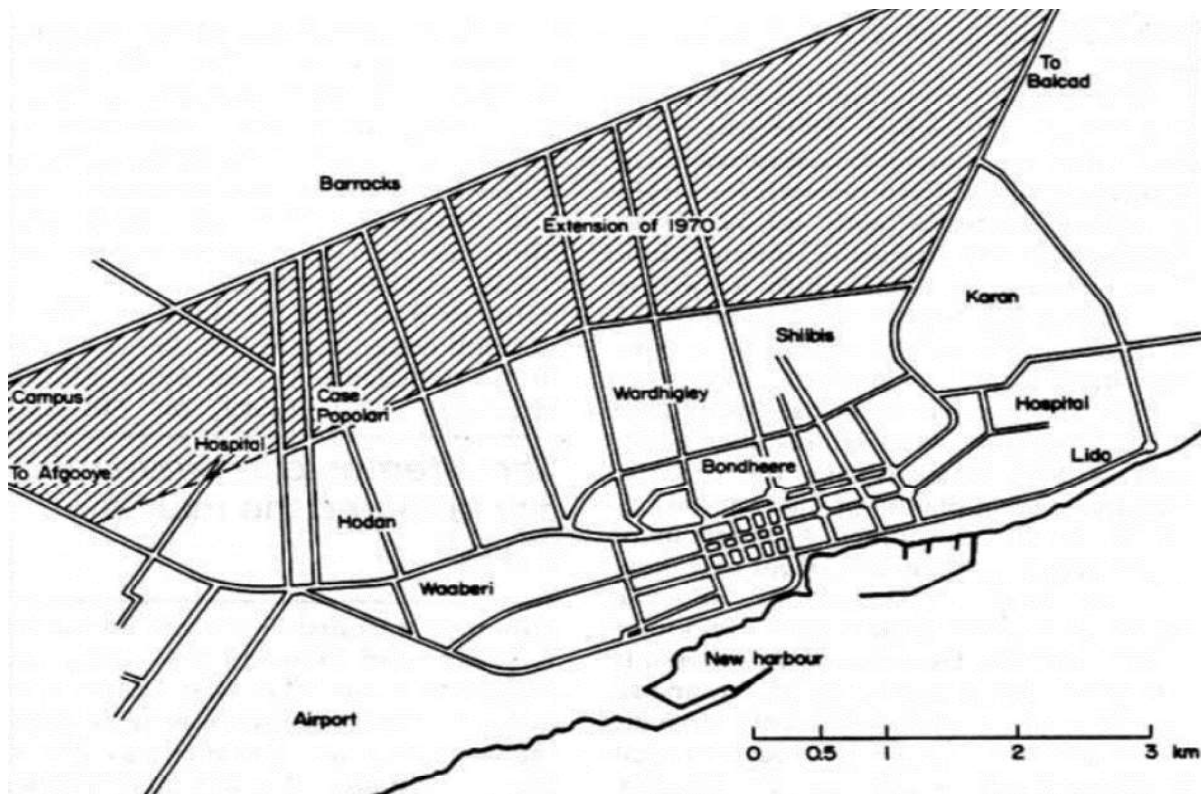


Figure 3.10. Expansion of Mogadishu in 1970 (Arecchi, 1984).

Fast forward to 2016, where contemporary planning initiatives took shape through the collaboration of the UN Joint Programme on Local Governance and the Banadir Regional Administration. Within a planning horizon of 20 years, these initiatives aimed to outline city-wide development scenarios, emphasising principles like inclusion, social diversity, a compact city form, and cost-effective development. These efforts reflected a continued commitment to shaping the urban future of Mogadishu (UN-Habitat, 2016).

In the initial phase, a compact city plan emerged, pinpointing six key development zones to receive targeted funds, localised plans, and infrastructure investments (Figure 3.11.). Strategic expansion areas contiguous with the existing city were identified, varying from residential spaces to economic investment zones. This approach formalises and guides the city's growth, capitalising on existing public facilities like Bakaara Market, the University of Mogadishu, Somali National University, and Mogadishu Stadium. Integrating this with the revitalisation of the former industrial cluster along Industrial Road presents ample job opportunities close to these new areas. Upgrading north-south roads ensures accessibility, contributing to cost-effective infrastructure. However, addressing land ownership concerns

through collective bargaining is crucial to success, ultimately preventing urban sprawl in environmentally sensitive hilly regions (Petrella et al., 2020).



Figure 3.11. Compact city scenario (Petrella et al., 2020).

As a second strategy, a satellite towns concept materialised, endorsing the development of surrounding towns with financial backing and enhanced transportation (Figure 3.12.). This globally utilised approach accommodates urban population growth, aiming for towns that are self-sufficient in urban services. The demarcated land could sustain Mogadishu's growth for the next three decades, assuming medium to high population densities. Concerns arise about job availability in these new towns, potentially straining existing infrastructure like the Afgooye Corridor. To alleviate this, a parallel transport corridor along Afgooye Road and a western bypass are essential. Additionally, considerable effort is required to establish specialised services, including the construction of educational institutions. The benefits of this scenario may only become apparent in the long run, emphasising the necessity of strategic planning and investment for sustained urban development (Petrella et al., 2020).

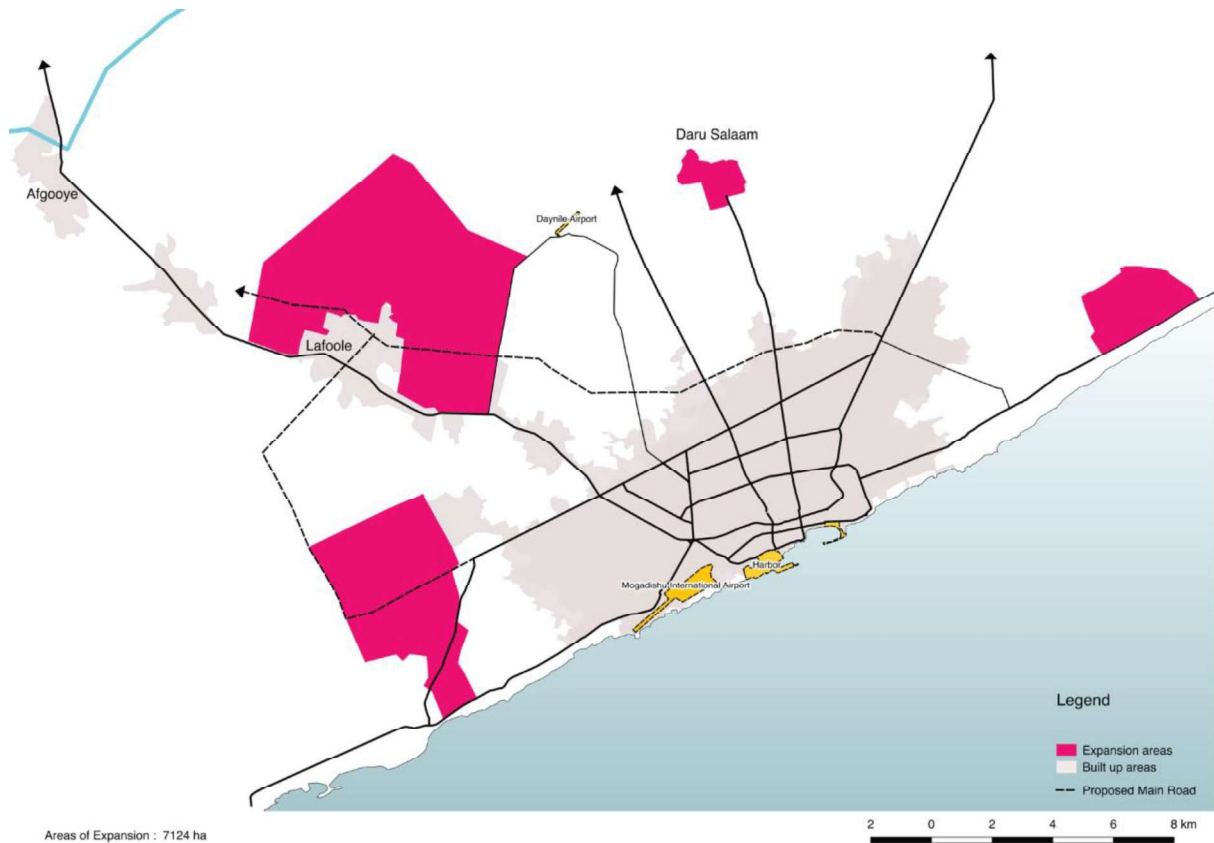


Figure 3.12. Satellite towns scenario (Petrella et al., 2020).

3.5. Mogadishu's Public and Green Spaces

Mogadishu faces a significant challenge when it comes to the lack of public space. The city, once known for its vibrant public areas and bustling streets, has been plagued by decades of conflict and instability, which have severely impacted the availability and quality of public spaces for its (Degan, 2018).

A significant factor contributing to the shortage of public spaces in Mogadishu is the extensive damage caused by prolonged conflicts. Years of civil war, insurgencies, and militia clashes have left the city's parks, town squares, and recreational areas in ruins. Many public spaces were either destroyed or privatised, eliminating places for community gatherings (Rift Valley Institute, 2017).

In addition, the increase in urbanisation and population growth in Mogadishu have made the availability of public space very limited. Somalia is said to be one of the rapidly urbanising countries in the world and since Mogadishu houses the most population with respect to other

cities, it will bear the brunt of this increase (Aubrey and Cardoso, 2019). As people immigrated to the city for safety and opportunities after each conflict halts, the demand for housing and commercial areas increased. As a result, public spaces and green areas were often neglected or repurposed to meet the urgent needs of a growing population. The priority shifted towards residential and commercial developments, overshadowing the creation or preservation of public areas.

3.5.1. Public spaces and monuments in Mogadishu

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Daljirka Dahsoon) in Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, stands as a tribute to the Somali soldiers who sacrificed their lives in defence of their nation, yet their identities remain unknown. Situated close to the old parliament building, this monument underwent renovations in 2012, 22 years after the war (Baldwin, 2018) (Figure 3.13.). Other statues are also located in the city commemorating prominent Somali figures like Ahmed Gurey, Hawo Tako, and Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan alongside Dhagah Tuur and the Somali Youth League (SYL).

The legacy of fallen heroes, including those from the SYL independence movement is immeasurable. As such they are collectively honoured through the Daljirka Dahsoon memorial. This area has historically been a point for community gatherings and traditional performances. On Fridays locals would dress elegantly to capture pictures there, a sight that sometimes intrigued tourists keen on experiencing Somali culture and attire (Asowe, 2021).

Moreover, beyond its significance The Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers serves as a venue for various demonstrations where citizens voice their concerns. Noteworthy protests include a 2016 rally led by women advocating for gender representation in state governance. Another impactful protest saw residents of Mogadishu standing united against Kenya's claims over parts of Somalia's waters underlining support for Somalia's Maritime Lawsuit with participation from women demonstrators. In April 2020, a significant protest occurred at Daljirka Dahsoon in response to the rise in killings of civilians (Asowe, 2021).

Every July 1st on Somalia's Independence Day ceremonies are organised at the monument to commemorate this occasion. National leaders lay flowers as a tribute to the country's heroes (Aweys, 2024). The Governor of Banadir frequently speaks to the public at this site

and government officials from federal government often give speeches to residents of Mogadishu at this monument which seems to be why Somali politicians are always interested in gathering their supporters together there (Lugcad, 2020)



Figure 3.13. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (Rus, n.d.)

Hawo Tako (Figure 3.14.) was an active participant in the Somali Youth League (SYL), and she took part in the 1948 riots in Mogadishu in which 14 Somalis lost their lives including herself, who was attempting to protect her community. In 1977, in her memory, the Somali Women's Democratic Organisation was founded with the support of President Siad Barre. This organisation honoured Hawo Tako however, some sources suggest that she was killed while trying to prevent the killing of Italians. A statue was erected depicting her in Mogadishu during President Siyad Barre's reign and was part of the renovations that was made to these statues recently by President Farmaajo (Ibrahim, 2021). There are no seatings

close to this place however gatherings by the civilian occur here since it is one of the well-known places in Mogadishu.



Figure 3.14. Hawo Tako statue (Ibrahim, 2021)

Sayyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan (Figure 3.15.) was born in 7th of April 1864, in the Dhulbahante area of British Somaliland and passed away in 21st of December 1920, in Imi, Ethiopia. Sayyid Mohamed was a prominent Somali religious and nationalist leader known by the British as the "Mad Mullah," and he led a two-decade-long armed resistance against British, Italian, and Ethiopian colonial forces in Somalia. Sayyid Mohamed is regarded as a forerunner to modern Somali nationalism due to his great resistance to colonial rule and his vision of a united Somalia based on a Muslim brotherhood that transcended clan divisions. Additionally, he is highly esteemed for his talents as an oral poet (Britannica, 2024). In 2019, similar to Hawo Tako's statue, Sayyid Mohamed's statues was re-erected by President Farmajo and recently, few seating spaces was made there so that it becomes a public space where citizens gather and relax when they need to (Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, 2019).



Figure 3.15. Sayyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan statue (AMISOM Public Information, 2019)

3.5.2. Parks in Mogadishu

According to FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations) (2015), the area of Banaadir Region, which covers the same area as Mogadishu, is 213,049,420 m² and the area of the UGSs in Mogadishu is 5,140,990 m² (Figure 3.16. and 3.17.). As mentioned in this chapter, the population of Mogadishu is estimated to be 2.5 million per official sources (Benaadir Regional Administration, n.d.). Citing these numbers, the area of green space per inhabitant becomes 2.06 m² per capita. This is a very low number compared to the minimum of 9 m² of green space per inhabitant recommended by The World Health Organisation (2012) or the ideal area of 50 m² of UGS per individual.



Figure 3.16. Satellite image of Mogadishu's UGSs and borders (Google Earth Engine using FAO GAUL dataset, 2015)

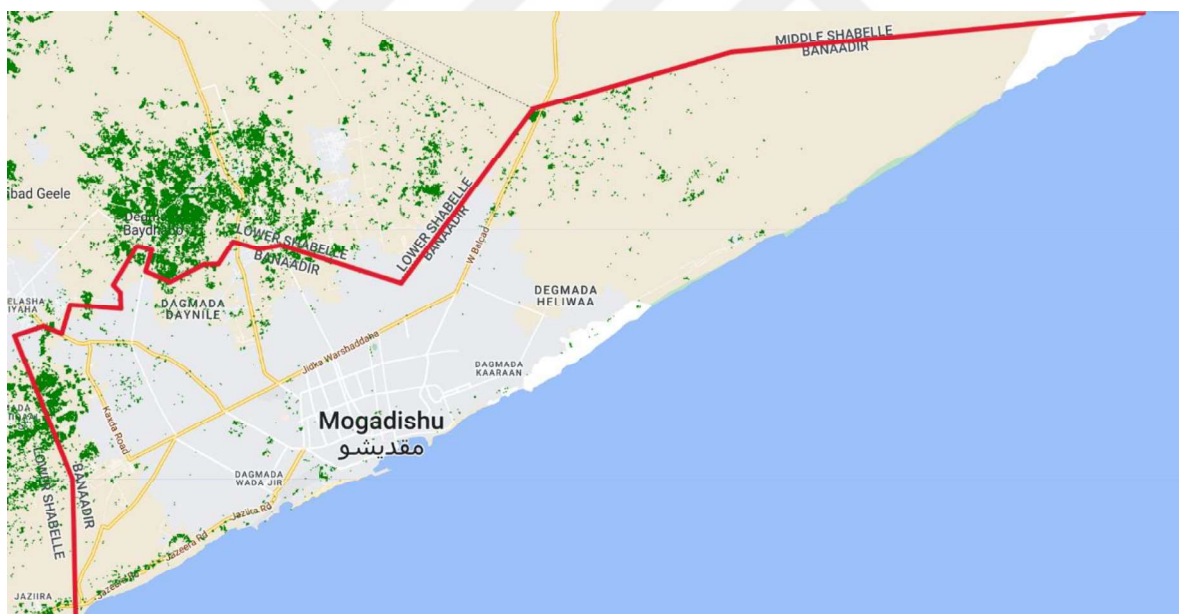


Figure 3.17. Map of Mogadishu's UGSs and borders (Google Earth Engine using FAO GAUL dataset, 2015)

It is important to mention that in Mogadishu, there is no classification of parks as there are in other countries. The most prominent available parks are small commercial ones, and neighbourhood parks are non-existent. When Figure 3.18. is evaluated, it can be observed that for a city inhabited by more than 2.5 million people, green areas are very insufficient. According to this map that was made by UN-Habitat in 2014 (Caglin et al., 2014) and was updated with the labels of the recreational areas by the researcher, green parks in Mogadishu

are too few and far in between. The most notable urban green areas in Mogadishu according to the researcher's knowledge of the city are Darussalam Garden Park (108,366 m²), Peace Garden Park (23,470 m²), Mogadishu Tourist Village Park (21,320 m²) and Banaadir Garden Park (11,198 m²). The parks in Mogadishu are predominantly private parks and even the public-owned parks such as Peace Garden Park are managed privately, and entrance fees are taken from the residents accessing these parks including the aforementioned one.

Figure 3.18. also highlights the two biggest stadiums in Mogadishu that host local and national football competitions and friendly matches. They are also used as venues for speeches of prominent figures such as religious leaders as a result of its large capacity compared to other public spaces in the city.

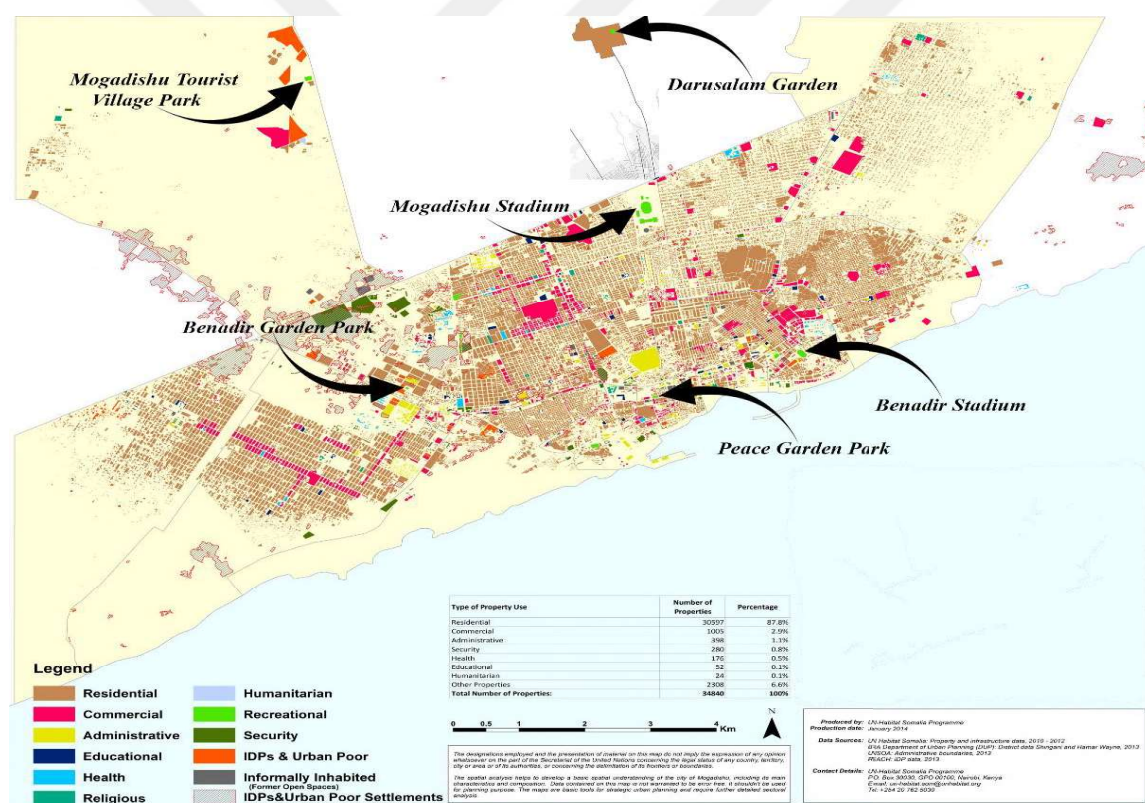


Figure 3.18. Mogadishu property use and green parks (Caglin et al., 2014) and updated by the researcher.

Darussalam Garden Park

It is located in the northern district of Dayniile with an area of 108,366 m². Darussalam Garden Park (Figure 3.19. and 3.20.) is the biggest park compared to the other notable parks

in terms of size and the services it provides. It has features such as amusement park, vegetation, seating areas, an events hall, a cafeteria and a small zoo. The only downside to this park- besides there being an entrance fee which is the same as the other ones- is that it is located far from the city centre, and it cannot be reached easily by most of the residents of Mogadishu.

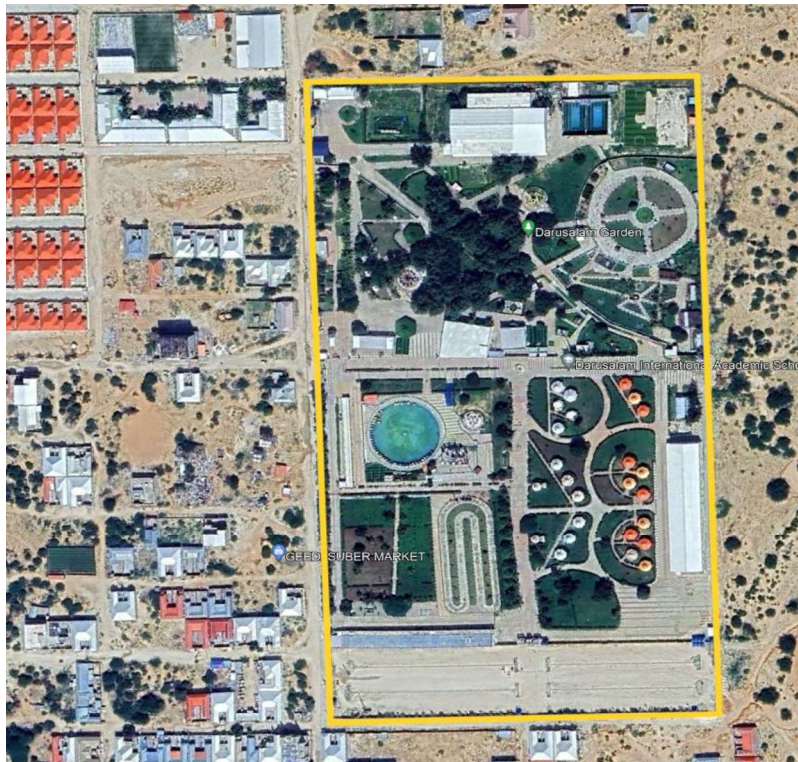


Figure 3.19. Darussalam Garden Park (108,366 m²) from Google Earth



Figure 3.20. Darussalam Garden Park (Africa View Facts, 2023).

Peace Garden Park

The second biggest one is the Peace Garden Park (Figure 3.21. and 3.22.) with approximately 23,000 m². It's located in the historical district of Hamar Weyne in the southern part of the city. Its name itself reflects its association with peace efforts referencing a peace agreement facilitated by Somalia between Tanzania and Uganda. Its features also include vegetation, a seating area, cafeteria and an events hall.



Figure 3.21. Peace Garden Park (23,470 m²) from Google Earth



Figure 3.22. Peace Garden Park (Africa Facts Zone, 2021).

Mogadishu Tourist Village Park

The other prominent park is Mogadishu Tourist Village Park (Figure 3.23. and 3.24.) with approximately 21000 m². It's located in the same district (Dayniile) as Darussalam Garden Park which make it also far from the city centre and very challenging for most of the residents of the city to reach it easily. Its features also include vegetation, seating areas and a cafeteria.



Figure 3.23. Mogadishu Tourist Village Park (21,320 m²) from Google Earth

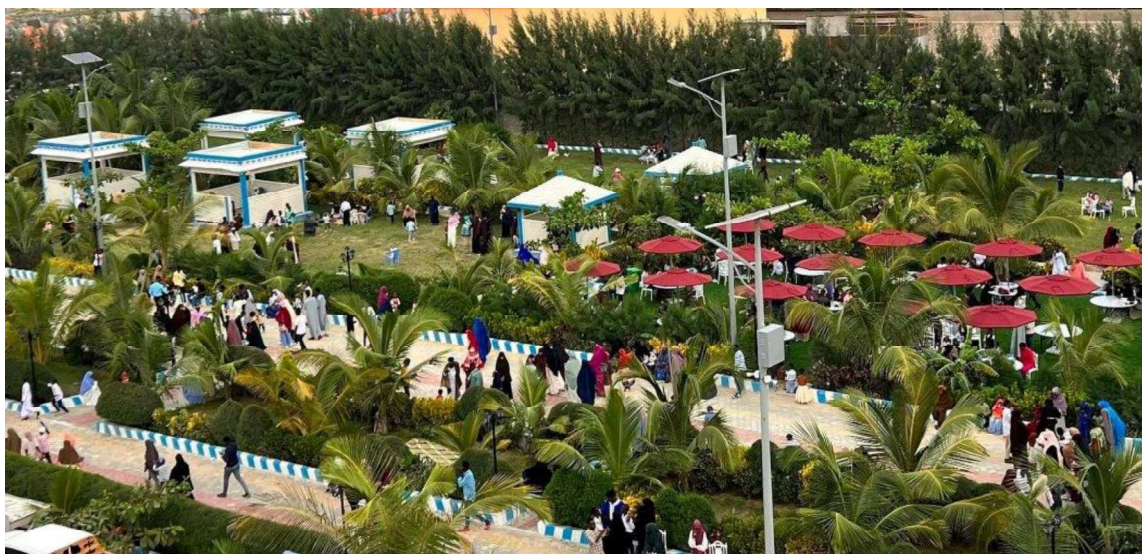


Figure 3.24. Mogadishu Tourist Village Park (Sabrie, 2023)

Banaadir Garden Park

The smallest park among the most notable ones is Banaadir Garden Park (Figure 3.25. and 3.26.). It is located in Hodan District which is in the city centre with an area of 11,198 m². The most interesting thing about this park is that fake grass is used for most of its floor as there is limited vegetation, cafeteria and seating areas.



Figure 3.25. Banaadir Garden Park (11,198 m²) from Google Earth



Figure 3.26. Banaadir Garden Park (Beerta Banaadir, 2022).

The absence of public and green spaces has negatively impacted Mogadishu's social cohesion. These spaces play a crucial role in fostering community interaction, cultural exchange, and recreation. They also serve as a platform for people to gather and build social connections with each other as well as enjoying leisure activities. The insufficient availability of these spaces is an obstacle to the development of a vibrant and cohesive society (Degan, 2018).

However, reclaiming public and green spaces and revitalising Mogadishu's urban environment is a complex process that demands a great amount of commitment, resources, and collaboration among different stakeholders. In addition to physically rehabilitating existing spaces, this also involves addressing urban planning, infrastructure development, and community engagement.

4. REASEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the approaches used to study how UGSs play a role in fostering peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu, Somalia is discussed. The methodology used involves a mix of methods including a review of existing literature and gathering primary data through surveys and targeted interviews.

4.1. Review of Existing Literature

The research began with an examination of the literature to grasp the current knowledge on the subject matter. This review focused on articles, reports and other relevant publications that delved into the relationships between green spaces, peace-building efforts and reconciliation in areas recovering from conflict. The aim was to identify themes and theoretical frameworks to guide the investigation.

Specifically, the literature review delved into:

- The documented benefits of green spaces on mental health and social well-being.
- Case studies illustrating how green spaces promote social connections and community development in conflict affected regions.
- Previous studies on peace-building initiatives and reconciliation efforts in Mogadishu.

By analysing this body of literature, the research laid a groundwork for understanding how UGSs could contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Mogadishu.

4.2. Data Collection

The study utilised two methods to gather data: questionnaires and targeted interviews. The snowball sampling technique was applied for both collecting questionnaire responses and conducting interviews. Convenience sampling was also applied for conducting interviews. Approval was obtained for the survey and interviews from Gazi University Ethics Commission. The survey and interviews were carried out after the approval was received on

07.05.2024. The questionnaires were carried out online via Google form shown here: (<https://forms.gle/j62JrXSzhDqy7SH47>)

4.2.1. Questionnaires

A self-administered questionnaire was created to capture how Mogadishu residents perceive and experience green spaces in relation to peace and reconciliation. The questionnaire was developed based on insights from existing research.

The final questionnaire included both closed-ended questions for quantitative analysis of responses and open-ended questions to gather qualitative data on residents' experiences and perspectives.

Target population

In this study the target population refers to all people living in Mogadishu, Somalia. This includes individuals of varying ages, genders, socioeconomic statuses and residential areas across the city.

Questionnaire sampling

In order to tackle the challenges of researching a hard topic and reaching out to difficult-to-reach groups in Mogadishu, a sampling method known as snowball sampling was employed for this study.

Snowball sampling proves to be useful when it's tough to pinpoint or directly connect with the target population. In this method initial participants are firstly selected and then requested to recommend others within their circles who meet the study requirements. This process goes on gradually expanding the sample like a snowball (Kirchherr and Charles 2018).

Although snowball sampling doesn't ensure a statistically representative sample, it serves as an effective tool for collecting data from populations that are challenging to get data from (Kirchherr and Charles 2018). In this study, snowball sampling provided access to residents who are visitors or non-visitors to green spaces or possess specific insights about UGSs in

Mogadishu. Moreover, to ensure sample diversity, sample seeds (the individuals the researcher started the data collection from) were as diverse as possible. That includes age group, gender, employment status and residential area.

Given resource constraints conducting a survey of the entire Mogadishu population is impractical. As a result, a sample was selected to mirror the characteristics of the target population. The study began by enlisting a group of residents who frequent or have knowledge about green spaces in Mogadishu. These initial participants were then urged to introduce others from their circles who met the research criteria. This cycle continued until a sample size of 385 participants was reached. This number was attained through the following:

Sample size of infinite population (n) = $[Z^2xp(1 - p)]/ C^2$ (Godden, 2004; Lalitbhai et al., 2022)

Where,

z (z score) = 1.96 since confidence level was chosen as 0.95

C (margin of error) = 0.05

p (population proportion) = 0.5

and Sample size of finite population (n') = $n/ 1+ [Z^2 x p (1 - p)]/ C^2 N$ (Lalitbhai et al., 2022)

Where,

N (population size) ~ 3000000 (residents of Mogadishu)

Therefore:

$$n = [1.96^2 \times 0.5 (1 - 0.5)]/ 0.05^2 = 384.16 \sim 385$$

and

$$n' = 385/ 1+ [1.96^2 \times 0.5 (1 - 0.5)]/ 0.05^2 \times 3000000 = 385$$

4.2.2. Interviews

A similar approach of snowball sampling was adopted for selecting interviewees. The study started by enlisting an urban and a community leader. The initial participant was then tasked with suggesting individuals with relevant expertise like community figures, government representatives or environmental advocates engaged in green space projects. Through this

snowball method a total of 3 figures were interviewed. Moreover, convenience sampling was used to conduct the interviews of the remaining 3 figures.

It's crucial to recognise that snowball sampling can introduce bias into the research since the sample may not accurately represent the entire population. Nonetheless for this study the advantages of using snowball sampling to reach groups that are knowledgeable on the subject and gather detailed qualitative data outweigh any drawbacks. The literature also concurred with the finding of this study which indicates that the sampling technique does not act as an impediment to this research.

To find the adequate sample size of interviewees, past literature regarding this issue has been examined and different researchers put forth different arguments for the smallest acceptable sample size in qualitative research. According to Guest et al. (2006) 6-12 interviews are enough for one qualitative research project. Following suite, since mixed methods have been used to conduct this study and there being 385 participants for the quantitative part, it has been decided that in depth semi structured interviews be conducted with six key individuals to delve into the connection between UGSs, peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu.

The participants for the interviews were chosen based on their expertise and experience in relevant fields which included:

- A civil engineer referred in the study as Interviewee 1.
- An urban planner referred in the study as Interviewee 2.
- A government official working for the municipality of Mogadishu referred in the study as Interviewee 3.
- An environmental activist referred in the study as Interviewee 4.
- A person serving as both a community leader and urban planner referred in the study as Interviewee 5.
- A parliamentarian for the Federal Government of Somalia referred in the study as Interviewee 6.

The interview guide was designed to delve into topics such as:

- The perceived importance and function of green spaces in Mogadishu.
- Personal experiences and observations on using green spaces for social interactions and community bonding.
- The potential of green spaces in promoting dialogue and reconciliation efforts.
- Challenges and opportunities linked to establishing and managing inclusive green spaces in Mogadishu.

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, the objectives of the research are:

- 1- To examine the effectiveness of Mogadishu's urban green spaces in promoting peace
- 2- To evaluate the usefulness of the urban green spaces in Mogadishu in facilitating reconciliation.
- 3- To understand the challenges and barriers faced in the creation and management of urban green spaces in Mogadishu.

The parameters for examining the first objective are:

- A: Creating a sense of community and unity.
- B: Fostering social interactions and dialogue.
- C: Providing opportunities for recreational activities.
- D: Enhancing mental well-being and reducing stress.

The parameters for understanding the second objective are:

- A: Creating neutral and inclusive spaces for dialogue.
- B: Encouraging cultural exchange and understanding.
- C: Promoting economic opportunities and community development.

The table below (Table 4.1.) illustrates how the questions in the questionnaire and interview correspond to the research objectives and parameters. For a copy of the questionnaire form and the interview questions refer to appendix 1 and appendix 2 respectively.

Table 4.1. The cross-section between questionnaires and interview questions and research objectives and parameters

	Questionnaire	Interview
Objective 1: parameter A	11	4
Objective 1: parameter B	12	3
Objective 1: parameter C	13	-
Objective 1: parameter D	14	-
Objective 2: parameter A	15, 16	5,6
Objective 2: parameter B	17, 18	-
Objective 2: parameter C	19, 20	-

4.3. Data Analysis

The information gathered from the surveys underwent analysis through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Statistical software (SPSS) was used to examine the close-ended survey questions, identifying patterns and trends within responses. Thematic analysis was employed to study the open-ended questions from both the surveys and interviews aiding in recognising recurring themes and narratives. Moreover, to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, data from both sources were cross checked. This method enabled an exploration of how urban green areas play a part in fostering peace and unity in Mogadishu.

In the following chapters a breakdown of the results obtained from analysing the collected data will be presented. These sections delve into the viewpoints and encounters of residents of Mogadishu concerning green spaces and their possible impact on creating a more peaceful and harmonious city.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1. Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The socio-demographic profile of the survey respondents on the role of UGSs in promoting inclusion in Mogadishu (Figure 5.1) showed that the largest age group was 18-24 years old, comprising over half (51.4%) of the respondents. The next largest group was 25-34 years old at 36.9%. The remaining age groups made up less than 11.7%, with only 2.1% being over 55 years old. In terms of gender distribution, 68.6% of the respondents were male, while 31.4% were female (Figure 5.2).

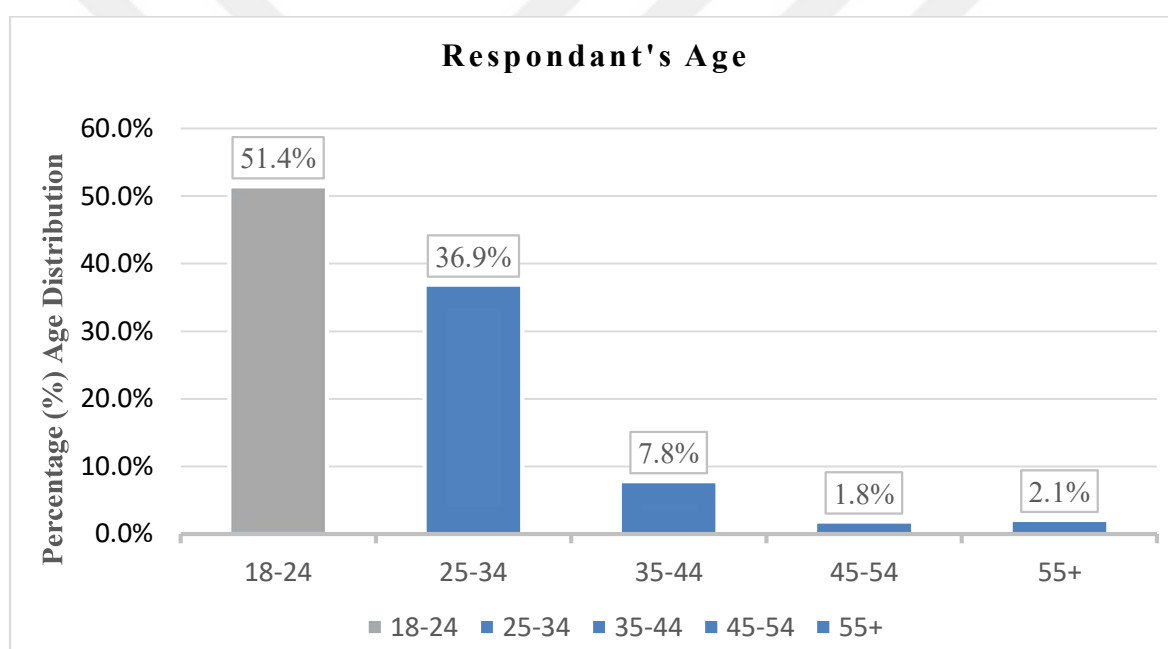


Figure 5.1. Respondent's age distribution

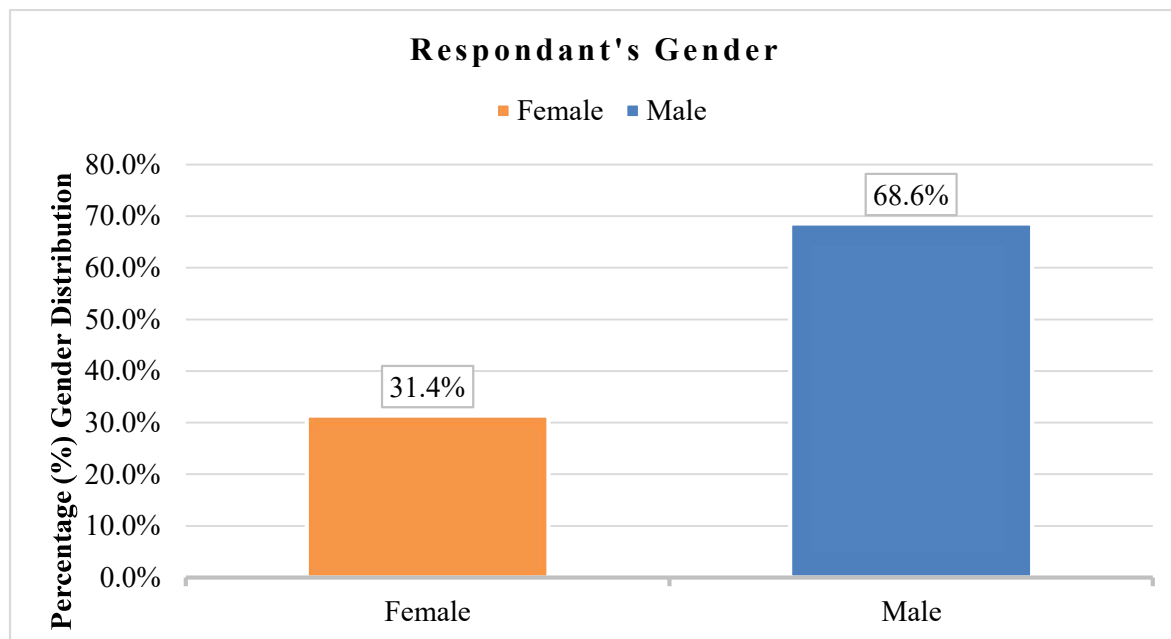


Figure 5.2. Respondent's gender distribution

The largest group of respondents, 56.6%, held undergraduate degrees. The second largest group was those with postgraduate degrees, at 28.6%. A smaller portion, 13.8% of respondents, had high school diplomas as their highest level of education. Only 1.1% of respondents reported having a middle school education or less as their highest level of attainment or below that (Figure 5.3)

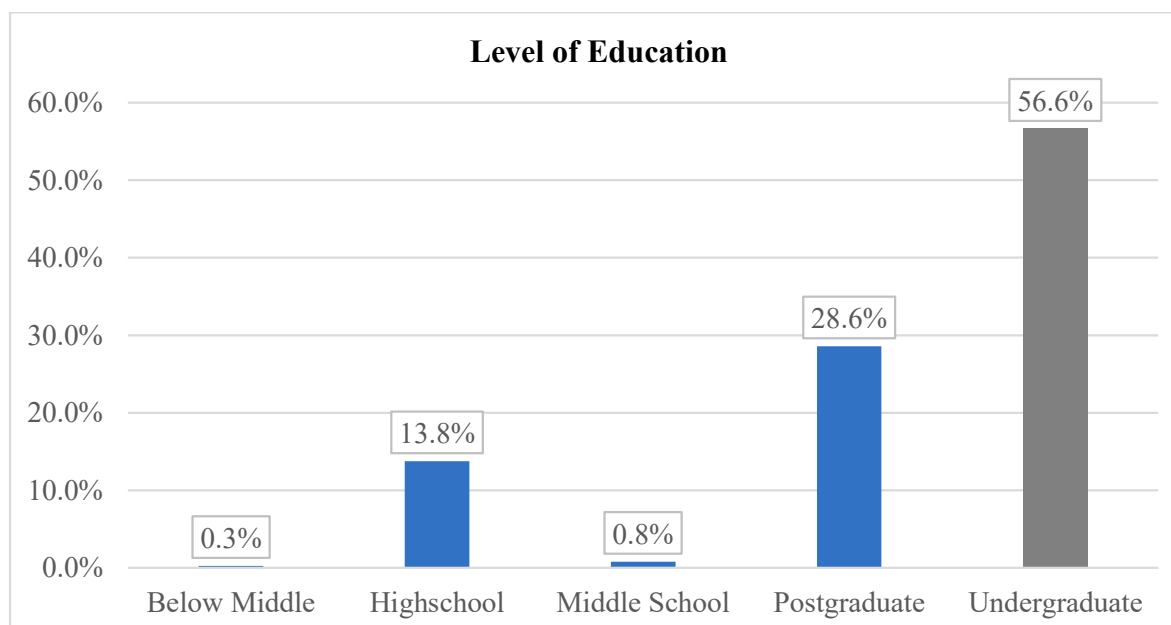


Figure 5.3. Respondents' level of education

The survey respondents included a predominant number of students (28.1%), as well as nearly fifteen percent (14.5%) who were unemployed individuals from the general public. Additionally, the sample encompassed a diverse range of occupational backgrounds, such as those employed in the financial sector (4.2%), instructors (7.5%), engineering (9.9%) medical professionals (11.9%), and domestic roles (4.4%) (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Survey respondent's occupation ($n=385$)

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Student	108	28.1%
Unemployed	56	14.5%
Medical Sector	46	11.9%
Engineer	38	9.9%
Instructor	29	7.5%
Housewife	17	4.4%
Financial Sector	16	4.2%
Businessperson	14	3.6%
Employee	9	2.3%
ICT	8	2.1%
Unspecified	8	2.1%
Self Employed	6	1.6%
Manager	5	1.3%
Architect	4	1.0%
Computer Scientist	4	1.0%
Electrical Sector	4	1.0%
Marketing	4	1.0%
Technician	3	0.8%
Civil Servant	2	0.5%
Researcher	2	0.5%
Environmental Sector	1	0.3%
Travel Agent	1	0.3%

Looking at the districts each respondent lives in, Hodan district has the highest percentage of respondents (25.5%), followed by Warta Nabada (12.7%) and Yaaqshiid (9.6%). In contrast, the lowest percentages are found in Garasbaaley (0.5%), Hamar Weyne (0.5%) and Shibis (0.3%) (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2. Survey respondents' district of residence ($n=385$)

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Hodan	98	25.5%
Warta Nabada	49	12.7%
Other	46	11.9%
Yaaqshiid	37	9.6%
Deyniile	27	7.0%
Wadajir	27	7.0%
Heliwaa	20	5.2%
Waaberi	20	5.2%
Hawl Wadaag	19	4.9%
Dharkenley	13	3.4%
Kaaraan	5	1.3%
Abdiaziz	4	1.0%
Boondheere	4	1.0%
Hamar Jajab	4	1.0%
Kaxda	4	1.0%
Shangaani	3	0.8%
Garasbaaley	2	0.5%
Hamar Weyne	2	0.5%
Shibis	1	0.3%

When the respondents were prompted with the question “How often do you visit Mogadishu's UGSs (parks)?” the majority of respondents (60.2%) frequently visited Mogadishu's UGSs, with the most common response being "sometimes" at 41.0%. However, a smaller proportion of respondents (24.2%), reported rare or no visits to these green spaces (Figure 5.4).

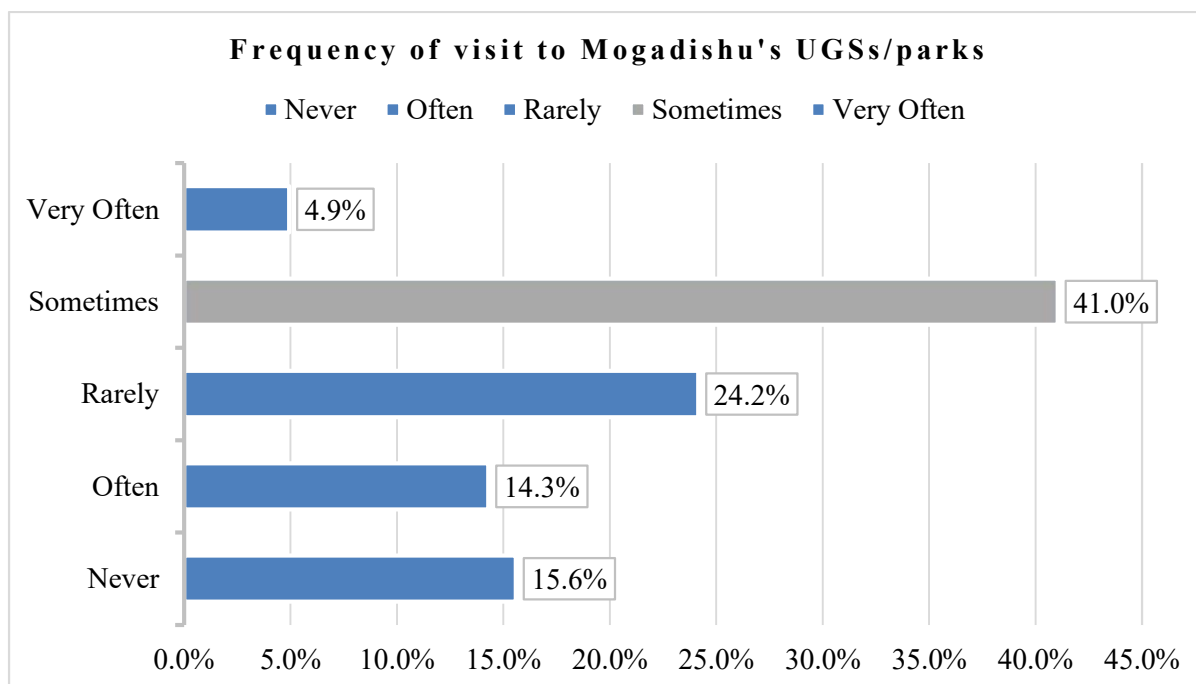


Figure 5.4. Frequency of the visit to Mogadishu UGSs

5.2. Understanding the Perceptions and Responses of Infrequent Visitors to Mogadishu's UGSs

The most common reason cited for not visiting Mogadishu's green spaces was distance, accounting for 29.2% of responses. Security concerns were another frequently mentioned factor, cited by 19.8% of respondents. Economic considerations, such as a lack of funds for entrance fees or transportation, were reported by 23.6% of responses. Other reasons for not visiting the parks included a lack of quality parks, transportation challenges, overcrowding or noise, allergies, and busy schedules (Figure 5.5).

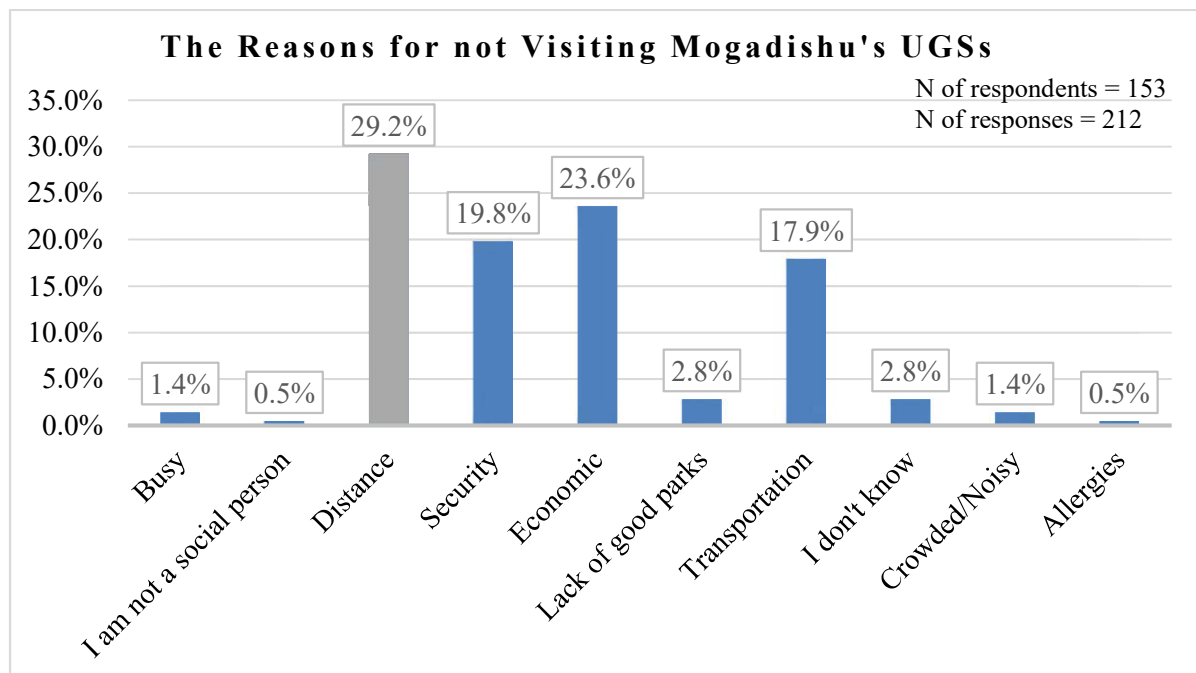


Figure 5.5. The reasons people avoid visiting Mogadishu's UGSs

When asked about the impact of the absence of UGSs in their lives, the majority of respondents (66.0%) who never or rarely visit such spaces believed that it negatively affects them. Conversely, only 34.0% of these respondents disagreed (Figure 5.6).

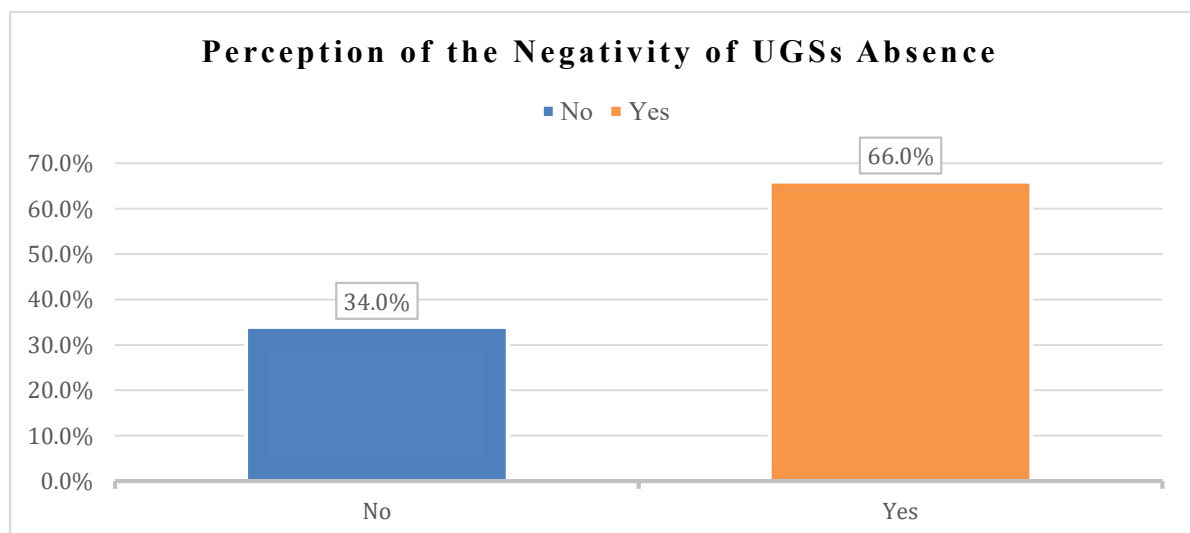


Figure 5.6. Perceived negative impacts of the absence of UGSs

Among those who did not think the lack of green spaces had a negative impact, a common reason was a lack of desire to visit these spaces (16.0%). Some respondents felt that being a non-social person diminished the need for UGSs (8%). Others stated they had not yet

experienced Mogadishu's parks and therefore could not assess their influence (14%). Additionally, while a small number cited busy schedules as a barrier to visiting parks, these were isolated responses (2.0%) (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3. Overall sample responses of the reasons for not having a negative perception of the absence of UGSs

	Sample responses (<i>n</i> =52)	Percentage (%)
Without reason	16	30.8%
I don't have a desire for those places	8	15.4%
I have not visited it and I don't know if it is affecting my life yet	7	13.5%
I go to the countryside or other places instead of Mogadishu's parks	7	13.5%
Because I am not a social person	4	7.7%
Because I don't think it can affect me negatively.	4	7.7%
I don't have much time to spend outdoors.	4	7.7%
It can cause bad weather and bad hygiene	1	1.9%
I have my husband	1	1.9%

Furthermore, the respondents who rarely visit or never visited Mogadishu's UGSs were asked if they would have gone to these places if it was a close distance to them. A significant of them (86.4%) indicated they would have visited Mogadishu's UGSs if they were located close to their homes. Only 13.6% of respondents said they would not have visited. This data along with the data in (see figure 5.5.) clearly illustrates that there is a lack of UGSs in the neighbourhood and district levels. Since the few green parks in Mogadishu are far from most of the residents, a great number of individuals do not go there (Figure 5.7).

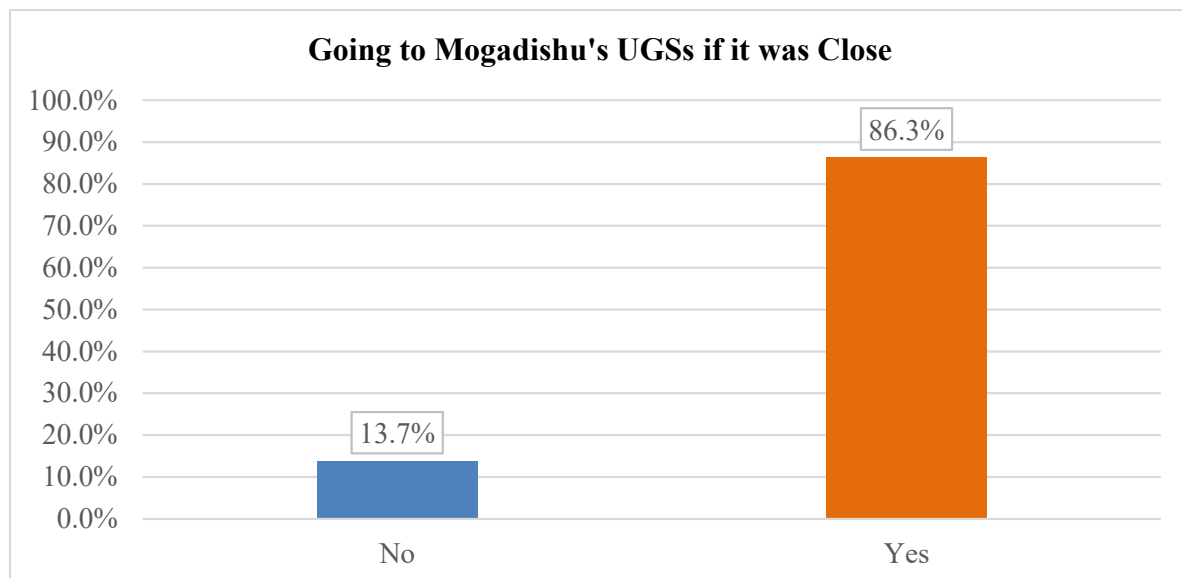


Figure 5.7. Whether or not the respondents would go to UGSs if it was close to them

Similarly, the respondents showed willingness to visit Mogadishu's UGSs based on the absence of entrance fees. A large majority of respondents (81.0%) said they would have visited the parks if there were no entrance fees, while only 19.0% said they would not have visited (Figure 5.8).

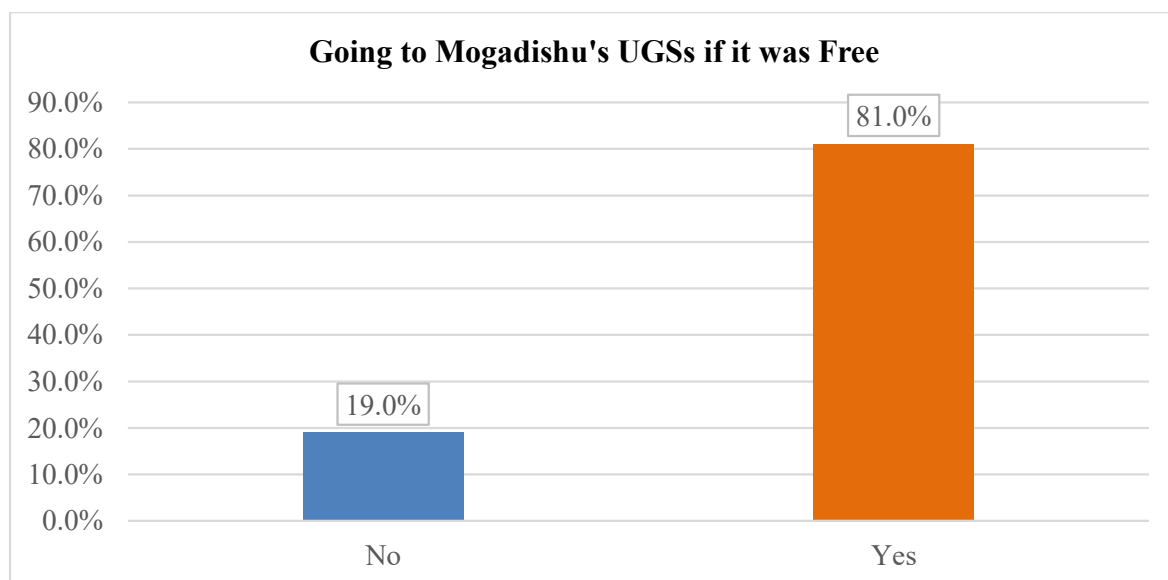


Figure 5.8. Whether or not the respondents would go to UGSs if its entrance was without pay

Interestingly, the most popular destination for relaxation and recreational activities among those who rarely or never visited Mogadishu's UGSs was the beach, with 19.8% of

respondents indicating they visited beaches for this purpose. Parks were the second most popular choice, with 15.6% of responses showing that even those who categorised themselves as infrequent visitors of green areas also went there occasionally. In contrast, places specifically designated for sports, coffee shops, and general outdoor activities accounted for less than 26.4% of responses for relaxation and recreation (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4. Places that rarely/non visitors of UGSs go for recreational activities

	Responses (<i>n</i> =167)	Percentage (%)
Beach	33	19.8%
Parks	26	15.6%
Coffee Shops	19	11.4%
Other	17	10.2%
Outdoor (walking etc)	15	9.0%
Home	12	7.2%
Nowhere	12	7.2%
Sports areas	10	6.0%
Restaurant	7	4.2%
Countryside	3	1.8%
Hotels	3	1.8%
Gym	2	1.2%
Library	2	1.2%
Mosque	2	1.2%
Video Games	2	1.2%
Supermarket	1	0.6%
Educational Institutes	1	0.6%

In addition, the most common response that residents of Mogadishu gave as places they go to for cultural exchange apart from saying "nowhere" (24.4%), was going to other cities/countries (16%) such as Afgooye, Bal'ad or cities they grew up in. This indicates that a significant number of respondents do not go anywhere in Mogadishu for cultural enrichment or exchange, and they would rather receive that from other cities. Other locations in the Capital visited for the same purpose include Coffee shops (3.8%), educational spaces (3.8%), and parks (9%) (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5. Places that rarely/non visitors of UGSs go for cultural exchange

	Responses (<i>n</i> =156)	Percentage (%)
Nowhere	38	24.4%
Other Cities/ Countries	25	16.0%
Other	16	10.3%
Parks	14	9.0%
Countryside	8	5.1%
Public and Open Spaces	8	5.1%
Coffee Shops	6	3.8%
Educational Spaces	6	3.8%
Community Parties	6	3.8%
Beach	5	3.2%
Family/Neighbour House	5	3.2%
Museum	5	3.2%
Cultural Events (Expo etc)	5	3.2%
Restaurant	4	2.6%
Library	2	1.3%
Sports areas	1	0.6%
Mosque	1	0.6%
Theatre	1	0.6%

Furthermore, coffee shops were the most popular destination for social interaction and community development, with 12.1% of respondents reporting visiting them for this purpose. Parks and sports areas are tied as the second most popular choice, each at 8.5% of responses. Social media was another commonly reported venue for social interaction and community improvement, with 7.9% of responses. Less than 5% of responses cited places like houses of relatives or friends, the market, and the gym for social interaction. Mosques (1.2%) and community centres (1.2%) were one of the least frequently chosen locations (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6. Places that rarely/non visitors of UGSs go for social interaction

	Responses (<i>n</i> =165)	Percentage (%)
Nowhere	22	13.3%
Coffee Shops	20	12.1%
Parks/Playground	14	8.5%
Other	14	8.5%
Restaurant	13	7.9%
Social media	13	7.9%
Educational Spaces	12	7.3%
Sports areas	11	6.7%
Public and Open Spaces	11	6.7%
Beach	7	4.2%
Hotels	6	3.6%
Family/Friend House	4	2.4%
The Market	3	1.8%
Library	2	1.2%
Mosque	2	1.2%
Community Centres	2	1.2%
Conferences	2	1.2%
Public Events	2	1.2%
Weddings	2	1.2%
Countryside	1	0.6%
Museum	1	0.6%
Gym	1	0.6%

5.3. The Perception and the Response Analysis of the Visitors of Mogadishu's UGSs

Several interview participants have emphasised the importance of green spaces in building a sense of community and fostering peace in Mogadishu. They particularly highlighted the value of spaces with parks such as Darusalam Garden Park and Peace Garden Park. Peace Garden Parks name itself reflects its association with peace efforts referencing a peace agreement facilitated by Somalia between Tanzania and Uganda. Other public spaces like Hawo Tako, Somali Youth League (SYL) and Dhagahtuur were also recognised as places that promote interaction and contribute to peacebuilding initiatives in Mogadishu.

Furthermore, analysis of the participants' reasons for visiting Mogadishu's UGSs revealed that the most frequently cited motivations were seeking comfort, relaxation, and mental well-being (37.9%). Social interaction or engaging in recreational activities such as walking or playing sports were other common reasons with 20.8% of the responses each. A smaller proportion of responses indicated visiting the parks for purposes such as cultural exchange

(8.1%), supporting local businesses (4.4%), work-related activities (0.5%), or socialising with family and friends (0.3%). Less prevalent reasons included entertaining children (0.3%) and reading or studying (0.3%) (Figure 5.9). As laid out in the literature, green spaces help bridge the gaps caused by conflicts and divisions and brings together individuals from different backgrounds (Naamani and Simpson, 2021; Mngutyo, 2021). Most of the responses of the participant relate directly or indirectly to activities that strengthens social cohesion and unity which is one of the benefits of UGSs.

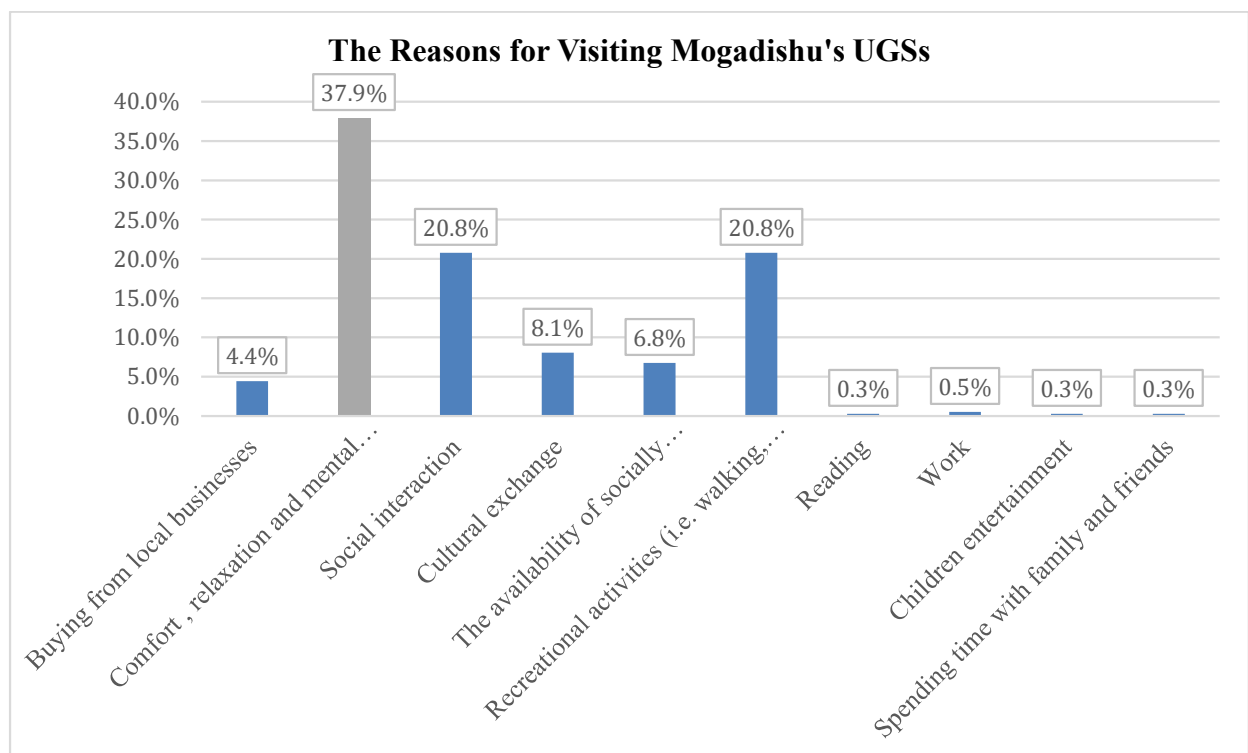


Figure 5.9. The reasons for visiting Mogadishu's UGSs

Resident satisfaction with Mogadishu's green spaces

The below chart explores resident satisfaction with various attributes of Mogadishu's green spaces. Darussalam Garden Park seems to have the highest satisfaction scores regarding fostering social interaction (40.4%), having recreational facilities (53.8%) and socially inclusive areas (38.8%), providing comfort and relaxation (43.3%) and facilitating cultural exchange (43.1%). Interestingly, Banaadir Garden Park which has the smallest area size among the four green parks, took the lead in resident satisfaction for its role in supporting local businesses (32.4%) (Figure 5.10). The quality of these spaces is critical. Well planned and maintained public spaces become lively hubs that attract residents, visitors and

investments, ultimately shaping the economic, social and environmental aspects of the surrounding region (Beck, 2009).

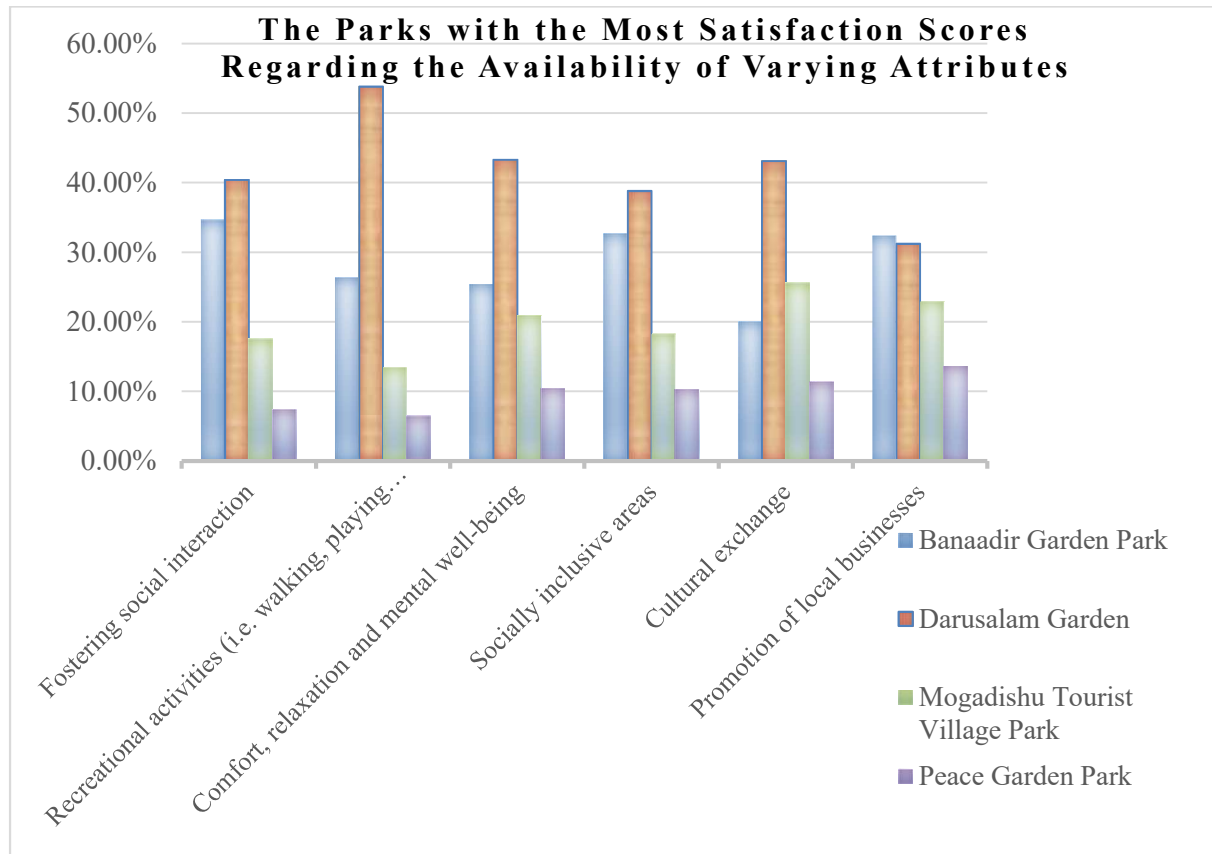


Figure 5.10. Parks with the highest satisfaction ratings for various features

Considering resident dissatisfaction with the above-mentioned attributes of Mogadishu's green spaces, Banaadir Garden Park received the highest dissatisfactory responses when it comes to fostering social interaction (36.9%) and having recreational facilities (30.8%). Moreover, residents reported the lowest satisfaction levels in Darussalam for comfort, relaxation, and mental well-being (32.4%) and the availability of socially inclusive areas (34.6%). Since Darussalam Garden Park had the highest score in terms of satisfaction of respondents, this shows that the residents are split on the positives and negatives of this park (Figure 5.11). According to Beck (2009), neglected or poorly managed areas can lead to anti-social behaviours and a decline in community well-being, which appears to be the case for some of these parks.

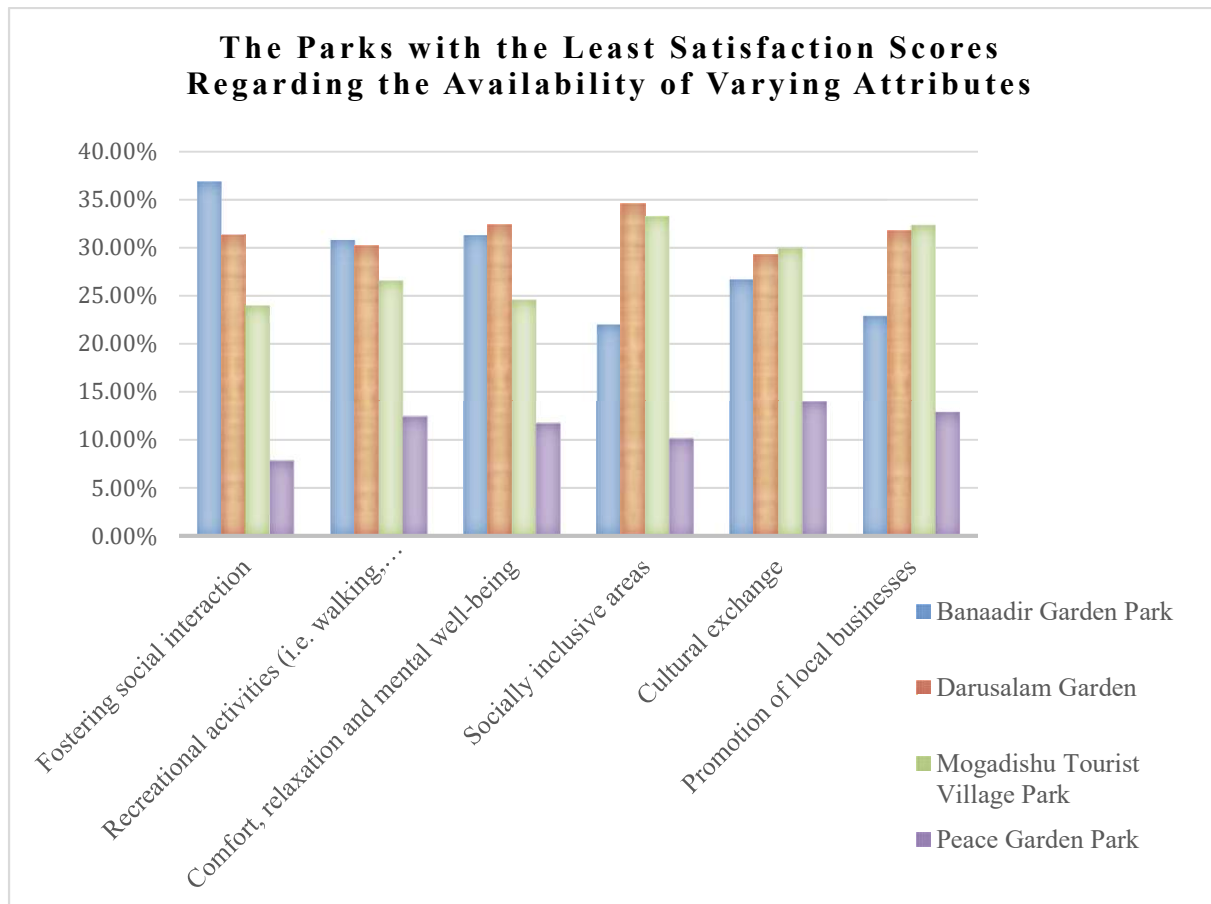


Figure 5.11. Parks with the lowest satisfaction ratings for various features

5.4. Mogadishu UGSs Creation of Sense of Community and Unity:

Several reasons indicate that the green areas, in Mogadishu play a role in creating a sense of community and unit. Firstly, these parks serve as neutral meeting spots where individuals from different backgrounds can socialise without restrictions. This encourages bonds and may help break down societal barriers (Interviewee 3). Additionally, green spaces offer a relaxed ambiance compared to other public places. Unlike town squares or busy streets, parks provide an environment with shade and natural beauty. This inviting setting makes them perfect for hosting community gatherings thereby strengthening unity through shared experiences (Interviewee 4). Moreover, the existence of these areas signifies a dedication to development and a collective vision for a more harmonious Mogadishu. Collaborating to preserve and make use of these spaces promotes a sense of shared ownership and solidarity among residents (Interviewee 6).

Furthermore, the results of the survey show that the mean score for the sense of community and unity in Mogadishu's UGSs was 3.58, with a standard deviation of 1.32. This indicates that the residents somewhat feel that Mogadishu's UGSs create a sense of community and unity, however the results are not positive enough to reach a definite conclusion on its creation of such feeling (Table 5.7).

This finding concurs with the findings of Wu et al. (2023) which argues that one of the keyways in which urban green spaces contribute to creating a sense of community and unity is by providing a shared environment where residents can connect with one another on a personal level. This sense of connection and belonging helps to break down barriers between people and fosters a greater sense of solidarity within the community.

Table 5.7. The answer about feeling a sense of community

	Mean	Std. Deviation ($\pm$ SD)	($\pm$ SD)/Mean
I feel a greater sense of community and unity in Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks) compared to other areas of the city:	3.58	1.32	0.37

5.5. Mogadishu UGSs Promotion of Dialogue and Social Interaction

The introduction of green spaces in Mogadishu seems to have encouraged social interaction. Regular visitors engage in discussions that may not have taken place elsewhere fostering a sense of community (Interviewee 2). This is especially important given Mogadishu's recent conflict history.

Before 2012 the civil war greatly limited interactions, with residents interacting within their immediate circles of family and friends (Interviewee 3 and 4). This lack of exposure to different perspectives likely worsened divides. With improved security came public places like tea shops and markets becoming hubs for interaction, however these settings could be crowded and noisy (Interviewee 3). In contrast green spaces offer quieter environments for socialising and conversing.

Interaction with people from different backgrounds

When survey participants were asked if they observed people from different backgrounds interacting in Mogadishu's UGSs, 45.3% said they sometimes did, 24.1% often did, and 10.3% saw it very often. Meanwhile, 12.9% reported rarely seeing such interactions, and 7.3% said they never observed them (Figure 5.12).

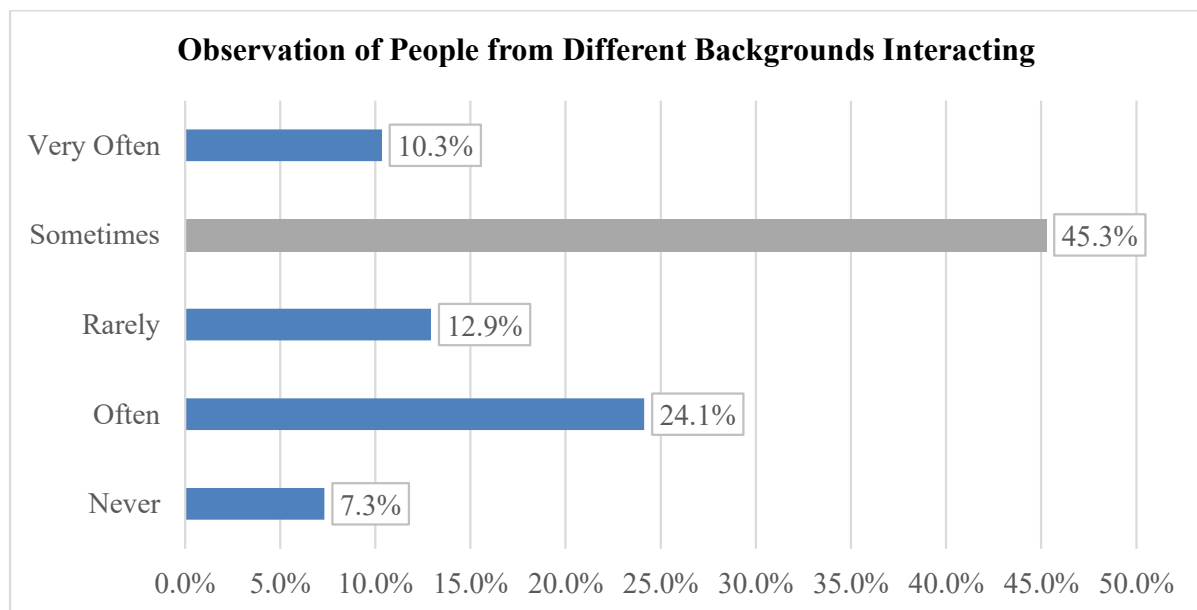


Figure 5.12. Observation of people from different backgrounds interacting in UGSs

5.6. Mogadishu UGSs Provision of Opportunities for Recreational Activities

Examining the ability of Mogadishu UGSs to provide opportunities for recreational activities, the largest portion of respondents (46.1%) reported using these spaces sometimes for recreational activities. A sizable portion (26.3%) reported using them often for the same reason. Less frequent use was reported by those who said they rarely (12.9%) or never (4.7%) used the parks for recreational activities (Figure 5.13). This result indicates that these green spaces indeed have some recreational facilities that residents make use of.

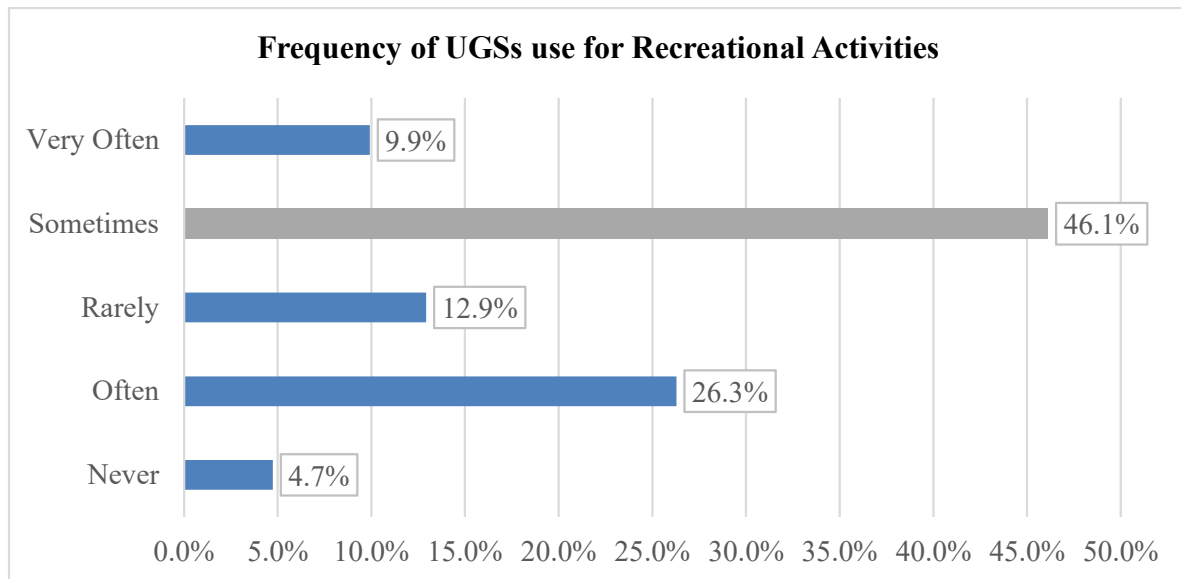


Figure 5.13. Frequency of UGSs use for recreational activities

5.7. Mogadishu UGSs Enhancement of Mental Well-being and Reduction of Stress

The consensus among interviewees is that UGSs provide an atmosphere for relaxation and leisure offering a needed break from the stress of conflict-ridden environments. These spaces are viewed as beneficial for well-being, creating a sense of calm amidst turmoil (Interviewee 1 and 6). The increased feeling of calmness is enhanced by the beauty of well-maintained parks, which can also symbolise peace for those looking to come to the city post conflict (Interviewee 1).

Similarly, 32.8% of respondents indicated feeling significantly less stressed after visiting a park, and 24.6% of the respondents reported feeling slightly less stressed. However, over twenty percent (21.1%) reported no change in stress levels. Moreover, smaller groups of respondents indicated feeling slightly more stressed (12.1%) or significantly more stressed (9.5%) following a visit to a park in Mogadishu (Figure 5.14).

This finding also coincides with the literature because access to green spaces has been linked to lower stress levels, improved mood, and better overall mental well-being (Turner-Skoff and Cavender, 2019; Simpson et al., 2023). These advantages are especially important in places like Mogadishu after conflicts, where the emotional impact of prolonged violence and instability can be deep. UGSs offer a haven for individuals to recover from stress and trauma

contributing to the healing process of the community (Henderson-Wilson and Weerasuriya, 2017; Poulsen et al., 2018).

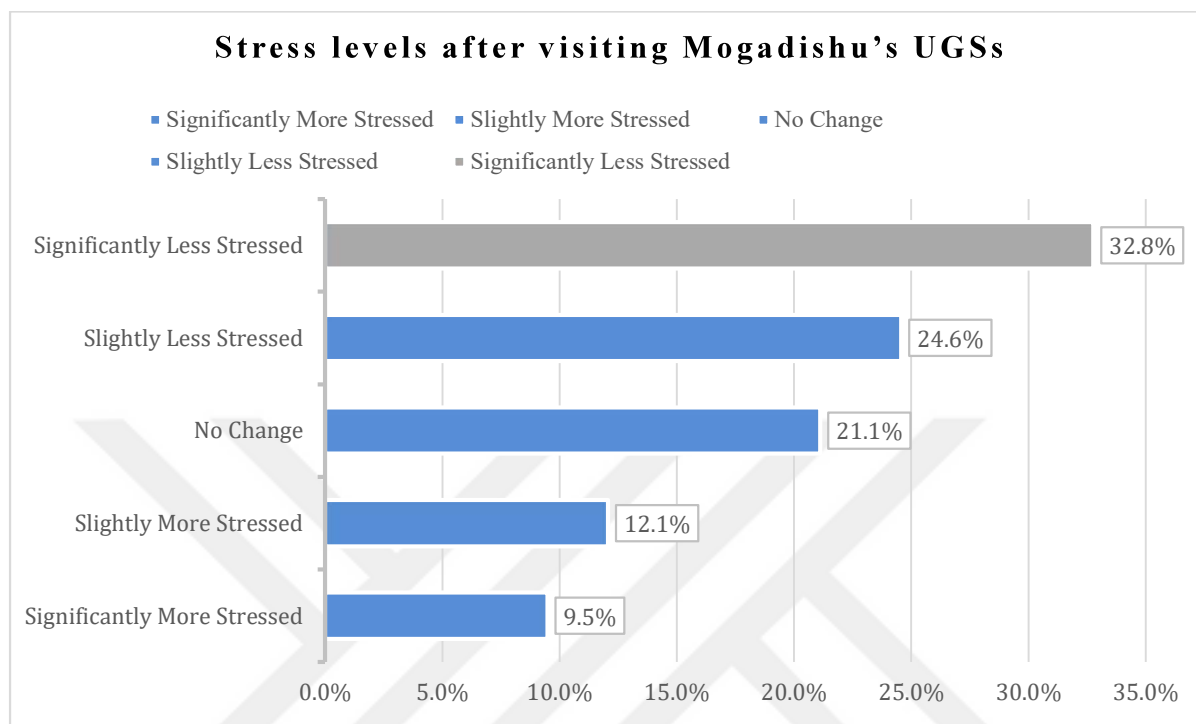


Figure 5.14. Stress levels after visiting Mogadishu's UGSs

5.8. Mogadishu UGSs Creation of Neutral and Inclusive Spaces for Dialogue

The green spaces in Mogadishu present opportunities for facilitating conversations among groups within the city. These areas seem welcoming with no limitations based on gender or clan affiliation (Interviewees 2, 3, 4 and 5). However, one interviewee points out a challenge related to economic constraints. Entrance fees at these spaces, like every green park in Mogadishu, exclude those facing financial difficulties from enjoying these green spaces (Interviewee 1).

Security presents another challenge to ensuring inclusivity for all. While striving for inclusivity it is recognised that there may be a necessity to exclude individuals or groups that pose a threat to safety such as the ones fighting the government and harming civilians as of the writing of this study (Interviewee 3). In addition to accessibility, the concept of inclusivity in these spaces appears intricate. It is suggested that it stems from the absence of segregation and the soothing ambiance of the surroundings (Interviewee 2 and 4).

To illustrate this further, the mean and standard deviation of how comfortable participants felt in approaching another person with a different background were 3.46 and 1.23 respectively. This indicates that the UGSs in Mogadishu are inclusive and makes individuals comfortable enough to approach others sometimes, but it does not indicate that this is the case every time (Table 5.8).

Various stakeholders have acknowledged the potential of public spaces and parks as platforms for promoting peace and reconciliation efforts initiating peacebuilding activities within them (Interviewee 2 and 3). The government for example frequently arranges events in public spaces such as Daljirka Dahson, Hawo Tako, SYL and Dhagahtuur. These occasions often coincide with national holidays and showcase speeches by government officials emphasising the city's advancements towards peace following a history of conflict (Interviewee 3).

Parks have also transformed into arenas for portraying a more positive image of Mogadishu. Notably, Peace Garden parks host summits and various events aimed at nurturing a sense of community spirit and collective responsibility, for the city's welfare. Furthermore, the local culture comes alive in these areas, with small music shows and performances drawing in residents and fostering a peaceful atmosphere especially at night (Interviewee 3).

While hotels remain popular for gatherings like conferences, public parks are gaining recognition for their role in hosting meetings and promoting community interaction instilling a sense of togetherness and harmony within the city (Interviewee 6).

Moreover, the mean score of the ability of Mogadishu's UGSs to reduce tension was 3.31 while the standard deviation was 1.26, and most of the respondents felt either neutral or that these spaces were not effective in reducing tension or conflict (Table 5.8).

This discovery is consistent with prior research in similar environments (Braubach et al., 2017). By providing gathering spots for individuals from different backgrounds UGSs help bridge social gaps and nurture a shared identity and understanding among communities. This function of UGSs resonates with findings from conflict affected regions such as Colombia where public and green spaces have proven vital in post conflict reconciliation efforts (Nail and Erazo, 2018).

Table 5.8. The answers about the Mogadishu UGSs inclusivity and reduction of tension

	Mean	Std. Deviation ($\pm$ SD)	($\pm$ SD)/Mean
How comfortable would you feel approaching someone you don't know (i.e. someone from a different clan or social group) in a Mogadishu urban green space (park)?	3.46	1.23	0.36
How effective are Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks) in reducing tensions or conflict between different groups within the city?	3.31	1.26	0.38

5.9. Mogadishu UGSs Encouragement of Cultural Exchange and Understanding

Participants' perception on the cultural learning opportunities provided by Mogadishu's UGSs, and their willingness to participate in cultural events held there were also investigated. The results show that the average respondent indicated a moderate belief that Mogadishu's UGSs provide opportunities to learn about different cultures (mean score 3.21), with a standard deviation of 1.29. There is also a slight willingness to participate in cultural events held in these spaces (mean score 3.06, standard deviation 1.27) (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9. The answers about the cultural exchange potential of Mogadishu UGSs

	Mean	Std. Deviation ($\pm$ SD)	($\pm$ SD)/Mean
To what extent do Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks) provide opportunities for people to learn about different cultures?	3.21	1.29	0.40
How likely are you to participate in cultural events held in Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks)?	3.06	1.27	0.41

5.10. Mogadishu UGSs Promotion of Economic Opportunities and Community Development

The economic benefits of UGS are recognised by both the interviewees and survey participants. Some of the interviewees argued that designed green areas can attract investments and contribute to the overall economic development. Moreover, the

revitalisation of the economy could lead to an impact creating a stable and peaceful atmosphere, in the community (Interviewee 1).

Since UGSs in general help promote local businesses and create economic opportunities such as jobs for the residents (Flyr and L. Koontz, 2023), the survey participants were asked if Mogadishu's UGSs have the same characteristics. The respondents were moderately positive that these spaces have a hand in boosting the economy with a mean and standard deviation score of 3.64 and 1.23. Similarly, when the willingness of the participants to go to local businesses in these green spaces was investigated, the mean score was 3.34 and the standard deviation score was 1.23 indicating yet again a positive attitude towards the subject (Table 5.10).

Well-maintained parks can attract tourists and support local markets and small businesses, sustaining livelihoods and enhancing regional stability and growth (Spencer and Nsiah, 2013; De Bruyn et al., 2018).

Table 5.10. The answers about promotion of the economy and Mogadishu UGSs

	Mean	Std. Deviation ($\pm$ SD)	($\pm$ SD)/Mean
Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks) create economic opportunities for local vendors (e.g., selling food, drinks, crafts)?	3.64	1.23	0.34
How likely are you to go to local businesses (shops, restaurants) located near Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks)?	3.34	1.29	0.39

5.11. Challenges in the Creation and Management of Mogadishu's UGSs

Mogadishu is grappling with a range of obstacles when it comes to developing and maintaining UGSs. The lack of a comprehensive urban plan for the city is impeding the establishment of dedicated green zones and creating ambiguity around their development regulations (Interviewees 2 and 4). Additionally, while existing public spaces allocated before the civil war have been encroached upon and turned into residential areas, land scarcity due to Mogadishu's population growth and unplanned development makes it difficult to secure suitable locations for green spaces (Interviewee 3 and 5). Moreover,

competing priorities may lead the government to overlook the importance of investing in these spaces (Interviewees 1 and 5). Limited public awareness regarding the advantages of green spaces further compounds the issue by diminishing support for their establishment (Interviewees 2 and 5). Resource limitations pose additional challenges in this scenario. The governments financial constraints hinder its ability to invest in creating and maintaining green areas, which also includes difficulties in relocating displaced individuals currently residing in potential green space sites (Interviewees 1 and 6). Additionally inadequate transportation infrastructure may decrease the accessibility of existing spaces to the public (Interviewee 1). Furthermore, security issues related to spaces can discourage people from utilising them (Interviewee 4).

Evaluating the feeling of safety among visitors of Mogadishu's UGSs, 53.1% of the respondents felt somewhat or very safe visiting Mogadishu's UGSs particularly at night. The breakdown of that percentage is 27.2% of the participants said they felt somewhat safe, followed by 25.9% who felt very safe. However, 21.6% of the respondents feel somewhat or very unsafe in these green spaces indicating that since close to a quarter of the respondents felt unsafe, this is a great issue that needs to be addressed (Figure 5.15).

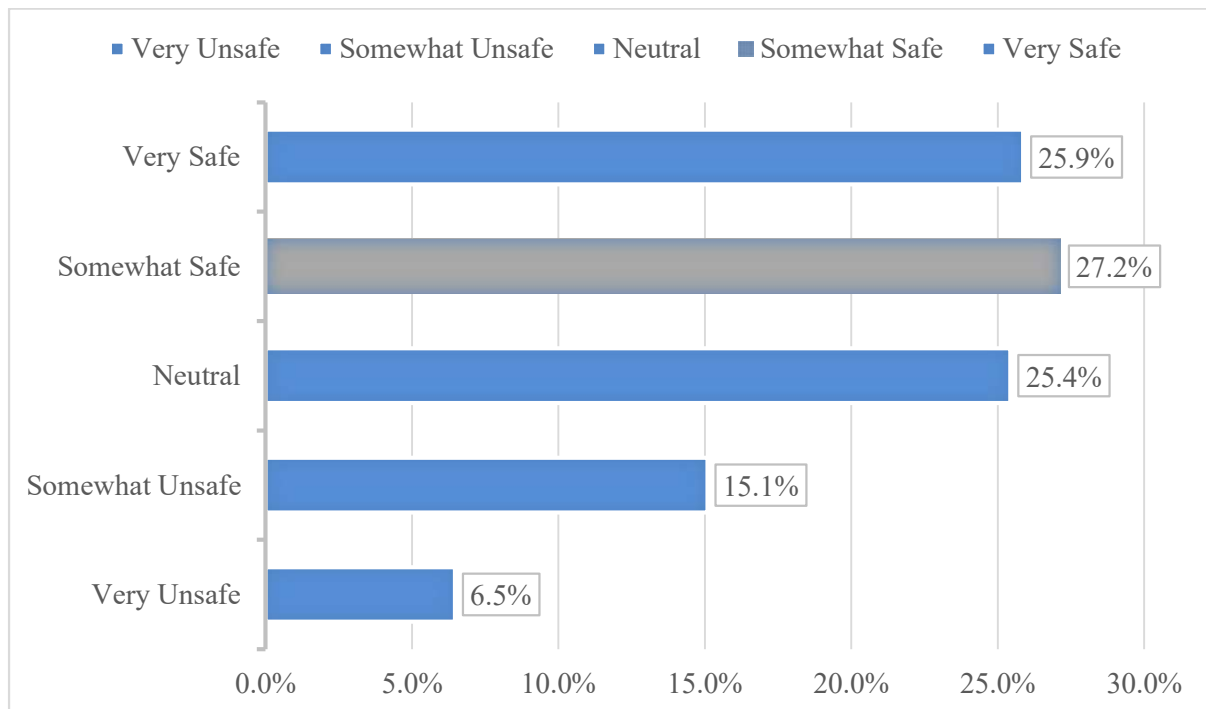


Figure 5.15. Feeling of safety among visitors of Mogadishu UGSs

Various significant suggestions have been put forward regarding the establishment and upkeep of spaces in Mogadishu. These proposals emphasise the necessity of a strategy that tackles land usage concerns, community involvement and financial aspects.

- a. The consistent recommendation from the interviewees was to develop a master plan for Mogadishu. This plan should pinpoint locations for green spaces while taking into account the city's anticipated economic expansion and population growth (Interviewees 1, 2 and 4).
- b. Addressing the problem of occupied land holds importance. Systems must be established to handle conflicting claims over areas designated for parks (Interviewee 1).
- c. Promoting awareness regarding the importance of green spaces is crucial. Education programs could focus on encouraging the involvement of residents in setting up and overseeing these areas even if the government cannot undertake the task alone (Interviewees 2 and 4).
- d. Equitable access is another important consideration. It's important to make sure that everyone can enter existing parks free of charge to avoid discrimination between citizens (Interviewee 4).
- e. The government should be dedicated to directing budget resources towards developing green spaces (Interviewee 6).
- f. Working with stakeholders such as local communities can improve the level of success of these spaces. The municipality of Mogadishu should play a leading role in creating and managing these green areas in collaboration with the community (Interviewee 5).
- g. Improving existing parks to meet international standards alongside establishing new green spaces can attract investments and tourists to the city boosting the economic growth (Interviewee 5).
- h. Integrating waste management strategies into green space development plans is essential for ensuring their sustainability and health benefits (Interviewee 4).

Moreover, when the satisfaction of survey participants with the maintenance and cleanness of Mogadishu UGSs was evaluated, 32.3% and 27.2% of the respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied respectively. In contrast, a combined 16.8% of respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the parks, with 12.5% reporting feeling dissatisfied and 4.3% expressing very strong dissatisfaction. A significant number of responses (23.7%) said they were neutral on the issue (Figure 5.16).

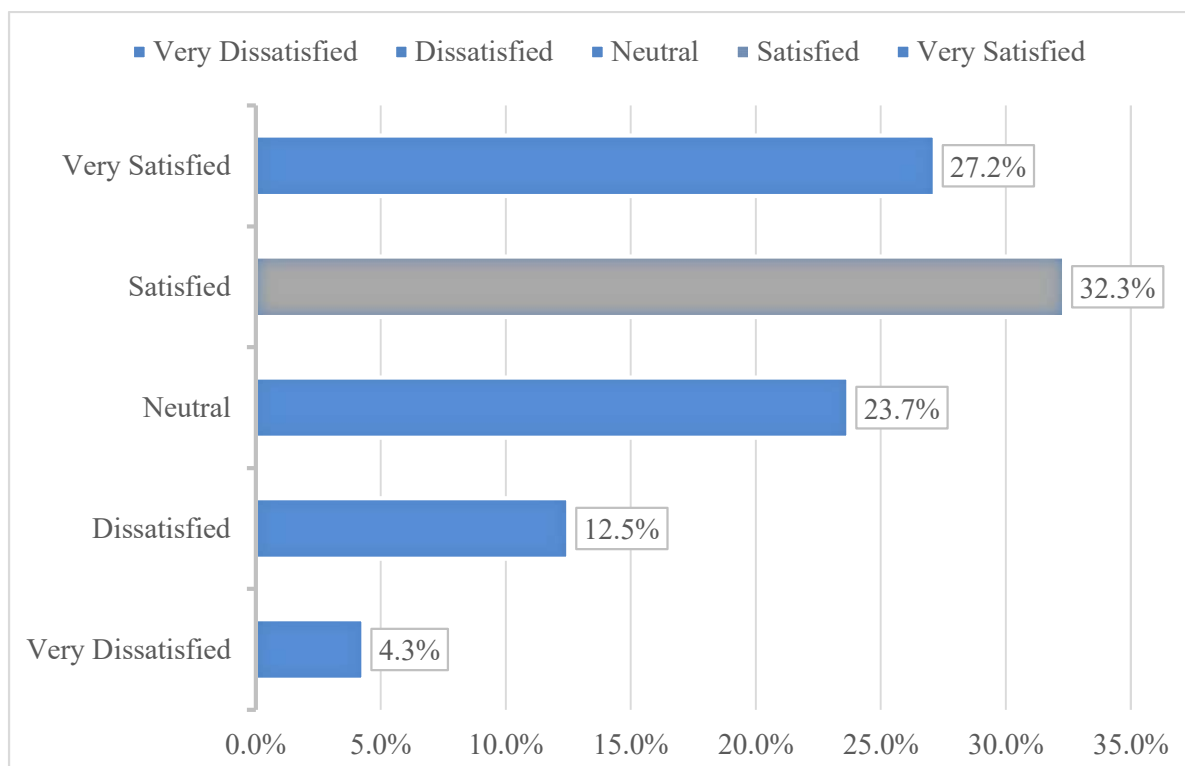


Figure 5.16. The satisfaction of participants with the maintenance and cleanness of Mogadishu UGSs

Furthermore, communities often lead the call for the establishment of green spaces. Residents should advocate for these spaces to be a priority, for the government and actively participate in their design and upkeep (Interviewee 5).

The government has a huge role in integrating UGSs into its broader peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies and to ensure the equitable access to UGSs for all residents of Mogadishu. Section two of the Mogadishu housing program aimed at creating an urban plan for the city is currently in progress. The initial phase of the program faced setbacks due to economic challenges, but it has since been revamped. There are plans to incorporate public spaces and green areas into the landscape to align with broader peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts (Interviewee 3). Moreover, A legislation known as "The disability law" has recently been a topic of discussion in parliament. The Ministry of Women and Human Rights is actively involved in its development with a focus on granting people with disabilities the freedom to access locations easily and freely, including green spaces like parks (Interviewee 6).

6. DISCUSSION

This study on the UGSs in Mogadishu and their role in fostering peace and reconciliation provides valuable insights into their current status, challenges and opportunities. The results underscore the perceptions and appreciation of UGSs by the community with a majority expressing gratitude for their beauty, importance and potential to enhance the residents of the city's quality of life well-being.

Socio-demographic analysis of survey participants

The socio-demographic of the respondents especially the percentages of the participants do not directly reflect on the distribution of the population to the districts. However, the largest number of participants reside in Hodan and Warta Nabadda, two districts that house the 4th and 6th largest population out of all the other districts. Another reason could be attributed to the fact that Hodan district is located in the city centre and a lot of public spaces that people gather in are found there. This could encourage the residents who were asked to participate in the study to accept it since they have experienced these spaces and could offer their opinions on it. Moreover, Warta Nabadda neighbours Hamar Weyne and is not far from Hodan in which two of the most prominent green parks are located namely, Peace Garden Park and Banaadir Garden Park.

Furthermore, despite the percentage of the population in Kaaraan, Heliwaa and Dharkenleey being 23% of the total population, the distribution of the respondents in these same districts was less than 10%. Since these districts are located in the peripheries of the city and none of them have public green parks, this could explain the low number of participants willing to respond to the survey. Dayniile is another district located in the periphery of the city, but the willing participants were 7% which is in line with the percentage of its population (4%) and two of the most well-known parks are located there.

Citizen's rights to the city

As a concept, the right to the city can be defined as a theory through which people are granted equal rights to resources of a city, be allowed to engage in the management of the city and

the social, economic and cultural diversity within urban spaces is promoted. Introduced by Henri Lefebvre and expanded by authors such as David Harvey, it states that all members of society should be able to change, use, and appropriate urban environments for their benefit with equal rights granted to them. This concept underscores three main pillars: spatially just resource distribution, political agency, and social, economic, and cultural diversity (Patel et al., 2016)

By applying the right to the city concept to the planning and development of the UGS parks in Mogadishu, it is highlighted how the parks should be made accessible and beneficial to people of all classes (Moreno et al., 2017). Equal distribution of green spaces requires development of parks within different areas of the city including the areas that lack parks or areas that is affected by conflict. This guarantees that all the members of the community have their chance for recreation, relaxation, and social interaction. This is currently not the case in Mogadishu and green parks are established commercially without prior thought on the distribution of these spaces to the different neighbourhoods of the city.

In addition, the right to the city also entails people's participation in the decisions that affect the urban planning of the city. In Mogadishu, this means that the population should participate in the creation, development, and management of green areas so that they reflect on the population's preferences. Participatory urban planning of this nature promotes responsibility amongst the people in the usage of space and the sustainability of these areas. Another key component is Inclusive governance; this is the ability of all the members of the community especially the vulnerable ones to participate in the process of urban development. This is also unfortunately not the case in Mogadishu and community participation in the creation and management of urban spaces in general and green spaces in particular is non-existent.

UGSs should also be used as cultural and recreational facilities that contribute to the enhancement of social inclusion and multiculturalism. Parks, and other green areas in Mogadishu can be used for culture, sports and other recreational purpose which are significant in the society and history of the city. These spaces offer a sense of continuity and stability in post-conflict settings. Furthermore, green spaces could offer employment opportunities in the construction and management of the greenery and through activities such as local markets and tourism, which enhances the livelihoods and reduces poverty in urban

regions. Although public spaces and monuments that are mentioned in Chapter 3 offer cultural and historical benefits, green spaces in Mogadishu do not provide the same value. Further proof is seen in the response of the survey participants in which more than 25% of the respondents stated that Mogadishu's UGSs do not provide opportunities for cultural exchange.

Other studies on peacebuilding and public and green spaces

Naamani and Simpson (2021) were the authors of the main study that stressed how important it was to inform people about urban green spaces in the cities of Beirut and Tripoli, which corresponds to our results. In Beirut, an organisation named NAHNOO facilitated public opinion to bring back "el-Horsh", one of the largest green areas in the city, through some awareness campaigns after it was shut down during the war. Thanks to this campaign, "el-Horsh" was partially opened in September 2015, and full access was allowed in July 2017.

Another pertinent study in Colombian cities explored the role of public spaces, particularly UGSs as settings for peacebuilding activities and discovered that these green areas offer advantages to users such as leisure activities, social interactions and environmental awareness. The significance of involving the community in the planning, design, and upkeep of UGSs was emphasised, supporting suggestions from our study (Nail and Erazo, 2018).

An example of a monuments that is made to commemorate fallen soldiers and remind the people of the cost of achieving peace is Türkiye's Gallipoli Peninsula Historical Site. Türkiye won the Çanakkale Naval Victory on March 18, 1915, against the allied states after a war that lasted eight and a half months in the northwestern province of Çanakkale, where one of the most violent wars in history took place. The historical Gallipoli Peninsula, where the Gallipoli Campaign took place, welcomes its visitors as an open-air museum with its martyrdoms, monuments, and veteran castles, while the museum exhibits war materials, each of which has a heroic story of Turkish soldiers (Hürriyet Daily News, 2021).

Parallels could be drawn from Mogadishu's the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the monuments in Gallipoli since they both honour the sacrifice of soldiers defending their country. These sites also serve as remembrance of the hard-fought wars and the importance of keeping peace in the country. A key difference between the two monuments is that on the

Gallipoli Peninsula the names of 60,000 soldiers are written on 1,670 concrete slabs in commemoration of their deaths (Atabay et al., 2016). However, reflecting its name, the monument in Mogadishu does not have names written but it represents every hero who died in the line of duty.

Nevertheless, numerous obstacles impede the development and efficient management of UGSs in Mogadishu. One major challenge stems from the absence of an urban plan leading to a lack of designated areas for green spaces and unclear guidelines for their establishment. This issue is worsened by land scarcity due to population growth and unplanned urban expansion making it challenging to secure suitable locations for UGSs.

Another hurdle involves the investment in UGSs. The government faces competing priorities that may not prioritise creating or maintaining green spaces despite their potential advantages. Economic struggles further constrain the government's investment capacity in UGSs. Moreover, resource limitations like the necessity to relocate displaced individuals occupying green space sites add to hindrances in developing these areas.

Similarly, challenges related to managing and maintaining UGSs were highlighted in the study conducted in Lebanon. Insufficient funding, limited stakeholder coordination, and inadequate incorporation of UGSs into planning were identified as constraints (Naamani and Simpson 2021). The challenges faced in Mogadishu are similar to those encountered here showing the importance of planning, increased investment and involving the community in developing green spaces.

Equally, the study in Colombia also pointed out issues regarding maintenance, security and accessibility for marginalised groups. These obstacles underscore the necessity of strategies for space development to ensure that all residents can access and enjoy these areas (Nail and Erazo 2018).

Despite these challenges in Mogadishu there are opportunities identified for enhancing and establishing spaces. One such opportunity is engaging communities in planning and managing these areas. By involving residents in the process, green spaces can better cater to their needs and preferences fostering a sense of ownership and long-term sustainability.

Another avenue is forming partnerships with organisations and NGOs. These bodies can offer support, funding and expertise to aid space development and upkeep.

Moreover, it is crucial to raise awareness among the public about the benefits of green spaces. Many individuals may not grasp fully how these areas contribute to their health well-being and overall quality of life in cities. Raising awareness can help garner support for green spaces encouraging more advocacy for their establishment and maintenance.

Limitations

The study has some limitations. While the sample size of 385 was determined using a reliable method, there may be concerns about how the findings can be applied to the entire population of Mogadishu. Additionally relying heavily on surveys in the study introduces biases. Respondents could inadvertently provide information (self-reporting bias) or be influenced by how questions are framed (response bias). Another limitation is that the focus is on urban green areas like parks excluding other potentially significant green spaces such as green roofs, street trees or even urban forests which could also have an impact on resident well-being, city sustainability, and promotion of peace and reconciliation. Furthermore, the study's cross-sectional approach captures data at a moment in time limiting the ability to understand how perceptions, attitudes and behaviours evolve over time. Conducting longitudinal studies would be essential for examining the lasting effects of green spaces on resident well-being, overall city development and their effects on promoting peace and reconciliation.



7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study investigates the role of UGSs in promoting peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu, a city marked by prolonged conflict and political unrest. Through different research methods such as a thorough literature review, survey and interviews with stakeholders, the study explored how UGSs can enhance social cohesion, dialogue and community solidarity in a post conflict setting. The results emphasise the impact of UGSs on mental well-being, social interactions, and economic opportunities while also addressing challenges related to security, funding, and maintenance.

The study affirms that UGSs play a role in peacebuilding by offering neutral spaces where diverse groups can engage with each other and ease tensions—a finding consistent with prior research in similar environments (Braubach et al., 2017). By providing gathering spots for individuals from different backgrounds UGSs help bridge social gaps and nurture a shared identity and understanding among communities. This function of UGSs resonates with findings from conflict-affected regions where public spaces have proven vital in post conflict reconciliation efforts (Nail and Erazo, 2018).

Likewise, the beneficial impact of UGSs on health is reinforced by existing literature that highlights their dual contribution to peacebuilding and health promotion. Access to green spaces has been linked to lower stress levels, improved mood, and better overall mental well-being (Turner-Skoff and Cavender, 2019; Simpson et al., 2023). These advantages are especially important in places like Mogadishu after conflicts, where the emotional impact of prolonged violence and instability can be deep. UGSs offer a haven for individuals to recover from stress and trauma contributing to the healing process of the community (Henderson-Wilson and Weerasuriya, 2017; Poulsen et al., 2018).

These spaces create opportunities through tourism and local businesses, which adds a unique aspect not extensively explored in previous peacebuilding studies. Well-maintained parks and recreational areas can attract tourists while local markets and small businesses can flourish within these environments (Spencer and Nsiah, 2013; De Bruyn et al., 2018). This economic activity not only sustains local livelihoods but also enhances the overall stability and growth of the region. Nonetheless, challenges such as safety issues, funding shortages,

and maintenance problems pose hurdles that align with broader urban development literature (Nail and Erazo, 2018).

Based on the study results, some suggestions are put forward. Firstly, it is crucial to carry out activities and initiatives that would increase the level of community cohesion. Festivals, local markets, and cultural events that unite people are a perfect example of how communities can be involved in the formation of successful interaction zones for the residents. For example, the programs like “Afternoons Together” in El Salvador in which cultural performances and activities are organised in the parks can be implemented. Such events usually celebrate the city's cultural diversity and provide opportunities for residents to appreciate and learn from each other's traditions, fostering mutual respect and understanding. Secondly, forming partnerships between the public and private sectors can secure sustainable funding for establishing and preserving UGSs guaranteeing their long-term sustainability. Such partnerships can utilise the resources and knowledge of stakeholders like government bodies, non-profit organisations, and private companies.

Thirdly, involving communities in UGS planning and maintenance through participatory methods fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among residents resulting in better-maintained and more vibrant public spaces. Community engagement in decision-making processes ensures that UGSs cater to the needs and preferences of the residents enhancing their significance and longevity. Moreover, some features of social integration into the design of UGSs should be incorporated. Seating areas can be arranged in circles, which makes communication between people using the park possible and easy, whereas community boards act as bulletin boards that can be used to post information regarding events in the community. Specific game zones, such as chess or ping pong tables, provide opportunities for casual interactions and friendly competitions. Such design features increase people's willingness to interact with other people which enhances their interpersonal relations in the park.

Furthermore, gardening workshops or programs designed for participants with PTSD should be organised where they can find therapeutic value as well as the sense of purpose and community. These programs enable the participants to be useful members of society through active participation in exercises, connecting with others who share similar experiences, and doing physical work that include cleaning up the green areas.

Finally, encouraging entrepreneurship within UGSs by providing spaces for markets and small businesses can boost local growth and create jobs contributing to larger peacebuilding endeavours. Economic activities in these spaces not only provide income for locals but also foster social connections and community bonding. For instance, markets can become lively meeting spots where individuals from diverse backgrounds mingle, fostering unity and economic cooperation.

In conclusion, this study highlights the roles that UGSs play in promoting peace and reconciliation in Mogadishu. By nurturing unity, improving mental health and offering economic opportunities, UGSs emerge as essential elements of peacebuilding strategies in cities. Tackling the identified challenges with targeted solutions can enhance the impact of these spaces making them vital for urban growth and peace efforts in post-conflict regions. This research contributes to a recognition of how UGSs can aid in peacebuilding efforts and provides practical advice for policymakers and practitioners working in similar environments.

Recommendation for future studies

The heavy leaning quantitative approach of this research limits its capacity to fully measure the overall impact of UGSs, and its focus on Mogadishu may affect the generalisability of the findings to other conflict-affected cities. Nonetheless, the insights gained can inform planning and peacekeeping operations in Mogadishu and similar situations. Future research should adopt a more qualitative methodology, combining in-depth interviews of far more than 6 people and extensive research across various areas of Mogadishu. Other types of public spaces and UGSs should be included in future studies and not be limited to green parks to understand the overall impact of these spaces in promoting peace and reconciliation.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-1. Questionnaire form

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study conducted by Muse Abdirahman Ahmed, a student at the Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences in City and Regional Planning at Gazi University in Türkiye. This questionnaire is part of a research project investigating the role of urban green spaces in promoting peace and reconciliation efforts in Mogadishu, Somalia. Your participation is entirely voluntary and anonymous.

The questionnaire aims to gather your experiences and perspectives on green spaces (parks) in Mogadishu. Your responses will be crucial in understanding how these spaces contribute to peacebuilding initiatives in the city. According to the answer to the 6th question "How often do you visit Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks)?", the number and type of questions required to be answered by the participant will be different. "Never and Rarely" will yield different questions to "Sometimes, Often and Very Often".

The questionnaire should take approximately 4-6 minutes to complete. Thank you for your time and contribution to this research.

1. Age group:

- > 18-24
- > 25-34
- > 35-44
- > 45-54
- > 55+

2. Gender:

- > Male
- > Female

3. Level of education:

- > Below Middle School
- > Middle School

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

- > Highschool
- > Undergraduate
- > Postgraduate

4. Occupation:

.....

5. District of residence:

.....

6. How often do you visit Mogadishu's urban green spaces?

- > Never
- > Rarely
- > Sometimes
- > Often
- > Very Often

If you have never visited or rarely visited Mogadishu's urban green spaces, please answer the following questions:

7. The reason(s) for not visiting Mogadishu's urban green spaces are [More than one could be chosen]:

- > Economic
- > Transportation
- > Distance
- > Security
- > Other (Please specify):

8. Do you believe that the absence of urban green spaces in your life affect you negatively?

- > Yes
- > No

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

9. If you answered “No”, can you please provide one or two reasons why?

.....

10. Would you have gone to Mogadishu’s urban green spaces if it was a close distance to your residence?

-> Yes

-> No

11. Would you have gone to Mogadishu’s urban green spaces if its entrance was without pay?

-> Yes

-> No

12. What type of place do you go for relaxation and recreational activities?

.....
 ...

13. What type of place do you go for cultural exchange?

.....
 ...

14. What type of place do you go for social interaction and community improvement?

.....
 ...

If you sometimes, often, or very often visit Mogadishu’s urban green spaces, please answer the following questions:

15. The reason(s) for going to Mogadishu's urban green spaces (parks) are [More than one could be chosen]:

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

- > Recreational activities (i.e. walking, playing sports)
- > Comfort, relaxation, and mental well-being
- > Social interaction
- > The availability of socially inclusive areas
- > Cultural exchange
- > Buying from local businesses
- > Other (please specify):

16. Please choose the park you feel the **most satisfied** with regarding the availability of each of the following attributes:

	Banaadir Garden Park	Darusalam Garden	Mogadishu Tourist Village Park	Peace Garden Park
Fostering social interaction				
Recreational activities (i.e. walking, playing sports)				
Comfort, relaxation and mental well-being				
Socially inclusive areas				
Cultural exchange				
Promotion of local businesses				

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

17. Please choose the park you feel the **least satisfied** with regarding the availability of each of the following attributes:

	Banaadir Garden Park	Darusalam Garden	Mogadishu Tourist Village Park	Peace Garden Park
Fostering social interaction				
Recreational activities (i.e. walking, playing sports)				
Comfort, relaxation and mental well-being				
Socially inclusive areas				
Cultural exchange				
Promotion of local businesses				

18. I feel a greater sense of community and unity in Mogadishu's urban green spaces compared to other areas of the city:

- > Strongly Disagree
- > Disagree
- > Neutral
- > Agree
- > Strongly Agree

19. How often do you observe people from different backgrounds interacting in Mogadishu's urban green spaces?

- > Never
- > Rarely

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

- > Sometimes
- > Often
- > Very Often

20. How often do you use Mogadishu's urban green spaces for recreational activities (e.g., walking, playing sports)?

- > Never
- > Rarely
- > Sometimes
- > Often
- > Very Often

21. After visiting a Mogadishu urban green space, how do you feel in terms of stress levels?

- > Significantly More Stressed
- > Slightly More Stressed
- > No Change
- > Slightly Less Stressed
- > Significantly Less Stressed

22. How comfortable would you feel approaching someone you don't know (i.e. someone from a different clan or social group) in a Mogadishu urban green space?

- > Very Uncomfortable
- > Somewhat Uncomfortable
- > Neutral
- > Somewhat Comfortable
- > Very Comfortable

23. How effective are Mogadishu's urban green spaces in reducing tensions or conflict between different groups within the city?

- > Not at all Effective
- > Somewhat Ineffective
- > Neutral

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

-> Somewhat Effective

-> Very Effective

24. To what extent do Mogadishu's urban green spaces provide opportunities for people to learn about different cultures?

-> Not at all

-> To a small extent

-> To a moderate extent

-> To a large extent

-> To a very large extent

25. How likely are you to participate in cultural events held in Mogadishu's urban green spaces?

-> Not at all Likely

-> Somewhat Unlikely

-> Neutral

-> Somewhat Likely

-> Very Likely

26. Mogadishu's urban green spaces create economic opportunities for local vendors (e.g., selling food, drinks, crafts)?

-> Strongly Disagree

-> Disagree

-> Neutral

-> Agree

-> Strongly Agree

27. How likely are you to go to local businesses (shops, restaurants) located near Mogadishu's urban green spaces?

-> Not at all Likely

-> Somewhat Unlikely

-> Neutral

APPENDIX-1. (continued) Questionnaire form

-> Somewhat Likely

-> Very Likely

28. How safe do you feel visiting Mogadishu's urban green spaces, particularly at night?

-> Very Unsafe

-> Somewhat Unsafe

-> Neutral

-> Somewhat Safe

-> Very Safe

29. How satisfied are you with the overall maintenance and cleanliness of Mogadishu's urban green spaces?

-> Very Dissatisfied

-> Dissatisfied

-> Neutral

-> Satisfied

-> Very Satisfied

30. What improvements would you recommend for Mogadishu's urban green spaces to better promote peace and reconciliation?

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APPENDIX-2. Interview questions

1. Are there any urban spaces/places that contributes to fostering a sense of community and promotion of peace in Mogadishu?
2. In your experience, how have Mogadishu's urban green spaces impacted the overall sense of peace within the community?
3. Have you observed any changes in social interactions and dialogue because of these green spaces?
4. Do these green spaces contribute to creating a sense of community and unity in Mogadishu?
5. Do you believe Mogadishu's green spaces provide neutral and inclusive spaces for dialogue among different groups? With what features/qualities do they provide this?
6. Can you share a personal story, anecdote, or specific activities/programs that have been held within these spaces (green parks) that have promoted peace or fostered reconciliation?
7. What are some of the main challenges faced in creating and managing urban green spaces in Mogadishu?
8. In your view, what are some practical steps that could be taken to overcome these challenges?
9. What role can local communities play in ensuring the success of these green spaces?
10. How does the government plan to integrate urban green spaces into its broader peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies? (For government officials)
11. What measures if any will the government take to ensure equitable access to urban green spaces for all residents of Mogadishu? (For government officials)



Gazili olmak ayrıcalıktır