



**Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanisms in
Post-1991 Ethiopia: The Case of Oromia and Somali Regional
States' Border Conflict**

**By
Temesgen Bayissa Gelle**

**May 2018
Addis Ababa**

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Conflict**

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Temesgen Bayissa Gelle

Supervisors: Tadesse Berisso (Assoc. prof.)

Fekadu Adugna (Asst. prof.)

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Abstract

In the last four decades, the international peace agenda has been dominated by debates on conflict prevention. In Africa, the post-Cold War era has witnessed a shift in emphasis from conflict management to conflict prevention. While conflict management focuses on armed aspects of conflict, conflict prevention tries to contain and resolve imminent conflicts by responding to visible signs and indicators. Essentially, the shift is necessitated by the shortcomings of the reactionary rather than proactive nature of conflict management approaches. Irrespective of the paradigm shift towards conflict prevention, Africa in general and the countries of the Horn in particular continue to witness persistent violent conflicts. Conflict early warning and response system as a tool for conflict prevention has assumed more prominence in international conflict prevention platforms such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), and Regional Economic Communities (REC), research institutions and National Governments, including Ethiopia. The adoption of early warning practice in conflict prevention has had its successes and failures. Cases of success are evident in Sierra Leone, while the failure of the International community to contain the genocide in Rwanda has been cited for its failure. This study therefore, primarily examines how the national conflict early warning and response system instituted by MOFPDA has worked or failed to prevent conflicts before it escalates to violent level in Ethiopia taking the Oromia and Somali National Regional States' border conflict as a case study. This study argues that the absence of viable and strong institution of early warning systems and response leads to conflict escalation. The study adopts conflict prevention theory propounded by Michael S. Lund (2009) as theoretical framework of analysis. Lund contends that the success of conflict prevention is contingent on the following three assumptions: early response to manifestations of indicators; an all-inclusive, coordinated process of key stages of conflict early warning to mitigate tension or threats to violence; and concerted attempts to transform the root causes of violence. Methodologically, the study employed qualitative research approach and data gathering was made by using interviews, focus group discussions, field observation and analysis of available documents. Empirical data were sourced from cases of the Oromo-Somali border conflicts, using two conflict hotspot districts – Mi'esso and Moyale. This border area has experienced persistent and complex armed conflict. The findings of this study indicate that the federal process has no strong conflict prevention, early warning and response institution. Lack of viable and strong institution for conflict early warning and early response systems – both at National (MOFPDA) and Oromia and Somali Regional States level to prevent the escalation of conflicts at its earlier stage have caused local and regional disputes to grow into violent conflicts. The study further points out that, institutionalizing and strengthening early warning systems will lead to a significant reduction of conflicts along the inter-regional borders. Also, the nature of cooperation and synergy between federal and regional conflict early warning and response mechanisms in the prevention and mitigation of Oromia- Somali border conflict is weak. The centralized policy and decision-making process of the ruling party and lack of impartial institutions for intergovernmental relationship has hindered strong synergy and cooperation between federal and regional governments.

Key Words: border conflict, resource conflict, conflict prevention, conflict early warning, conflict early response, Oromia and Somali National Regional States

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data
AMM	Africa Media Monitor
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CAST	Conflict Assessment Software Tool
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Network
CEWERU	Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit
CEWRR	Conflict Early Warning and Rapid Response
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CMD	Conflict Management Division
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CPF	County Peace Forums
CPMR	Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution
CPR	Conflict Prevention and Resolution
CPRDG	Conflict Prevention and Resolution Directorate General
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPCs	District Peace Committees
DPCs	District Peace Committees
DSCPO	District Security Committees and Police Operations
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ECOWARN	Economic Commission for West African Network
ECOWAS	Economic Commission for West African States
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ER	Early Response
ESDL	Ethiopian Somali Democratic League
ESDM	Ethiopian Somali Democratic Movement
ESDP	European Security and Defense Policy
ETLR	Evolutionary Theory of Land Rights

EU	European Union
EW	Early Warning
EWERS	Early Warning and Early Response System
EWS	Early Warning System
FAST	Early Warning Project of Swiss Peace
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FEWER	Forum for Early Warning and Early Response
FFP	Fund for Peace
FSI	Fragile States Index
GPI	Global Peace Index
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HEWS	Humanitarian Early Warning System
HOA	Horn of Africa
HOF	House of Federation
HQ	Head Quarter
ICBMs	Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFLO	Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGLF	Issa Gurgura Liberation Front
IPSS	Institute of Peace and Security Studies
IPSTC	International Peace Support Training Centre
IRCK	Inter – Religious Council of Kenya
IT	Information Technology
LCP	Local Peace Committees
LINs	Local Information Networks
MOFPDA	Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs
NCEWERS	National Conflict Early Warning and Early Response System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OAU	Organization for African Unity
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo Peoples’ Democratic Organization

ORCI	Office for the Research and Collection of Information
POW	Panel of the Wise
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PSCA	Peace and Security Council Architecture
PSCP	Peace and Security Council Protocol
REC	Regional Economic Communities
RRF	Rapid Response Fund
SNM	Somali National Movement
SNNPRS	Southern Nations and Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State
SR	Situation Room
TCEW	Technical Committee on Early Warning
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WSLF	Western Somali Liberation Front

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The Horn of Africa is one of the most conflict-prone areas in the continent involving different factors and actors. The sub-region has been experiencing protracted conflict and instability during the last several decades. Most of the conflicts are attributed to ethnic nationalism, resource competition especially claims over territorial boundary and religious conflicts at a times. Most of the conflicts have largely been internal and complex in nature. Some scholars attribute the complication of the conflict in the Horn of Africa region because in most cases politics and ethnicity are deeply interwoven (Wolff, 2007). In the context it is often observed that political elites could manipulate ethnic claims to mobilize a given ethnic group towards certain political ends (Ibid). Ethiopia, just like other parts of the Horn, has been suffering from these kinds of conflicts for many decades.

Several writers on Ethiopian political history, such as Markakis (2003) and Clapham (2002), argue that the major cause of ethnic conflicts is the centralization of power and domination over economic resources by the elites of dominant groups, principally by people from the central parts of the country. For the Imperial era, this refers to the Amhara ethnic group, mainly from Shawa, which despite genealogical mixtures defined itself as Amhara nation along a narrow perspective, and marginalized other ethnic groups (Markakis, 1998 and Clapham, 1994). The response of the Imperial regime to the various resistances against its centralization drove the marginalized ethnic groups to unrest and the conflicts it provoked paved the way for the ruling elite to advance the project of 'nation- building'. The imperial regime subjected the vanquished ethnic groups to politico-economic domination, linguistic and cultural suppression; and more fundamentally it forcefully confiscated the land from the subjected population of the South. State-sponsored nationalism was advanced aggressively by the hegemonic elite to ensure the continuity of its dominance and the centrality of the monarchy which legitimated such dominance (Merara, 2003).

The monarchy was overthrown by the military force called Dergue which neither solved the country's chronic problem of neither underdevelopment nor the demands of various forces, especially those of the marginalized ethnic groups of Ethiopia. Due to the existence of serious challenges from various directions, for the control of the state, the military used its comparative advantage to downsize the ethnic issues. Hence, both the Imperial regime (1930-1974) and the military regime (1974-1991) have been criticized for monopolizing state power and economic resources in "technocratic form" by a few which either came from Amhara ethnic group or those which identified themselves with that identity and which excluded other ethnic groups' access to state power (Markakis, 1998 and Clapham, 1994).

Abbink (1997) argues that ethnic revival is primarily a result of failing state policy which excludes certain ethno-regional groups, with locked elite groups. It seems that these circumstances encourage the politicization of ethnicity and lead to ethnic conflicts. Young (1998) also emphasizes that intra-state conflicts that involve ethnic groups have become common since the establishment of the modern state in Ethiopia. However, Emperor Haile Selassie and the military regime neglected the issues and focused on Ethiopian state building. As a result, protracted civil wars continued and became the main reasons for the fall of the military regime in 1991(Young, 1998). This suggests that conflict prevention, management and resolution have not been given due attention in both regimes.

The centrist state structure that prevailed in Ethiopia since the second half of the 19th century came to its collapse in the May 1991 with the defeat of the Dergue regime by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) which introduced a new policy of ethnic based federal model. The post-1991 politics of Ethiopia witnessed a major departure from the past in terms of political and structural dimensions as an anti-thesis to the former unitary socio-political rule. This has happened partly to manage the existing inter-ethnic diversities and prevent further conflicts thereof (Markakis, 2011). Thus, the introduction of ethnic federalism was meant to be a mechanism of conflict resolution (Vaughan 2003). Further, Vaughan (2003 quotes the ex-Ethiopian Prime Minister:

From a purely legal point of view, what we were trying to do was to stop the war, and start the process of peaceful competition [...]. The key cause of the war all over the country was the issue of nationalities. Any solution that did not address them did not address the issue of peace and war [...] People were fighting for the right to use their language, to use their culture, to administer themselves. So without guaranteeing these rights it was not possible to stop the war, or prevent another one. [...] People were already expressing themselves even at that early stage before the conference in terms of nationalities: that is manifested in the way they organized themselves. (Vaughan, 2003: 37).

The ethnic federal model has constitutionally guaranteed unconditional right of self-determination up to and including secession (FDRE, 1995; Article 39), and recognized equality of identities, languages and cultures of ethnic groups as a means of ensuring peaceful coexistence (FDRE, 1995; Articles, 5, 25 and 41). Whether the new Ethiopian federal model has mitigated or exacerbated ethnic conflict is a matter of debate. Some empirical studies indicate that soon after the introduction of the new ethnic based federal system intra-state conflicts were instigated following the re-organization of regional states in the country. In fact, since Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic country where diverse people live together, it may be argued that it is not an exception to face ethnic confrontations. Hence, although it varies in differences in degree, extent, causes and actors, the country has faced many recurrences of intra-regional ethnic conflicts at different periods (see Tadesse and Yonas 2005; Abeje, 2006; Mellese, 2008; Abera, 2009). Various ethnic groups have engaged in conflicts and claims over territory, resources, power, and self- administration.

The conflict between Oromo and Somali since 1991 is an empirical example that indicates that the ethnic based federal model generated new forms of conflict (see chapter five). As soon as the Oromia and Somali national regional states were established, they got engaged in protracted claims and counter-claims over territories along their nominal but indistinct borders. The two regional states share a border more than 1552 kilometers which have not been clearly demarcated. These two regional states experienced severe conflicts along all their common borders. The conflict involves five zonal administrations of Oromia (West Hararge, East Hararge, Bale, Eastern Guji and Borana) and six counterpart zonal administrations of the Somali (Siti, Negob, Fafan, Afdher, Liban and Dawa share physical borders). Moreover, conflicts that may emerge in a certain area

could easily expand to other areas which share borders. The conflicts with the involvement of pastoralist communities affect two states and take the form of economic, political, ethnic, religious and regional dimensions (Asnake, 2004). Thus, the socio-economic and political dynamics related with formation of regional states provides additional incentives for the protracted conflicts of the area when vibrant conflict prevention is not in place. Despite a history of common relationship such as shared values, religion and inter-marriage, the tension between Oromo and Somali rose quickly to a full-blown hostility during the post 1991. Contentious issues left unresolved, such as access to scarce resource, access and unfinished border-delimitation, all became sources of discord (OBAS Archive, 2016-17).

Between July 2011 and September 2017, tensions over 19 districts and 5 zonal administrations along the border belts of Oromia and Somali National Regional States escalated into an all-out conflict and called for the involvement of Oromia and Somali regional states in which one accuses the other for invading its territory. The area of conflicts were Mi'esso, Gumbi Bordode and Doba districts in West Hararge; Chinaksen, Babile, Gursum, Qumbi, Midhega Tola and Mayu Muluke districts in East Hararge; Moyale, Guchi, Wachile districts in Borana; Rayitu, Madda Walabu and Dawe Qachan districts in Bale; Liban and Gumi Adelo districts in East Guji zone. In these conflicts, about 2,806 people were killed and 1,588 were wounded, 184 women were raped, and 63 kidnapped (OBAS Archive, 2015- 2017, own interview sources). In addition to this, the border conflict between both regions has become the main cause of internal displacement of persons along the borders since the 1990s. Nevertheless, there is no available official data regarding the exact number of people internally displaced by conflict along the borders. This is mainly attributed to the fact that information on internal displacement provided by the federal government on the one hand and the regional and local authorities on the other have been different. However, estimates suggest that over 655,470 people have been internally displaced and fled their homes along the borders between July, 2011 and July, 2017. This figure includes 340,612 people displaced in Borana; 38,453 people displaced in Guji, 187,981 in East Hararge; 58,438 in West Hararge; 29,986 in Bale (OBAS Archive, 2015- 2017; BBC News Broadcast 28 July 2012, Own interview

sources). In addition to this, a woman informant depicted that “... during the 2015 conflict occurred between Oromo and Somali around Mi’esso district the elderly, children, women and people with disability bear the most severe consequences of violent conflict”.¹ This implies that conflict affects different categories of people differently and call for institutional conflict prevention and response mechanisms in which particular care to be accorded before, during and after conflict to the community, especially to women, children, elderly and people with disability.

More recently, exclusive document presented at the Ethiopian National security meeting indicates that, though to fully grasp the genesis of the current conflict one must go back some decades, at its height, the most recent (2015- 2017) conflict between Oromia and Somali is unique because unprecedented humanitarian and material crisis have occurred. Brutal killings and injuries, violations of rights to residence, property and movement, psychological scars (impact and frustration and morality) were observed. Moreover, non-accountability and non-appearance of perpetrators before court of justice were identified as additional instigating factors(Ethiopian National Security Plan Report, 2017:3-5).

More specifically, in 2007, some 328,715 people were uprooted by ethnic clashes between Oromo and Somali groups, this figure includes Male 14800 Female 9943 Total 24743 in West Hararge; Male 10631 Female 13514 Total 24145 in East Hararge; Male 17034 Female 11356 Total 28390 in Guji; M 36,261 Female 35,254 Total 71,515 in Bale; Male 108,975 Female 70,947 Total 179,922 in Borana. From all five zones, Male 187,701 Female 141,014 Total 328,715 people were internally displaced. In addition, tens of thousands of people were forced to leave their homes due to the inter-ethnic conflicts from Jigjiga the capital of Somali region and the surrounding (OBAS Archive, 2017; BBC News Broad Cast, September 15, 2017; VOA News Broad Cast; September 18, 2017 11:49 AM). Moreover, about 3000 Oromos were displaced from Somaliland in connection with Oromo- Somali border conflict (Reuters News Agency, September 2017; Associated Press, September, 2017). Likewise from the Somali region some 250,000 people were internally displaced due to the conflict (Ethiopian National Security Plan

¹ Interview with an elder woman in Mi’esso of Oromia, February 16, 2016.

Report, 2017:3-5). There have been interventions both from the state and non-state actors to address the problem within the federal framework. Ethiopian government says it is working towards resolving what it calls boundary dispute between its Oromia and Somali regional States (BBC News Broadcast, 13 September 2017). Nevertheless, the conflict continued and unabated and the root causes have remained unaddressed until recently along the bordering areas. The reason for this may be the absence of institutionalization of strong conflict prevention, early warning and response mechanisms in the country in general and Oromia and Somali regional states in particular. Thus, this research argues that lack of properly institutionalized conflict prevention; early warning and response mechanism are the main factors for the recurrent hostility which results in death, injury, rape, and internal displacement of large population in the conflict ragged zones of Oromia and Somali National Regional States.

Conflict prevention and “early warning systems” (EWERS) have become official policy and agendas of global community and national governments for mitigating intra-state conflicts. Although a variety of definitions of the EWERS do exist, there is a common understanding of the nature, role, and characteristics of these systems. In the field of peace and security study, EWERS are systems in which information are collected using specific conflict indicators, verified, validated, and analyzed in a systematic manner, and thereby communicated to decision makers for formulation of joint response options on an ongoing basis for a wide range of preventative purposes (Adam Habib, 2011:1). In other words, early warning has been taken as a tool of conflict deterrence that aids in establishing the likely occurrence of violent conflicts and how to arbitrate and avert these conflicts (Austin, 2004). Early warning is a specific aspect of, and prerequisite for conflict prevention. The primary goal of early warning and response system is to save life and property.

In addition, early warning involves a process of communicating judgments about threats as early as possible for decision-makers to take action before hostilities could happen (McCarthy, 1997:15-16). There are many cases where early warning systems were able to prevent loss of lives and destruction of properties. Equally there are many disasters where

early warning systems were not in place or failed to save life (e.g. Rwanda, Yugoslavia) (Wulf and Debiel, 2009:18).

The field of early warning system emerged on the international policy agenda after the end of the Cold War (Nyheim, 2008:7-14). At the beginning of the 1990s, a series of violent conflicts broke out in different parts of the world. Despite a new thrust on multilateralism heralded by the United Nations, the international community by and large failed to adequately address these conflicts. The cases of Somalia (1992/93), Bosnia (1992/93) and – most importantly- Rwanda (1994) demonstrated the limitations of international community (at times, outright unwillingness) to prevent and manage violent conflict wherever it occurs. These failures underline the critical need for strengthening prevention mechanisms, in particular the development and implementation of early warning systems, which could support early action. Consequently, numerous governmental and non- governmental bodies have started to get involved in early warning and devised early warning models (Wane, 2008:11).

Since the end of cold war, economic dislocations, civil war, famine, ethnic and religious animosities have added fuel to conflicts and enhanced political instability in the Horn of Africa. These conflicts and instabilities frequently challenge national security and at times resulted in human rights violations. Mwangi (2006) states that conflicts are rarely abrupt; they develop over a period of time. Nonetheless, attempts to prevent conflicts through the use of early warning systems are a recent phenomenon. It is against this backdrop that the idea of preventing came to existence in Africa Being an important component of conflict prevention, early warning system is basically conceived as a means of “avoiding or minimizing violence, deprivation or humanitarian crises that threaten the sustainability of human development and livelihood” (John Davies, 2000:2). In view of intensive and complex conflict situations, it would be better to respond to conflicts at a much earlier stage, preferably before the eruption of violence or, at any rate, before violence would escalate (Walraven, 1998).

In the post-1991 period in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs and most regional states have endeavored to institutionalize conflict

prevention/early warning and early response mechanisms. However, the scanty attempt to introduce the system could not restrain the frequency of conflicts along inter and intra-regional borders. Generally, the ethnic federal arrangement which was instituted in the country since the beginning of the 1990s was meant to do away with structural causes of conflicts - but in the Oromo-Somali case, the ethnic federal arrangement created frontier/border conflicts. Some old conflicts between Somali and Oromo ethnic groups were also transformed into boundary conflicts. Claims and counter-claims over resources and territories have become the center of conflicts around the borders of both ethno-national regional states of Ethiopia. The contestations between them were viewed by many as local level disputes and conflicts between the agro-pastoralists and pastoralists. Considering the fact that the federal system - ethnic decentralization and creation of boundaries would create conflicts- the federal system incorporated systems of conflict management and resolution. To this end, the constitution puts provisions on how disputes on issues of identity and boundary can be resolved. Moreover, conflict management institutions have been established at different levels. There have been also efforts of establishing early warning and systems of conflict prevention - but the performance of these institutions has been limited. Nonetheless, there has not been a significant reduction or mitigation of violent conflicts. Moreover, there are still many uncertainties about the institution, design, efficiency and effectiveness of the current national early warning and early response systems. Moreover, the regional state/ local level/ early warning and response systems have not been given due emphasis and are yet to be sought. Furthermore, by concentrating on the practice, of early warning and conflict prevention, rather than the scholarly constructs, this thesis examines the kind of institutions and events that are treated by the federal and regional governments in Ethiopia as signals of potential violent conflict. It is against this backdrop that this research intends to examine whether Ethiopia as a member of IGAD has achieved its institutional mandate to respond to the wave of ongoing conflicts along the bordering areas of Oromia and Somali regional states.

In general, the popular adage has it that “prevention is better than cure”. Given the heavy and enduring costs of violent conflicts, it is indispensable to make efforts to prevent them

from breaking than waiting until it breaks out. This activity entails two things: conflict prevention measures and early warning systems. Anything that could be done to effectively address the root causes of a conflict before it turns violent may fit in to the former, while the later aims at identification of threats in order to seek for effective conflict prevention measures that would resolve the conflict before they start to surface. In other words, ensuring ‘human security is the goal of the former, while surveillance for any deficit in providing the different components of this “human security”’ is the target of the later. The ultimate goal of doing this is not simply to guide early action but also to signal to the parties at the center of a conflict that they can take paths to peace by instituting a system rather than wedge into violence. The thesis deals with this issue and specifically examines how the national conflict early warning and response institution/system put in place captures and prevents conflicts before it escalates to violent level in Ethiopia by taking the Oromia and Somali National Regional States’ Border Conflict as a case.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

The conventional paradigm of states going to war with each other has become less common. However, violent conflicts have spread in complexity and intensity all over the world and today, intra-state conflicts are more prevalent. Since the establishment of African Union (AU) in 2002, countries such as Kenya, Burundi, South Sudan, Somalia, DRC, Nigeria, Egypt, Uganda, South Africa, Tunisia, and Ethiopia, just to mention a few, have witnessed persistent overt conflicts (George Otieno, ed. 2014). These conflicts have been termed as civil wars, wars of independence, secessionist conflicts, national violence resulting from border disputes, poor governance, ethnic rivalry, and competition over resources, decline of economic conditions, and widespread of poverty (Wallenstein and Möller, 2003). In the recent past, Sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed an increase in the number of military interventions as a result of the rising violence across the continent. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) database of November

2014- March 2015 records a dramatic rise from over 3,000 violent events in 2009 to over 12,000 in 2014.²

Jeong (2005), states that conflict does not just arise, rather it goes through a series of phases and that prevention is attainable at the latent phase. Similarly, Lund (2009) affirms that overt conflicts are preventable and the success depends on the available mechanisms for preventive responses at the latent phase of conflict. In this sense, effective early warning systems are irrefutable prerequisites for conflict prevention in Africa. Knowing who, what, where, when and why conflict is likely to explode is ultimately a precondition for timely response that would register greater positive impact on conflict prevention in Africa.

Conflict early warning and response is a field of study that deals with conflict prevention. Thus, conflict prevention could not be effective in the absence of early warning and response systems. This is one of the tools that are employed to prevent, manage or mitigate a violent hostility. It has assumed more prominence in international conflict prevention platforms such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), and Regional Economic Communities (REC), National Governments, Non- Governmental Organizations (NGO) and research institutions in the late 20th century (George Otieno ed. 2014). However, conflicts in the Horn of Africa are still continuing.

Ethiopia has continued to experience violent and deadly conflicts. Recently the conflicts are mainly around the ethno- national boundaries, which are political borders at the same time. The conflict between Oromia and Somali regional states with which this dissertation deals is not only one of these conflicts but is also the cause for most severe damages on lives, livelihoods, properties and human relationships. These conflicts have been recurrent and have still continued to thrive, as there is no viable and comprehensive institution of conflict early warning and response system. Both the Federal and regional governments tend to pursue a *fire-brigade* approach to alleviate conflicts. In addition, there has not been a proactive engagement mechanism at the earlier stages of potential

²Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, Conflict Trends (No. 36) Real-Time Analysis of African Political Violence, April 2015.

conflicts. Despite some joint interventions made by the Federal and regional governments frequent conflicts have been recorded across the border areas of Oromia - Somali Regional States.³ Moreover, the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA), the federal institution in charge of such issues, which is supposed to play a leading role to resolve and manage conflicts through cooperation and institutional link with Oromia and Somali regional states has been ineffective developing strong synergy for the operationalization of conflict early warning and response systems. MOFPDA and most of the Ethiopian regional states have attempted to establish conflict prevention/early warning and early response mechanisms. However, its operation differs from region to region and in most cases it lacks proactive engagement on the ongoing conflicts. In addition, conflict early warning information produced by different actors at national and local levels were not soliciting adequate response that would serve for preventing or controlling escalation of violent incidents. The sources of information, like field monitors and other stakeholders that are central for collection of conflict indicators (signals) and facts about the future trends and potential conflicts, may not be found or may not be properly assigned.

The rationale for the establishment of early warning systems is that 'prevention is better than cure'; that means in order to be most effective prevention should be initiated at the earliest possible stage of a conflict cycle (Matveeva, 2006:8). To be able to effectively respond, there is a need for concrete information regarding a certain conflict, such as its root and escalating causes and an analysis of possible intervention strategies. This role is ideally supposed to be played by the early warning systems. Importantly the output of such systems must be effectively linked to the response tools. Otherwise the system becomes less relevant. Schnabel argues that it is not simply enough to generate information and hand it to those who might be in the situation to take necessary responses. If the recipients of the information are not well informed, capable or willing to

³For instance, conflicts over the border claims with Somali regional state around the districts of Mi'esso, Hawi Gudina in western Hararge zone; Qumbi (Mino), Chinaksen, Midhaga Tola, Gola Oda, Mayyu, Babile, Gursum, Metta in Eastern Hararge; , Guradhamole, Dawe Sara, Dawe Qacan, Beeltu, Madda Walabu in Bale zone; Liban, Negelle, Gumdolle in Eastern Guji; Moyale, Wachile, Dhas and Arero districts of Oromia regional state used to be active until February 2017 resulting in humanitarian and material crisis (Oromia Government Report, 2017).

take action, early warning analysis would be reduced to nothing but a futile academic exercise. Hence conflict early warning systems are viewed as a system which anticipate, analyze and develop response and implementation strategies for managing conflicts. Conflict early warning system at the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA) has been mandated to undertake these roles. As a part of National Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Architect, it is expected to act as key signal component of conflicts. Therefore, there is a need to analyze whether it has achieved its intended goals. This study answers this question by critically analyzing how actually the national conflict early warning and response system based at MOFPDA has been operating to mitigate the border conflict between Oromia and Somali region. Since I have been working as an expert of peace-building and conflict transformation in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau,⁴ I was encouraged to conduct this study.

However, as Brian Bourke (2014) states, we have to acknowledge who we are as individuals, and as members of groups, and as resting in and moving within social positions (Bourke, 2014:3). It is reasonable to expect that the researcher's beliefs, political stance, cultural background (gender, race, class, socioeconomic status, educational background) are important variables that may affect the research process (Brian Bourke, 2014:2). In addition, regarding reflexivity, as Cohen, Manion et al. (2011) describes

the concept that researchers should acknowledge and disclose their own selves in the research, seeking to understand their part in it, or influence on the research (Cohen, Manion e

⁴*First*, as a civil servant and national peace building and conflict transformation expert in the Bureau of Administration and Security Department of Conflict Prevention and Resolution of the Government of Oromia in Ethiopia, I dealt with different intra-state conflicts in the early period of the federal arrangement. Although my focus was on administration and security matters, my concerns about the repeated occurrence of intra-state conflicts such as between the Oromia and Somali, Oromia and SNNPRS, Oromia and Benishangul Gumuz and specifically between Afar and Karayu, Borana and Garri, Borana and Gabra, Guji and Sidama, Guji and Burji, Guji and Amaro, prompted me to engage in research. *Second*, I have taken part in number of workshops, trainings and consultations held both at the federal and regional state levels. In these processes, I learned that the reality on the ground and at the community level demands research and there is a need for intervention through to conflict prevention by employing conflict early warning and response systems. Thus, I am interested to link the local practice with academic discourse. On top of that, the present reality shows that both the national and regional states lack comprehensive conflict early warning and early response system. In addition, there is lack of focus on small events and local level conflicts where the majority of violent conflicts take place and where monitoring systems have not systematically been established.

t al. 2011 p. 225). I am an Oromo, actor in the national and regional politics. These positions of mine can be reflected and might even affect the research. However, as much as I know I have not compromised the objectivity of my data and analysis.

Moreover, as shown above, the intervention mechanism of the government seems to stimulate academic debate whether or not it can prevent, manage and resolve intra-state conflicts in the country. Therefore, I argue that Ethiopia in general and the conflict affecting Oromia and Somali regional states in particular needs to have viable and operational conflict early warning and response systems to prevent escalation of conflicts into violence among their pastoral and agro-pastoral communities.

At present there is a rich stock of literature on conflict prevention and early warning and early response mechanisms. However, most of the studies focus only on conflict early warning system at UN, AU and Regional Economic Communities (IGAD/CEWARN, ECOWAS/ECOWARN, etc.) levels and give less emphasis to national and local level early warning and early response systems. For instance, the works of Clingendael Institute (1996); Campbell and Meier (2007); Zenko and Freidman (2011) focused on UN early warning for preventing conflict and the political practices of international organizations. On the other hand, the works of Nhara (1996); Cilliers (2005); Wulf and Tobias (2009); Dawit (2009) and Brikiti (2010) dealt with establishing and harmonizing AU- CEWS (Continental Early Warning System) and response mechanisms in African peace and security architecture. Others, including Wulf and Debiel (2009); Aseto (2011); Endale, (2011) and Solomon (2014); focused on IGAD/CEWARN and Regional Perspectives, mapping multi-lateral transition and challenges of Early Warning Systems (EWS). The literature survey made so far shows that little or no reference has been made to specific cases of the national and local conflict early warning and response systems. Hence, this study aims to fill in this gap by taking the case of Ethiopia and conflicts of its inter-regional states.

On the other hand, although continental and regional early warning initiatives tend to inform policy makers at the top level, less attention has been given to strengthen the national and local level early warning systems and coping strategies. Moreover, it seems

that excess focus on regional mechanisms might have overshadowed the conflict dynamics at national and local levels. Giving less emphasis to the local level dynamics of conflicts might have an implication on conflict spill-over cross national border areas. In other words, there is a possibility of local conflicts to transform to national or international boundaries. Therefore, the study intended to investigate the conflict early warning and response system initiated and established by the Ethiopian government with reference to Oromia and Somali regional States' border conflict. Based on the statement of the problem the study was guided by the following research questions:

- a) What are the major causes, actors and consequences of conflicts along the boundaries of Oromia and Somali Regional States?
- b) How has the national conflict early warning and response system of the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA) worked to mitigate border conflict between Oromia and Somali region?
- c) How have the federal and regional states cooperated with regard to conflict prevention, early warning and response mechanisms in the mitigation of Oromia-Somali border conflict in Ethiopia?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to provide explanations to the mechanisms of conflict early warning and response in Ethiopia by using empirical evidences from Oromia and Somali regional states. More specifically, the study aims at:

- (a) Investigating the major causes, actors and consequences of conflict along the borders of Oromia and Somali Regional States.
- b) Examining how the national institution of conflict early warning and early response (EWER) mechanisms (policies, institutions, processes and methodologies) function to prevent conflicts along the borders of Oromia and Somali regional states.
- (c) Assessing how the federal and concerned regional states cooperate with regard to conflict early warning and response mechanisms in preventing Oromia-Somali border conflict in Ethiopia.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study has both academic and policy significance. Academically the study is justified on the ground that conflict early warning systems remain understudied and their relevance is often taken as a given. However this is not always the case. Their relevance need to be tested against the reality on the ground. Do they predict conflicts? Are their modeling/analytical indicators capable of capturing all the dynamics of conflict? Do they influence responses or has the business of early warning remained a mere academic exercise? Hence, this study would contribute to narrow knowledge gap with regard to conflict early warning and response systems by using Oromo and Somali inter-ethnic conflict and prevention strategies as a case study. It could also serve as a valuable source of information for national and regional governments to develop strategies for the prevention of conflict. It can also be used as an input for national policy makers. It may minimize gaps of literature sources in the study area and may serve as a reference for further studies. Finally, it might be used as a springboard for other interested researchers on peace and conflict future research undertakings.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study was delimited to the adjacent and border areas of Oromia and Somali National Regional states where both communities experience frequent and protracted conflicts. Among these districts suffering hotspot conflicts, Mi'esso district of Oromia and Mi'esso district of Somali and Moyale district of Oromia and Moyale district of Somali were selected as a case study to explain the actual and potential conflicts along the regional border. These districts were selected because they have been experiencing protracted conflicts until recently. Both districts are strategically important. Mi'esso district is located in the Eastern Ethiopia and is known for its center and main feeder highway. The Ethio-Djibouti railway and the main road through the district. On the other hand, Moyale district (town) is located in the South-Eastern Ethiopia and has strategic significance as a gateway and outlet to Kenya.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

Given a highly politically sensitive and staggering nature of the topic of the study, it was obvious that I encountered different challenges particularly during my stay in the field. The challenges I faced with no doubt would manifest itself in the whole process of the

thesis had I not used a proper mechanism to reduce its impacts on the results of the work. First, I promised in my proposal to have equal number of informants from both Oromia and Somali ethnic groups both from the regional and local officials and the community. This strategy was preferred to enhance the objectivity of the research results by cross checking the information obtained from members of both ethnic groups.

However, the limitation befallen in this regard when some of the Somali regional state officials showed their unwillingness to cooperate neither to provide me with the necessary information nor to facilitate and allow me to communicate with the local officials and community elders. To overcome this difficulty, I repeatedly visited the Border Affairs and Conflict Prevention and Resolution Bureau of the Somali Regional State and discussed with the bureau head showing the letter written to the office by Institute for Peace and Security Studies of Addis Ababa University which indicated the purpose of the field work. Unfortunately the bureau head put conditions to provide a support. One was that he and his experts would provide oral interview but were not permitted to give written documentary evidences. The other condition he put was that facilitation with local officials and community members was impossible due to security reasons. I agreed to the first condition and conducted my interviews. For the second condition, I understood that I had to look for another option. To this end, I used another network and found one prominent senior ex-official with whom I conducted workshops and trainings on conflict transformation and peace building when I had been working as a civil servant in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau for the community representatives drawn from the adjacent weredas of both Oromia and Somali regions. Then, he arranged focus group discussion for eight local officials from Mi'esso, Chinaksen, Babile and Moyale of Somali region by explaining the purpose of their involvement and introduced me with four Issa elders in the districts and two Garri elders in Moyale town. He told them the benefit of participating in the interview. Taking into consideration his educational background, previous experiences and position in dealing with Oromo- Somali border conflict and his clan from Garri of Somali, I used him as one of the key informants from the Somali regional state side.

The fact that I am fluent speaker of Afan Oromo and had wide experience working in border conflicts. These put me in a better position for building trust with the people I interviewed. First, it enabled me to freely interact with informants without mediator. The communities along the borders speak the language of one another. That is, Oromos spoke Somali and the vice versa. A few interviewees from the Somali side, however, they were fluent in Oromo language, they appear uncomfortable for the fact that I communicated in Oromo language and suspected me of having some kind of alignment with the Oromo group. At this point, I have to make clear the objective of the research and ethical issues related to objectivity.

Second, I easily secured cooperation from Oromia regional state, local officials and elders. As a result, I used all the facilities like selection of venues for interviews to conduct the interviews and focus group discussions. In this regard, from Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, the head of Conflict and Conflict Resolution Core Process was assigned to follow and facilitate my activities in the field work. On the other hand, some of the interviewees provided substantial and essential information, while others were unwilling to give their information in detail. Some informants manipulated the reality and presented it as it best served their interests while some specially those government officials at the Federal and Regional States repeatedly gave information for the question which they were not asked. Some even gave me biased information which did not represent the actual situation. Some of those officials who were selected for the study shared their views while others delegated the task to deputies or other lower officials and experts. In most cases, it was very difficult to get higher officials for interview on time. In these cases, I relied on other sources, such as academic literature discussed in conceptual issues and information provided by other interviewees.

1.7. Structure of the Study

The study was organized into eight chapters. Accordingly, chapter one deals with the introductory part of this thesis and constitutes the background of the study, problem statement, the research questions, the purpose, significance, scope and the delimitation of the study. Chapter two focuses on the conceptualization of conflict, forms of governance and local conflict, conflict intervention approaches, conceptual clarifications of conflict early warning, emergence, purposes and debates, early response systems and theoretical

and conceptual frameworks of the study. Chapter three describes the case of Ethiopian namely, the conflict early warning and response system which was newly initiated by the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA) in the post-1991. Since there has not been adequate literature regarding conflict early warning system in Ethiopia, for broader understanding and conceptualization of the system, I use additional literature review as a supplementary chapter. To this end, the chapter provided an overview of conflict early warning systems in terms of the UN systems, Africa Union (AU-CEWS) and IGAD's CEWARN in relation to structure, operations, and achievements. The purpose of this literature review was to identify the trend, location, development, institutional operation and analysis of documents and works containing information related to the research problem under investigation. Chapter four discusses research design and methodological orientation. Chapter five discusses the causes of conflict, actors and impacts of Oromo-Somali Border conflict in the Post-1991. Chapter six assesses the national conflict early warning and response systems initiated by MOFPDA in the mitigation of Oromia – Somali border conflict. This chapter focuses on whether the policies, institutions, processes, methodologies and models of conflict early warning and response systems put in place are were capable to capture and prevent conflicts before it escalates to violent level along the border belts of Oromia and Somali regional states. Chapter seven examines how the cooperation and inter- institutional link and synergy between federal and regional conflict early warning and response mechanisms were integrated to prevent and mitigate the Oromia-Somali border conflict. Chapter Eight is the the summary of research findings and conclusion. The chapter also discusses the policy implications and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUALISATION OF KEY ISSUES, REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the conceptualization of key issues and the theoretical framework of analysis. To this end, it is organized into four sections. The first section is devoted to conceptualization of conflict and highlights competition for the natural resources and claims over territories [boundaries] as a major factor to the local conflicts among pastoral and agro-pastoral communities. As this study focuses on border conflict and EWS and response systems in Oromia-Somali region in the Ethiopian federation, the section also discusses the federal governance and local conflict within the spectrum of contending views with regard to regionalization process. The second section deals with the conflict intervention approaches (Prevention, Management and resolution). The separation of these concepts, even when they are seen as different sides of the same coin or are seen as a certain continuum, creates a problem with existing theory. Thus, in this assessment more emphasis is given to conflict prevention because it is much more intertwined with conflict EWS and early response. The third section deals with evolving definitions, historical developments, objectives, types, and constituents of conflict EWS. It discusses conflict early response system that brings to light the role of decision makers to intervene and avert the consequences of conflict. The final section deals with related literature review and theoretical frames for analysis.

2.2. Conceptualization of Conflict

Conflict is a universal feature of human society. According to Kayode et al (2013), the history of conflict is as old as human history. Since the advent of human history, communities have been competing for control for dominance over varieties issues. These competitions have led individuals as well as social, economic and religious groups to inevitable conflicts. Varying interests of individuals, groups, societies and states often lead to conflict; as they are pursuing opposing or incompatible goals (Kayode et al,

2013). Conflicts are multi-layered and inter-linked to local, national, transnational actors and interests (Jürgen et al, 2006:19). Swanstrom and Weissman (2005:6-12) depicts that conflict is not a static situation but changes over time as the conflicts life cycle or dynamics changes. Understanding conflict dynamics is essential for an understanding of how, where and when to apply different strategies and measures of conflict prevention and management as they are intertwined together (Swanstrom and Weismann, 2005:11). Conflict thus refers to explicit or implicit hostile behavior initiated by one contending party against another. It can also be defined as an incompatibility of goals or values in which each party becomes aware of the incompatibility and perceives it as antithetical to its own goals or values in the relationship and is combined with attempts to control the antagonistic feelings against each other (24 standard definition of authorities in the field). The goals can be over scarce resources, unequal relations, and/or competing values (Fisher, 1990:1; Galtung, 2004).

Hence, observation could be made that conflict is present when two or more parties perceive their interests are incompatible. These parties may be individuals, small or large groups, and countries. According to Lund (1997), *interests* can differ over access to and distribution of resources (e.g. territory, money, energy sources, food) and how they should be distributed (Schmid, 1998). Furthermore, conflict may prevail due to perceived inequality over control of power and participation in political decision making; identity, concerning cultural, social and political communities to which people feel associated; and status inequity, particularly those embodied in systems of government, religion or ideology (Lund, 1997).

Many developing countries are affected by high levels of communal and inter-communal conflict that does not take the form of a civil war, but nonetheless results in significant casualties, destruction of livelihoods and property (World Bank, 2004). Pervasive and widespread local conflict is not only a barrier to development but in some cases threatens to escalate into larger incidents of unrest or even fully-fledged violent conflict (World Bank, 2016). Countries which undergo difficult political and economic transitions appear especially vulnerable to conflicts (World Bank, 2004). As the focus of this thesis is to examine conflict prevention, EWS and response systems along the bordering areas of

Oromia and Somali regional states, conceptualizing conflict over local resources and border or territorial disputes would be vital.

Cognizant of the current terminological and conceptual debate over conflict, I use the term conflict throughout this thesis in the sense that it would be caused in the processes of pursuit of incompatible goals by different individuals, peoples and groups or states within a country. Conflict has different phases that determine where and when to apply preventive strategies. The earliest intervention which is referred as conflict EWS and response systems is the first phase because it attempts to mitigate conflict before it erupts in its violent form. The violent conflict claims the lives of many people, extinguishes property, and diverts human as well as financial resources away from development. It is within this particular context that this research situates the discussion about the causes and impacts of conflict along the border between Oromia and Somali Regional States. Therefore, the conflict between pastoralists and agro-pastoralists along the boundaries of both people could be assessed as inter- regional states' conflict mostly related to politicized resource competition and territorial claims and counter-claims. Accordingly, the following section highlights the natural resource competition, especially land and water as a contributing factor to the local conflicts between and among pastoral and agro pastoral communities.

2.2.1. Conflict over natural resources

People have been competing over natural resources they need to support their livelihoods since time immemorial. There has, however, been great divergence on the values given to resources and the type of the resources, as well as the nature, scope, and complexity of the struggles over these resources (Buckles and Rusnak, 1999:2). Conflicts over natural resources may occur for a number of reasons. In the Horn of Africa, in general, it is assumed that violent conflicts that emanate from ethnic, religious, or cultural differences is limited. The pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in the area, however, rely on land and water for advancing their livelihoods. Such resources have become scarce and under increasing pressure from time to time. Nowadays, local conflicts over land and water have been intensified due to ever-increasing demand for these resources as a result of rapid population growth and increased consumption of such vital resources. In

addition, endemic poverty, recurrent drought, and harsh climatic conditions constitute some of the major contributing factors to local conflicts over natural resources. These circumstances complicate the use of the natural resources as well as modes of management. Apart from conflicts over land and access to water resources, insecurity and livestock raiding for economic or cultural related matters also play a tremendous role in violent conflicts between neighboring local pastoralist communities.

As the type, nature, and value given to the use of natural resources differ under certain circumstances, there is also divergence in approaches used for solving hostility that emanate from natural resources. There is a tendency of using violent means in the context of local resource access among the pastoralist communities. These trends usually call for a clear understanding of the nature of the conflicts and the power dynamics that shape the particular nature of socio-economic environment of the resource use (Buckles and Rusnak (eds), 1999). In fact, in order to manage some of the natural resource problems in the Horn, there is a need to tackle the specific causes of conflicts over natural resources, such as land-use, human and animal population growth, and climatic variations. But, it is also equally important to take into account the crucial issues of the states, and identity politics in analyzing the contemporary local conflicts between various ethnic communities in the Horn (Suleiman, 1999:206).

2.2.2. Conflict over Territorial Claims

Territoriality refers to an attempt to affect, influence or control actions by enforcing control over a specific geographical area (Forsberg, 1999:93). Territorial disputes remain serious challenges to peace, stability and prosperity of the Horn region. In fact, interstate disputes over territory often tend to lead to armed conflict. A mix of political and economic interests, normative reasons, and competition over scarce natural resources have been suggested as drivers of conflict over disputed territories (Mancini, 2013:1). Territorial disputes cannot be explained with mono-causality and that all territorial disputes that flare-up in violent conflict show a wide range of causes. Sometimes, it is a combination of material and/or cultural interests. In certain circumstances, needs for resources may mix up with geopolitical rivalries and power relations between neighbors.

In other cases, nationalist ideologies can add up to economic interests (Ibid: 5). Zartman argues that there are two types of border problems: territorial disputes over the location of the border itself and relational problems about the conditions of existence near the border (Zartman, 1991:304). Vasquez observes that territorial contiguity has been a source of potential conflict and contention (Vasquez, 1993:124). This implies that human tendencies toward territoriality are fundamental factors that drive collectivities to take actions that eventually result in war (Wenani, 2003:7).

Generally speaking, there are four interrelated factors that can cause territorial demands and conflicts (Thomas Homer Dixon cited in Hauge, 1999:108). First, territorial conflicts can be caused by the degradation and depletion of renewable resources that result in a struggle over access to and control over natural resources. For example, resource scarcity has become one of the main reasons for the conflict of pastoral people when they move from one area to another looking for water and grazing land for their live stocks in the Horn of Africa (Markakis, 1987). However, Broding (1998:36) argues that there is no simple direct relationship between scarcity of natural resources and intra-state conflicts. Other variables, including socio-economic factors, political institutions, and psychological factors could also mediate the relationship (Iyob and Khadiagala, 2005). In addition, it can be argued that the role of environmental factors in intra-state conflicts is situational. In situations of cooperation and negotiation between the ethnic groups, solutions to environmental problems are effective, but when the relations are reversed, environmental issues would add flame to the problems created (Gleditsch, 2001:60).

The second factor is connected to local peoples' perceptions of internal migrants and illegal settlements on their territories. For some indigenous groups whose traditions are associated with their territories, the existence of a large population of migrants and illegal settlers in their territories can lead to greater resentments that lead to intra-state conflicts (Forsberg, 1999:98). Third, territoriality can sometimes also relate to claims about rights to the land. Territoriality can be a symbol for social kinship and an inseparable part of the common ethnic identity. In such situations if there is an external threat to part of the territory, it reinforces the collective identity of the group (ibid). Therefore, identity itself can contribute to territorial conflicts in this regard (Smith cited in Forsberg, 1999:98;

Ronnquist, 1999:148). Finally, territorial conflicts can involve an aspiration to dominate territory of other groups through expansion. One of the ethnic groups in a country could have a growing tendency to dominate in the region and expand its territories into the territories of others. In this case, the territorial issues could be related to power politics which include enlargement of economic assets (Forsberg, 1999:101). For example, for the Somali communities whose livelihood is associated with Oromia territories, the risk of internal migration and illegal settlement schemes crossing borders can also lead to intra-state conflicts.

2.3. Forms of Federal Governance and Local Conflict

Federal forms of government in any country result from unique political and historical process. Federalism emerged as an important instrument of nation/state building after the collapse of European colonial empires in the immediate post-World War II period (Watts 1994:2). Subsequently, many post-colonial multi-ethnic countries of Asia and Africa adopted federalism. Even if several of these federations failed in their infancy, the role of federalism in balancing the competing and perhaps conflicting demands for autonomy and unity in such countries as India, Malaysia and Nigeria could not be doubted (Rothchild, 1966). In this respect, many post-colonial multi-ethnic countries of Asia and Africa adopted federalism. Since the end of the Cold War, federalism once again emerged into the spotlight because of two contradictory developments. First, the disintegration of the socialist federations of the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia refreshed doubts about stability and durability of multiethnic federations. The continuing standoff in Canada over the question of Quebec's independence and the frequent political stalemates that characterize federal Belgium strengthen uneasiness about the stability of multi-ethnic federations. Second, in spite of these problems, politicians have tried to reconstitute multiethnic countries through federalism after the collapse of authoritarian regimes. There is a growing consensus on federalism as the best instrument for accommodating national minorities (Kymlicka, 2001: 108). This is partly due to the characteristic of federalism that "...respects the desire of national groups to remain autonomous and to retain their cultural distinctiveness" (Ibid).

Besides, federalism is assumed to be flexible and advantageous in that it has an ‘infinite capacity to accommodate and reconcile the competing and sometimes conflicting diversities having political salience within a state’ (Michael Burgess, 2006:7). Most scholarly definitions reflect the intrinsic eminence of federalism to accommodate diversity. For instance, Watts (2008:8) defines federalism as normative term that advocates “multi-tiered government combining the elements of shared-rule and regional self-rule”. In fact, this definition is based on the presumed value of federalism in accommodating, preserving, and promoting distinct identities within a larger political union (Elazar, 1994).⁵ In the same manner, Kymlicka (2001: 110-111) defines federalism as:

... a political system which includes a constitutionally entrenched division of powers between a central government and two or more sub-units (province/lander/ states /cantons), defined on a territorial basis, such that each level of government has sovereign authority over certain issues [which distinguishes it from administrative decentralization and confederations].

However, literatures show that there are varying conceptions and applications of federal political systems. For instance, based on their recognition of ethnic and linguistic diversities, federations could broadly be divided into two categories; namely, national federations, and multinational and/or ethnic federations. A huge difference exists between national federations that are not designed to accommodate minorities and multinational federations that aim to accommodate minorities (Ibid: 115-116). Some federations such as United States of America are designed based on individual rights within a common nationality, and do not recognize national minorities for self-government (Ibid:116). In other words, in USA and in other territorial federalisms such as Brazil and Australia, internal boundaries, power divisions are not made with the conscious intention of empowering national minorities (Ibid:119). Consequently, in America, for instance, state governments often consider national minorities as ‘an obstacle to settlement and development’ and dispossess them from their historic homelands (Ibid:115).

⁵Daniel Elazar has identified several broad genera of federal political systems such as unions, federations, confederations, federacies to associated statehood. Federations refers to a political system in which each constituent units have sovereign powers derive from the constitution rather than from another level of government, each empowered to deal directly with its citizens in the exercise of its legislative, executive and taxing powers, and each is directly elected by its citizen. Daniel J. Elazar, 1994: xvi; cited in Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems*, 8.

On the other hand, multinational federations are federations designed with the intention of accommodating national minorities. Switzerland is a typical example that scholars consider as the first “modern federation built upon indigenous ethnic and linguistic divergences that were considered permanent and worth mentioning” (Daniel Elazar, 1987:20). Moreover, ethnic-based federal arrangement is supposedly an appropriate way to create a separate space for minority communities to flourish⁶. For national minorities concentrated regionally where they form the majority, ethnic-federalism can provide sub-unit boundaries that they can exercise extensive self-government and make certain decisions without being outvoted by the larger society (Kimilkya, 2001:112).

2.3.1. Contextualizing Federal Governance and Causes of Conflicts in Africa

Earlier commentators regarded the sources of conflicts in Africa as merely tribal-, ethnic- or identity-based (Lewis, 1994; Horowitz, 1985, Osaghae, 1991). Others also associated them only with competition for power, resources of the neo-patrimonial state and representation at the state level (Braathen et al, 2000). However, the causes of the conflicts in Africa can be traced back to historical, economic and political factors associated with the colonial, Cold War and post-Cold War periods (Joseph, 1999), uneven levels of development, crises of state formation and territorial factors.

In multi-ethnic African states, over-centralized state with unequal access to state power unavoidably creates conflicts. One of the reasons for this could be that the state in these countries often serve as the key controller for the creation and redistribution of political, economic, and social wellbeing. Hence, as far as those in power may attempt to consolidate power, they often favor their ethnic groups while marginalizing others. This inevitably stimulates ethnic tension and thus conflicts (Odowa, 2006:14). However, the assimilation project was ephemeral and does not succeed for a number of reasons including, the growing number of oppositions and rebellions throughout the nations. Nevertheless, in the past decades the process of centralization and one ethnic dominated state power has been constrained by a variety of social and ethnic-based political movements. The human, financial and social costs caused by these ethnic conflicts in the

⁶ See for example Philip G. Roeder, ‘Ethno-federalism and the Management of Conflicting Nationalisms’ in Jan Erk and Lawrence Anderson (ed.) *Regional and Federal Studies*. Vol. 19, No.2 (Routledge, 2009), 207.

Horn, raised new questions and concerns about ethnicity in state formation thus making the issue of governance at the heart of internal conflicts (Rupesinghe, 1996:42; Odowa, 2006:14).

In Ethiopia, the centralization project started in the 19th century by successive regimes that ruled the country which perpetuated ethnic oppression and marginalization under the guise of nation building endeavors. In practice the process was an establishment of Amhara state domination which had instigated ethnic conflicts.⁷ Ethnic inequality and economic exploitation characterized the multi - ethnic Ethiopian empire that emerged following conquest by Emperor Minilik II (Markakis, 1973; Merera, 2003). This particularly refers to the imposition of the Amharaculture, Orthodox Christianity, and the Amharic language as embodiments of the Ethiopian state. Clapham (2014) notes that the chief instrument the imperial government used to introduce some form of unity among the ethnically diverse people of the country was their assimilation in to the culture, language and religion of the dominant Amhara rulers. Moreover, throughout the monarchical rule and the Derg communist regime, the country was under remarkably centralized form of authority, where the production and the re-distribution of the state's resources were strictly controlled by these authoritarian governments. The domination of state power by a single ethnic group had created economic, social, and political inequality and consequent grievances in the rest of the ethnic groups in the country.

The supremacy of centralized state power has been declining, and there has been a profound political shift underway in most of the African countries. As a result, many of these states have introduced in new forms of decentralization (Odowa, 2006:14; Doornbos, 1991:54). In Ethiopia too, the nation building project in due course generated its own antithesis by stirring sense of ethnic nationalism among the elites of different ethnic groups and thereby begot secessionist armed national movements. The wide spread armed struggle across the country resulted not only in the overthrow of the military government that ruled the country for 17 years but also marked the end of the era of the

⁷See Creative Associates International, 1996, at <http://www.caii.comlCAIISaWDashboard> GIRO Admin CAII Staff' Dashboard CAIIAdm in Database/resources/ghai/costcaus.htm#c2), accessed November 2016.

unitary state that lasted for about a century (Asnake,2009). As a result, a number of ethnic-based insurgent movements emerged. The struggle and fighting between nationalist movements of the various ethnic-based insurgent groups and the state had further deepened the crisis in the country leading the coming to power of the EPRDF.

The birth of ethnic federal system is a response of different nationalist movements to the historical trajectory of building a nation–state through ethnic assimilation that gave rise to the ‘Nationality Question’ in the country. The EPRDF and other nationalist movements introduced a new model of state building namely ethnic-based federal system in 1991. This has been translated into practical reality through a redrawing of the country’s politico- administrative map largely along ethno-linguistic lines. To its credit, the incumbent government under-took ‘radical’ and ‘pioneering’ (Turton, 2006:1-31) reforms in the state structure and explicitly proclaimed a fundamental break with the country’s long history of centralized authoritarian governance to ensure their self-government and to help nations and nationalities retain their cultural distinctiveness The Constitution of the FDRE establishes nine “self-governing” ethno-regional (Art. 47) and two city administrations. Oromia and Somali regional states are two of the nine regions. Ethnicity is the key factor in establishing the regions, and sub–regional units in the multi–ethnic regions.

Indeed, the ‘ethnicization of the country’s political landscape’, helps historically marginalized and disadvantaged ethnic-groups to attain self-governance and equality (Merera G., 2003: 110)⁸.

The Ethiopian ethnic federalism and the recognition of the right to self-determination including secession are meant to avoid ethnic domination and lay a favorable condition for lasting peace. However, in the years of its implementation, the major challenge remains to be unprecedented ethnic conflict and border disputes in Ethiopia in general

⁸ On the contrary, some critics contend that the restructuring of the state along ethno-linguistic criteria was motivated by TPLF/EPRDF elite’s interest of hegemonic control of the state and to reverse Amhara elite’s historic dominance. It is merely an opportunity for EPRDF dominance which fell short of its rhetoric, and in some cases produces additional, unforeseen problems and can hamper to achieve effective self-governance and sustainable peace see for instance, Merera Gudina,(2003)*Competing Ethnic Nationalism.*, 123.

and in border lines of Oromia- Somali Regional States in particular (see Abbink, 2011; Asnake, 2011; Hagmann and Mulugeta, 2008; Schlee and Shongole, 1995). As a result, the reconfiguring of the Ethiopian state along ethnic lines has attracted mixed reactions and contending views. Hence, the practice of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia is yet a matter of debate, whether it's a remedy or a curse for long existed ethnic conflicts within the country. Thus, some scholars argue that the system is a panacea for ethnic conflict while others counter argue that the new system exacerbates ethnic conflicts. As this study focuses on the conflicts between Oromo and Somali ethnic groups which are the members of the Ethiopian federation and the prevention of these conflicts through institutionalizing conflict EWS and response systems, it is important to highlight the existing competing perspectives. Accordingly, the two contending views are discussed in the next sections.

2.3.2. Contending Views

There are varied conceptions about the values of ethnic federalism. Some scholars and Ethiopian authorities are in favor of ethnic based federalism with assumption that it is a panacea for the longstanding ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia. However, others contend that such federalism complicates the fabric of the country and instigates endless ethnic conflicts.

Federalism as a Panacea for Ethnic Conflicts: The perspective that defends the ethnic federal system promotes the view that ethnic federalism is a way towards democratization and development by fairly managing ethnic diversity and resolve ethnic conflicts. The advocates of this perspective consider it is a panacea to the age-old national oppression and dominations; and hence they commend the implementation of ethnic federalism as appropriate measures to rescue the country from the alleged impending disintegration. This perspective also contends that it is a novel ethnic policy to demonstrate the regime's commitment to promote equality of nations and nationalities and peoples' as a strategy to forge diversity through voluntary federation which would ensure democratization (Salih & Markakis, 1998; Young, 1998; Alemseged, 2004; Fasil, 1997; Mengisteab, 1997). Likewise, others also argue that the federal system attempts to balance varied interests

including maintaining national unity, preservation of ethno-linguistic demands, alleviation of ethnic inequality and marginalization by granting the right to self-determination, development of one's culture and language and self-government which has been guaranteed in the constitution. Hence, the ethnic groups in the country have largely welcomed the right to speak and write in their own language and use them for local administration. They also appoint local officials from their own ethnic group for self-administration (Hagmann and Abbink, 2011: 583). Moreover, Mesfin (2011) argued that ethnic federal system has been used as a principle of government for reasons such as better economic and security opportunities and accommodation of different identities in the political spheres. According to this view ethnic based federalism is a multi-layered government structure which combines elements of unity and diversity, shared rule and regional self-rule in which people are free to preserve and promote distinct identities, national sovereignty and regional autonomy and enhances the political participation of the population. Hence, many hitherto marginalized minority groups were given representation at federal and regional levels, centralization and decentralization of power within a larger political system (Mesfin, 2011). Furthermore, others also argue that ethnic federalism is intra-governmental decentralization; and devolutions are some of the most cited forms of devolving power to lower levels. Therefore, within this federal form of governance, sub-national governments (regions) with clearly defined territorial boundaries usually enjoy considerable degree of autonomy from the center (Lovies, 2000; Ayenew, 1998; Odowa, 2009:13). The advocates anticipated that the new system would end the dominance of the state power by a single ethnic group and realize self-administration.

Federalism Exacerbates Ethnic Conflicts: The other perspective contends that ethnic-based federalism is exacerbating localized inter-ethnic tensions and conflicts in the country. Equally, there are groups which view the short comings and entrenchment of ethnic federalism model as a dishonest move at best and a political trick at worst, with a malicious intent, to destroy the country and hence they bitterly resent it (Aalen and Tronvoll, 2009; Berhanu, 2007; Aalen, 2006). Likewise, other scholars also put forward their argument that the new system excludes many other essential concerns such as the

long history of ethnic mobility, intergroup relations and integrations in the country and redrawing ethnic based boundaries between groups has been generating ethnic based boundary conflicts (Asnake, 2010; Tsegaye, 2010; Vaughan, 2003). Skepticism about the use of federalism in managing ethnic conflicts relate in part to the susceptibility of multi-ethnic federations to fragmentation. The USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, which collapsed after the end of the Cold War, exhibited vulnerability of multi-ethnic federations to conflict and fragmentation (Gagnon 2001: 320; Asnake, 2009:46). Extending his argument, Asnake claims that the major problems refer to the impossibility of making ethnic and administrative boundaries congruent. This tends to engender tensions and conflicts in the relationship between local/regional majorities and minorities. Thus, restructuring multiethnic states into ethnic federations tends to generate intra-federal (violence) conflicts. As a result, the debate has continued unabated for a long time now with a little hope for consensus in the foreseeable future (Asnake, 2009: 46). On the other hand, one can sense that in the Horn, the conflicting parties usually belong to different ethnic groups. Though some questions whether the conflicts in the region are caused by differences ascribed to ethnicity, never the less, it is undeniable that they are contributing causes and more often than not are exploited by the contending political elites (Assefa, 1996).

I argue that the recognition of equality, cultural and linguistic autonomy has been positively contributing in paving the way for sustainable peace in the country. While realizing the positive effects of establishing local level structures through decentralization of power and resources to local governments, it is, however, important to take a critical look at current modes of thinking and practices at the local level regarding its effect on local ethnic conflicts. Abbink (2006:390), argues that “the post 1991-regime (...) basically only, decentralized” the problems by defining the sources of conflict to be on the local and not national level”. Thus, decentralization is not enough to avoid ethnic conflict. It becomes clear that the question of how access to state resources is regulated is much more important than the question “who has access to state resources?” Another drawback of power exertion from above is that it has destroyed many forms of traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution. Since all resolution of conflict has to conform to

government measures, grassroots organizations are usually not consulted, even though they have strategies of avoiding conflict that are more effective than the state proposals (Abbink, 2006: 401). Hence, my point of departure at this point is that the conflict on the ground is not solved and the communities along the borders of Oromia and Somali regions think that their life and property was not saved due to frequent conflict. The reason for this is that the system lacks instituting viable and strong conflict prevention, EWS and response systems in place to mitigate conflicts at their earlier stages because it pursues 'fire brigade' approach.

2.4. Conflict Intervention approaches

The overall field of conflict management is filled with conceptual and definitional haziness. Conflict management can take various forms and may involve a complex and multidisciplinary field of studies (Reimann, 2001:1). It is therefore, beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss the different definitional and conceptual explanations related to different approaches of conflict management. Thus, to help facilitate better understanding, three approaches of conflict management as they relate to local conflicts discussed in the preceding chapters of this paper were discussed. These are; conflict prevention, management, resolution, and traditional practices of conflict management. But, more emphasis was given to the prevention and EWS and response systems. The division of these concepts even when approached as different sides of the same coin or as a certain continuum creates a problem with existing theory. In theory, it has been regarded necessary to make a distinction between prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, as a way of simplifying reality to enable the construction of a theoretical model. However, such a distinction is not only artificial, but also incoherent as different scholars use their own definition of the respective concepts. A more coherent definition of prevention, management and resolution that can be integrated with other mechanisms for handling conflicts is thus needed (Swanström and Weismann, 2005:28).

In addition, a theory that differentiates conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution also risks to become counterproductive when applied to a reality in which these concepts are indistinguishable. In practice these measures can be seen as working side by side at different levels and within different issues in a larger conflict. It

is, thus possible, as argued earlier, to resolve certain issues in a conflict, while at the same time managing or preventing other issues from taking a violent form. This does not imply that the conflict has been resolved, or even that tension has been reduced since new issues can be brought into the conflict at any time.

2.4.1 Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution

In principle, conflict prevention, management and resolution are intertwined and regarded as applicable in different phases; mainly at the earliest phases of a conflict situation (Swanstrom and Weismann, 2005: 11).

Conflict prevention: various researchers use this term to mean different in the aspects of conflict management. ‘Conflict Prevention’, refers to approaches, methods and mechanisms used to avoid, minimize, and/or contain potential violent conflicts at the earliest stages. In other words, it is concerned with keeping intra-state and interstate tensions from escalation; and in post-conflict environments, to prevent violent conflict from re-emerging (Alice, 2003).

The concept of Conflict Prevention and its empirical value began to take major relevance as the post-Cold War, a period during which preventive actions were reduced to pre-emptive operations and super-power politics. The idea of Conflict Prevention was presented as an official policy of the UN by Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali in 1992 in his *An Agenda for Peace*. According to him it a process of "fact-finding and analysis-to identify at the earliest possible stage the circumstances that could produce serious conflict-and the need for Preventive Diplomacy to resolve the most immediate problems with attention to underlying causes of conflict." The focus was on punctual preventive interventions (Wegner & Möckli, 2003:1).

The international community was faced with a new responsibility and with the authority to intervene in dispute situations in order to avoid their escalation into destructive armed confrontations. This impression was reinvigorated by the negative experiences and cases such as the genocides in Rwanda, ethnic wars in Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and state failure in Somalia, to name a few forceful reasons which have shockingly alarmed

the world and persuaded them to avert conflicts from escalating into war which results in human disaster and regional instability. Since then, the concept of Conflict Prevention has developed further and moved its focus from "Preventive Diplomacy," including a limited set of diplomatic or military initiatives, to more structural interventions. Academics and practitioners have since stretched the concept to include, in addition to diplomacy and military operations, institution building, economic development, and grass roots community building. Operationally, most preventive diplomacy can be placed within two broad categories: Direct/operational prevention – reactive and often short term interventions taken to prevent an imminent outbreak of violence, i.e. the use of mediators; and Structural prevention – long term institutional or grass roots changes designed to help create sustainable peace, whilst addressing the underlying causes of violence within a community. This approach focuses on development assistance and, successful conflict prevention strategies which must take an ‘upstream’, community first approach and prioritizing the needs and concerns of the local communities involved in the conflict (Wallensteen & Möller, 2003:3; Wegner & Möckli, 2003:18). The basic objective behind this rising tendency was to develop a conceptual understanding and empirical tools to find viable solutions to differences that could become violent before they actually did; to stimulate preventive thinking (Wallensteen, 1998:9; Åkerlund, 2005:116).

Since its inception the concept has grown in popularity in fields of diplomacy as key actors and institutions have increasingly shifted from a culture of reaction to prevention in their approach to violent conflict. This shift towards a preventive approach to conflict has been accelerated by a number of moral, political and economic imperatives. Needless to say, the human suffering, destruction of communities and loss of lives that routinely occur in violent conflicts are the primary moral justifications for a preventive approach. Beyond these humanitarian considerations; the economic degradation that nations suffer whilst embroiled in violent conflict – through loss of livelihoods, destruction of property, loss of trade and foreign investment – demonstrates why a preventive approach is also an economic imperative for actors engaged in violent conflict.⁹ Furthermore, the detrimental

⁹ Available at <https://www.peaceinsight.org/themes/conflict-prevention-early-warning/> accessed January 15, 2016.

humanitarian and economic effects of any violent conflict rarely reside within national boundaries. Once conflict has broken out the costly security and humanitarian interventions that often result causes the international community to place their citizens at risk – both directly and indirectly – as well as placing a huge financial burden upon the international community. Moreover, it is also prudent to say that the financial and political costs of managing conflict are much higher once violent conflict has erupted (Haider, H. 2014:46; Fisher et al 2007:265; Miall, Rams Botham & Woodhouse, 2004).

The advantage of conflict prevention is that it can prevent the escalation towards violence and even transform contexts of security threats into stable and pacific processes. There are now numerous tools which work in contexts and situations that threaten peace and security in order to accomplish this goal and move from rhetoric to action. Among all other options, this paper attempts to draw attention to the potential of EWS mechanisms for conflict prevention. They work on the identification and timely alert of potential threats in circumstances of instability and get into operation during the violence escalation. The base of their success rests on a timely collection, analysis and communication of data, since their final objective is to transform warnings into preventive measures.

There are ongoing attempts to develop conflict prevention into a proper discipline. For example, Lund (2009) has attempted to develop a theory and methodology for prevention which he designed to help in determining the appropriate mix of tools in varying stages of conflict and contexts. He identifies the key stages as: latent conflict, manifest limited conflict and escalating violent conflict. He argues that structural prevention interventions (e.g. helping specific governments to address socioeconomic sources of conflicts or institutional and policy deficits that keep countries from addressing tensions meaningfully and peacefully) are most appropriate in earlier (latent) stages.

In Lund's Preventing Violent Conflict, the distinction between different types of preventive intervention is based on the scope and duration of the actions, and on the stage/phases of the conflict at which the action occurs. If violence is occurring, then "damage-control" initiatives must be taken. If violence is impending, then preemptive

measures must be implemented to reduce the tension between parties. If violence has not yet taken place, but there are tensions in the society, peace building measures should be put into place. There are five major stages of conflicts. These are pre-conflict (latent stage)¹⁰; confrontation (open phase)¹¹, the crisis¹² (outcome)¹³ and the post conflict¹⁴ stage. Corresponding to all these stages, there are conflict EWS indicators that can be used to monitor and employ intervention. Conflict indicators also make it easier to employ preventive strategies. An understanding of the cycle of a conflict helps in planning and coordinating efforts for prevention, EWS, management and resolution of the conflict, and peace building and consolidation (See annex Three).

In fact, conflicts begin with an escalation of tension between adversaries which, in the absence of prompt preventative measures and successful dialogue, degenerate into violence and have a greater effect on the political, social and economic spheres. In general, this study uses the narrow definition of conflict prevention of concept of conflict prevention which denotes any kind of (political, economic, etc.,) action with the aim of preventing the eruption of violence as such. Conflict prevention takes place before a conflict has reached the stage of armed violence. My argument is that the recurrent deadly fight and conflict among agro pastoralists and pastoralists' communities along the borders of Oromia and Somali regional states is attributed to lack of preventive institutional strategies to contain and arrest the conflicts before they escalate. In other words, I argue for the need for preventing the outbreak of conflicts through institutionalizing viable conflict EWS and response systems.

¹⁰*Pre-conflict*: Period where there is incompatibility of goals between two or more parties, which could lead to an open conflict. The conflict is hidden from general view although one or more of the parties are likely to be aware of the potential for confrontation. There may be tension in relationships between the parties and/or a desire to avoid contact with each other at this stage(see Fisher, Simon, et al., 2000).

¹¹*Confrontation*: The conflict has become more open, occasional fighting or low levels of violence may break out. Relationships are becoming very strained (Ibid:

¹²*Crisis*: This is the peak of the conflict when the tension and/or violence is most intense. In a large-scale conflict this is a period of war, when people on all sides are being killed. Normal communications between the sides has probably ceased (Ibid)

¹³*Outcome*: Eventually the crisis will lead to an outcome e.g. one side might defeat the other, or a cease-fire might be called (in the case of a war). Parties might agree to the peace table or the negotiating table with or without the help of a mediator

¹⁴*Post-conflict*: Finally, the situations resolved in a way that leads to an ending of any violent confrontation, to a decrease in tensions and to more normal relationships between the parties. However, if the issues and problems arising from their incompatible goals have not been adequately addressed, this could lead to another pre-conflict stage (Ibid)

Conflict Management: Prevention of a conflict which has failed has to be managed until the adversaries reach a peace agreement. Once a peace agreement has been signed, the process of peace building should start immediately in terms of applying the conditions stipulated in the agreement. The objective of conflict management is to contain the violence and combat it within certain geographic and limited intensity so as to prevent the conflict from spreading and becoming more violent and deadly. Any efforts made to contain violent conflict, reduce the levels of violence, or engage parties in a process to settle the conflict is in practice conflict management (MacLaren, 2002). Conflict management is an intervention towards preventing the escalation and negative effects of conflicts, especially violent one, of ongoing conflicts (University for Peace, 2005).

Ethnic Conflict Management: Ethnic conflict is defined as any episode of sustained violent conflict in which national, ethnic, and religious or other communal minorities challenge governments to seek major changes in status (Bates et al, 2003). Ethnic conflict management is about reducing ethnic tensions and conflicts (Horowitz 1991: 116; Asnake, 2009:40). Policies and institutions of ethnic conflict management anchor on the recognition that ethnic, linguistic, religious and other social cleavages should not be suppressed either in the name of majoritarian democracy or nation building (Asnake, 2009:40).

Broadly speaking ethnic conflict management constitutes different legal, political, territorial, economic and other instruments through which multi-ethnic countries seek to reduce ethnic conflicts. According to Cohen, "ethnic conflict management refers to the capacity of political institutions to contain ethnic conflict within their mechanisms, routines, and procedures for resolution" (Cohen, 1997: 608 cited in Asnake 2009: 40-41). The destructive nature of conflict manifested in the form of violence is only reduced and controlled by conflict management strategies (Jeong, 2003:31).

2.4.1.1. Conflict Management and Institutions in Ethiopia

Conflict management is a cost-effective intervention for countries with limited resources which cannot afford the wider and complex burden of post conflict situation which results from over looked or unmanaged conflicts (Jeong, 2000:31). Ethiopia is the home

of more than 80 ethnic groups with their varied languages, religions and other cultural identities living together. Thus, conflict is inevitable in this circumstance as long as conflict is driven by the existence of peoples with incompatible goals. Moreover, the diversity of the country also urges strong and functional conflict management institutions at all levels of the government structure.

To have an understanding of how conflict management in Ethiopia operates, it is important to examine and understand how responsible bodies, practitioners and different actors who have direct involvement in conflict attempt to manage conflict. The inability to distinguish violence and conflict by these decision makers leads them to conclude that conflicts can be resolved and managed by mere indoctrination of the people involved in the conflict with regard to the destruction attributed to violence unless conflict is resolved peacefully (Trist, 2004:27). Furthermore, government officials take the option of handling conflicts by force.

Although there are minor differences from place to place, in general, the process conflict management in Ethiopia is not performed in a systematic way. As a result, the intervention effort done by the government bodies becomes costly, time consuming and unsustainable. As Trsit reflects, the fact is that this unsystematic approach to conflict is the result of government officials' inability to see conflict handling mechanism as a process. To substantiate her argument, she raises the case of Oromo and Somali boundary dispute whereby government officials from both side were busy in urging participant in the process to expose the perpetrators of the violence rather than discussing and identifying the root causes of the conflict (Trist, 2004:32; Dereje, 2010).

The third point in relation to conflict management in Ethiopia is the fact that conflict has not usually been properly recognized and addressed until it becomes violent. The wrong belief of officials at different levels of administration is that everything is in a peaceful situation unless it becomes violent. As a result, they seem to ignore the demands of different groups and try to respond to conflict when the issue is surfaced in a violent form and after it has resulted in death and injury on both sides of conflicting parties. Similarly, in the case of Somali Oromo border dispute, the disagreement or dispute began after the

end of the Transitional Government period but officials from both Regional States gave formal did not give wider recognition until recently when it erupted into violence (Trist, 2004:40; Dereje, 2010).

The fourth conflict management mechanism which is observed to have been widely used in the country as an instrument to handle conflict is organizing “Peace and Democracy Conference”. These conferences in which different parts of the society can be represented to discuss with government officials are organized by government bodies (Asnahe, 2004:67). The above discussion demonstrates the fact that conflict management in Ethiopia can be characterized as a ‘fire-brigade’ approach and the inability to handle conflicts as a process and lack of sustainability in the process leads government officials to perform nothing before and after violence occurs.

Institutions: It is the prime responsibility of governments to manage and resolve conflicts. To discharge this responsibility, governments establish institutions to manage conflict at national, regional and local level. This section discusses the major institution in Ethiopia which are engaged in conflict management. In Ethiopia, the House of Federation which is the upper house of the country is represented as the higher body for managing and resolving conflicts in the country. Pursuant to Article 62(2) of FDRE Constitution, “the house of federation is authorized “to find solutions to disputes or misunderstandings that may arise between states”.

Ethiopia, as multi ethnic state, is required to provide a system of conflict prevention, management and resolution. The Constitution of Ethiopia (1995) offers the House of Federation the mandate of settling any disputes that may arise between the constituent units to. The House of Federation is mandated for promotingequalityofpeople; strivingtofindsolutionsto disputes ormisunderstandingsbetween regions; orderingFederalinterventioninanyviolationoftheconstitutionandin conflictsituations, holding referendum when there are border disputes between regions/states. The Mechanisms of dispute settlement employed by the House of Federation as enshrined in Article 62 (6) of the FDRE Constitution provides that the House of Federation shall strive to find solutions to disputes or misunderstandings that may arise between States. On the

other hand, Article 3(5) of Proclamation No. 251/2001 for Consolidation of the HoF and definition of its powers and responsibilities has also provided principles, procedure and institutions for the management of disputes and conflicts over the issue of boundary conflicts among regional states. Even though the HoF is authorized under Art 62/6 of FDRE Constitution to find solutions to the disputes that arise between states, it does not mean that it decides on all cases by itself. Disputes that arose between regional states are mostly intended to move through a multiple dispute settlement processes. Any state that has a dispute with another state, before it submits the case to HoF, has an obligation to make a request in writing to the party in a dispute for discussion. The later on its part, should show its readiness for a genuine discussion within a maximum of forty-five days. Following the two parties' willingness to resolve their dispute by discussion, the HoF shall strive to the fruition of their discussion (Article 24(3), proc.251/2001). It shall also follow up the progress of the discussion. However, if one of the parties is unwilling to resolve the dispute by discussion or if they could not reach an agreement, the case may be submitted to the House by the one or the other party (Article 25 (1), proc. 251/2001). Upon receiving the petition, the House initially encourages further discussions between the parties or require the parties to produce all evidence in their possession to the House in order to give final decisions (Article 26, Proc, 251/2001).

On the other hand, in the case of interstate border disputes, the law does not mandate negotiation and mediation; rather, it follows a different pattern. Any interstate border dispute shall be settled by agreement of the concerned states. Where the concerned states fail to reach an agreement the HoF shall decide such dispute on the basis of settlement patterns and the wishes of the people concerned within a period of two years (Article 28, proc 251/2001). The House encourages the disputants to resolved their issues by agreement with the assumption that settling border dispute by an agreement between concerned states is preferable than submitting their cases to the HoF. The basic reason for this preference is that, if dispute is settled based on the agreement of the disputants all parties to the disputes are more likely to get satisfied by the result of their agreement which would make the relationship between the parties better than their previous state of affair. When the conflicting parties fail to agree the House will conduct referendum in

pursuant to Article 29 of proclamation 251/2001. The dispute between Oromia and Ethio-Somali is a case in point. The border dispute between Oromia and Somali Regional state was attempted to be resolved through a referendum. Pursuant to this, the House conducted referendum in 420 kebeles. Nevertheless, the referendum did not end the frequent conflicts along the borders of both regions. The HOF neither conducted the post referendum impact assessment on the dynamics of the conflict between those regions nor institutionalized conflict EWS and response systems to mitigate escalations to date. Therefore, one could make an observation that in the absence of conflict EWS and response systems, referendum alone could not suffice to prevent and mitigate border conflicts.

The other important institution in Ethiopia in relation to conflict management is the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA). The Ministry is mandated by the Proclamation 471/2005 as amended by proclamation 691/2010 of the federal government to work on conflict management activities. The Ministry also engages in settling border disputes and ethnic conflicts across the country. This institution helps in facilitating the resolution of conflict under two circumstances. The first is when Regions fail to resolve conflicts within their own border or between regional borders. In this case the regional states submit their request for intervention to the Federal Government and the request comes through the Office of Prime Minister. When the intervention gets approval, the MOFPDA involves in facilitating the resolution of conflicts. In other circumstances the MOFPDA sometimes gets involved without the request of the Regional States. This is applied when cases that authorize the intervention of the Federal Government in Regional states are based on the Proclamation No.359/2003 which is referred as “System for the Intervention of Federal Government in Regions” happens. The Federal Government is authorized for intervention under three conditions: when security situation gets deteriorated, the constitutional order is endangered and human rights are violated. The major task of the Ministry is to facilitate the resolution of conflicts through different mechanism. The major mechanisms this particular institution uses is organizing “Peace and Democracy Conferences” where conflicting parties and different stakeholders come together. In such conference they deploy traditional conflict

resolution mechanisms in which elders and traditional leaders are engaged in demarcating the boundary between ethnic groups which are in dispute over land. There are also other institutions within regional states which are directly or indirectly involved in handling conflicts in the country. These institutions are structured at Regional, Zonal and 'Woreda' levels. Some of the institutions include, the Justice and Security Bureau, Administration and security bureau, Regional Police Commission and Regional Militia Offices. Regional states have the major responsibility to address local conflicts. In line with above mandate, they have attempted to undertake conflict prevention and peace-building activities. For example, in some instances peace committees or Joint Woreda Task Forces have been established to manage conflict. However, these regional offices especially those in Oromia and Somali regional state seem to have failed to execute their responsibility which could be attributed to lack of strong and viable institution for conflict prevention, EWS and response systems. As Trist (2004:27) points out that, they over simplify cases of conflict at local level. As a result, minor conflicts turn into unmanageable and deadly violence.

There are many factors that contribute for the failure of these offices not to execute their responsibilities. Regarding the offices in Somali Regional state, there are cases of overlapping responsibilities and mandates among regional bureaus due to unclear terms of reference. The other factors that have adversely affected the efficiency of the bureaus are lack of adequately trained and qualified manpower, on the part of the officials' failure to remain non-partisan, the tendency to benefit from conflicts, manipulation of clan politics and corruption associated with the occurrences of conflicts (Kelkelachew, 2004:17). Moreover, there is lack of coordination/integration between basic local structures and intermediate (werda, zone and region) government hierarchies; and the federal government seem to be less committed to prevent conflicts along the borders. Furthermore, the traditional mechanism has the advantage of being more accessible to the conflict prone people than the formal mechanisms for the reason that they are less costly and immediate, open and participatory (Macfarlane, 2008). However, in some instances these mechanisms are procedurally flawed as they tend to be co-opted. They need to be enhanced through policy stipulation. Embodied within these interventions are challenges

relating to the adequacy of the institutional constraints and the capacity to implement conflict EWS and response systems. Moreover, the political will to move forward the conflict prevention agenda seems to be ineffective and there has been limited attention given to establishing a comprehensive EWS system. As a result of the inter - regional conflicts are frequently emerging along the bordering areas of Oromia - Somali Regional states.

Conflict Resolution: conflict resolution, is defined in much broader aspect than conflict settlement. According to Riemann, 2001:12), conflict resolution refers to all orientated activities that aim to address the underlying causes of direct, cultural and 'structural violence '. Structural violence refers to social, political and economic structure of a conflict situation, while 'cultural violence' may refer to the social and cultural legitimization of direct and structural violence. As discussed earlier (section 2.2.), conflict is a fact and inevitable phenomena in human relationships. It is understood as the existence of incompatible goals; the act of achieving these goals through force eventually leads to violence. This violence is the ugly face of conflict which ends up in a destruction of human life and resources. Once conflict turned into violence it needs the commitment of all actors and those who have interest in the conflict to resolve and manage the conflict in order to bring the situation into the peaceful situation (Jeong, 2000:167). Once conflict breaks out into violence there are different approaches (mediation, dialogues, etc.,) to manage and resolve it (see also Dereje, 2010:82; Paffenholz, 2003:15, 17; Jeong, 2000:181).

2.4.2. Conflict EWS and Early Response

In this section a detailed review of conflict EWS warning and early response was made.

2.4.2.1. Evolving definitions

Preventing violent conflicts is mostly done by tackling the root causes of conflict. It is therefore important to identify the situations that potentially lead to violence. This identification and prediction of what might happen in the (near) future is done by EWS. This shows EWS system is adequate in formulating underlying and direct factors that might lead to alleviate violent conflict. The policy that aims to prevent violence is based

on the formulation and recommendation of the EWS system. When the EWS system points at the wrong indicators, the prevention of violent conflicts would fail (Tessa De Waal, 2012). The enormous costs incurred, in such places as Rwanda, Yugoslavia and Somalia among others, has persuaded the international community and various organizations to seek for a more cost-effective way of preventing conflicts (Pinteiro, 1998:66). Hence, nowadays several organizations, such as national governments, intergovernmental organizations, supranational organizations, and non-governmental organizations, are involved in EWS, (Bellamy, 2009:107; Tess De Waal, 2012:23).

There are several definitions of EWS (EWS) which has evolved over time depending on the focus of the persons and organizations and only some of them are highlighted below. Most of these existing definitions reflect attempts in various levels to respond to the four important questions in EWS. These questions are *who, when, of what, and how to warn*. While some of the definitions emphasize on the “what and who to warn” aspects of the question, others underscore methodological considerations of how to carry out EWS. The 1997 definition by the FEWER of EWS is:

The systematic collection and analysis of information coming from areas of crises for the purpose of: a) anticipating the escalation of violent conflict; b) the development of strategic responses to the crises; and c) the presentation of options to critical actors for the purposes of decision-making” (FEWER, 1997:24)

Austin (2004) defines EWS as

any initiative that focuses on systematic data collection, analysis and/or formulation of recommendations, including risk assessment and information sharing, regardless of topic, whether they are quantitative, qualitative or a blend of both. Austin differentiated three components within EWS as estimating the magnitude and timing of relative risks of emerging threats, analyzing the nature of these threats and describing plausible scenarios, and communicating warning analyses to decision makers (Austin, 2004).

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), with great appreciation of the application of EWS to different phases of conflict (outbreak, escalation, and resurgence) attempts to address the questions of what and who to warn and the role of information analysis as a response in itself. It defines EWS as “EWS is a process that (a) alerts decision makers to the potential outbreak, escalation and resurgence of violent conflict; and (b) promotes an understanding among decision makers of the nature and impacts of violent conflict” (OECD, 2009).

This definition is said to be well placed since it addresses the idea of EWS holistically by bringing out the major components of who to warn, what, when and how it should be carried out which correspond the phases of conflict. On the other hand, a more comprehensive definition that comprises the different aspects of EWS and EWS system is given by Montanoro and Scheunemann:

EWS is a process that alerts decision - makers to the potential outbreak, escalation and resurgence of violent conflict. It is a basis for informed decision - making and a tool to manage political priorities and objectives. An EWS system: (a) includes systematic monitoring, collection, ordering and analysis of information (based on qualitative and quantitative conflict analysis methods), (b) promotes a better understanding of conflict dynamics and impacts, (c) provides forecasts of potential developments; and (d) presents options for the purpose of decision - making on early and effective response through relevant instruments and mechanisms” (Montanoro & Scheunemann, 2011: 10-11).

Regardless of the various definitions, the common understanding, in the field of peace and security, EWs are systems that collect, verify, and analyze data in a systematic manner and on an ongoing basis to provide information for a wide range of preventative purposes.¹⁵ These systems should also provide recommendations of action for key decision-makers while providing an assessment of the impact of the situation. EWS have achieved their purpose when the information provided is useful in preventing, mitigating, and resolving conflict. Hence this research employs the definition provided by Austin (2004) and OECD (2009) as they complement each other and most likely fit the purpose of the thesis.

2.4.2.2. Historical Development of Conflict EWS

Though conflict EWS are recent development which emerged during the post-cold war period and thus the presence of EWS is traceable to 1950s (Debiel and Wulf, 2009:5). Early warning systems as a concept has two historical roots, but both are distinct to the conceptual understanding portrayed in this study. However, they have complementarily influenced the development of the term as such, specifically relating to the prevention of violent conflicts in the current international political system. The first use of the term EWS can be traced back to the work of military intelligence, and the need for advancing

¹⁵ Preventative purposes include war, armed conflict, generalized violence, state failure, riots, coups, protests and demonstrations, pastoral conflict, and terrorism.

knowledge about hostilities from an enemy and on the actor conducting the intelligence collection. This means one actor produces EWS information about probable danger to itself and to protect its national interests and the integrity of its state borders (Schmeidl, 2002:74). This is certainly a case in inter-state armed conflicts, especially referring to the security environment of the Cold-war period.

The second application of the term is the anticipation of natural phenomena that might lead to humanitarian disasters (i.e. hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and droughts) (Hough, 2004:27; Adelman, 1998: 45). The idea behind this conceptualization is a call for third parties as the situations analyzed do not necessarily pose any direct risk to the party emitting the warning (Adelman, 1998: 45). Both routes have been put in practice within the United Nations System, the first conceptualization was used in order to deploy UN peacekeeping forces to manage hostilities in Africa, and the second was employed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in its attempts to anticipate famines. For example, the UN Humanitarian EWS System (HEWS) was the first EWS system to implement a theoretical model in practice with a specific focus on the potential outbreak of drought and famine (Campbell and Meier, 2007). This in turn popularized the concept and practice of EWS. With reference to Africa, specifically,

*EWS and response systems were first developed in Africa in the 1970s to deal with drought and to ensure food supplies to avoid humanitarian disasters. In the 1990s, accelerated by the Rwandan genocide, EWS efforts expanded beyond natural disasters to include food security and refugees. More recently, EWS efforts have been used to address the prevention, management and resolution of violent conflicts.*¹⁶

Consequently, over the last two decades there has been an institutional emphasis on EWS at the continental, sub-regional (RECs) and national levels. Moreover, the contemporary understanding of EWS as a concept and as a tool stems from a combination of the previously mentioned ideas, as a means to safeguard third parties, particularly innocent civilians from dangers, violence and violent confrontations. Today, EWS is not synonymous to intelligence as it utilizes open-source channels to gather data, aims to serve human security and not state or national interests, and depends on transparent

¹⁶ CEWARN, *Strategy for 2007–2011*, Addis Ababa, 2006, <http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/en-CEWARN-Strategy-2006.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2015).

methods of information sharing (Cilliers, 2005: 1; MacFarquhar, Rotberg & Chen, 1996: 5).

On the other hand, EWS are also associated with the new ‘human security’ thinking about the responsibility of leaders to protect ordinary people, and thus have traditionally been located within technical agencies that forecast food shortages. Similarly, it is linked to the non-governmental sector where it has a wide application among humanitarian relief agencies. EWS use open source material and generally aim to serve human security, not national or state interests. While Intelligence systems rely primarily on secrecy, situation rooms and the encrypted communication of classified information. EWS depends principally upon transparent methods and the sharing of information, even though these exchanges and the communication of results may be classified and restricted to different levels of users (Cornwell, R. 2001; Cilliers, 2005).

Related to the institution of EWS, Adleman (1998) argues that EWS entails both a process and institutional structure. The process involves collection, analysis, strategic assessment and dissemination of information and Institutional structure is set for fostering such a process (Adleman, 1998:60). In the realm of conflict prevention, institutions are the functional structures that exist to undertake the conflict EWS and response process (Hannah, G., et al, 2005). Hence, the placement of EWS and response systems within the institutional architecture depends on political and strategic decisions. In other words, the place given to the system in the state apparatus is an initial message about its significance and recognition (Jessica and Luis, 2015).

2.4.2.3. Objectives and Scope of Conflict EWS

There is little or no consensus on the objectives of conflict EWS. Rather depending on the composition of factors such as the types of conflict (interstate, ethnic or pastoral), geographic coverage (regional, sub-regional, or national), institutional level (governmental or non-governmental) or, composition of stakeholders, there are different expectations on how EWS should perform and what they should achieve (Kopfmüller, Simone and Niels von Keyserlingk, 2006).

Nonetheless, at the most basic level, according to Austin (2004), the objective of conflict EWS is conceived as “obtaining knowledge to assist in the prevention and mitigation of conflict. Besides, Davies and Gurr (1998). describe the goal of early warning as a “proactive engagement in the earlier stages of potential conflicts or crises, to prevent or at least alleviate their more destructive expressions” Birikiti (2010)also points out that the objectives of EWS and preventive strategies must work to promote human rights, protect minority rights and to institute political arrangements in which all groups are represented. Hence, ignoring these underlying factors amounts to addressing the symptoms rather than the causes of deadly conflicts.

On a more operational or functional level, the list of EWS objectives identified by FEWER include: Identification and assessment of the most salient conflict indicators; assessment of likely trends and scenarios; identification of strategies and opportunities for peace; contribution towards a balanced situational analysis based on the interaction of the different conflict and peace factors; and translation of these conclusions into response options and action strategies for local, national, regional and international actors (FEWER,1999¹⁷; Cilliers,2008; Bullman,2010).

If EWS is to anticipate violent conflicts, this cannot be understood without reference to the root causes such as poverty, inequality, political representation and the uneven distribution of resources. The link between violence with deep rooted poverty, inequality, development, governance and other related issues is discussed by many scholars (Wood,2003).For example, the 2001 UN Report clearly mentions that every,measures taken towards reducing poverty and achieving broad based growth is a step towards conflict prevention¹⁸.

2.4.2.4. EWS and Traditional Intelligence

Though conflict early warning is born out of the need to anticipate and prevent the outbreak of violent conflicts, ironically its origin and historical development is to be

¹⁷ FEWER (UK based Forum on EWS and Early Response) is a global coalition of organizations that provides EWS and promotes early, coordinated responses to violent conflict.

¹⁸ For more sophisticated view of the connection between aid and conflict, see Kofi Annan, “Peace and Development- One struggle, two fronts, "Address to World Bank Staff, October19, 1995, p.45.

traced to traditional military intelligence (Debiel and Wulf, 2009:4) which Bradley E. Perry considered as the “parent field” (Bradley E. Perry:2008:6) for early warning. Besides this “parent-child” relationship, the similarities of their methods often cause confusion between the above two forms of intelligence.¹⁹ As a consequence, most of the conflict early warning literature included a brief attempt to show major differences between early warning and traditional intelligence. Based on functional considerations, Jackie Cilliers, for instance, distinguished the two by asserting that “the purpose of early warning (as opposed to traditional intelligence) is the formulation of strategic options directed at taking preventive action in the common (regional or international) good as opposed to the national interest” (Cilliers, 2005:1). Likewise, Susanne Schmeidl underscored their differences in the context of the type of security frameworks they serve. To this effect, Schmeidl indicated that “early warning differs from traditional intelligence in one fundamental point by stressing the welfare of others (human security) rather than state (national) security.” (Schmeidl, 2002:73). According to African Union (2008) the major differences and similarities between conflict early warning systems and traditional intelligences are summarized as follows²⁰:

Early Warning: Depends on the collection and analysis of information, scenario-building and the presentation of recommendations to decision makers. It focuses on human security. Early warning seeks to serve larger objectives than those of the state “stricto sensu”. It depends on transparent methods and sharing of information. It is transparent in information and analysis. It is also decentralized and dependent upon other sources of information and analysis.

¹⁹ The confusion between the two may arise as both early warning and intelligence depend on similar methods such collecting and analyzing information, scenario building, and recommending options to decision-makers for action and intervention. Susanne Schmeidl, “Conflict Early Warning and Prevention: Toward a Coherent Terminology”, In Cirû Mwaûra and Susanne Schmeidl (eds.), *Early Warning and Conflict Management in the Horn of Africa* (Asmara, Eritrea: The Red Sea Press, 2002), 73.

²⁰ See AU [African Union] CMD [Conflict Management Division] (eds.), “Report of the Workshop on the Establishment of the AU CEWS: Background paper No. 1”, In *Meeting the Challenges of Conflict Prevention in Africa: Towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System*. (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2008), 106.

Traditional Intelligence Systems: Depends also on the collection and analysis of information, scenario building and the presentation of recommendations to decision makers. It focuses on state security. It seeks to serve state interest, rely on secrecy, situation rooms and encrypted communications of classified information. It is a closed system and centralized and dependent on in-house information and analysis.

2.4.2.5. Constituent Elements of Conflict EWS

EWS is intertwined with conflict prevention and held as a tool for conflict deterrence that aids in establishing the likely occurrence of violent conflicts and how to arbitrate and avert these conflicts. To do this, conflict EWS constitutes key stages and variables for assessing the process (collection of information, analysis and dissemination) of operationalization of the EWS (Odato, 2014; Adleman, 1998:60). The major ones are discussed below.

Conflict EWS Indicators: An indicator is a sign, something observable, which provides information about a situation. Indicators are at the heart of early warning work, providing a systematic framework for monitoring the situation and creating an alert, using signs that show a situation is deteriorating. Indicators are classified as quantitative and qualitative. Simply put, quantitative indicators are observations that can be expressed using numbers. Qualitative indicators are expressed using words and are more descriptive (Steven Leach, 2016:15).

Indicators are predictors, precursor events or other telling signals used in forecasting about the likely conflict to occur. Indicators help EWS actors and systems to understand the nature of the conflict, ascertain the expected impact, and determine a sufficient response. The basic premise of EWS is that the evolution of conflicts can be monitored through follow-up and analysis 56key pre-defined indicators (Jessica and Luis, 2015). Walton (2011) and Haider, et al. (2011: 5) identify the most comprehensive database of conflict EWS indicators as demographic²¹, economic²², and political or policy²³,

²¹ Rapid demographic shifts caused by refugee movements can put pressure on resources and state institutions and spark local conflicts (see Salehyan & Gleditsch 2004). Civilian movements across borders (see FEWER 1999, Van Der Goor and Versteegen 2000; IDP Movements, see Joseph & Carment 2000).

security²⁴, social factor or public opinion²⁵ and human right²⁶ related indicators. All indicators can either be informative signals of potential conflict or peace factors.

Mwaûra and Cirû (2002) are however keen to warn that easy access to information may not automatically impact indicators. Indicators are determined through comprehensive analysis that categorizes the multifaceted causes that may lead to escalation of armed conflict. Today, monitoring of major EWS indicators has not been given due attention. Nevertheless, most analysts contend that tailoring EWS around groups of “family” or “cluster” indicators are useful (Cirû Mwaûra and Susanne Schmeidl, 2002:79). The analytical and monitoring framework of indicators is shown Annex Two on graphic display of analytical framework Model of EWS indicators.

In EWS two major elements—root cause and proximate causes – are often given consideration. Root causes include pervasive factors that form the foundation of a people and may form the pre-conditions for violence. According to Clark (cited in Mwaûra and Schmeidl 2002), root causes are a deep-rooted state of affairs that have been passed on for generations, and their change is gradual. The root causes are entrenched in a people’s way of life and are hence crucial for the overall evaluation of a country’s risk potential (Mwaûra and Schmeidl, 2002 see also Odato, 2014).

Proximate causes, on the other hand, are close in proximity to the real conflict and can be the breeding site for armed conflict. Proximate causes contribute to a favorable climate for violent conflict or advance its intensity, at times actually indicative of a deeper problem. These are definite situations such as an enlarged income difference, antagonism and uprisings between ethnic groups. As such, proximate causes may be diluted or

²² Competition over resources (see Van Der Goor and Versteegen 2000), Economic Deterioration (see Van Der Goor and Versteegen 2000; Commodity Prices (CEWARN 2010), Unemployment rate (see Joseph & Carment 2000), Livestock Prices (see CEWARN 2010).

²³ Several political and policy-related indicators are compiled globally. Examples are Voter intimidation (see FEWER 1999); politically motivated arrests and violence (see FEWER 1999, Van Der Goor and Versteegen 2000); Corruption and governance (see Joseph & Carment 2000).

²⁴ Security-related indicators have been a key feature of most local and regional CEWSs. Number of armed clashes, number of raids or cattle rustling, number of deaths (see CEWARN 2010); Cross-border shootings and killings (see FEWER 1999).

²⁵ Number of demonstrations (see CEWARN 2010); Peace Initiatives (range of indicators including NGO peace initiatives, local peace initiatives) (see CEWARN 2010); Alliance formation (inter-ethnic group alliance, ethnic-group/government alliance) (see CEWARN 2010); Changing Alliances (see FEWER 1999).

²⁶ Freedom of Expression, movement, religion (see FEWER 1999); Human Rights abuses (see FEWER 1999, Van Der Goor and Versteegen 2000, Joseph & Carment 2000); Number of Political Prisoners (see FEWER et al 2003).

transformed with time and often due to a government's capability/failure or readiness/reluctance to correct situations (Mwaûra and Schmeidl, 2002). Intervening factors also known as accelerators have a two-fold effect. They can either augment or reduce the chances of armed conflict and enhance or diminish the prospects of peace (hence contributing to the intractability of conflict or contributing to conflict resolution).

Accordingly, in view of the above assumption structural approaches lead analysis to the extent that they are based on certain postulations, in many cases it has proved impossible to collect the necessary data to prove hypothetical arguments. Based on this, an all-encompassing approach that merges indicator models with case evidence is encouraged. It is argued that:

Indicator models provide general information about factors that should be monitored, while case studies provide in-depth information about key personalities, issues, events that are needed to gauge the prospects for conflict resolution. The necessary detailed information often aids in finetuning data accurately to anticipate conflicts that can often be gained only through a context sensitive qualitative approach (Mwaûra and Schmeidl, 2002:8).

Some scholars explain that in the case of the Rwandan genocide; there was no systematic understanding of how genocide develops so that warning signs could not be noticed because policy-makers did not understand the genocidal process. As a result, they missed the EWS signs. Conflict indicators are therefore important in understanding the various contexts and situations that might arise (Stanton, 2009). This can tell us that noticing conflict indicators in EWS are, therefore, a crucial issue in conflict prevention.

These indicators are as diverse as price fluctuations, demonstrations, government policies, social movements, political infighting, leaders' attitudes, and arm flows. At the same time, change, tension and political turmoil can be positive as well as negative in transitions between economic and political systems. Monitoring and information-gathering mechanisms should reach deep into a country's social fabric and grassroots politics to identify possible sources of conflict (Muhabie, 2015).

Many conflict EWS, including the one developed by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (CEWARN),²⁷ select key indicators for specific countries or regions. Nyheim et al (2001) provide a useful list of key conflict indicators in the Great Lakes and the Caucasus, which demonstrates this regional variation. Matveeva (2006) argues that it is generally more useful to work with a small selection of conflict indicators. Using a long list of indicators may include a lot of information that is irrelevant to the particular conflict situation.

Hence, one could observe that the bases for monitoring potential conflict and achieving EWS are indicators or signals from conflict areas. There are many different predictors, precursor events or other signs of trouble that could be used in forecasting situations that have the potential to escalate into violent conflicts. For the purpose of this research, indicators in either root causes or proximate causes clustered as economic, social, political, environmental, etc. or any other forms are considered for analysis in Ethiopia in general and in Oromia and Somali regional states' conflicts in particular.

Situation Room for Conflict EWS: Situation room is a head quarter where the latest information on conflict EWS is collected, analyzed and channeled.²⁸ This information comes from a wide range of sources such as reports from individuals, local authorities, NGO representatives and the local media and streamlined and contextualized in terms of appropriate criteria in the situation room (GTZ, 2006:11). Likewise, Davies and Gurr (1998) list information sources for EWS as in-country situation studies, screening and analytical coding of public news sources, field reports, analyses from governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental institutions, coded assessments by country experts of current situations, trends, country or group profile, or databases of structural indicators and episodic databases profile of past crises. According to them, there are two main approaches to gathering event data: to use the global newsfeed and an expertise

²⁷ IGAD is an inter-governmental organization established in East Africa in 1996. See <http://igad.int/>. For more information on CEWARN see <http://www.cewarn.org/>

²⁸ Taken from 'Random House Unabridged Dictionary,' 1997, by Random House, Inc.

survey. However, they note that both approaches have advantages and drawbacks (David and Gurr, 1998).

Having the concepts discussed in mind, for this study, information sources from local communities, peace committees, government officials, police and intelligence sources are used in a situation room. In a nutshell, the Situation Room for conflict EWS and early response systems is responsible for monitoring indicators, analyzing information and producing a wide range of reports such as news highlights, daily reports, and other ad-hoc reports for proper action. Therefore, the formal duties of situation room are to provide monitoring and situation awareness and early alerts. Accordingly, the research at hand took the concept of situation room to investigate how the situation rooms at federal and regional states were established and the role they played in the operationalization of EWS to mitigate conflicts.

Moreover, the need for useful information that warns a probable danger and the need for this information to be timely enough so that preventive actions can be taken would be vital and be processed in the situation room. For example, the failures that the international community confronted during the Rwanda (1992-1994) and in the Congo-Zaire (1996) where information was either ignored or misinterpreted resulted in the realization of more effective methods for the collection of EWS need to be developed. This initiative relies on the understanding that good EWS directly influences early preventive action. In other words, the better and more authoritative EWS information is the more policy makers will feel committed and responsible to act. As stated by Schmeidl and Adelman (2002: 72), “early warning needs to be seen as a precondition to developing political will and thus initiate (or better inform) reasonable response strategies. This makes early warning the *sine qua non* of effective conflict prevention for humanitarian action cannot be undertaken without it”. Hence, it could be observed that information leads to action.

Early Warning Information and Analysis: Early warning analysis entails evaluating a number of questions that lead the analyst towards a comprehension of both underlying and apparent concerns rooted in a particular conflict. Despite the fact that every conflict context is distinctive, indicators can be tailored to enlighten on their linkages with diverse

backgrounds. Signs are important for the reduction of a complex situation to manageable concrete features and to assign useful issues against which to observe any transformations. Not only are the variations of party, aspirations, problem, and approach illustrate the nature of conflict, but also the styles and importance of effects of opposition. The features not only determine the conflict approaches but also shape dynamics associated with mutual relations.

EWS is a large field with many different methodologies operating at different levels and with a wide range of issues. Austin (2004) in his work, *Early Warning and The Field: A Cargo Cult Science* explains that EWS can be categorized in terms of the methodology that they use. According to him, EWS has to achieve three main goals: (a) identify the causes of 5, (b) predict the outbreak of conflict (c) mitigate that conflict.

To achieve these goals EWS should contain six core mechanisms that fits the three objectives. To address the first objective, the archetypical system should have a systematic process of: (i) data collection (quantitative and/or qualitative) and (ii) data analysis. In order to predict conflict, it is necessary to have (iii) an assessment for warning or identification of different scenarios. To move towards the mitigation of conflict and bridging the gap between EWS and response, the model should be in a continual circle: (IV) formulate an action proposal, (v) transmit recommendations and (vi) assess the early response, which in turn feeds back into the formulation of action. The need for this continual circle is that warning must not stop with intervention. The intervention itself can have an impact on the specific context and that can change the context (Austin, 2004:11)

Conflict analysis is an essential but a tremendously challenging process. The aim is to gain a comprehensive and shared understanding of conflict potentials or ongoing violent conflicts. This usually involves an assessment of key conflict factors (sources of tension and root causes of conflict, including linkages and synergies), actors (interests, potential spoilers, capacities for violence and incentives required to promote peace) and dynamics (triggers for violence, local capacities for peaceful and constructive conflict management, and likely future scenarios). An analysis is undertaken at local, national, regional and

international levels (GSDRC Conflict Topic Guide, Rev., 2014). Mwaûra and Schmeidl (2002) argue that information must live up to some principles. These principles, they argue, include: the information must be well-timed, precise, convincing, consistent and provable (Mwaûra and Schmeidl, 2002: 81).

New Technology and EWS and Response Systems: It is obvious that technology speeds up information collection, sharing and dissemination and thereby alerts concerned bodies about the conflict and enhances EWS response processes. In addition to this, new technologies have the potential to allow conflict affected population to actively involve in data gathering and conflict prevention, although its impact varies depending on the context in which they are engaged. They can also be used as part of a holistic response (Mancini, 2013: iii). Crowd sourcing platforms could give individuals the ability to act upon warnings and work to build resilience within their community (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Using technology for EWS relies on much greater levels of community involvement and thus local input needs to be integrated throughout the process (Pham and Vinck, 2012; Mancini, 2013). It also requires a rethinking of conflict respondents to see if a specific response plan is part of the EWS and effective (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Using technology in early response also creates new roles, relationships and responsibilities among conflict affected population, civil society, governments, multilateral organizations, and even perpetrators of violence, which raise some new major concerns and ethical challenges (Ibid).

There are concerns about the quality and reliability of the information collected and a possible trade-off between speed and accuracy technology. Since everyone hardly has access to this new technology, disparities may exist in relation to gender and education which may introduce biases into the data collected. Hence, disparities in access to technology may reinforce structural inequality at the root of conflicts and using inaccurate and biased data could increase risks of pledging inappropriate responses. The ability to gather data locally and communicate information globally in near real-time has exposed sources to more danger as repressive regimes can monitor internet, mobile phone traffic and social networking sites, to identify and target activists who are volunteer potentially to share sensitive information (Pham and Vinck, 2012). For example,

sometimes security forces shut down mobile phone networks in order to prevent mongering rumors and conflict escalation, which means an SMS based EWS and response system is unable to function (Stine, 2013:22). Misaka (2014) argues that as new technologies are being leveraged to wage war, they are also increasingly being used to improve physical security and work toward conflict prevention and peace. This indicates that there are advantages and disadvantages of new technologies. Hence, proper management should follow to prevent devastating effects of the application of new technologies in the application of EWS (Nyheim, 2015). In this research, utilization of information communication technology (ICT) is critical for conflict prevention and early warning and response systems. The timely flow of information between field monitors, local peace committees, and governmental security agencies is mainly dependent on the technology employed. Hence, how the ICT tools can be introduced into conflict early-warning mechanisms and what factors undermine their effective utilization were analyzed in the study.

2.4.2.6. Conflict Early Response

From a theoretical perspective, early response is the development of strategic response against escalation of violent conflicts and the presentation of preventive options to critical actors (national, regional and international) for decision-making with regard to preventive actions to be taken. In achieving such frameworks, EWS must be often aligned with early response (Suifon, 2005).

The concept of early response or early action has not shown significant changes in meaning since the mid-1990s.²⁹ Schmid (1998) defines it as preventive action or early action that involves consultation, policy making, planning and implementation of action to reduce or avoid armed conflict. In addition, actions may include diplomatic, political, military, security, humanitarian, development or economic activities (Schmid, 1998). Austin (2004) refers to early response as any initiative that occurs in the latent stages of a

²⁹See, for example, Diller (1997), "Processes of consultation, policymaking, planning, and action to reduce or avoid armed conflict. The se processes include: i) diplomatic/political; ii) military/security; iii) humanitarian; and iv) development/economic activity" quoted in Alex P Schmid (1998), *The saurus and Glossary of EWS and Conflict Prevention Terms (Abridged Version)* (Netherlands: PIOOM).

perceived potential armed conflict with the aim of reducing, resolving the conflict from escalation (Austin, 2004: 23). Likewise, OECD (2009) explains early response as early and rapid response to any initiative that could work as soon as the threat of a potential violent conflict is identified and which aims at managing, resolving, or preventing the violent conflict. In the same vein, Haider notes that early response system refers to timely and appropriate prevention initiatives, usually undertaken during the dormant stages of perceived potential violent conflict (Haider et al, 2014:49).

Thinking on early response ranges from mapping the response toolbox to understanding what makes an effective response to conflict, and how response instruments/ mechanisms work. Thinkers such as Michael Lund (1996) propose a toolbox for preventive diplomacy.³⁰ According to him early thinking on responding to conflict includes the work of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, which maps operational and structural prevention measures³¹ and that of thinkers such as Lund's 1996 'tool box for preventive diplomacy'.³²

Activities related to responses and interventions include direct (operational) prevention mechanisms, such as preventative diplomacy³³ (diplomatic persuasion to prevent armed conflict); incentives and sanctions³⁴ to influence the behavior of key conflict actors and

³⁰ See Lund's (1996) 'tool box for preventive diplomacy' which includes: Military approaches (Restraints on the use of armed force and Threatoruse of armed force), Non military approaches (Coercive diplomatic measures (without the use of armed force) ,Development and governance approaches (.Policies to promotenational economic and social development. Promulgation and enforcement of human rights, democratic, and other standards and National governing structures to promote peaceful conflict resolution; in David Nyheim (2015), *EWS and Early Response to Prevent Violent Conflict: Time for a re-think?* SAFERWORLD, London, UK.P.6.

³¹ Available at www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a372860.pdf for www.insightonconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Carnegie-Commission Summary. Pdf. Accessed, 27,10,2016.

³²

Quoted in Peter Wallensteen & Frida Möller's 'Conflict Prevention: Methodology for Knowing the Unknown' available at www.pcr.uu.se/digitalAssets/61/61533_1preventionknowing_the_unknown.pdf.

³³ More information on preventative diplomacy and conflict prevention can be found in Haider (2014, p. 52) and Strachan's (2013) GSDRC Helpdesk report: Preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, which focuses on regional approaches to preventive diplomacy. The report is available here: <http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/HDQ1047.pdf>. See also Micheal Lund's 1996 Tool Box for Preventive Diplomacy in David Nyheim (2015) *EWS and Early Response to Violent Conflict: Time for a rethink?* SAFERWORLD, London, UK.

³⁴ More information on incentives and sanctions can be found in Haider (2014: 53).

to alter conflict dynamics; and peace-making dialogue³⁵ to get conflicting parties to talk, to build up trust and to transform relationships (Haider, 2014:52-54). According to Haider, responses and interventions may also comprise *structural* prevention, which involves long term interventions that aim to transform key socioeconomic, political and institutional factors that if left unaddressed could lead to violent conflict in the future (Haider, 2014:55). They include, but are not limited to: addressing inequality, exclusion and marginalization; developing social capital and social cohesion; promoting livelihoods, local development and economic opportunities; and promoting legitimate and equitable political, justice and security institutions. Early warning and response are less effective if they fail to address the underlying causes of conflict (Amao et al, 2014: 89). Reyntjens and Pannels (1997:89) argue that late response to conflict from international community is due to lack of political will rather than lack of information. Similarly, Gordenker notes that the usefulness of warning depends on the nature and timeliness of the warning and its reception by those who are given responsibility for initiating response (Gordenker, 1992:3). Kurado (1992:216) suggests that prior knowledge through systematic monitoring of root causes and developing situations could prepare concerned policy makers to take timely action that would help for negotiation, prevention or mitigation. Persend (1992:190) also advises that in early warning broader preventive strategies should be based on broader network of sources of information and targets for action. In this study, I argue that preventive strategies (preventive diplomacy) such as consultations, cooperation, peace dialogues and forums could have significant contributions for responding to and mitigating conflicts; however, they could not stand by themselves unless supported by strong and viable institution of EWS and response systems. In other words, there is a need to circumvent the culture of fire-brigade approach which is usually employed after enormous humanitarian and material crisis has ensued in Ethiopia in general and in Oromia and Somali regions in particular. Moreover, the endangered local population who has a local knowledge and is situated closest to the conflict strike environment need to be part of the system to respond to conflicts before it escalates to violent level.

³⁵ Ibid, 2014:53-54.

2.5. Literature Review on Conflict Early Warning and Conflict Prevention Theory

2.5.1. Conflict Early Warning

The formal study of Conflict Early Warning and Response began in the 1970s and its incorporation into public policy began after the end of the Cold War (1989) (OECD, 2009:15). Scholars such as (Singer and Wallace, 1979) used EWER to forecast war while (Charney and Charney, 1982) applied early warning to genocide prevention. The end of the cold war brought new dynamics with increased global powers cooperation in conflict management and prevention and more focus on intrastate conflicts in Eastern Europe and Africa. The need for such response was occasioned by the challenges posed by the ‘new types of wars’ that engulfed the Balkans, Rwandan genocide and Somalia conflict. The September 2001 terrorists attack on the United States also created a new impetus for understanding conflicts in weak and failing states. Specific proposal for a global early warning system was made by a UN Special Rapporteur, Prince Aga Khan in 1981 (Rupesinghe, 1989). In 1987 the UN developed the Office for the Research and Collection of Information (ORCI) to develop an early warning system for monitoring global conflict trends. The UNHCR and UNDHA also spearheaded separate early warning systems that were relevant to their work. The first international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) to work on early warning system was International Alert in 1985 (OECD, 2009:28). The UN Secretary General (Boutros Ghali) report of 1992, named, An agenda for Peace, Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peacekeeping, captured the emerging trend by focusing more on comprehensive conflict prevention and peace building for sustainable conflict management (UN, 1992). The OAU also established a unit for conflict early warning; Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in 1992 (Cilliers, 2005). The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflicts (1997) Report also stressed the need for early warning, local solutions and quick international response, bearing in mind the lost opportunities in Rwanda and the Balkans (Carnegie, 1997).

In 2000, the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace keeping Operations (Brahimi Report); recognized the role of early warning in broader UN peace support operations. A unit within the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), named Information

and Strategic Analysis Secretariat (EISAS) was proposed but was not implemented (UN, 2000). The UN Secretary General's Report 2001: Prevention of Armed Conflict; stressed the need for the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), to develop capacity for conflict analysis for timely conflict prevention (UN, 2001). The European Commission in its publication, Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention, also stressed the need for integrating early warning systems in its conflict prevention programs to inform early response (European Commission, 2001). The United Kingdom (UK) government responded positively to the Brahimi report and issued a White Paper in 2000 spelling out its commitment to conflict prevention and calling for the implementation of Brahimi report within 12 months. The UK subsequently established Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) as its new approach to international engagement framework (UK, 2000). In Eastern Africa, the Heads of States meeting in 2000 endorsed a recommendation to establish Conflict Early Warning and Response Network (CEWARN), (IGAD, 2000).

Many scholars have written on nature and effectiveness of early warning and response systems from a global, regional and national perspective; OECD, (2009), Rupesinghe, (1989). Some scholars have identified good practices in EWER. A number of criteria for gauging effective EWER systems have been identified: understanding the problem, diversity, flexibility and sustainability of responses, planning and strategy, conflict sensitive, balance, speed, ownership, coordination and differentiating technical problems from political issues; OECD, (2009), IPI, (2012). These reviews present ways and means of timely, cost effective and efficient governmental and institutional responses to conflict vulnerability.

Mbugua (2014) focused on Conflict Early Warning and Response Systems in Eastern Africa. He argues that despite significant improvement in institutional and operational preparedness in the region, there has not been a significant reduction or mitigation of violent conflicts. He further argues that there are still many questions about the design, efficiency and effectiveness of the current EWER mechanisms. There are still many hurdles (political, institutional, technological and economic) along the way before effective regional early warning systems can be achieved. However, he left to emphasize

how the system is linked to national and local level early warning systems as an effective model of EWER system that should consolidate and integrated into national and traditional community structures.

Campbell and Meier (2007) focused on early warning and decision making within the United Nations to prevent violent conflict. They analyze three decision-making structures that have been created within the UN Secretariat to bridge the early warning-response gap. These structures include; the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS), The Framework Team, and The Policy Committee. These three decision-making organs are located in the subsystem aspect of the United Nations. These organs constitute the representative made up of member states. Moreover,they argued that early warning is relevant and useful in encouraging early response by creating accountability for responses not taken (Campbell and Meier (2007). Hence, it is observed that the major emphasis is made at the UN level to bridge the early warning and response gap and encouraging accountability for failing to take response action. This is a right step forward and providing valuable lessons for regional and national early warning systems.However, they could not emphasize on the integration of early warning system to the regional and national level conflict early warning systems while member states are represented in the decision-making organs of the UN.

On the other hand, Zenko and Freidman (2011) stated that the UN planned to develop and implement effective preventive strategies, decisionmakers usually require early warning about socio-political crises that couldlead to instability or armed conflict. Moreover, they argue that despite repeated calls for a coordinated UN early warning system for preventing conflict,early warning is currently performed piecemeal by seven UN bodies and one ad hoc initiative.Due to the difficulties inherent in the UN's structure – the transparency of the organizationand member states' sensitivity about perceived encroachments on their sovereignty– the UN cannot, and arguably should not, develop a comprehensive early warning systemfor preventing conflict. Instead, the UN could improve its ability to analyze and absorbearly warning information already in the system by: reforming the Executive Office ofthe Secretary-General; strengthening the early warning and assessment capacities withinthe aforementioned bodies; soliciting greater

cooperation with the US intelligence community and regional organizations; and promoting enhanced inter-agency cooperation.

Regarding the existing UN Early Warning and Assessment Capacity. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) has an early warning mandate 'to identify potential or actual conflicts in whose resolution the United Nations could play a useful role'. For many years, the DPA was significantly understaffed given its growing set of responsibilities, including its country-level analysis and monitoring and support to special political missions. First, there is presently nobody in the Secretariat dedicated solely to collecting, analyzing and integrating all the UN early warning reporting described above. Second, almost every UN early warning body is underfunded or understaffed to an extent that they cannot adequately fulfil their mandates. Consequently, early warning units independently prioritize those few countries or regions they⁵⁴ believe are most pressing and most important for senior decision-makers.

Wulf and Tobias (2009) studied a comparative case study of five regional/sub-regional organizations. Several regional and sub-regional organizations have established, or are building up, EWR mechanisms. In Africa, they focus on the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), an intelligence-gathering and analysis center of the African Union; the Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism (CEWARN) of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa (IGAD); and the West Africa Early Warning Network (WARN) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). They demonstrated that why do regional organizations not use early warning and response (EWR) mechanisms more effectively? In Current EWR mechanisms they have identified four key weaknesses to address; they need to adequately consider causal chains, the local space, the impact of small events, and under what conditions they can be effectively replicated. Regional organizations do not use EWR effectively because of political interest, institutional rigidity, a lack of information that is tailor-made for decision-makers, and a lack of capacity. Concepts need to be developed on the precise role of regional organizations in EWR (Wulf and Tobias, 2010:525-547). However, the link between warning and response is still weak despite mushrooming of multiple EWR organizations, OECD, (2009). There have been a rising interests in conflict risks

assessments among global private sector and this can boost EWER fortune. Documentation of practical experiences in countries and regions is providing valuable lessons for global EWER practitioners.

The literature survey made so far shows that little or no reference has been made to specific cases of the national and local conflict early warning and response systems. On the other hand, although continental and regional early warning initiatives tend to inform policy makers at the top level, less attention has been given to strengthen the national and local level early warning systems and coping strategies. Moreover, it seems that excess focus on regional mechanisms might have overshadowed the conflict dynamics at national and local levels.

2.5.2. Debates on Early Warning Systems in the Modern Context

Gurr (1994) considers EWS as a preventive measure for violent conflicts. In his view the collection of data and interpretation of events is used to empirically forecast and determine the chances of conflict intensification (Gurr, 1994:20). Rupesinghe (1992) explains EWS as information collection in order to provide a timely alert about contexts with conflict potentials (Rupesinghe, 1992:22). The system collects information and data on the social, economic, political, religious, cultural, educational, resource utilization and military situations. Rupesinghe on the other hand, links EWS and diplomacy. Accordingly, the objective of EWS is early detection of developments that may result in eruption of violence. Thus, it refers to a specific aspect of the more general concept of conflict prevention. In this view, EWS denotes situations in which conflicting goals are controlled to avoid the development of hostilities (Ibid: 5).

Although Gurr takes EWS as a preventive measure; he ignores the preparedness aspects and calls for the development of EWS models. Gurr therefore emphasizes the collection and interpretation of events and data for forecasting and determining the chances of conflict intensification (Gurr, 1994:20). Therefore, his model of EWS complement with that of Rupesinghe which focuses on the assessment of situation that lay ground for conflict. Barbara (1994), further adds a diagnostic perspective that includes assessment of background conditions, including legacies of past antagonisms between groups, loss of

political status, and economic equalities. Lund (1996) recommends the application of either a preventive or containment approaches above. The core notion behind his thoughts is that addressing problems as they emerge essential, because responding after they have erupted become less manageable. He concludes that there is a need to develop a more systematic data collection process in order to tract the antecedents and triggering processes in the emergence of conflicts. He warns that EWS should be tied to response mechanisms by decision makers (Lund, 1996). Hence, he interlinks the Gurr's preventive forecast and Rupesinghe's diagnostic perspective to effectively control the emergence of conflict in a context.

Kuroda (1992: 217) on his part views EWS as preparedness, preventive and mitigation tool for disasters, emergencies and conflict situations, whether short term or long term.. He identifies preparedness, prevention and mitigation as three pillars of EWS. In this regard, the provision of information alone does not constitute EWS unless the information serves a specific purpose. For him a critical issue is the origin of the information and data and the time frame in which it is developed. Barrs (2006), on the other hand, views EWS as complementarily activity between the external and internal contexts. In this regard, the local knowledge helps to solidify the regional and international mechanisms and thus leads to credence to the actions supposed to be taken. EWS in this sense means not only gathering data analyzing data and developing strategic response; options which are contingent to local and international resources but also a means to verify the credibility of the data for providing policy makers with appropriate policy strategies (Barrs, 2006).

According to Woocher (2008), EWS means any initiative that occurs in the latent stages of a perceived potential armed conflict with the aim at reduction, resolution or transformation. To Woocher (2008), the term 'systems' refers to the units of an EWS such as data collection, data formatting, data analysis with the understanding that there is a relationship and process between these unities for the system to operate (Woocher, 2008). Here, a crucial, yet so far mainly under-reflected, issue is the question of who is going to be warned and who is supposed to act upon this warning. Dorn (2004)on his part

defines EWS as the act of alerting a recognized authority such as the United Nation Security Council to a new or renewed threat to peace at a sufficiently early stage.

Howard (1998) argues that EWS System is intended to detect rising tensions headed towards violent conflict and, therefore, is complementary to conflict prevention discussed earlier since it focuses on tensions that are already rising but has little to do with preventing tensions from rising at all (Adelman, 1998). That EWS does not only include the gathering of data but the analysis of that data to develop strategic options for response but does not include the responses themselves which come under conflict prevention. From the above views, it is clear that EWS is meant to inform, and detect violence manifestation at early stages before it is fully blown out of proportions and therefore can be categorized as a key process in the management of conflicts. To this end there is unanimous agreement that EWS is a very fundamental instrument in conflict prevention. Moreover, Schmid Alex notes that EWS involves a process of communicating judgments about threats early enough for decision-makers to take action to deter whatever outcome is threatened; or failing that, to manage events in such a way that the worst consequences are mitigated (Schmid, Alex P.2000). The objective here is to detect the signs of conflict escalation in due time in order to initiate preventive measures which are generally referred to as early response or early action.

In a basic form, conflict EWS needs to provide answers to some underlying questions: issues (manifestations, precipitating, proximate and root causes) that underpin and drive the conflict, factors that put a brake on conflict and serve as the basis for peace, main stakeholders in the conflict, practical options available to policy-makers, parties to be affected by the emerging conflict, how to avoid human suffering in the short term and move toward a sustainable settlement in the longer term and the timely communication and engagement with policy-makers to close the loop from analysis to action (Cilliers, 2008). This analysis of the different EWER mechanisms reviewed in the study has been informed by the above findings. Therefore, for the research at hand, a great attention has been given to those communities about to be attacked and when they are trapped in conflict and are dying the chance of reaching them in time and protection is unlikely along the bordering areas. Therefore, I argue that EWS is meant to get innocent people

out of harm and sufferings; it is warning toward a population in imminent danger; it is to protect individual, group, public or private assets; and it is to protect national or collective (inter-state) interests. The local level/ community based or traditional EWS need to be on board and be considered at the grass roots as these communities are closer to the local conflict and play their role in warning activities. To do this, there should be an institution and a system in charge to carry out clear analysis or diagnosis on the risk propensity of each type of conflict along the bordering areas (root causes, proximate and triggers) and monitoring EWS indicators (social, political, economic, environmental, humanitarian and cultural) to pass timely life-saving information.

2.5.3. Review of Conflict Theory

A large volume of literature are written about the nature and theory of conflict on one hand, and lack of consensus among both contemporary and long established views of human conflict on the other made conflict studies uneasy. Concerning this, J.A schellenberg notes that, there are many versions of conflict theories and many different theories about conflict (Schellenberg, J.A.1996:12). Due to the constraints of time and space, it is difficult to deal with each theory and its approach. Nevertheless, categorizing theories in to the major groups might help one to scrutinize the theories of conflict definitely. There is a marked polarity among theoretical approaches there are two divergent theories: the **classical and the behaviorist**. The **classical theories** are primarily concerned with analyzing the interaction of groups. These groups have many categories from national to smallest level group such as ethnicity. The classical theorists attempt to analyze conflict situations from conscious interaction of human being. The units of analysis they perceive conflict from the holistic social perspective.

The **behaviorist theories** focus on the individual level in which the unit of analysis is the individual rather than the group. This theory gives a special place for the innate traits of individual which instigate him/her toward violent conflict. To behaviorists, the unit analysis is hence the individual. In line with this, there are also many approaches of conflict analysis; however, the majority of them fall under either of the taxonomies discussed above. For further scholarly analysis and discourse of conflict in both the

classical theories and behaviorists, I will examine a few but relevant approaches to the study in the subsequent sections under causes of conflict.

Currently, it is found to be impossible to list down the causes of conflict and dispute. Pervasiveness of many and varied conflict causes, and complexity to discern actors' interests involved are among others which made causes of conflict the other contentious element among conflict scholars. Thus, different and controversial theories have emerged concerning the causes of conflict (Melaka, 2009).

Early proponents of behavioral conflict theory just hypothesize that there was an innate instinctual or biological trait that press on human towards violent actions. Freud's 'death instinct' psychological analysis and social Darwinian theories regarding the fight for survival were among others which symbolize this theory (Dejene, 2007). This theory seeks to establish causal relationship between human biological or psychological nature and violent conflict. Many writers share this assertion which associates conflict with the inborn violent behavior of mankind. According to these scholars human tendency to act aggressively is inborn (Freud, 1961). This theory, however, was subsequently discredited by other writers who made exhaustive ethnographic works particularly in a peaceful society. For example, Robe recheck asserts that, the *Semai society*, is peaceful and war hating society where warfare is unknown (Robe, 1990). Similarly, Taddesse argues that human behavior is more complex than similar creatures for it can either be peaceful or aggressive across times Taddesse, 1988). Thus, apart from biologist who repudiate the hypothesis of inborn violent human behavior, ethnographic researches have also a paramount contribution to pinpoint its short fall. Following strong criticisms, the behaviorist school of thought has faded. However, **frustration aggression** theory takes a step in this dormancy of the behaviorists. Frustration-Aggression theory assumes frustration, i.e., whether achieving a goal or not is the root cause behind each and every conflict across all levels. Thus, frustration is the necessary and sufficient condition of aggression. Aggression is always a consequence of frustration (Denmis, J.D sandoleand Hugo Van der Merwe, 1993: 9).

Frustration aggression theory, in explaining the causes of conflict assumes that human beings are goal-oriented and rational. Frustration is accumulated when an individual or a society is blocked from meeting their realization of goal; then it is natural to be aggressive and opt for conflict for the realization and fulfilment of their goals (Jeong, 2000:67). Likewise, Davis's theoretical connection between frustration and aggression seems very explicit among others proponents of this theory. According to Davies, frustration of subjective (physical, Social- affectional, self- esteem, and self-actualization) or implemental needs (Security, knowledge, and power) turn conflicts in to violent form when certain innate needs or demands are deeply frustrated (Davies, 1973).

Be it as it may, now theories of conflict have also emerged while lending analytical tools from Frustration-Aggression theory. In this regard, ***Human Need Theory*** remain long cultured theory for analyzing conflict courses, among others. Thus, many and varied approaches of conflict causes were derived from this human need theory. For example, Burton states that, individuals cannot be socialized in to behaviors that destroy their identity and others need goals, and therefore must react against the environment that do this (Burton, 1990). Burton (1990) cited in Jeong (2000:71) further emphasizes that these needs are basic; hence, they are neither negotiable nor traded. The denial and access to these needs makes people to take the option of violence in order to secure their needs. It is the need to reach one's potential in all areas of life (Sandra Marker, 2003). In this context, therefore, the source of conflict is not the behavior of the individual rather the social environment which dictate individuals develop that need. To this perspective, responses of frustration from such a human need will often seem aggressive. In related text, but with a different fashion, Koestler identifies the need for belongingness excessive capacity and urge among humans to become identified with a group, a nation, church, etc. are integrative or self-transcending tendencies which indicate violent conflicts through human history (Koestler, 1967). Moreover, since the demand for basic human needs has always exceeded the supply, all human conflict can be traced to an actor's failure to obtain what it needs. Consistent to this, Thomas Hobbes argues, selfishness of man is the cause of conflict. According to him, human is naturally inefficient to satisfy all of his needs by himself (Hobbes, 1951). Therefore, excessive desire to satisfying these

needs will lead human in to conflict. John lock reacted to his logic by attaching the very premises of Hobbes reasoning. John lock maintains that niggardliness of nature (i.e. scarcity) is the cause of conflict among humans (Ibid: P 43). For lock, nature does not provide us enough resources to satisfy our needs hence it is the cause of conflict (Ibid. 43). Although the discourses over human need theory having no unitary theoretical analysis regarding causes of conflict, it is better to note that extensions of approaches towards scarcity provide another dimension for conflict studies.

Currently, approaches of conflict causes nexus scarcity seems to be the focus of many theories of conflict in which it associated with economic origin of conflict causes. Historically, individuals, social groups and societies have competed over scarce resources such as water, land, and others. However, many scholars are trying to show how scarcity becomes a source of violent conflict once accompanied with other variables such as natural disasters. For scholars like Barth, inter-ethnic and inter-group conflict turns in to violent form once ecological changes take place. This may result stiff competition over resources in which it becomes scarce due to this change (Barth, F 1969:29). This elucidation which tends to construct a causal relationship between ecological factors and conflicts is also shared by other writers. For example, Divale states that, crop failure, draught, natural catastrophe and the consequential competition over resource can lead to conflicts between or among groups (Divale, 1974:56).

On the other hand, the ***relative deprivation theory*** assumes that conflict erupts when raising expectation and the absence of progress towards better life. In other words, the gap between people's values of expectation and capabilities and the wider gap between their perception and the reality on the ground lead people to make violence and unrest (Jeong, 2000:69). The relative deprivation theory as articulated by Ted Gurr (1970) shows that people are bound to rebel when they understand that there is much difference between what by right they are expected to get and the practical reward. Relative deprivation theory offers an explanation based on an ethnic group's access to power and economic resources (Ibid).

2.5.3.1. Review of Conflict Prevention Theory

The old proverb it is better to prevent than to heal, known in many cultures throughout the world, fits in the field of international relations, as well. Also if one put aside the moral aspect of necessity to prevent the war and avoid loss of lives, there is still a strong argument to strive for conflict prevention: the costs of preventing bloodshed and overall destruction are dramatically lower than huge costs of armed conflict.³⁶ Brown and Rosecrans, who have conducted scientific analysis of the cases of the conflict prevention, argue that prevention was significantly cheaper in all cases (Brown and Rosecrans, 1999).

Of course, it should not be the rationale of costs the ultimate question of preventing conflicts – if the subject of international relations (be the country, international organizations or some other subject) wants to substantiate as a credible player of international community, it shall take into consideration also the issues that could be described as moral obligations/responsibilities to avoid human suffering. It is, of course, difficult to assess one specific action or set of actions as good (or bad) mechanism of conflict prevention in international relations. The term conflict prevention is more often heard in international relations recently than it used to be previously – soon after the end of the Cold War, when an apparent explosion in the number of demands for full-fledged ethnic self-determination had occurred, the term conflict resolution was predominantly used. Lund argues it is not clear whether the activities carried out under the rubric of conflict prevention are new – despite the ambiguity due to the idea's rise to fame, analysts have hammered out a core definition (Lund, 2008:288).

2.5.3.2. Empirical Instances Where Conflict Prevention Theory Is Applied

Conflict prevention has also been found to be effective. A reported decline in armed conflict since the Cold War has been attributed in part because of an extraordinary increase in activism by the international community directed toward conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding (Human Security Report 2005). Notwithstanding semantic

³⁶ According to estimates the costs of interventions in recent wars compared with the costs if preventive action had been taken, and the actual costs of preventive action taken in vulnerable societies that did not break out into wars compared with the estimated costs had war occurred showed huge possible savings (Lund, Michael S., *Methods of Managing Conflict*. In Bercovitch, Jacob (ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, Sage Publications Ltd., Los Angeles, 2008, pp. 308)

disagreements over preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, norms, rules and institutions related to preventive action have proliferated since Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld's first utterance of the phrase 'preventive diplomacy' in 1960 (Lund, 2008).

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon released his report on Preventive Diplomacy: Delivering Results (2011) which highlighted the growth of preventive diplomacy and called for more predictable and generous financial support, enhanced capacity building and the formation of partnerships to strengthen the work of 'preventive diplomats'.

Regional bodies have also increasingly taken up the language of conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy (Mancini, 2011). In Africa, the African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) has been highly active, as have numerous other associated bodies such as the Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). Sub-regional bodies such as the South African Development Community (SADC) and, in particular, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have been particularly active in attempting to settle disputes before and after they have turned violent. ECOWAS, for instance, played a key role in mediation efforts in Guinea in 2009 and 2010 along with the African Union and United Nations. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has established a Regional Forum mandated with monitoring and preventing conflicts. The Pacific Island Forum, Organization of American States (OAS) and High Commission for National Minorities within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have also been closely engaged with regional preventive action initiatives. More recently, the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation Council have taken a strong step forward into this area, sending mediators to try and resolve political crises in Syria and Yemen, respectively, since the start of the so-called 'Arab Spring'.

National initiatives have also proliferated. In the United States, the Obama administration's National Security Strategy highlights the importance of preventing violent conflict, and conflict prevention has been identified as a priority for the newly established Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (Williams, 2012). Other national initiatives have also been developed amongst developed and emerging economies such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) (Ibid).

Beyond more traditional peace and conflict-focused organizations such as the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Saferworld and International Alert, humanitarian and development agencies have also taken up the banner of conflict prevention. As with gender, climate change and other transversal priorities, conflict prevention and resolution have become core cross-cutting themes to be addressed through a wide array of humanitarian and development programs in fragile and conflict-affected countries. Conflict prevention is now official policy in the UN, the EU, and the G-8 and in many states. It has been successfully applied in a range of places at the national level, including in South Africa, Macedonia, the Baltic States, Crimea, and the South China Sea. The many successful violence prevention efforts on the community and sub-national level, often remain invisible. Much conflict literature emphasizes that despite these developments, conflict prevention has not been pursued sufficiently. There is still a lack of strategy and capacity for prevention efforts, and inadequate local knowledge and local networks. In order to fill the gap between conflict prevention rhetoric and practice, prevention needs to become a full-time professional and governmental endeavor. Only then, it is believed, can the devastating impacts of violent conflict be systematically avoided (<http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CON72.pdf>).

2.5.3.3. Some Critiques of Conflict Prevention Theory

Despite incremental progress in pro-activism, international actors often fail to apply vigorous measures to unraveling societies when they are first significantly threatened by social turmoil, state breakdown, gross human rights violations, and violence. In one study to ascertain the most active third parties in the early stages of recent conflicts, the U.N. and the USA led other third parties, but the responses occurred at late stages of crisis or actual war and in salient arenas such as the Middle East (Moller and Svensson, 2007: 17). U.S. foreign policy debates constantly dwell only on the narrow question of how “tough” to be toward enemies and whether to go to intervene militarily here or there, thus totally ignoring the options available before such adversaries are created and crisis points are reached. Although humanitarian and development aid have increased, resources earmarked for conflict prevention, with the exception of a few dedicated funds, have not (Lund, 2009:295).

Dispersion of wills: The conventional explanation of why major international organizations do not respond to potential conflicts is a 'lack of political will.' But this is vague and does not explain how it can be that preventive actions sometimes are taken. While it may be assumed that Western publics are opposed to the use of force abroad to stop genocide or humanitarian crises, it is not clear they would balk at strengthening the capacity to avert crises and avoid later costs. (Jentleson, 1996: 14). Public opinion is also not the final arbiter, for political leaders can circumvent or influence it. Several recent prevention decisions have been taken quietly with little or no wider consultations (Lund, 2009:296).

More often, the problem may be that there is an ***excess of political wills***. The major powers and international community are present extensively in most developing countries, including those vulnerable to conflict. This presence takes many forms such as diplomatic missions, cultural activities, health and education and infrastructure development, trade and commerce, military assistance, as well as efforts to promote democracy, human rights, and civil society. But this multitude of activities building schools, training nurses, assisting elections, digging wells, teaching good business practices, you name it, is pursuing a variety of differing policy goals that are not necessarily supportive of conflict prevention (Lund, 2009:296).

Even the most prevention-relevant activities listed above are too segmented. Early warning and conflict indicators come up through separate reporting channels and program desks, such as for human rights, humanitarian aid, and development, arriving at differing definitions of local problems and interpretations of conflict causes. This information is not synthesized to reveal possible overlap and complementarity. For example, genocide prevention is advocated as if it is a separate problem from intra-state conflict. But most genocides by far occur during wars (Harff, 2003), and wars are hard to stop, so the best way to prevent genocide is to prevent the wars in which they usually arise (Lund, 2009:296).

Clash of professions: Lying behind the problem of disparate wills are differing values and paradigms of separate disciplines and professions such as conflict resolution, peace studies, human rights, economic development, political development, and security

studies. Contradictions arise over the often-inescapable need to make tradeoffs between these fields' desirable but competing goals. The prevailing Western liberal model often assumes that the democracy, human rights, rule of law, free markets, and economic growth are all compatible with one another and with peace. But in many situations, such compatibility does not hold, yet there is no common understanding or procedure for prioritizing goals at differing stages of conflict. These value conflicts reflect differing worldviews of diverse professionals regarding how to conflict. Diplomatic, military, and security communities often ignore the need to address underlying, longer-term factors that contribute to conflicts, as they pursue predominantly elite-oriented and state-centered approaches to already armed conflicts (Lund,2009 :296).³⁷

Certain obstacles remain that will impede the shift from preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention from ideas whose time have come to highly effective practices. Indeed, the rapid emergence of new stakeholders focused on conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy has generated challenges associated with coordination and quality control. While the diversity and heterogeneity of these new players may offer some exciting innovation, it also produces challenges of cooperation and mutual awareness. Without better understanding one another's efforts, agencies may duplicate efforts or worse, undermine each other's attempts and generate conflict prevention fatigue. (<https://www.stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.ac/>)

2.5.3.4. The Use Conflict Prevention Theory in This Research

Lund (2009), states that there are some conflict theory assumptions. These includes;*first*, between individual or group, conflict emerges from having opposing interests or competing for limited resources; There is conflict between two groups having different opinions on a specific issue or competing for resources.*Second*, struggle and conflict typically lead to some groups and individuals controlling and dominating others, and that patterns of subordination and domination are self-perpetuating;*third*, dominant groups disproportionately influence resource allocation and societal structure (Lund, 2009:289).An example of this is the Oromia- Somali conflict in Ethiopia where

³⁷ Lund, M. S., 2009, 'Conflict Prevention: Theory in Pursuit of Policy and Practice', in The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution, eds., J. Bercovitch, V. Kremenyuk, and I. W. Zartman, SAGE, London, pp. 287-308.

competition for resources have been gradually transformed to constant territorial claims and friendly relationships were forged as a result of the conflict to own the resources.

Conflict prevention theory holds that conflict does not just happen, that it goes through a cycle of phases. It emphasizes that preventing the outbreak of overt conflict is possible depending on three assumptions: timely response to manifestations of danger; an all-inclusive, coordinated approach to mitigate the threats to violence and a comprehensive attempt to resolve the root causes of violence (Lund, M., 2009:288-308). Conflict prevention theory underlies that it is possible to collect data in order to determine whether a situation is risky and likely to escalate into violence or not. A second tenet of this theory states that in situations where clear information of an impending crisis exists, there remains the task of persuading stakeholders to act upon the warning signs on time. This theory further propagates the prospects of facilitating advanced planning and the early deployment of supplies and personnel as well as prompting intervention efforts to rescue the situation (Lund, M., 2009:288-308).

At present, most organizations that have been involved in a region before, during or after a conflict might claim that they have been actively involved in conflict prevention. However, if violent conflict is to be prevented successfully and systematically, conflict EWS should be contextualized. This helps to detect the emergence of a potential conflict as well as organized efforts to respond to escalating conflict in a bid to contain or stop the widespread of the violence (Albrecht Schnabel and David Carment, 2004:4). The former UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali refers to conflict prevention as “Preventive diplomacy”. He defines it as “an action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur” (Samuel Totten, 2008: 555).

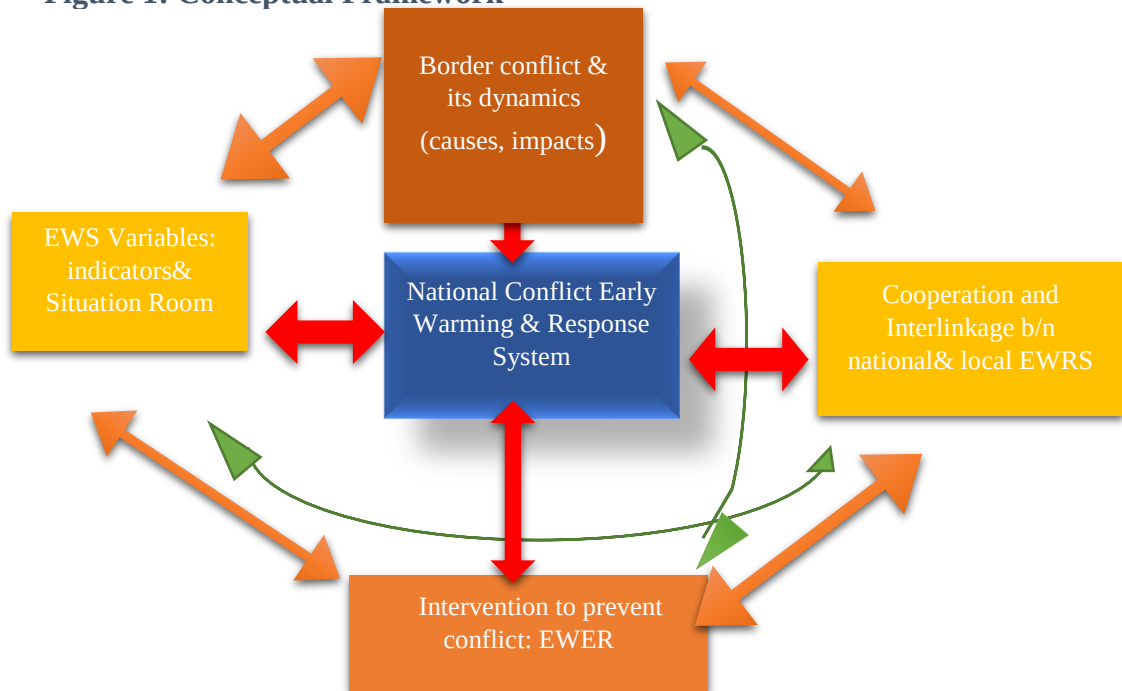
The application of conflict prevention theory in this research is based on the rationale that overt conflicts are preventable at the latent stage if appropriate systems are put in place and preventive measures are taken at the right time. This theory presupposes preventing conflicts at the earlier stage would reduce sufferings. Using preventive strategies by Identifying stages of conflicts and responding to corresponding indicators of conflict

(Lund, 2009:288-308). Moreover, this theory connects rightly to the subject matter under investigation in that if conflict early warning signs are identified in good time and with good will from stakeholders and appropriate preventive initiatives can be taken, conflict prevention is likely to succeed and familiarized to the local context. Conflict prevention theory therefore provides important tenets for this study.

2.5.3.5. Conceptual Framework

Miles and Huberman (1994) defines conceptual framework is a written or visual presentation that explains either graphically or in a narrative form, the main things to be studied; the key factors, concepts and variables and presumed relationships among them (Miles and Huberman, 1994:18). The purpose of conflict early warning is the provision of timely information on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security to enable the development of appropriate response strategies to prevent or limit the destructive effects of the violent conflict. Thus, there is a strong link between causes, dynamics of conflict, information, analysis, and reporting the analyzed information to decision makers and action. Effective operationalization of conflict early warning need to fulfil these key elements. The conceptual and Analytical framework sketch is as shown below.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Adopted from: J. Carlos Villagran de leon.(2003)

2.6. Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the theoretical lenses that inform this thesis. It attempted to ground the dissertation in the current theoretical discourse with the further investigation of the elements of national conflict EWS and response systems in the mitigation of Oromia-Somali border conflicts by raising questions whether the existing system in Ethiopia stem to mitigate conflicts before escalation or not which the theoretical framework presented here has explored. The application of conflict prevention theory in this research is, therefore, based on the assumption that overt conflicts are preventable at the latent stage if appropriate systems are put in place and appropriate preventive measures are taken at the right time. This theory explains the subject matter under investigation in that if conflict early warning signs are identified in good time and with good will from stakeholders, appropriate preventive initiatives can be taken and conflict prevention is likely to succeed. The chapter also highlighted that conflict prevention theory is envisaged as a useful tool for analyzing the data collected from risk areas. Indeed, acting before high levels of conflict intensity is better than trying to end them. Hence, conflict prevention theory therefore provides important tenets for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

EMPRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW ON CONFLICT EARLY WARMING AND RESPONSE SYSTEMS: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN, AU AND IGAD/CEWARN

3.1. Introduction

Conflict early warning is a new phenomenon which has started attracting attention in the UN system during the post 1991 changes in, Africa, as well as in Ethiopia. In the case of Ethiopia, the conflict early warning and response system has been newly initiated by the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA) for preventing and managing conflicts of post-1991. However, as there has not been adequate literature regarding conflict early warning system in the context of the country, for a broader understanding and conceptualization of the system, this chapter was specifically prepared to supplement the study with empirical literature review.

Accordingly, this literature review focuses on analyzing documents and works containing information related to trends, location, development and institutional operations of conflict early warning system. It was believed that in this manner, lessons would be drawn regarding the successes and challenges in the study area of this research on how constituents and key elements of conflict early warning system (information gathering, indicators, situation room, methodology and analysis, ICT, etc.) are developed and operationalized in order to contribute for the effective use of early warning systems.

The eventual aim of this literature is to review the development of early warning and response systems; to analyze the most practical conflict early warning and response systems; to assess the capabilities and flaws of existing systems; and to diagnose the impediments to conflict early response within the frameworks of conflict early warning signs already in existence. To this end, this chapter reviews the operationalization of the conflict early warning systems in the United Nations, the practices of the African Union (CEW) and the sub-regional IGAD/CEWARN with the assumption to explain the interplay between the continental, sub-regional, national and local conflict early warning

and response systems. Adetula (2008:9) argues that a conflict that starts in a specific area may soon engulf the entire region because most African conflicts spillover easily across borders which makes regional approach to the prevention of conflicts imperative.

The development of early warning mechanisms took shape along global, continental, regional, national and local lines due to the interconnectedness of peace and security issues and the spillover effect of conflicts in the post-cold war period. The UN itself faced challenges and was forced to push for the decentralization of some of its roles in maintaining international peace and security of continents including Africa. African Union on its part also faced challenges and was unable to prevent, resolve and manage conflicts in the whole Africa. Accordingly, it also wanted its sub-regional bodies to shoulder the burden of maintaining peace and security in their respective sub-regions. The sub-regions also have done the same to their member states and thus the member states also started to take care of their national and local security concerns mainly in the post 1991.

3.2. The United Nations System

The unanticipated events of the Yom Kippur war in 1973³⁸ and that of the Falklands/Malvinas in 1982³⁹ provoked a series of debates over the lack of early warning system against armed conflict. The incident over the Falklands had been a surprise to the UN for the very reason that “no map of the islands was available in the Secretariat when the invasion began. This incident prompted the UN to consider (for the first time) a formal mechanism for preventive diplomacy” (Campbell and Meirer, 2007:4).

³⁸The Yom Kippur War of 1973, the most recent ‘full’ war in Middle East history, is so-called because it began on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the holiest day of prayer and fasting in the Jewish calendar. The Yom Kippur War is also known as the October War. At the time of Yom Kippur, Israel was led by Golda Meir and Egypt by Anwar Sadat. The Yom Kippur War started with a surprise Arab attack on Israel on Saturday 6th October 1973. On this day, Egyptian and Syrian military forces launched an attack knowing that the military of Israel would be participating in the religious celebrations associated with Yom Kippur. Therefore, their guard would temporarily be dropped. See <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/modern-world-history-1918-to-1980/the-middle-east-1917-to-1973/the-yom-kippur-war-of-1973>

³⁹A brief undeclared war fought between Argentina and Great Britain in 1982 over control of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) and associated island dependencies. See <https://www.britannica.com/event/Falkland-Islands-War>

As the Cold War thawed and Global Warming began to replace the headlines, early warning system became more commonly associated with disaster early warnings and humanitarian actions than with Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). At the same time, political scientists in leading academic institutions began to modify old Cold War models to understand the onset of civil wars and internal conflicts. This has renewed activities of and interest among academics in predicting the future spur of conflict early warning. Hence, this impetus led to the establishment of the Office for the Research and Collection of Information (ORCI) which was in the first phase in 1987(ibid). Furthermore, *an agenda for Peace, Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peacekeeping* report which was prepared by the UN Secretary General (Boutros Ghali) in 1992 also captured the emerging trend for more on comprehensive conflict prevention and peace building for sustainable conflict management (UN, 1992). This report, as one of the first milestones for conflict prevention, in turn, called for more systematic efforts directed at the timely prevention of conflicts and gave an initial impetus to the development and adoption of conflict early warning systems by an increasingly large number of international organizations (governmental and non-governmental), academic and research institutes and national governments (African Union CEWS Hand Book, 2000:35).

Office for the Research and Collection of Information (ORCI) attempted to develop an early warning system with the mandate to assess global trends and to prepare country, regional and sub-regional issue-of related profiles (Goor and Vestegen, 1999: Annex 1). The global database of the systems consisted primarily of country profiles meant to inform the Secretary-General on potential conflicts that might endanger international peace and security. However, the database did not make use of economic indicators and hence the sizeable number of indicators already in the database (Ibid). Due to this, in 1992, Boutros-Boutros Ghali closed ORCI because he did not, allegedly, need the services provided by the Office. Instead, as indicated earlier, Ghali established the UN's Department of Political Affairs (DPA), institutionally modeled along Cairo's Foreign Ministry (Campbell and Meier, 2007).

The second phase began in 1998 is considered as a period of comprehensive efforts towards the establishment of the UN Early Warning System. This phase was characterized by the establishment of a Policy Planning Unit within the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the creation of a Conflict Prevention Team.

The UN Secretary General's Report 2001: *Prevention of Armed Conflict*; stressed the need for the establishment of the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to develop capacity for conflict analysis and timely prevention of conflicts (UN, 2001). The DPA has an *early warning mandate* 'to identify potential or actual conflicts in whose resolution the United Nations could play a useful role in conflict management. Since its establishment in 1992, the DPA has grown to meet the constant demands from the UN system on its broad range of country, regional and thematic expertise (Zenko M. and Rebecca R. Friedman, 2011:21-37).

Furthermore, the 2001 Report of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Armed Conflict outlined a clear agenda to instill a "culture of prevention" within the UN. In 2003, the General Assembly further called on the Secretary-General to "strengthen the capacity of the United Nations for early warning, collection of information and analysis" (See General Assembly Resolution 57/337). Another important milestone is the 2004 report presented by UN Secretary-General's High Panel on Peace and Security, which recommended the establishment of a Peace-building Commission for preventing countries under stress from sliding towards state collapse. The UN has also been developing conceptualization of early warning and early response and enhancing collaboration among its various organizations. The UN EWER framework aims at strengthening the national capacity for conflict prevention by building the skills of national actors, including civil society, and developing closer collaboration between them (UN Security Council Report, 2001).

According to Woocher (2009), the UN General Assembly calls for strengthening the capacity of the United Nations in order to carry out its responsibilities more effectively for the prevention of armed conflict. Besides, the United Nation's Security Council expresses its determination to pursue the objective of prevention of armed conflict as an integral part

of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security (Woocher, 2009: 13). Following this, early warning and response initiatives are expressed within the general UN conflict prevention framework. There are a number of historical documents that define UN's conflict prevention policy and approaches. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in conjunction with Department of Political Affairs (DPA) conducts monthly 'Horizon scanning' sessions to discuss emerging and ongoing crises (International Peace Institute (IPI), 2012:3).

However, Zenko and Friedman argue that despite repeated calls for a coordinated UN early warning system for preventing conflict, early warning is currently performed piecemeal by seven UN bodies and one ad hoc initiative. In addition, due to inherent difficulties in the structure of the UN, lack of transparency of the organization and thereby the sensitivity of member states about perceived encroachments of UN in their sovereignty, the UN could not develop a comprehensive early warning system for preventing conflict. (Zenko M. and Rebecca R. Friedman, 2011).

In summary, the research on the evolution of conflict early warning systems at the UN has followed a noticeable trend even though the challenges in the process are evident. At the outset, both ORCI and the original HEWS were ambitious with efforts to develop sophisticated systems for early warning. Nonetheless, the review shows that the UN early warning system has a mandate and institution to promptly deal with conflict prevention through comprising the inherent variables of early warning systems. Besides, developing conceptualization of early warning and early response enhances collaboration among its various organizations. In addition, indicators which are critical in early warning were defined to cover the range of social, economic, political, human rights and ecological factors and root causes that generally lead to complex humanitarian emergencies. The system also aims at strengthening the national capacity for conflict prevention by building the skills of national actors and includes the civil societies and develops closer collaboration between them. This review sheds light on frameworks to examine how the continental, regional and national early warning stems are operationalized.

3.3. The African Union

Armed conflicts have turned Africa into a serious crisis zone of the world. It is argued that, "... violent conflicts have torn the social fabric of the African Society [and] conflicts have separated and split families..." (Bakwesegha, 1994: 9). Most of these conflicts have been attributed to colonial make. Zeleza states that "there is hardly any zone of conflict in contemporary Africa that cannot trace its sordid violence to colonial history and even the late nineteenth century" (Zelza, 2008:2). There is a rich body of literature⁴⁰ on African conflicts which attest that conflicts in Africa "have complex histories and exhibit multiple and multidimensional causes, courses and consequences" (Zelza, 2008:2).

The 1990s has so far witnessed events that would remain as serious indictments in the history of African political development. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) established a Conflict Management Division in 1992 but the operations were faced with a number of challenges owing to capacity limitations of the OAU. In order to strengthen the operation, Article 4 of the *Constitutive Act of the African Union* (2000) articulates a commitment to conflict prevention and the responsibility to protect potential victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The *Protocol on Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU* creates a number of conflict prevention provisions: Panel of the Wise, Continental Early Warning System, African Standby Force (ASF) and the African Common Defense Policy.⁴¹ Article 12 of the *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council* of the AU stipulates the establishment of the Panel of the Wise (POW) to assist the AU/PSC in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

In a different turn of events, the increasing death toll and weight of human rights violations augmented the high cost of peacekeeping and other post-conflict efforts and awoke the international community and African authorities to contemplate on conflict

⁴⁰See for example: Adebayo Adedeji(1999)*Comprehending and Mastering African Conflicts: The Search for Sustainable Peace and Good Governance*, London, Zed Books; David J. Francis ed. (2008)*Peace and Conflict in Africa*, London: Zed Books; Alfred Nhema and Paul Tiyanbe Zeleza eds.(2008) *The Roots of African Conflicts: The Causes and Costs*, Oxford: James Curry Publishers; William Z. Zartman (1989) *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*, Oxford and Toronto: Oxford University Press.

⁴¹ Provide the full reference, not just the website www.peaceau.org/uploads/declaration-cadsp-en.pdf

prevention. This led to a paradigm shift in the direction of early warning system to the advancement of knowledge-based approaches and thereby reinforced the decision makers to unearth important policy developments. These were what followed as the institution of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in 1992. This was functional after June 1993 with the enactment of the Cairo Declaration which founded the Central Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Although the Cairo Declaration constituted most of the AU institutions (such as the Peace Fund) and traditions (such as the use of eminent persons) and were afterwards incorporated in the PSC Protocol, it failed to particularly allow for the institution of a body for early warning. The specific mention of an early warning system at the level of the OAU Heads of State emerged in the Yaoundé Declaration of 1996 which followed the June 1995 OAU Council of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa, which adopted a proposition introduced by then Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim for the formation of a continental early warning system.

Subsequently, early warning as an organ of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) was actively advanced in 2004 under the Peace and Security Secretariat of the African Union. The PSC incorporates the Continental Early Warning System in addition to the other organs under the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Since its establishment the CEWS has been transformed. Key among the transformations are the incorporation of the eight Regional Organizations as key actors, the classification of indicators for data gathering and the formation of the situation room in Addis Ababa. Actualizing the aims of CEWS has not been easy and has sparked different contentions and discussions, especially about the purpose of EW and how and when to use it (Birikit, 2010; see also Nhara, 1996, Cilliers 2005).

One of the core objectives of the African Union (AU) is to promote of peace, security and stability on the Continent, as spelt out in Article 3 (f) of the AU Constitutive Act. The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) is a conflict early warning operation within the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) of the African Union.⁴² Its

⁴²See "The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) - African Union - Peace and Security Department". African Union.

continued development has been supported by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1809 (United Nations, 2008). At the beginning of the 1990s, and following the collapse of the Cold War, a series of violent conflicts broke out in different parts of the world. Despite a new thrust on multilateralism heralded by the United Nations, the international community by and large failed to adequately address these conflicts. The cases of Somalia 1992/93, Bosnia 1992/93 and most importantly the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda demonstrated the inability (at times outright unwillingness) of the international community to prevent and manage violent conflict. These failures highlight the critical need for strengthening prevention mechanisms in particular, the development and implementation of Early Warning Systems (EWS) which could support early action. Numerous governmental and nongovernmental bodies have started to engage in early warning systems and devised different early warning models (CEWS handbook, 2008). Consequently, over the last two decades there has been an institutional emphasis on early warning at the continental and sub-regional levels.⁴³ The next section highlights some of the existing conflict early warning models.

3.4. Global Early Warning Systems Model

Governments and organizations across the world have developed early warning systems which are based on software that collects data online. These models include Minorities at Risk (MAR) and Global News Monitor Model, Crisis Watch (International Crisis Group (ICG) Model, Fragile States Index (FSI) Model, Global Peace Index (GPI) Model and The Swiss FAST approach. These systems have their own internal independent indicators. Nevertheless, since each of these systems have their own strengths and weaknesses, the mechanisms can be merged and used for analyzing specific conflict situations.

3.4.1. Minorities at Risk (MAR) and Global News Monitor Model

The purpose of this model is to establish the predictable conditions that lead ethnic groups within a state into conflict – rebellion and repression. It assumes linkages between grievance, mobilization, rebellion and repression. Historical cases are studied by using

⁴³ In addition, in order to fully comprehend the causative aspects of the conflict in Africa, see William Godwin Nhara, (1996) Early Warning and Conflict in Africa: Occasional paper No.1. p.9.

statistical analysis to establish links found between mobilization and rebellion. A number of structural indicators are derived from these linkages. This project adds specific value to reliability of early warning through establishing dynamic factors in risk assessment that informs early warning.⁴⁴

3.4.2. Crisis Watch: International Crisis Group (ICG) Model

This is a monthly report of the most significant crisis situations around the world. The index covers about 70 situations. The system also observes monthly trends in terms of escalation or de-escalation of conflicts, risks of conflicts and opportunities for conflict resolution. The report is also complemented by monthly analysis of narrative of conflicts. The index is meant to inform the media, policy makers, business community and the general public the magnitude of conflict in a given context.⁴⁵ The Brussels based ICG has established centers in Africa, Asia and Europe and therefore it has developed significant capacity for global conflict analysis (Mbugua, 2014:17).

3.4.3. Fragile States Index (FSI) Model

This model is an annual survey of states based on their level of vulnerability to conflict. The index is based on a software system called Conflict Assessment Software Tool (CAST) developed by the Washington DC based Fund for Peace (FFP). The list which consists about 100 indicators examines political, economic and social conflict indicators based on other specific sub-themes.⁴⁶ The system can be used in conjunction with GPI among other indicators to show the clearer picture of vulnerability of a specific state (Mbugua, 2014:17).

3.4.4. Global Peace Index (GPI) Model

The Global Peace Index is a data system that ranks countries according to their level of peace. It has 22 qualitative and quantitative indicators and covers 162 countries (99.6) of world states. The index also examines global and specific trends of a country through a seven-year period and assesses the risk to conflict factors.⁴⁷ It is one of the most popular

⁴⁴The Minorities at Risk project was established by Ted Gurr in Mary Land University, Gurr, 1994

⁴⁵www.fundforpeace.org/en/publication-type/crisis.aspx

⁴⁶www.fundforpeace.org/library/fragilestates/2014

⁴⁷www.globalpeaceindex.org/globalpeaceindex/2014

yardsticks for measuring states vulnerability to conflict and can be adapted to the context of local states (Mbugua, 2014:17).

3.4.5. The Swiss FAST approach

FAST International uses a comprehensive methodology that combines the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative analyses of conflictive and cooperative trends in societies under observation. FAST is a comprehensive approach and uses multiple methods and combines qualitative and quantitative elements in its methodology. This enables it to work comparatively effectively and takes into account the advantage of the benefits of either both methods. In every monitored country, FAST International establishes Local Information Networks (LINs) (Heinz Krummenacher, et al, 2002: 3). All these different approaches offer perspectives for adding value to EWER systems. As new indicators are identified, different systems can be adapted to produce better models. Therefore, an effective model should be adjustable, flexible and robust.

3.5. The Practices of African Union Continental Early Warning System

This section provides a brief overview of the trend, development and practice of conflict early warning systems in Africa continental landscape. As noted in the introductory part of this chapter, the review is aimed at figuring out the trends on how the systems were established, developed, structured and inter-linked with regional, national and local levels. Further, it aims at looking into how the system at these levels employ the key stages and variables (discussed under chapter two above) of early warning systems to draw related lesson and information for the work at hand.

3.5.1. The African Union (CEWS): Legal Rationale and Policy Ground

According to Porto et al (2009), the structure of AU is core to the fulfillment of the Union's conflict prevention, management and resolution mandates as without the capacity to monitor, analyze and develop tailored and timely response and policy options to threats to peace and security on the Continent, the African Union (AU) would be severely limited in its ability to address these appropriately.

The legal and political basis of the Continental Early Warning Systems, hereafter referred to as AU (CEWS) are African Union Constitutive Act, Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, Framework for the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System, Relevant Assembly, Executive Council decisions and Relevant PSC Communiqués and requests from the Commission (AU-CEWS Hand Book, 2008).

The above institutional frameworks led to the establishment of a Peace and Security Council (PSC) in 2002, ostensibly to function as a collective security and early warning instrument and to provide a timely and efficient response to both existing and emerging conflicts and crisis situations in Africa (AU, 2010). This was followed by the formation of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) in 2006 which was meant to serve as an observation and monitoring center or Situation Room where information is gathered and sent as a piece of advice, including recommendations on the best course of action, to the Peace and Security Council on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa (AU, 2010). The goal of CEWS is to; provide timely advice on potential conflicts and threats to Peace and Security Council for facilitating the development of appropriate response strategies to prevent or resolve conflicts in Africa'.⁴⁸Article 12 of the "Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union" provides a provision that Continental Early Warning System:

*In order to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts, a Continental Early Warning System to be known as the Early Warning System shall be established. The Early Warning System shall consist of an observation and monitoring center, to be known as "The Situation Room", located at the Conflict Management Directorate of the Union and responsible for data collection and analysis on the basis of an appropriate early warning indicators module; and observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms to be linked directly through appropriate means of communications to the Situation Room, and which shall collect and process data at their level and transmit the same to the Situation Room.*⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See African Union (AU), Meeting the Challenges of Conflict Prevention in Africa: Towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System, Meeting of Governmental Efforts on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention, Concept paper, Kempton Park, South Africa, 2006, p.2

⁴⁹ See Article 12 of "Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union"

The establishment of the CEWS is a requisite of the *PSC Protocol* as detailed in Article 12 which states that, “in order to facilitate the anticipation and prevention of conflicts, a Continental Early Warning System to be known as the Early Warning System shall be established”.

Currently, the AU is undertaking the process of operationalizing a continent-wide early warning system which aims to address peace and security needs of the continent as part of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).⁵⁰ Within the APSA, the AU-CEWS plays a crucial role in facilitating “the anticipation and prevention of violent conflicts.”⁵¹ By gathering and analyzing information that enables decision-makers in the African Union to prevent violent conflicts in a timely manner.⁵² The CEWS conducts a number of activities: collection and analysis of conflict data based on indicators module and production of effective early warning reports to facilitate the engagement of decision makers, for coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders such as RECs, UN (UNSC and Secretariat), Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (the latter collects security information).⁵³ Though the main goal of early warning according to the Peace and Security Protocol of the AU is only to prevent violent conflict, it also mentions that the tasks of CEWS include monitoring situations of potential and actual as well as post conflict situations on the continent.⁵⁴ With regard to the process of early warning system, the protocol on the PSC, which is the decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, provides a Peace and Security architecture; a Panel of the Wise (POW), a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), an African Standby Force (ASF) and a Special Fund (PSC Protocol Art.2).

⁵⁰ According to the Peace and Security Council Protocol of the African Union that came into force following the transformation of the OAU into the AU, the new African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) will be composed of the Peace and Security Council (PSC); the Panel of the Wise; the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS); the African Stand by Force (ASF) and the Peace Fund. Ulf Engle and João Gomes Porto, “The African Union’s New Peace and Security Architecture: Towards an Evolving Security Regime?” *African Security Reviews* (Forthcoming), 2009.

⁵¹ See African Union (AU), (2002) *The Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*, Article 12(1). Durban.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ See African Union (AU), Meeting the Challenges of Conflict Prevention in Africa: Towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System, Meeting of Governmental Efforts on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention, Concept paper, Kempton Park, South Africa, 2006, p.4.

⁵⁴ See African Union Meeting The challenge of Conflict Prevention in Africa- towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System. Framework for the Operationalization of the Continental early Warning System. 2006

In the African Union, early warning system is perceived as 'an effective tool to action' and encompasses the collection and analysis of information, formulation of appropriate scenarios and response options for communicating to decision makers. In a similar manner, the PSC protocol put the early warning unit as a system that uses the information gathered through the CEWS for a timely and optimal course of action (PSC Protocol Art.12 (2)). However, this process does not escape from critics. Gounden, Executive Director of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) forwarded his critics at an open session of PSC on 29 July 2015. He noted that things have changed dramatically and made huge progress in the last 20 years. He told the PSC representatives, diplomats and civil society representatives that conflicts have become more complicated since then and stressed that having early warning system does not necessarily mean having effective responses.⁵⁵ On AU data collection and gathering information, Gounden commented that without the raw data and the facts on the ground, it is impossible to know where action needs to be taken. He, however, added that it is not perfect but it is a good start. With regard to analysis of the information, he mentioned that, unless someone is able to make sense of it, no amount of raw data is going to help. He stressed that 'The quality of our response depends on the quality of our analysis,'⁵⁶ Furthermore, Gounden, forwarded his argument that currently this is a weak point for the Continental Early Warning System, which does not have the necessary army of highly-trained analysts with lots of experience and a track record of getting things right. Moreover, he added that it does not have the necessary geographic representation within the Situation Room that might help when it comes to grasping regional and local nuances.⁵⁷ A major part of the mandate of the Continental Early Warning Systems (CEWSs) is to 'advise the PSC, on potential conflicts and threats to peace and security in Africa'. But there are two difficulties here: first, the quality of communication between the CEWS and the PSC is poor, meaning that the PSC does not always get the timely

⁵⁵ Available at [www.http// peaceau.org](http://peaceau.org).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

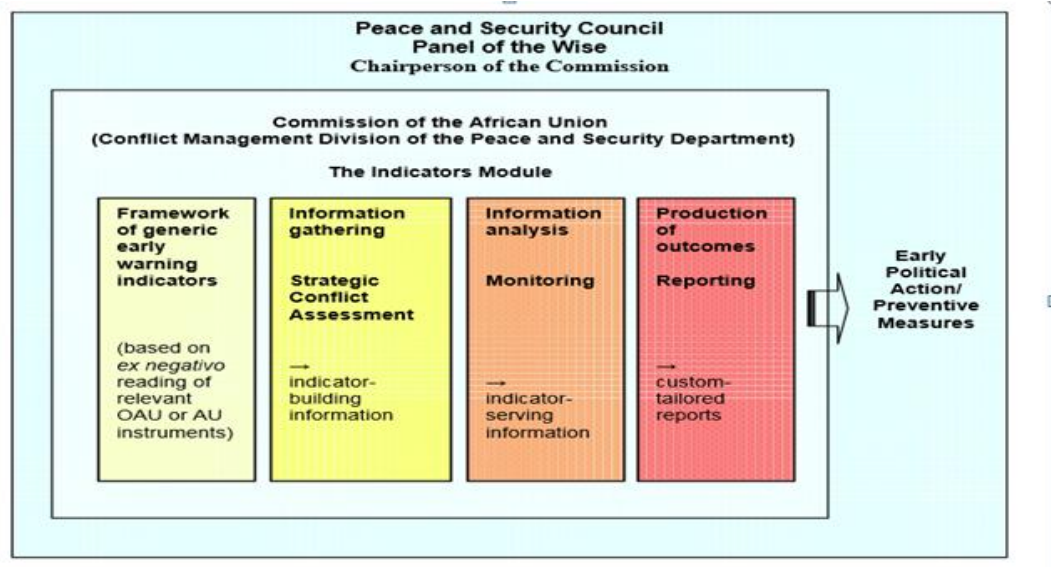
⁵⁷ Ibid.

warnings it needs to make the necessary decisions; and second, the PSC does not always act on the information it is given.⁵⁸

3.5.2. African Union Early Warning Indicators

At an AU appointed commission meeting on conflict early warning, delegates proposed the creation of an indicators module that could be drawn from a set of documents that outlined issues affecting state, regional and international security, principles of democratic governance, and commonly accepted norms on human rights and the establishment of a strong civil society (see Figure 2.2).⁵⁹ True to their “generic” classification, the list ran the gamut of background trigger and accelerator type indicators (see Appendix Six), for which an indicators-based model would serve the creation of a continental-wide early warning system.

Figure 2:AU Indicator Module



Source: African Union CMD (2008:90)

The above figure depicts that the development of an indicator module of the Continental Early Warning Systems (CEWS) are based on a framework of generic indicators extracted from documents adopted by the African Heads of State and Government within

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “Meeting the Challenge of Conflict Prevention in Africa: Proposal for an Indicators Module”

the framework of article 12 of the PSC Protocol. The figure also depicted three basic early warning roles to be conducted by the AU commission through the Conflict Management Division (CMD) of the Peace and Security Department (PSD). These basic roles are information gathering, information analysis and the production of outcomes with a view to sketching a workable indicators module of the CEWS which enables the end users to take appropriate action on the upcoming potential or violent conflict.

The efforts of the organization are not the first of their kind in Africa but mark an important change as the region's decision makers seek to no longer rely on the outside world to foresee their own internal threats. Despite initiatives regarding Peace and Security Council of AU early warning, Chikwanha, cited in Perry (2008), a senior Research Fellow at the ISS's African Human Security Initiative, says that the body is hampered with political concerns, in part, due to its leadership by African politicians who could not initiate real progress. In particular, she said that information sharing is a challenge for the organization as it lacks resources and the analytical skills (Perry, 2008:22).

3.5.3. African Union (CEWs) Situation Room

The African Union (CEWs) Situation Room was commonsensical that a thorough understanding of African conflicts required timely and reliable information and analysis which would provide decision - makers with implementable options. These growing concerns provide the impetus for identifying the political, economic, social, and military indicators, which could be taken into account to qualify a conflict. Accordingly, the AU-CEWs has a monitoring and observation Centre (Situation Room) located at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. It serves as the center for the collection, processing and dissemination of data and information on crisis situations around the continent.⁶⁰ And it is directly linked to early warning centers of Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The Situation Room of CEWS collects data from AU field missions and open sources and provides regular reports. Its main purpose is to store and disseminate information on

⁶⁰See African Union (AU), Meeting the Challenges of Conflict Prevention in Africa: Towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System, Meeting of Governmental Efforts on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention, Concept paper, Kempton Park, South Africa, 2006, p.117.

conflict situations. Efforts are being made to increase the number and build the capacity of the personnel.⁶¹

The 1998 meeting proposed a rudimentary early warning system consisting of an Internet-linked Situation Room based in Addis Ababa and the subsequent development of a system of early warning focal points around the continent (Cilliers, 2008). In addition, though it was a single large office with a number of televisions to monitor CNN, BBC, and SABC Africa, the Situation Room also became responsible for producing a wide range of reports such as news highlights, daily reports, and other ad-hoc reports. Sources of information include AU field missions, continental and global Internet-based news sources, as well as international organizations, like the UN think tanks, and the media.

CEWS analytical framework involves collection and monitoring of information on potential conflicts alerts, profiles and baselines for assessing vulnerability. Gender Based Indicators (GBI) produced by CEWS and AU Women, Gender and Development Directorate, are used to reflect gender perspectives. Through analysis of structures, dynamics and actors, conflict trends trajectory can be produced. Recommendations are provided through scenario building, development of response options and their validation and verification. There is a response framework that reflects the conditions identified through the AU conflict prevention infrastructure.⁶² Mudida cited in Perry (2008), a professor of International Conflict Management at the University of Nairobi, describes AU's "Situation Room" as merely one setup with CNN TV. According to him, it is an effective institution with regard to predictions (Perry, 2008:22).

3.5.4. Information Sources and Principal Users of the CEWS Framework at the African Union

Regarding sources of information, the AU (CEWS) is envisaged as an open-source system where information is gathered from a variety of different sources, including, inter alia, governmental and inter- governmental actors, international and non-governmental organizations, the media, academia and think-tanks. Information is collected and processed by the CEWS as described in the PSC Protocol called an "open sources". Thus,

⁶¹See African Union (AU), Meeting the Challenges of Conflict Prevention in Africa: Towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning System, Meeting of Governmental Efforts on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention, Concept paper, Kempton Park, South Africa, 2006, p.2

⁶² Ibid. P. 5.

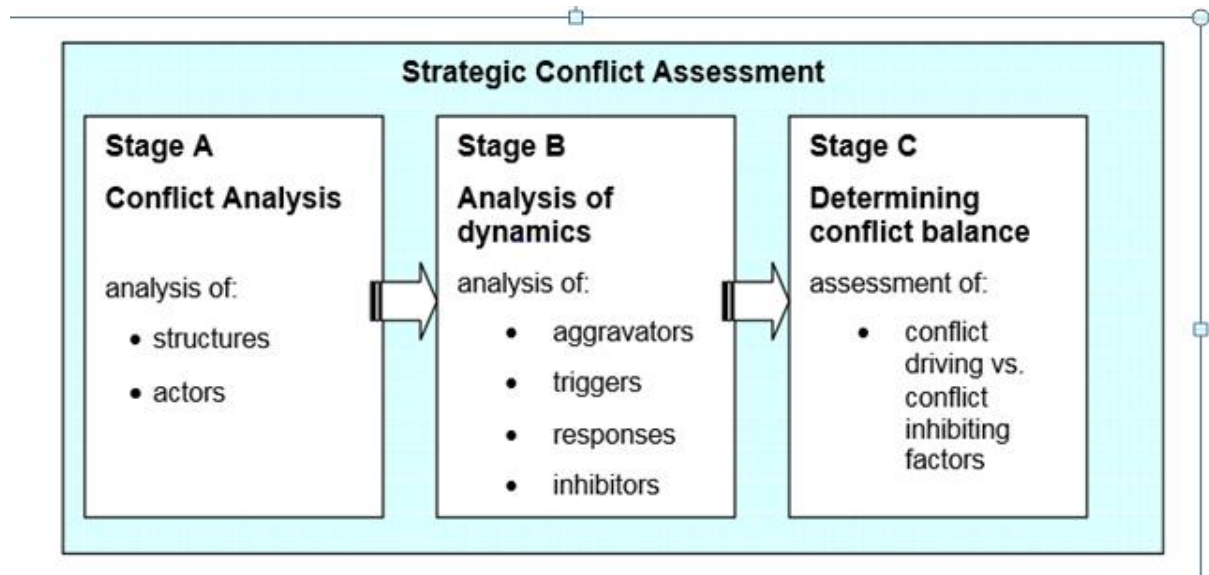
the information comes from the sources already named in the protocol. These include a member of states, Regional Economic Communities, UN and other international organizations, The Pan African Parliament, African Commission on Human and People's Rights, Research centers and academic institutions, civil society organizations, media and a number of other public sources such as newspapers, journals, and other media reports as well as online data sources (African Union, 2008).

CEWS relies on open and other institution-based sources gathered from sources such as Oxford Analytical, BBC monitoring, Africa Reporter, Africa Media Monitor (AMM) and Live-mon. AMM is a data gathering tool that facilitates collection and sharing of information in four languages across all African regions. Africa Reporter facilitates gathering of information from the AU field missions and liaison offices (Africa Union, 2006:5).

3.5.5. AU CEWs Methodological Framework

Every Early Warning System (EWS) requires an underlying methodology through which data and information are analyzed with the purpose of issuing warnings which enable decision makers to take early action. This AU methodological framework is referred to as the *CEWS Handbook*. This is both a continental wide framework and a methodology with specific implications to the AU, particularly to its Conflict Management Division (CMD). As conceptualized and elaborated in this document, the CEWS methodology informs the totality of the activities and outputs of the CEWS, bearing in mind the constituent role assigned to the RECs as an integral to the CEWS itself. Consequently, the CEWS Handbook is designed to ensure that the CEWS operates in an integrated fashion, with a shared purpose, methodological compatibility and terminology. Hence, CEWS adopts Risk Assessment Model with early warning component (Wulf and Tobias: 16).

Figure 3: The AU Stages of Strategic Conflict Assessment



Source: African Union CMD (2008: 90)

The above figure depicts that the operationality of the structure of the AU has three stages. The first stage shows the analysis of structures and actors of the conflict. During this stage (A), the analyst is looking at the political culture, issues of inadequate governance, matters of inequality to determine the structural causes of conflict. At the same stage the analyst also carry out an analysis of the actor constellation and describe their interests, relations, capacities to influence conflict either negatively or positively, resources as well as strategies. The second stage (B), the emphasis is on identifying those factors of a potential conflict which either could contribute to conflict escalation or which would mitigate the potential for violent conflict. Thus, the above figure reveals the analysis of the aggravators, triggers, responses and inhibitors of the conflict. The third stage in the figure above shows the information gathered in stage A and B needs to be reconciled and it depicted how the balance of conflict driving and inhibiting factors are to be determined.

3.5.6. AU- CEW Institutional Link and Cooperation

PSC Protocol Article 12 (2, b) stipulates that observation and monitoring units of the regional mechanisms should be linked directly to the Au- CEWs situation room through

appropriate means of communications. It also informs that they should collect and process data at their level and transmit them to the situation room. Considering the centrality of the sub-regional mechanisms, the AU underlines that the harmonization between the African Union and RECs (Regional Economic Communities) is essential for the effective functioning of the CEWS (African Union, 2008: 51). As a result, the AU has attempted to harmonize the various early warning mechanisms within the CEWS framework, which is one of the major tasks in the implementation of Peace and Security Architecture of the continent. According to the Conflict Management Division of the AU, the CEWS, which is bestowed with the task of harmonizing conflict early warning mechanisms in the continent, serves as “an overarching framework in which the purpose, method and terminology of early warning will be a shared one” (Ibid:9) among the various early warning mechanisms in the continent. PSC Protocol Article 12 (3) stresses that the commission should collaborate with the U N and its agencies, other relevant international organizations, research centers, academic institutions and NGOs to facilitate the effective functioning of the Early Warning System. In performing its role, early warning system relies on close cooperation and interaction among focal points located within member states as well as within regional organizations and other institutions (Cilliers, 2005:4).

Accordingly, the early warning systems of the AU and various REC have been physically established, widely inter-connected and are capable of quickly delivering information and policy recommendations for crisis mitigation to political decision makers. Nevertheless, although information on crises and conflicts is readily available, decisions are often not taken on time and in a suitable manner due to different political interests of council members (GIZ, 2015:7). In addition, although the AU and the REC are expected to conduct mediation missions in coordination with other international organizations, mediation framework structures have not yet been fully established or operational at either the AU or the RECs level. These structures are necessary to guarantee professional preparations for conducting mediation processes. However, the AU and EU have established cooperation on a number of issues and some of the cooperative relationships in the area of development between the EU and AU goes back

to the 1970s when the later was referred to as OAU (Adebajo and Whiteman, 2012). Moreover, dramatic broadening took place in this relationship particularly after the establishment of the AU and from the outset of the new millennium. Indeed, this cooperation has evolved and diversified, particularly in the peace and security field.

In fact, the action of the EU in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution is taking place within its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Through these institutions, the EU has signed a number of treaties and agreements with the AU in order to achieve peace and security in Africa. One of these treaties is the Common Position on the Prevention, Management and Resolution of violent conflicts in Africa which was signed on 26 January 2004⁶³. As a result, the African Peace Facility was established in March 2004 in response to the request made by the African leaders at the AU's 2003 Maputo Summit⁶⁴; the Action Plan for ESDP in Africa was adopted in November 2004⁶⁵; the EU Strategy for Africa, entitled Towards a Strategic Partnership developed in 2005; a Delegation of the EU to the AU was assigned in 2007 and; finally the third Africa-EU summit was held in Tripoli, Libya in November 2010⁶⁶. Wulf and Tobias (2009) emphasize that the establishment of conflict early warning systems in Africa has played a significant role in the prevention of conflicts in the continent and note that CEWs was an adaptation of the EU early warning system..

The treaties discussed above reflect the fact that the EU has always been willing to work with the AU in supporting its conflict management efforts. Nevertheless, there are different perspectives regarding the nature and motivations of the EU's support. In reality, many researchers consider that this support is not to help Africans but to gain economic and political interests for the EU as a global actor. Franke (2009: 259) argues

⁶³See Council Common Position 2004/85/CFSP, 26 January 2004. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:021:0025:0029:EN:PDF>.

⁶⁴The APF has been considered as a shift in approach on the part of the EU inasmuch as it transfers funds earmarked for development of peace and security initiatives.

⁶⁵Council of the EU, Action Plan for ESDP in Africa, Brussels, 16 November 2004, available at, <http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Action%20Plan%20for%20Civilian%20Aspects%20of%20ESDP.pdf>

⁶⁶The third Africa-EU summit in Tripoli, Libya, 29.Nov.2010 to 30.Nov.2010, available at <http://europa.eu/eucalendar/event/id/154051-3rd-africaeu-Tsummit/mode/standalone58> On 19 March 2011, NATO began a military intervention in Libya to implement UNSC Resolution 1973. The resolution was taken in response to events during the Libyan conflict which erupted on 17 February 2011.

that “the contemporary support by the West is driven by strategic consideration as many states are competing for political influence and access economic resources on the continent”. Similarly, Olsen (2009: 245) states that “the development of a military conflict management policy has been and still is motivated by European concerns and European interests [...] only secondly is it motivated by concerns for Africa. EU policy towards Africa was based primarily on the interests of the member states (Keane, 2004; Farrell, 2005; Sicurelli, 2008).

These perspectives regarding the EU’s support to the AU is shared by a number of African analysts who consider that the aim of the European support either individually or under the umbrella of the EU is not to help Africans but to achieve their own interests and to compete with other actors such as the US, China and Russia which see Africa as a source of raw materials. The best evidence for African analysts for their conclusions was the West’s swift intervention in Libya (in less than 33 days)⁶⁷ to protect their interests in this oil-rich country. Therefore, the concerns were not the safety of the Libyan people. If this was not the case, why they were reluctant to act in the same way in other places such as Syria and Somalia (Hutton, 2010:16).

Indeed, many scholars such as Jean (2004), Bariagaber (2008), De Coning (2007) and Brosig (2010) consider the EU to be an important actor in achieving peace and economic development not only in Africa but also in other parts in the world, regardless of its own interests. In this regard, Carbone (2013: 122) argues in his analysis of the EU’s support for the AU through the APF that “the APF has gradually turned into, albeit slowly and somewhat problematically, an important component of the EU’s comprehensive approach to security (and development)”.

As Williams (2011) argues, despite the fact that African leaders pledge to take all necessary measures to strengthen the AU institutions by providing them with the relevant powers and resources to fulfill their respective mandates effectively, there has still been a gap between the mandates of the AU and the resources made available. It seems that the

⁶⁷On 19 March 2011, NATO began a military intervention in Libya to implement UNSC Resolution 1973. The resolution was taken in response to events during the Libyan conflict which erupted on 17 February 2011.

ethical responsibility to help poor people either in security or development matters is more relevant in explaining the motivations behind the EU's support to the AU.

However, I argue that the way of cooperation seems to be prescription for importing ideas from the west so as to overlook the use of the indigenous knowledge/culture of conflict prevention, management and resolution experience in Africa. Every society has its own methods of conflict prevention and resolution and any action to address conflicts in Africa needs to take these in to account. Thus, Africans should explore their inner potentials in order to gradually establish self-reliant system than usually adopting imposed systems which can undermine African moralities. Until maturity is maintained, however, there need for a balance between the inner culture of conflict prevention in Africa and that of the views of the west which comes in the form of cooperation from abroad.

3.5.7. AU CEWS Response System

Political decision-makers at continental (PSC) and regional levels have at their disposal timely and needs-oriented information and analyses on conflicts arising within and/or between member states and response options for gender-sensitive measures aimed at early conflict transformation. The units, with the involvement of early warning system at continental and regional levels, provide a timely warning of any escalating conflict situations in the member states. They formulate high-quality and gender-sensitive analyses and response options for conflict transformation which indicates that the CEWS is continuously developing. Technically speaking, the early warning systems at continental and regional levels are mutually compatible and they use a common shared network and a broad and diverse range of information sources (GIZ, 2015: Annex ii).

3.5.8. AU- CEWS Out Comes/ Products

In early warning systems early warning products refer to outputs of the data collected and analysis processed which are often delivered in the form of briefs or reports (Nyhiem, 2009: 48). In this regard, the AU-CEWS accordingly experiences regular distribution of information: daily news highlights (two times daily news clipping

service), daily reports (five times a week), weekly wrap-up (one time a week) and SMS alert Service (GIZ, 2015:19). Hence, areas of improvements for AU-CEWS are enhanced capacity and uptake of ICT, improved partnership between situation room and RECs early warning units, training and capacity building of staff, stronger collaboration with other AU conflict prevention bodies, RECs, CSO and participation of civil society in CEWS (International Peace Institute (IPI),2012:6).

3.6. CEWARN/IGAD

3.6.1. The Development of CEWARN

Operationalizing conflict early warning systems, which was initiated at the continental level as indicated earlier, was replicated at sub-regional level with the various Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and thus following suit in establishing their respective early warning mechanisms. Similar to the continental one, the main focus of the sub-regional early warning initiatives has been generally conceptualized as “alerting a recognized authority⁶⁸ to the threat of a new (or renewed) armed conflict at a sufficiently early stage so that the authority can attempt to take preventive action.”⁶⁹ Prominent among these sub-regional organizations are: The Economic Community of West African States, (ECOWAS) whose early warning mechanism is the West African Early Warning and Early Response Network (WARN), and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) which hosts the Conflict Early Warning Response Mechanism (CEWARN) (Birikit, 2012;Nyheim,2009). This thesis focuses on CEWAN/IGAD which is the the context of the study and is also assumed as the most advanced and functional regional early warning systems in the continent (Cilliers, 2005; Nyheim, 2009; Amao, etal. 2014).

The Conflict Early Warning Network (CEWARN) is one of IGAD’s departments which aims at preventing and mitigating violent conflicts in the Horn. The organization was established in Addis Ababa in 2002. It is mandated to provide credible, evidence based

⁶⁸Recognized authority often refers to the respective regional or sub-regional formal-decision-making formal bodies such as the OAU, AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, etc. which oversee the early warning mechanisms. Walter A. Dorn, “Early (and Late) Warning by the UN Secretary General: Article99Revisited”, In Albrecht Schnabel and David Carment (eds.), *Conflict Prevention from Rhetoric to Reality* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 317.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

early warning information and analysis in a fashion that would inform timely action to prevent or mitigate violent conflict. CEWARN involves civil society. The organization attempts to link local and national early warning networks with the regional system. Initially it focused on conflicts among pastoralist communities but it has expanded its areas of coverage since its establishment. The principles of vertical coordination, subsidiarity and coherence enshrined in the APSA framework inform the relationship between CEWS and CEWARN. In its current strategic plan (2012-2019), CEWARN aims to promote integration of warning and response, expand the range of topics covered to reflect human security approach and involve more stakeholders including the private sector.⁷⁰

3.6.2. Institutional Structure and Functions of CEWARN

Article 2 of the IGAD Member States protocol⁷¹ declares the establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response mechanism (CEWARN). According to Article 4 of the protocol, the decision-making structures for CEWARN is established and is complementary to those already existing one in IGAD. The structure of CEWARN is as aligned with the policy arm or governing bodies consisting of the Assembly which meets at least once a year and is the supreme organ of the Authority. The Council is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and one other focal minister designated by each member states. The cCouncil meets at least twice a year with a Committee comprising the Ambassadors of IGAD member states. The IGAD secretariat serves as the administrative arm of CEWARN. On the other hand, the CEWARN Unit and the National Conflict Early warning and Response Units Known as CEWERUs are technical arms of the mechanism. Inter- State structures and sub- regional councils are taken as cooperating bodies; but their establishment is stated as optional. The Technical Committee on Early Warning (TCEW) is 91expected to play a coordinating role (IGAD, 2002).

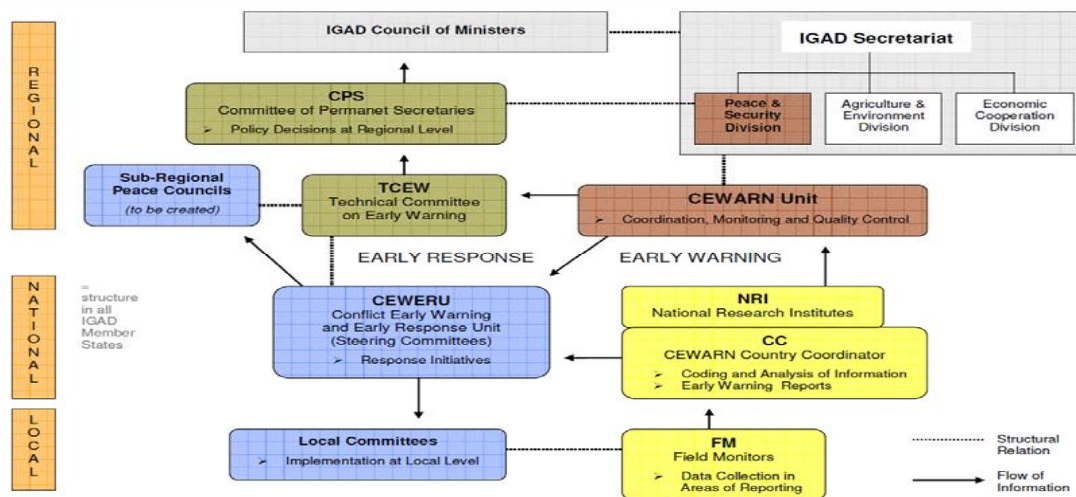
⁷⁰See www.igad.org/cewarn

⁷¹ Refers to Protocol on the Establishment of a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism for IGAD Member States

At the national level, the CEWARN Mechanism is incorporated in Conflict Early Warning and Response Units (CEWERUs). These Units are placed within relevant Ministries in each member state and are guided by CEWERU heads nominated by states themselves. They serve as a focal point in the Mechanism (CEWARN, 2006b:18). These with the CEWARN Unit are part of the CEWARN Mechanism dealing with technical matters concerning early warning and early response. The CEWERUs are composed of an optional steering committee, a focal point and local committees. In terms of function, they collect appropriate information concerning early warning and early response by involving civil societies which are working on information collection at the grass root to national levels. They also undertake preliminary analysis of the collected information and develop response strategies and provide periodic conflict early warning reports to the CEWARN Unit (CEWARN, 2006b:18).

As part of the structure of the CEWARN Mechanism, national research institutes are identified and contracted by CEWARN for each IGAD member states. Each of these institutes has CEWARN country coordinator supported by an assistant. The country coordinator is responsible for organizing and supervising required field monitoring activities and coordinates information and data collection processes. It also undertakes data analysis and submits early warning reports to the CEWARN Unit (CEWARN, 2006b:18).

Figure 4: IGAD/CEWARN Institutional Structure



Source: African Union CMD (2008:154)

The above figure shows the structural relation and flow of information for the operability of early warning of the CEWARN at regional, national and local levels. Policy decisions, establishment of technical committees on early warning and coordination, monitoring and quality control are identified as the role of the regional level for the operation of early warning and response. The figure also depicts that at national level the structure of EWER is to be established in all IGAD member states so as to take response initiatives through structuring CEWARN national research institute and country director.

3.6.3. CEWARN Mandate

The mandate of CEWARN includes receiving and sharing information concerning potentially violent conflicts with their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD sub-regions. The activity of undertaking and sharing analysis of that information and developing case scenarios are part of the mandate. Furthermore, it is mandated to carry out studies of specific types of conflicts in the IGAD sub-region and formulate options for responding, sharing and communicating information (IGAD, 2002). From the mandates given to CEWARN, it could be argued that the IGAD member states are convinced that the availability of early warning information could be instrumental for timely prevention and mitigation of conflicts in the sub-region. For this to happen, however, response measures are very essential.

The functions of CEWARN, as provided in its establishment protocol Article 5, are promotion of exchange of information and collaboration among member states concerning early warning and early response. This process is guided by the principles of timelines, transparency, cooperation and flow of information in terms of gathering, verifying, processing and analyzing information about conflicts in the region as per existing guidelines. These all information and analysis; are communicated to decision makers of IGAD policy organs and the national governments of member states. In addition, the functions include facilitation of system and capacity building concerning conflict early warning early response in the IGAD sub-region. Accordingly, it serves as a documentation center at the sub-regional level and provides common internet communication center for the national CEWERUs. As a result, CEWERU establishes a

system of cooperation among the member states in the process of conflict early warning and response activities and harmonizes common information policies for early warning among its member states (IGAD, 2002).

The activities of CEWARN depend on information collected from the public domain. That is the case particularly for resolving conflicts related to livestock rustling, over grazing and watering points, smuggling and illegal trade, nomadic movements, refugees, land mines and banditry. These conflicts can be mitigated by using primary data, available documentary sources and other sources at national and local levels. Member states are also expected to use sources from other governments, humanitarian agencies, NGOs, individuals, the media, the academic community and community-based groups (Appuli, 2004:179). This shows at least at conceptual level, there are attempts to make the mechanism broad-based and thereby it could be properly implemented.

3.6.4. Indicators, Information Sources and Situation Room

CEWARN uses a set of 52 socio-political indicators for two types of reports: (1) Violent Incident Reports with indicators on armed clashes, raids, protest demonstrations and other crimes; and (2) Indicator Reports on the presence and status of communal relations, civil society activities, economic activities, governance and media, natural disasters, safety and security and social services (Appuli, 2004:179). The most common early warning indicators in the region include natural phenomena such as raid, heavy rainfall, draught and other climatic data, socio-cultural related activities such as songs/dance, news sources, rumors, unusual cattle movement and unusual alliance (Richard and Wekesa, 2003).

Operationally, the CEWARN System established a network of field monitors, country coordinators, national research institutes and conflict-EWR units at the national level and began its work by using information collected by field monitors. In two pilot areas on pastoral conflicts in the cross-border areas of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sudan as well as in the second cross-border areas of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. Because of a number of acute inter- and intra-state conflicts in the region, CEWARN initially adopted an incremental approach by focusing exclusively on two pastoralist conflicts. Its ultimate

aim was to report on all violent conflicts in a broadly defined human security area and not just on national or state security (Wulf, 2009:19).

IGAD has established a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) with the mandate “to receive and share information concerning potential violent conflicts as well as their outbreak and escalation in the IGAD sub-region.” Since June 2003, CEWARN has been monitoring and tracking cross-border pastoral and related conflicts in the two pilot areas of the Karamojong and Somali Clusters, which are now being expanded. CEWARN has developed information gathering and analysis tool known as the CEWARN Reporter. It collects data and produces reports four times a year which include country updates from situation and incident Reports and recommendations which are eventually discussed by Member States. National focal points have been developed for the mechanism, which is implemented by a government-CSO partnership. Information gathered by these focal points is analyzed and sent to CEWARN headquarters in Addis Ababa before feedback is provided for early response strategy.

3.6.5. Use of New Technologies/Information Communication Tools

The IGAD/CEWARN utilizes technology through the Regional ICT Support Program, in which the Internet was upgraded from 128kbps to 512kbps effective from February 2007. The improved capacity ensures higher speeds for information access and dissemination. The increased capacity would also enable IGAD’s specialized institutions to access information in the headquarters. The Regional ICT Support Program also financed the procurement of server equipment for hosting in-house mirror websites, firewall system and e-mail services. In addition, a full-time webmaster was recruited to re-design, manage and maintain the main IGAD website as well as other project websites. The web platform is expected to play a crucial role in IGAD’s communications strategy (See IGAD Annual Report, 2007)

3.6.6. CEWARN/IGAD Methodology and Conflict Analysis/ Analytical Model

In CEWARN mechanism, the method of conflict analysis was adopted from the Swiss Peace Foundation (FAST) model of early warning analysis. It is based on the interaction of root causes, proximate and intervening factors which may lead to armed conflict,

hamper conflict mitigation, or provide a window of opportunity for de-escalation and peace building efforts. In terms of specific tools of data analysis, CEWARN employs qualitative data analysis tool known as the Reporter (Kummenacher and Schmeidle, 2008; Appuli, 2004; (see also the FAST-diagrammatic model under chapter two). On the other hand, Wulf and Tobias explain that CEWRN combines Risk Assessment and State Failure Task Index (predictive) models that are based on the empirical findings of a data set that tries to explain events of political instability (Wulf and Tobias, 2009:19). It is observed that as described earlier every system can adopt flexibly the system that complies with its context to prevent the escalation of conflict.

3.6.7. CEWAR/IGAD Response System

CEWARN has developed an ‘Engendering manual’ to reflect specific impact of early warning on different social groups, thereby designing appropriate response mechanisms for each target. The Rapid Response Fund (RRF) is meant to strengthen the response part of the CEWARN mechanism. Currently this basket fund is financed by the member countries and development partners. It has provided capacity for responding to conflicts at the national and cross-border levels. The RRF has also been designed not only to act as a fire fighting mechanism but also to support the entire Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution (CPMR) spectrum. RRF has been implemented for the last 5 years and evaluation of the project has been done (Girma Kebede, 2011: 20-21).

Due to the traditional practices of dependency on elders in peace making, there has been a tendency to include few women and the youth in Local Peace Committees (LCP), District Peace Committees (DPCs) and County Peace Forums (CPF). Though civil society is acknowledged as a partner, effective inclusion of civil society is lacking in some countries and regions. There are few regional coordinated disarmament projects. There is still a great need of building local capacity for conflict prevention at the grass root level.

3.6.8. CEWARN Outputs

The next figure presents the type of report, frequency and level of reports in the IGADCEWARN

Table 1: IGAD/CEWARN Output

CEWARN Outputs		
Type of Report	Frequency	Level
➤ Alerts	Immediately	National/Regional
➤ Situation Briefs	As the need arises	National/Regional
➤ Country Updates	Every four months	National
➤ Cluster Reports	Every four months	Regional
➤ Annual Risk Assessment	Annually	National/Regional (to be launched)
➤ Country Baseline Studies	For all new areas; and evaluation every 5 years	National

Source: GIZ, APSA Impact Report (2015:21)

3.7. Challenges and Opportunities of Early Warning in Africa

The other body of literature on conflict EW systems concerns the challenge they face and opportunities they have. Accordingly, translating EW in to timely action in AU-CEWs and CEWARN/IGAD constitutes challenges and opportunities. Some of them are discussed below.

3.7.1 Challenges of AUCEWs

There are several factors that constrains the AU-CEWs. Some are identified as the prevalence of conflicts, the warning-response link and human and financial resources.

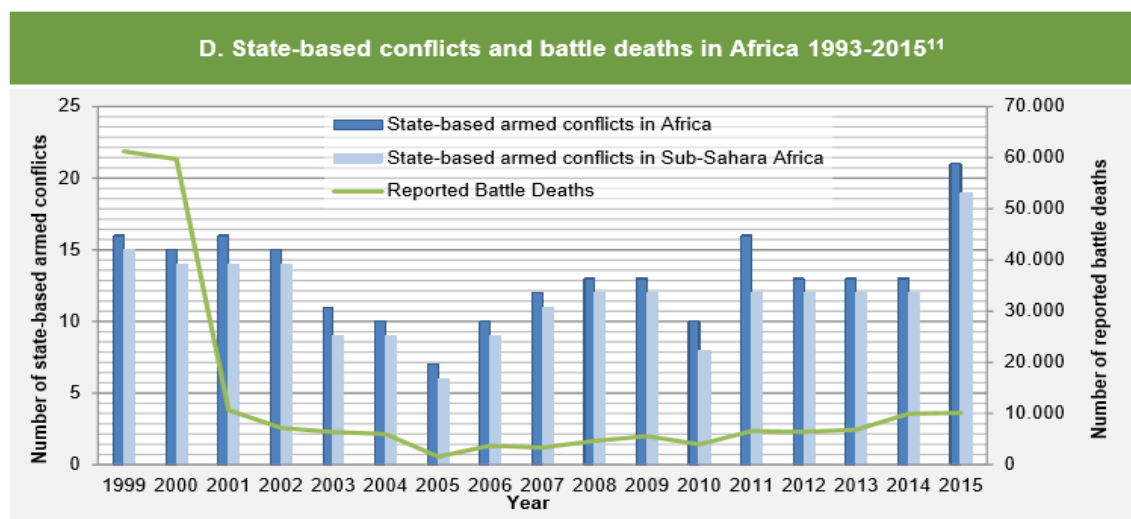
Prevalence of Conflicts

Domestic conflicts continue to dominate the conflict situation in Africa. According to the HCB, the main causes of conflict in 2015 were: 31 national power, i.e. national claims to power; 29 sub-national predominance, i.e. territorial claims to power; 20 system/ideology, i.e. regime change or the demand for a shift in the ideological, religious, socioeconomic or legal nature of a system; 20 resources, i.e. control over natural

resources; 6 autonomy, i.e. achieving or extending of political autonomy of a non-state actor or an independent region ; 4 secession, i.e. secession of a territory from the state ; and 1 territory, i.e. demand for changing an international border have been reported. What do the figures refer to? More than half (14 out of 23) of the highly violent conflicts (HCB intensity level 4-5) were revolved around sub-national claims to power, often combined with disputed control over natural resources. The main actors in these conflicts were militias and ethnic-based groups (GIZ, 2015:7; see also HCB, 2015)⁷².

Eight (8) out of twenty (20) conflicts revolving around system/ideology also involved extremist groups. Examples include Al-Shabab (Somalia), Boko Haram (Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad) and groups affiliated with al-Qaida (Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Niger) and the Islamic State (Libya). More specifically, this conflict item accounts for 70% of conflicts in North Africa. Like in 2014, the most common combinations of conflict items in 2015 were “national power” and “system/ ideology” (14), and “sub-national predominance” and “resources” (GIZ, 2015:7).

Figure 5: Armed Conflicts and Humanitarian Crisis in Africa 1993-2015



Source: GIZ, APSA Impact Report (2015:21)

The above figure indicates that the number of states based armed conflicts and

⁷² Heidelberg Conflict Barometer

corresponding fatalities from 1999 to 2015. As shown in the bar chart, in 1999 the number of state-based armed conflicts was nearly sixteen and the number of reported deaths is nearly 41,000 while in 2015 the number of the same conflicts nearly twenty-two and the corresponding reported deaths is nearly 55,000 (GIZ,2015:12). Therefore, the figure indicates that the pattern of the armed conflict was regularly continued with corresponding fatalities and have challenged Africa and brought into light the need for strengthening comprehensive operationalization of conflict early warning and response systems.

The Warning – Response Link: Early responses to early warning signals remain rather weak and inadequate. This highlights the fact that decision-makers do not seem to rapidly decide on responses based on a wide range of issues. Furthermore, timely response requires information to be clear, easily accessible, and quickly communicated, which are not always the case. After the start of the Rwandan genocide, policy-makers “resisted and misconstrued the facts,” such that “the number of deaths in the early weeks was grossly under-estimated (Stanton, 2009). Clear information is an integral to EWERS as wrong information can lead to a wrong response. It is also important that information quickly reach decision-makers so that they would take informed and quick decisions.

Human and Financial Resources: The resources (financial and human), technical capacity, and technological infrastructure needed for successful early warning and early response are lacking. Without these, information would not be easily accessible and responses cannot be rapid. For instance, CEWARN continues to be bogged down by inadequate information and the absence of a solid early response system (Wulf and Tobias, 2009). Likewise, insufficient human resources at AU-CEWS and the RECs and insufficient internal funding coming from member states and the resulting dependency on external support are the major challenges (GIZ, 2015:53).

3.7.2 Challenges of CEWARN

The CEWARN/IGAD shares some of the challenges constraining AU-CEWS. In addition, there are a number of political, institutional and technical challenges that continue to derail the effectiveness of EWER mechanisms. The CEWARN mechanism

prefers to cover pastoralist conflict indicators. Even after the indicators have been increased, it has still not yet comprehensive to cover the entire sources of state fragility. Domestic insecurity indicators are emotive issues in inter-state relations and therefore it is difficult for member countries to allow CEWARN to monitor political issues. At an institutional level, though CEWARN is among the most advanced mechanisms in Africa, there are still challenges related to the provision of efficient monitoring and communication of findings. The response arm of the mechanism has also faced significant obstacles such as weak member states, presence of regional conflicts, absence of common values, lack of resources and coordination (George and Holl1997:14; see also Mbugua, 2014:22). The other is that the currently applied analytical methodologies cannot adequately provide an understanding of greed-driven or criminalized (armed) violence, extremism and terrorism, or regional-level dynamics. And the last challenge is that the systems remains reactive in their responses and do not tackle the micro level origins of conflicts or their structural causes (CEWARN) (Nyheim, 2009).

Issues of sovereignty and political interest arise when it comes to collecting reliable data and ensuring a timely intervention.⁽¹⁸⁾ The success of regional early warning and early response systems would be determined by the cooperation from member states in showing commitment for joint efforts and collaboration and to lay aside their national interests. The case of CEWARN provides a clear example of this especially as the unresolved tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea would make it rather difficult to serve together under a broad IGAD command (Wulf and Thobias, 2009).The use of data and reports from early warning processes might not be allowed or encouraged based on the idea that some reports should not be publicly shared due to the information that they might hold. In addition, the issue of data ownership comes to the fore and limits the flexibility on the use and dissemination of the data collected.⁷³ The politicization of the EWERS remains evident; specifically in the control of political information in cases of (national) security. Information sharing is still lacking between CEWARN and the IGAD member states (Cilliers, 2005).

⁷³See Conflict Management Division of the Peace and Security Department, African Union Commission (ed.), 2008, Meeting the Challenge of the Conflict Prevention in Africa: Towards the Operationalization of the Continental Early Warning Systems (CEWS). Report of the Workshop on the Establishment of the AU Continental Early Warning System (CEWS).

National EWERS are still lacking on the continent in spite of the progress at the sub-regional and continental level. Countries that have launched these systems include Kenya, where information is obtained from local peace actors (Wulf and Thobias, 2009). Among all, Kenya's national Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit (CEWERU) is part of CEWARN's initiative which has a CEWERU in each IGAD member state ever since it has been fully functional. On the other hand, the value of these continental, sub-regional, and national systems and their contribution to conflict prevention depends on how strong linkages they have and how they can adequately complement each other. Further, the success of regional early warning and early response systems is determined by the cooperation from member states to commit themselves to joint efforts and collaboration and lay aside their national interests (Wulf and Thobias, 2009).

3.7.3 Opportunities

It is important to highlight the significant progress that EWERS have made on the continent and the steps taken to make sure that they are fully functional. In spite of the challenges that exist, there are a few opportunities that must be explored further for the continued success of these systems. Nonetheless, there are lessons drawn from CEWRN in terms of the variables set out in the previous discussions for the operationalization of the national CEWERS so that Ethiopia could draw lessons from them.

3.8 Summary

The chapter has provided an overview of trends, developments, structures and challenges of global, continental, sub-regional and national early warning systems. This could help to draw lessons regarding the successes and challenges of CEWER in the study area of this research on how constituents and key elements of conflict early warning system (information gathering, indicators, situation room, methodology and analysis, ICT, etc.) are developed and operationalized in order to contribute for the effective use of early warning systems.

The chapter also reveals that due to paradigm shift in the post-cold war from reaction to prevention and growing interest in EWER, all levels geared towards prevention of

conflicts through prior institutionalization of conflict early warning and response systems. For this reason, the chapter has discussed the key constituents of EWER systems which are becoming critical to operationalize and mitigate human sufferings. It has tried to show that each state in Africa belongs to a sub-regional organization with an early warning system though at different stages of development. It points out the importance that has been attached to such systems for the purpose of conflict prevention. However, there exist gaps between expectations and realities. Despite significant improvement in institutional and operational preparedness at all levels, there has not been a major reduction or mitigation of violent conflicts. There are still many questions about the design, efficiency and effectiveness of the current EWER mechanisms. Even where some conflicts are foreseen, there has been little or not sufficient response. There are still many hurdles (political, institutional, technological and economic) along the way before effective regional early warning systems can be achieved. Despite these challenges EWER mechanisms remain high potential investments for conflict prevention and management in Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methodological approach and the design of the study. It begins with an explanation of the conceptual framework of research paradigms. It describes and justifies the methodology and procedures used in conducting the study, including formulating and justifying the adopted research approach and research design, data collection instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations. The chapter also presents a geographical and historical description of the research sites.

4.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a set of beliefs about one's own worldview which helps him/her to understand the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It is the position whereby the researcher stands to choose his or her methodological principles when searching for knowledge and truth. Thus, the question of methods is related to the question of paradigms. The research paradigm is important to ensure whether there is a fit between the research problem and the research 94, a fit between the questions and the methods of research and a fit among the techniques, the data and the means of data handling (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). A thorough understanding of the research paradigm is needed to choose the most appropriate methodological design, which depends on the nature of the discipline and empirical data to respond to the research questions (Bryman, 2004). It is crucial for the researcher to clarify the inquiry and methodological choices and explore the paradigm adopted for the problem under study (Maxwell, 2005).

To determine the appropriate research paradigm, ontological and epistemological assumptions should be considered (Cohen et al, 2007). Considering different paradigms and approaches, Bryman (2004) sees the principal orientation to the role of theory in relation to research to be either deductive or inductive. This means the epistemological orientation incorporates either the practices or norms of the natural model of science or observes the world as interpreted by individuals. Similarly, the ontological orientation

underlies whether social reality is viewed as an external and objective or as constantly shifting and dependent on creation by the individual. In some social science disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology and political sciences, the constructivist paradigm roots itself into the naturalistic approach (Guba. & Lincoln, 1994).

From an ontological point of view, following the naturalist paradigm in the thesis I argue that reality does not exist in a singular form. I tried to show that as realities are multiple and truth is relative and can hardly be taken as a single and the only one. Epistemologically, too, my work falls within the constructivist perspective which underlies that conflicts are socio-historically, economically and politically constructed. Similarly, the interpretive paradigm posits that the essence of reality is subjective; and knowledge emanates from social interaction. From an epistemological point of view, in naturalist paradigm, knower and known are interactive and inseparable. In this case the researcher and participants are dependent on each other and equally important from inception to conclusion (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this regard, I interpreted the local, the regional states and the national construction of the conflicts and conflict preventions, resolutions and managements in their natural contexts. From a methodological point of view, in line with the naturalist paradigm I employed qualitative research methods that generate non-numerical data, ideas and opinions and social constructs for contextual understanding (Creswell, 2009).

4.3. Case Study Method

Case study research allows the exploration and understanding of complex issues. It can be a robust research method particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required. Case study research is recognized as a research approach in many social science studies and has become more prominent with regard to issues in sociology, political sciences and anthropological studies (Grassel& Schirmer, 2006).One of the reasons for the recognition of case study as a research method is that it is more concerned with the holistic and in-depth explanations of the social and behavioral problems in the research questions. Thus, case study method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context in a small geographical area in its true essence and investigate

contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of events or conditions and their relationships. As Yin further states the case study research method deals with “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (...) when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”. (Yin, 1984:23). Moreover, Bromley (1990: 302) considers case study research as a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest”.

Advantages of using case study method are twofold. First, the examination of the data is most often conducted within the context of its use (Grassel& Schirmer, 2006), that is, within the situation in which the activity takes place. Second, the detailed qualitative accounts often produced in case studies not only facilitate the exploration describe data in real-life environment, but also help to explain the complexities of real life situations which may not be captured through other survey research methods. These advantages applied to this thesis mainly in Mi’esso and Moyale conflict cases. It has been used to covers contexts of events in these districts; mainly exploring the cuses, actors and consequences of the conflicts. It has been also used in investigating experiences and making it contextual and covers events and the reality (real-time) of the situation in the area.

4.4. Sample Selection and Rationale

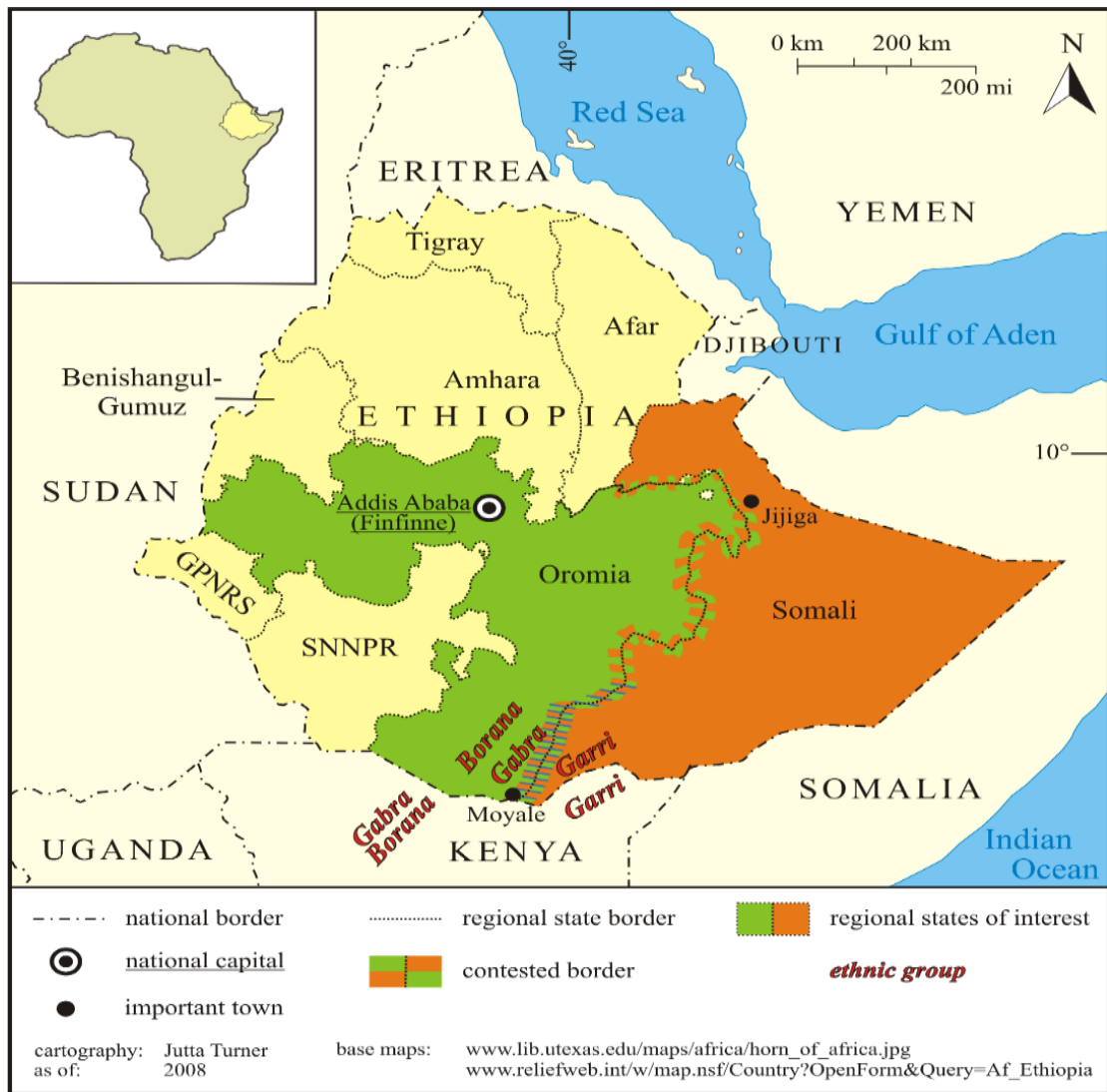
Oromia and Somali Regional states share not only of a border line of more than 1552kms but also belong to Cushitic languages family. Both regions saw armed insurgent movements in the name of national self-determination during the pre and post-1991. In Oromia the Oromo Liberation Front was established in the 1970s and has been fighting a low-level insurgency since then. The Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) started armed opposition to the political center in Somali region during the 1970s with the aim of uniting the Somali inhabited in the part of Ethiopia with the Republic of Somalia. The armed opposition within the Somali areas was strong and was supported by the neighboring irredentist Republic of Somalia. Both regions as compared to the remaining

regions of the federation are characterized by political volatility and incidents of conflict. Since the change of the Derg regime in 1991 and the introduction of regional governments, these regions saw several purges with a high level of intervention from the political center. Similarly, geo-strategic interests of regional and international players in the Horn of Africa and the continued proxy warfare among the countries of the Horn, Ethiopia and Eritrea in particular, could adversely influence peace and stability in Ethiopia in general and in Oromia and Somali regional states in particular (Abbink 2003).

To explain the conflicts along the boundaries of these regional states, the researcher selected two cases that geographically and politically cover four adjacent “hotspot” districts or flash points in the border areas as case studies. Accordingly, Mi’esso (Oromia), and Mi’esso (Somali) districts were selected from the eastern side of both regions, and Moyale (Oromia) and Moyale (Somali) districts from the southern part were selected from both regions. The reasons for selecting these districts includes but not limited to the fact that they have experienced frequent conflicts and were sites of potential conflicts; they are also strategically important in that Mi’esso is on the railway line that connects Addis Ababa to Djibouti in the eastern side, while Moyale is a gateway to Kenya in the southern extreme. In all sites attempts were made to resolve conflicts through referendum in 2004. Nevertheless, the referendum drew specific factors, both historical and contemporary, that have contributed to those longstanding disputes.

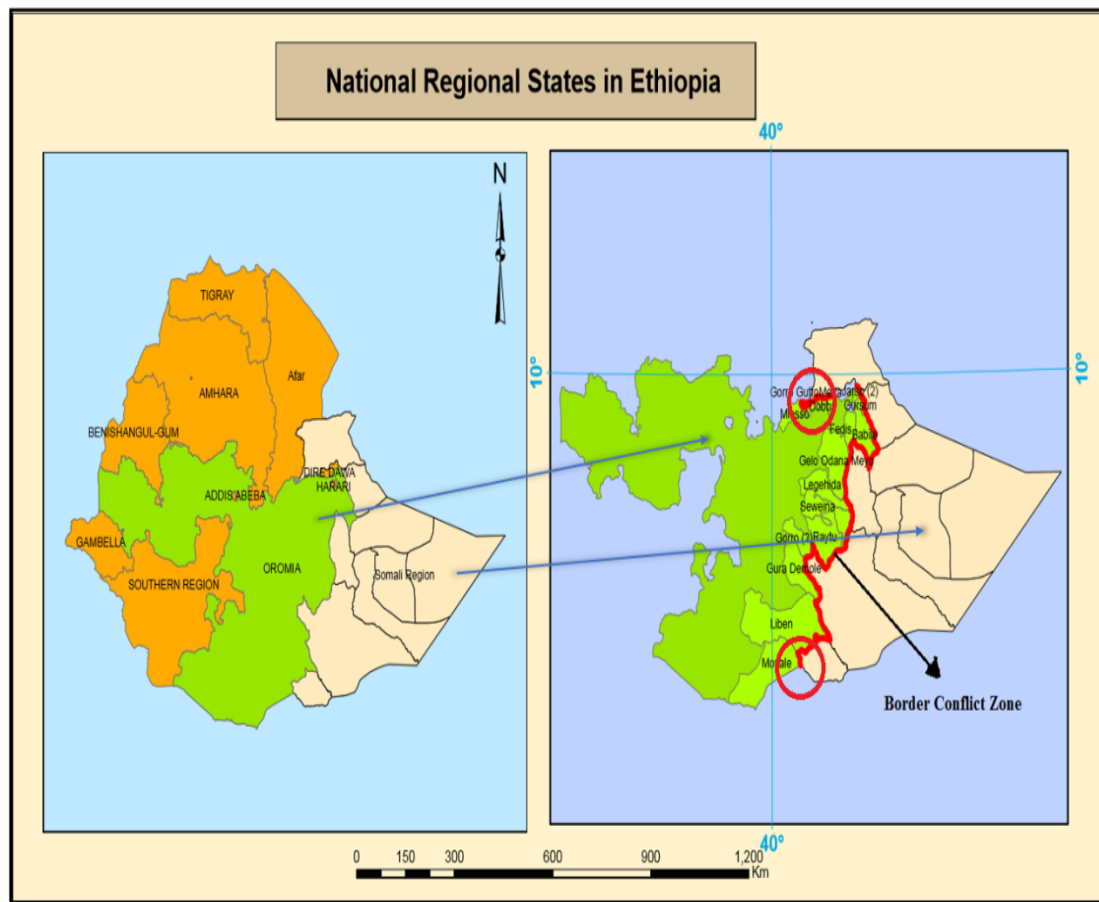
The study employed purposive sampling techniques. Informants were purposively selected from all the field sites including the four districts where in-depth case studies were conducted. This was because knowledgeable persons with the desired expertise were to be suitable for the purpose at hand. The two maps below respectively show the contested border between Oromia and Somali regional states as well as the two selected sites.

Map 1 The Contested Border Areas of the Oromia and Somali Regional States in Ethiopian Federal States Arrangements:



Source: Fekadu Adugna (2011)

Map 2: National Regional States in Ethiopia and Zones of Border Conflict (Including Mi'esso and Moyale)



Adopted from UNOCHA.ORG/Ethiopia (2017)

4.5. The Settings: Oromia and Somali Regional States

The current Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) constitutes nine-member states and two federal chartered cities. The Oromia and Somali regional states are among the nine bordering states. Oromia National Regional State with its capital Finfinnee/Addis Ababa is the largest state in the Ethiopian Federation. The total area of the region is 363,136 square kilometers, accounting for about 34.3% of the total area of the country. The total size of the population of the region is 27,158,471 and covers 36.7 % of the total population of the country (CSA, 2007). Administratively, the region is divided into 20 administrative zones, 365 *woredas*/ districts (out of which 39 are towns structured with the level of *woredas* and 265 rural *woredas*), and more than 6,342 farmers

and 482 urban dwellers *Kebeles*. The Oromia State shares border with all the regional states in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, except Tigray (BoFED, 2008). It also shares international boundaries with the South Sudan in the west and Kenya in the south. Oromia is located between 3 and 15 degrees' north latitude, and 33 and 40 degrees' east latitude.

The Somali National Regional State (SNRS) is in the eastern-most corner of Ethiopia, and shares borders with Kenya, Somalia, the Republic of Djibouti, and the Afar and Oromia Regional States. Its capital Jig-jiga is located in the eastern and south-eastern part of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Somali region covers an area of 279,252 square kilometers. The total size of the population of the region is 4,439,147 and covers 6.0 % of the total population of the country (CSA, 2007). Administratively, the region is divided into 9 zonal administrations and 47 *woredas*. The State has common boundaries with Afar and the Republic of Djibouti in the north, Kenya in the south, the State of Oromia in the west, and Somalia in the east and in the south.

4.6. The Settings of Mi'esso Districts of Oromia and Somali Regions

Mi'esso district of Oromia is located in eastern Ethiopia on the highway connecting Ethiopia with Djibouti. It is one of the districts in West Hararge Zone. The population of this district is 130,450, of which 66,762 are male and 63,696 are female; and 25, 370 of the population reside in urban and 105,088 in rural (CSA, 2007). On the other hand, the Mi'esso district of Somali is situated in the Shinile Zone of Somali regional state. The population size of this district is 71,497 out of which 42, 405 are male and 33,468 are female, and 903 in urban and 70,594 resides in rural (CSA, 2007).

4.7. The Settings of Moyale Districts of Oromia and Somali Regions

Moyale is located in southern Ethiopia on the border of the Somali and the Oromo regional states. Moyale town is found around 771 kilometers south of Addis Ababa and about 211 kilometers South of Yabello, the capital of Borana zone to which it is a part. It is found at 30 33'N latitude and 39 06'E longitude. Moyale is located in the southeast corner of the Borena Zone, and is bordered in the south by Kenya, on the west by Dire, on

the northwest by Arero, in the north by the Dawa River which separates it from Liban, and in the east by the Somali Region. The town of Moyale is at the center of a pastoral area, and, at the same time, is the meeting point of two border lines: the border which separates Ethiopia and Kenya and the border which separates two Ethiopian Regional States: Somali and Oromia.

The strategic significance of the town emanates from its utilities as an important gateway to Kenya that allows the trans-clan and trans-national trade network for the movement of goods and people. The population of Moyale Woreda is 31,162 and are dominantly Muslim with considerable followers of Waqeffanna and Christian minority (CSA, 2007). The people in this area can also be classified along linguistic lines. The prevailing local languages are Afan Oromo and Somali, both Cushitic. The Borana, Guji, and Gabra speak Afan Oromo. The Ogadeni, Mareehaan, Digodia speak Somali. The Garri are bilingual, with most members speaking both Afan Oromo and Somali (Belete, 1999: 5). An asphalt road connects the town to Addis Ababa.

4.8. Sources of Data

This study utilized both primary and secondary data collection techniques. In-depth interviews with key informants were conducted and thick data was generated to describe the events under discussion. Key informants and focus group discussion participants were selected based on their age and level of awareness about the culture, conflict, society and environment of the area. Accordingly, 4 concerned federal and regional government officials, 2 IGADCEWARN officials, 4 political party officials (ruling and oppositions), 2 civil society organizations, 2 police commission heads, 2 regional militia heads, 2 security heads, 12 members of joint peace committee, 12 clan leaders, Aba Gadas and elders of the respective groups, 6 women representatives, 6 youth representatives, 6 (agro) pastoralists; 12 residents of the area were selected as study informants. Hence, a total of 71 informants were selected from federal and both regional states through purposive snow-ball sampling technique.

Secondary sources of both published and unpublished documents such as government reports, letters, cases, journal articles, newspapers, legal documents annual plans were also reviewed and analyzed thematically. The unpublished documents were found mostly in the archives of the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Oromia regional state administration and Security Bureau, Somali regional state Justice and Security Affairs, Somali Regional State Border Affairs, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Bureau, the zone and Wereda Administration and Security offices.

4.9. Instruments of Data Collection

The main research instruments used in the study were semi structured interviews, focus group discussion, observation, and document analysis and media reports. These are briefly discussed below.

The main purpose of the interviews was to elicit or extract information that describes the official or institutional position regarding the conception, rationale, area and modalities of national early warning and early response in Ethiopia. In this regard, interviews provided valuable sources of information. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews were employed. The interviews were semi-structured, flexible, and were presented in the form of guide (Ahuja Ram, 2005:179). Emerged questions were also included during the interview (Russell H. Bernard, 2000:191).

The researcher has undertaken a series of structured and semi-structured in-depth interviewees(See Annex Six). For instance, the viable interviews were held with elders of the communities, clan heads, *Abba Gadaas* and religious leaders, government officials, peace committee, and conflict victims. During interviews the informants reflected the views and feelings of their respective groups on the nature of conflicts, the process of the conflict management to reconstruct positive relationship for sustainable peace among groups involved in conflicts. Sound recorder, memo and notebook, pen, etc. were used not to miss any data. Sound recorder was used based on the consent of the participants selected.

4.9.1 Focus Group Discussion

As a research method, focus group is a valuable tool in that it offers the researchers a means of obtaining an understanding (insight) of a wide range of views that people have about a specific issue as well as how they interact and discuss about the issue. It is particularly instrumental when the researcher does not have an in-depth knowledge about the participants. Since focus groups provide rich and detailed information about feelings, thoughts, understandings, perceptions and impressions of people in their own contexts and words (Stewart et al, 2007). Focus group discussions permit researchers to search for the reasons why particular views are held by individuals and groups. It has an advantage of providing opportunity to explore new or unique perspectives and it is relatively inexpensive (Richard A.K., 2005). Accordingly, in the study focus group discussion was employed in this study.

On the other hand, to aid triangulation, of the data obtained from in-depth interviews, the researcher conducted five equally sized focus groups discussion, each having seven participants. The first two groups incorporated from both Mi'esso's of Oromia and Somali regions constituted prominent elders, victims of the conflict, religious figures, kebele administrators and selected members of local peace committees. Similarly, the FGD at both Moyale Oromia and Somali regions constituted the Borana and Garri ethnic groups (one FGD with each); and the other focus group discussion was made with local officials and Oromia Pastoralist Association(OPA) representatives and others who have proximity and interest about the issue under study at Mi'esso. The fifth group discussion was made with local officials and others who have an interest in the study from Moyale district of Somali regional state.

For FGD purpose, I selected nine (9) basic questions from the list of questions prepared to guide the in-depth interviews (see Annex Six). The same questions were administered to meet the prime aim of cross-checking the data. The homogeneity of the participants maintained not by design, but by default. This method helped me to gather detailed data on the nature of inter-ethnic conflict, the prevention and management mechanisms used, and the feelings, perceptions and attitudes of the community on peace and conflict, the role of the community and local governments in processing peace, potential values or

elements in the community and the challenges and peace scenario. Participants of focus group discussions were, therefore, selected purposively considering the broader roles they played in the community, participation in the conflict and conflict transformation.

4.9.2 Field Visit

The field work and personal observation is the most important method to collect original data. The researcher has developed observation checklists and made several visits to study site zones and districts prone to conflict along the border between Oromia and Somali regions. Accordingly, from the Eastern Ethiopia, from February 2016 to March 2016, I visited Mi'esso District, Western Hararge Zone of Oromia and the Mi'esso-Mullu district in Siti zone of Somali Region. I stayed in Mi'esso town for one month (February 1 to 30/2016) to conduct focus group discussions and individual interviews. I also visited Babile and Chinaksen districts in Eastern Hararge of Oromia and Babile and Tullu-Guled districts of Fafan zone of Somali Region. The zones and districts are on the same high way to Jig-jiga, the capital of Somali Region, Chinaksen is 12 kilometers and Tullu-Guled 27 kilometers respectively outside the road and I did not have a problem to reach these districts. In a similar manner I stayed in the regional capital of the Somali region (Jijiga) for one month (from March 1 to 30, 2016) and conducted focus-group discussions and individual interviews about the state of inter-regional conflicts, causes, actors, consequences, conflict prevention approaches and how early warning and response systems institutionally operated in the region as well as along the common borders. I also visited Moyale district of Oromia and Moyale district of Somali regional state in the south-eastern Ethiopia. I stayed in Moyale town for two months (September 15 to November 15/ 2015). Almost all of the elders of the Somali clans and Borana who were involved in mitigating violent conflicts come regularly to the town of Moyale, and that facilitated for me to conduct focus group discussions and the interviews.

During his field visit, the researcher also got the opportunity to observe the ongoing interactions and reflections among Somali and Oromo communities in the areas selected for observations. As I stayed longer in the area I got trust to win trust of the people for informal discussions and dig out information that could not be obtained otherwise. Additionally, the researcher took field notes on the behaviors and activities of individuals

in the research sites, particularly, the common grazing sites, common markets, and places mostly prone to conflict.

4.10. Data Analysis

Analysis of data in general involves a number of closely related operations which are performed with the purpose of summarizing the collected data and organizing these in such a way that they give meaning and answer the research questions (C.R. Kothari, 2004). The qualitative research method is oriented towards understanding meanings and experiences and needs to be organized in thematic bases. Thematic analysis can be defined as a process of interpreting qualitative data to find patterns of meaning across datasets. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that thematic analysis methods are essentially independent of theory and epistemology and can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches.

Analyzing data thematically is, therefore, potentially very useful in understanding the nature and context of conflict early warning and early response practices; because it can provide new insights and knowledge in the critical issues under study. In this study thematic analysis and content analysis were used in order to capture the meanings within the data. In this regard, the data obtained from interviews, focus group discussions, document analyses and field notes have been systematically organized and summarized to point out the study issues. This task was carried out by applying thematic analysis method, which is pertinent in dealing with qualitative data. In the process, as the themes emerged from the data, the data collection and analysis took place simultaneously. It is suggested that even background reading can form part of the analysis process, especially if it can help to explain an emerging theme (Dawson, 2009:120). The first step in the thematic analysis of this study was becoming closely familiar with the data by reading and re-reading the interview transcripts. Hence through close reading, initial thematic codes of the interview data were generated. This involved examining the data in line with the research questions in mind.

The next step involved searching for major themes. After generating codes, the researcher clustered them into related ideas. All the data relevant to each theme were extracted and a system was developed to ensure all the relevant data were associated first with individual codes and then with the themes. Themes were identified, defined and named. The defined themes were illustrated with reference to the transcripts. Extracts or quotes were used to capture the essence of the theme. While reading the transcripts the researcher focused on what the participants had said in relation to response to conflict early warning and early response practices at the study area.

4.10.1. Document Analysis

To trace the root causes of the conflict in Ethiopia between the border areas of Oromia and Somali regions and the present practices and the changes observed in the system of Ethiopian Federal Democratic Governance System and in order to get deep into the historical past and present relevant documents on the issue under study were analyzed. From the conflict early warning point of view, the document analysis and review in this regard started from the emergence of conflict early warning and early response practices from global to local areas. In all cases, different books, articles, journals, dissertations and theses published and unpublished; and local, national and international documents which dealt with the study issues were analyzed. In addition, official documents, such as from Ethiopian Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, Regional government administrations and security bureau reports, conflict prevention and resolution department policies and strategies and reports, proclamations, and relevant documents from IGAD were obtained and analyzed.

The information obtained from document analysis has been employed to cross check the data obtained through interviews and focus group discussions. Besides, informal conversations and observations were analyzed to support the data obtained from the field. In addition, the report based on the documents was seen to verify data obtained from focus group discussions in terms of triangulation. Furthermore, document analysis was made to complement and deepen understanding of the additional data obtained through the interviews and focus discussions and field visits. The document analysis corroborated

the data gathered through the focus group discussion and interviews to enrich knowledge of the current Ethiopian conflict early warning and early response practices.

4.10.2. Data Integration

Finally, findings from both secondary data and different theoretical and empirical reviews and the primary data drawn through interview, focus group discussions were thoroughly synthesized to make a holistic analysis of the study. The themes of the data analyses were derived from the conceptual framework of the study that was grounded in the basic research questions. Thematic issues and the evidence generated from the study were integrated with reference to the original research questions.

4.11. Validity of the Study

As the data for this study were qualitative, it is imperative that the validity of the research was increased by ensuring that questions asked directly addressing the research objectives (Polit & Beck, 2012). As one of the secondary data sources of this study were theoretical frameworks, empirical studies of conflict early warning and early responses, the data sources were duly acknowledged and referenced. For the primary data sources generated through interview and focus group discussion, the principles of qualitative data trustworthiness (Polit & Beck, 2012) were seriously considered.

One of the key criteria towards addressing the issue of trustworthiness of the data collected through interviews was by ensuring that the research measures what it was actually intended for (internal validity). The study addressed what Polit and Beck (2012) refers to as credibility; by explaining that credibility in terms of truth of the data or the participant views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher. In this study, the researcher demonstrated engagement with the participants, methods of observation, and audit trails. The other strategies used to address the issue of validity and trustworthiness was made by addressing issues of dependability, confirmability, transferability and authenticity.

Dependability refers to the constancy of the data over similar conditions (Polit & Beck, 2012). In the study it was reached by strengthening the validity of data collected through

interviews. To ensure this, I as a major investigator of the study used similar qualitative instruments in similar conditions with series of time table with participants and audited the validity of the data gathered through data triangulation methods.

The researcher also made sure that he adhered to the principle of *confirmability* which refers to the researcher's ability to demonstrate that the data represent the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints. In reporting the research done in this study, the researcher provided rich quotes from the participants that depicted each emerging theme (Polit & Beck, 2012).

Transferability is another important criterion to measure credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative data. It refers to findings that can be applied to other settings or groups (Polit & Beck, 2012). For this the researcher provided sufficient information on the participants and the research contexts to allow the reader to assess the findings.

The criterion of *authenticity*, which refers to the ability and extent to which the researcher expresses the feelings and emotions and experiences of the participants in a faithful manner (Polit & Beck, 2012), is also key in enhancing the validity of qualitative study. Thus, a descriptive approach where the researcher presents the essence of experiences of participants through quotes was adopted in this research project.

A specific strategy such as triangulation was employed by the researcher to address the multiple principles stated above (Bazeley, 2010). For this specific study the focus group discussion data were combined with the document analysis and interview data as a means of identifying potential patterns of conflict early warning and early responses practices of Oromia and Somali regions. The analysis was linked to the theoretical literature and empirical studies which provided a basis for the data complementarities. Triangulation of data is crucially important for some pieces of information which come to light. In this study the triangulation of data was achieved by what may be termed as "development of converging lines of inquiry" (Polit & Beck, 2012) which is a source of internal validity and is seriously addressed to make the whole study valid.

Positionality and Reflexivity Positionality represents a space in which objectivism and subjectivism meet. To achieve a pure objectivism is a naïve quest, and we can never truly divorce ourselves of subjectivity. We can strive to remain objective but must be ever mindful of our subjectivities. Such is positionality. We have to acknowledge who we are as individuals, and as members of groups, and as resting in and moving within social positions (Bourke, 2014:3). It is reasonable to expect that the researcher's beliefs, political stance, cultural background (gender, race, class, socioeconomic status, educational background) are important variables that may affect the research process (Brian Bourke, 2014:2).

Reflexivity the concept that researchers should acknowledge and disclose their own selves in the research, seeking to understand their part in it, or influence on the research (Cohe, Manion et al. 2011:225). I am an Oromo, actor in the national and regional politics. These positions of mine can be reflected and might even affect the research. However, as much as I know I have not compromised the objectivity of my data and analysis in this research.

4.12. Ethical Requirements

Ethics in research deals with sets of beliefs, trustworthiness and the way procedures in carrying out the research are implemented (Hisada, 2003). The most recent Ethics Code includes a more protective standard to reduce deception in research, prohibiting such research if it leads to pain or substantial stress or discomfort and forcing investigators to respect a participant's request to withdraw from data gathering or debriefing (Fisher, 2003). Social science researchers should strive towards establishing trust with research participants, the scientific community and the general public. When conflicting professional, personal, financial, legal or other interests impair the objectivity of data collection, analysis or interpretation, the validity of the research is compromised (Fisher, 2003).

This study is about conflict early warning and early response system which is politically sensitive within the current Ethiopian context. This may necessarily engage one in a discussion of a broad range of political issues, which, in turn, raises ethical issues during

the research process. As the research also relates to the current institutional early warning and early response within a political environment, the ethical steps should avoid potentially harmful conflicts of interest to ensure the fairness though hardly to talk about objectivity in qualitative research philosophy in data analysis and interpretation. Compromising fairness and justice can harm participants, the public, institutions, funders and the integrity of social science as a field when qualitative instruments are employed (Marshall, 2003).

In this study, the researcher ensured the ethics of research by remaining honest, keeping the research information private and confidential throughout the study and ensuring protection of the rights and welfare of the participants using the following procedures, except for media publication information (via EBC, OTV/OBN) and official responses addressed by regional and federal governments. The first ethical requirement was met by obtaining consent letter from Addis Ababa University Institute for Peace and Security Study. Further, the researcher took the following steps to meet ethical requirements:

- The participants were informed about the purpose of the research.
- The nature of the research and how the information would be gathered and used were explained to the respondents through the consent letter as well as verbally by the researcher.
- Confidentiality of information obtained in the research was maintained. Confidentiality of data recorded was guaranteed and the researcher informed the participants beforehand.
- A consent letter was given to all participants to sign as acknowledgement that they had agreed to participate in the study.
- Participants were requested not to reveal their names during focus group discussions. As mentioned, codes have been used to identify participants' quotations in the findings.
- Under no circumstances were the participants forced to participate. All those who participated signed the consent form.

In terms of role representation, particularly for focus group discussions, the researcher tried to make a balance between building genuine rapport with participants and maintaining professional objectivity. During the focus group discussions, the researcher respected set boundaries for participants to safeguard their own professional reputation. The other ethical consideration that the researcher considered was related to the maintenance of confidentiality during both data collection and writing process. Finally, the findings of this research will only be presented at academic conferences and workshops and published in appropriate academic journals and policy briefings.

4.13. Summary

This chapter portrayed the different research paradigms and approaches with a short explanation and rationale for the choice of the research methods from different disciplines. The philosophical assumption of ontology and epistemology are the basis for the paradigm and methodological choice of any research. In this study, based on the ontology and epistemology assumptions of the social constructivist approaches, the qualitative method of study was selected and explained in detail. In the light of this approach, the complementarities of instruments used in the study were articulated. The data gathering instrumentation and procedures and the ethical requirements were explained. The measures taken to ensure validity of the study, data collection and analysis were addressed. The following chapters present the findings of the empirical study.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OROMIA AND SOMALI NATIONAL REGIONAL STATES INTERACTION: CONFLICTS, CAUSES AND IMPACTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the interaction between Oromia and Ethio-Somali regional states around their common borders during the post 1991 Ethiopia. The Oromo and the Somali peoples in Ethiopia have long standing relations. Their relations have been both cooperative and conflictual. This chapter mainly focuses on their conflictual relationships connected to the establishment of clear border between Oromia and Somali national regional states has been at the center of the conflicts. To this end, the chapter is organized into four sections. The first section discusses the background to Oromia and Somali relations. The second section examines the nature, dynamics and the causes of Oromo-Somali conflict. The section also examines the historical causes of the conflict, the dynamics of the conflict in the post 1991 context and the impact of federal restructuring on the Oromia- Somali conflict. The third section attempts to explain the establishment of the Oromia *Fetno Derash* police and the Somali *Liyu* Police in the two regional states and their implications to the border conflicts between both regions. The fourth section deals with the analysis of cases of Mi'esso and Moyale districts. The cases of the two districts are very important to explain the conflict between Oromia and Ethio-Somali regional states because both Mi'esso and Moyale districts are strategic and conflict prone areas where disputes have frequently been violent and deadly. Lastly, the humanitarian and material impact of the conflicts will be discussed in section five.

5.2. Back Ground to Oromia- Somali Relations

The Somali and Oromo languages belong to the eastern Cushitic linguistic group of the Horn of Africa. The two societies are closely related to each other in terms of language and culture. Sociologically, both groups follow the patriarchal clan structures. The Somali practice Islam almost exclusively and are predominantly engaged in nomadic

pastoralism. In contrast, the Oromo practice Islam, Christianity and traditional religion. Nevertheless, those Oromo clans who reside coterminous with the Somali largely follow the Islamic faith and are predominantly engaged in pastoralism.⁷⁴ Although Islam and pastoralism could be seen as indicators of their commonalities and could serve as instruments of integration, pastoralism, which depends on the mobility of livestock, is often a cause for frequent resource conflicts.

As neighboring ethnic communities, the Somali and the Oromo have longstanding relationships. Both were key players in the 16th century major population movements in the Horn of Africa, which greatly contributed to the present distribution of ethnic groups region (Baxter 1978: 284; Lewis 1966: 27). According to Lewis (1966: 35), interactions between the eastern most Oromo and the western most Somali began during the 1500s and 1600s as the Oromo were expanding to the north, northeast, and southeast. This means the two groups were competing for about 400 years in their borderlands for water, grazing and agricultural lands (Lewis 1966; Turton 1975 cited in Asnake, 2009:181).

Because of their centuries old interactions, the Somali and the Oromo have several commonly shared socio-cultural values. For instance, some Oromo and Somali groups have been either Somalised or Oromised.⁷⁵ In this respect, the ethnic identities of Garri and the Gabbra that today compete with the Borana for control of the Moyale town were influenced by years of Oromo-Somali interactions in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya.⁷⁶ The relationship between the Oromo and the Somali largely remained in the realm of culture and local alliance formation, until it began to change and became politicized because of the partition of the Horn of Africa at the beginning of the 20th century by different powers; state nationalism and ethnic politics. Both have similarities

⁷⁴The only major exception in this regard could be the Borana Oromo who practice traditional religion.

⁷⁵ This refers to the assimilation of some Somali and Oromo clans by their neighbours through a long period of interaction. Because of the assimilation, some of the concerned clans could adopt a new Oromo or Somali identity – or maintain a dual identity of both the Somali and the Oromo. For instance, the Garre clan in the Borana region uses the Oromo language, but due to its Islamic religion and genealogy identifies itself with the Somali (Farah 1996: 124, see also Asnake, 2009:181).

⁷⁶ The Borana and Gabbra are in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya. The majority of them are found within Ethiopia. The Garre, on the other hand, are found within Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. In terms of language, all of the clans predominantly speak Afaan Oromo, while the Garre of central Somalia speak a Garre dialect known as Garre Koffar (Belete 1999: 30; see also Asnake, 2009: 182).

and differences in their relationship with the Ethiopian State. The Somali remained at both the geographic and political periphery for much of the 20th century. The Oromo, in contrast, played key roles in Ethiopian politics at least since the beginning of the 20th century (Clapham 1988: 217; Asnake, 2009:181). The Somali and the Oromia national regional states share more than 1552 kilometers that stretches from Mi'esso district in the east to the Moyale district in the south. As soon as the federal structure was put in place both regional states engaged in protracted claims and counter claims of territories along their indistinct borders. Parallel to the territorial contest, pastoral resource conflicts were rampant in the lowland pastoral Oromo and Somali inhabited areas.

5.3. The Nature, Dynamics and Causes of Oromia- Somali Conflict

Different studies show that the root causes of Oromo – Somali conflicts have been attributed to different factors. Indeed, it is difficult to put factors under different headings like, economic, social and historical, because the casual relations and inter plays between diverse factors change over time and are influenced by a wide range of factors at different levels. However, for the purpose of this dissertation, I will focus on the subsequent headlines.

5.3.1. Historical Causes: Post-Independence Somalia and the Westward Expansion

States in the Horn of Africa are colonial creations. The post-independence Somali political scene was dominated by the vision to incorporate the Somali-inhabited regions in the Horn (Yasin, 2010:103). After Somalia became independent in 1960, the Republic Somalia set out to unite all Somalis in the Horn of Africa which had been delimited within three countries (Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya). The Somali Republic which was established in 1960 as a result of union of the British and Italian Somalilands, has promoted the idea referred as 'Somaalinnimo or Somali community' (Gebru 1991:141) among the Somalis in the Horn region. This led to the foundation of the Somali nationalism around the idea of “Greater Somalia”, a ‘political and symbolic construction

aimed at establishing all- Somali inhabited territories of the North Eastern Africa into one Somali national state' (Aguilar,1996:351 cited in Fekadu 2011:106).⁷⁷

The constitution of the Republic of Somalia and its national flag contributed much in creating and strengthening the Pan-Somali nationalism in the Horn. For instance, the preamble to the constitution of the Republic approved in 1961 proclaimed that all ethnic Somalis, no matter where they resided, were citizens of the Republic of Somalia. Besides, the five-pointed star on the Somalia flag represented the unity with lost Somalia territories and became the main targets of Somalia foreign policy since 1960 and focused on the eastern Ethiopia (now known as Ethio-Somali Regional State), Djibouti and north-eastern Kenya (Woodward, 2003:26; Yasin, 2010:103). To realize this, the Siad Barre government supplied arms for liberation fighters in the adjoining areas of Ethiopia, particularly for Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), and for the Eritreans to get the support of Arab countries. Counteractively, Ethiopia, supported opponents of Siad Barre, known as Somali National Movement (SNM) and instigated clan rivalries to weaken the Somalia regime (Woodward, 1996).

This historical incidence of Somali nationalism and the Ethiopian response led to the Ethiopia- Somalia war of 1977/78. Ethiopia and Somalia have persuaded a competing concept of the territorial border: Ethiopia sought to maintain the colonial territorial border as defining the Ethiopian nation, while the Somali tried considered the same border that they considered as dividing the Somali nation and tried to remove it. The forceful implementation of these 'competing national missions' (Clapham 1996:241) led Ethiopia and Somalia to fight one of the bloodiest wars in the Horn of Africa. An influx of weapons to the area fueled the conflict between the communities along the common borders. In addition to the inflow of weapons in the area, there is a critic that such political mobilization has also had some influence on Ethiopian Somali ethnic groups. Some of the ex- soldiers of the ousted Said Barre regime immigrated to Ethiopia to the

⁷⁷ The idea of "Greater Somalia" was formulated in 1943 with the establishment of The Somali Youth League (SYL) on May 15, 1943 initially known as Somali Youth Club (SYC) which was aimed at struggling for the independence and unification of Somalia. This was symbolized in the national flag, which showed a five – pointed white star on a light blue background referring to the five territories under colonial rule (Drysdale, 1964).

areas of Somali ethnic groups. They succeeded in influencing some Ethiopian Somalis to share their ambition of “Greater Somalia” (Alem Habtu, 2010: 165; Ewnetu, 2006).

Among all the most propositions at the back of the Greater Somali quest was the assumption that Somalis are homogeneous people and have a pastoralist mode of life. The Somalis in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti demand secession from their state to join the Republic of Somalia (Negussay Ayele, 1970: 87-88). The issues had direct impact on the territorial integrity of Ethiopia. According to promoters of the dream, the incorporation of *western Somali* (also called Somali Galbed) that refers to vast Somali, Oromo and Afar inhabited territory in eastern and southern Ethiopia was a crucial policy agenda. To this end, the Barre regime pursued the policy of dividing Ethiopians and tried to arm groups against the Imperial and Derg regimes (Asnake Menbere, 2013). The Greater Somali land dreamers, Yasin (2010:104) contends, claim large portions of Ethiopian regions of the South, Oromia, Harar, Dire Dawa and Afar stretching to Awash River where they planned to stop during the 1977 war. They considered all the mentioned territories within Ethiopia as the lost territories of the western parts of Great Somalia (ibid). Citing oral sources collected from Oromo elders in Dire Dawa, Milkessa Midega wrote that:

Siad Barre government had claimed that its territory stretched to include Afar Region and Wollo areas in the northeast, Somali areas, Hararghe, Arsi, Bale, part of east Shewa including Adama from east to central Ethiopia, through Moyale to north Kenya in the south. To accomplish the so-called Greater Somalia agenda, he established military fronts in Ethiopia under five nomenclatures: Somali wariya aimed to control all Somali lands, Somali abo to incorporate Oromo areas, Somali ika for Afars, Somali ante for Wollo, and Somali enafde for Kenyans (Milkessa, 2013: 181).

Barre established these fronts as a mechanism to control eastern half of Ethiopia using Islam as an instrument. Actually, only Somali *wariya* and Somali *abo* successfully mobilized fighters and fought against the Imperial and the Derg regimes. The Oromos in Bale, Arsi and Hararghe were also keen to use the weapons from Siad Barre government to liberate Oromia from the Amhara-dominated Christian government of Ethiopia (ibid.). Religion was the underlying factor for the collusions in eastern Ethiopia. Milkessa observed instrumentality of religious identity for Siad Barre’s political ends of creating

Greater Somalia. Abdullah Salih, who was a soldier of Somali *abo* rebel force, witnessed this:

We joined Somali abo, under the leadership of an Oromo from Chercher, to topple down Ethiopia's Amhara government and liberate our land and people. We were provided military training and weapons in Mogadishu along with Somali wariya fighters [proper Siad Barre fighter] during which time both abo and wariya fighters vowed to be one people united by blood- Islam. [...]. Both Somali abo and Somali wariya conjointly fought the Amhara government in 1977 (interviewed in Milkessa, 2013: 181).

The territorial dispute that emerged between Ethiopia and Somalia since the 1960s, because of the aspiration of the latter to incorporate all territories mentioned above under its jurisdiction, adversely affected local inter-group relations in Ethiopia in the remaining years. In other words, the inter-state conflict instigated inter-group conflict, for example, in Moyale in southern Ethiopia where the Garri and the Borana supported Somalia and Ethiopia respectively to enter into local conflicts that continued to the present day. Between the late 1980s and early 1990s, the state collapse, famine, and the civil war in Somalia led to a reverse refugee flow from Somalia, including the Garri. By mid-1992, there were 594,000 refugees and 117,000 returnees (Asnake, 2013:111). Some fled to refugee camps, others simply crossed the borders with or without their cattle, and tried to continue their lives in this new area. This process brought a new wave of Somali people to the region, and pushed the existing people further west into Borana territory (Helland, 1998 cited in Watson, 2001:10). Many of the returned pastoralists were heavily armed (Watson, 2001:10). As a result, the Garri and other Somali groups gained new control over territory and wells; and this control has since been consolidated, partly by the redrawing of the boundaries of the new administrative regions (Getachew, 1996; Bassi, 1997). Resources that were shared between different pastoralist groups like Borana, Gebara, and Garri are now only used by one or two of these groups. As a result, the Borana, the Garri and other Somali clans have been fighting over these resources. Most of these fights have been concentrated in the areas where Oromia and Somali regions share borders today (Watson, 2001:10). This regional division came with the new ethnic federalism policy of Ethiopia and its impacts on the relationships between Borana and Garri.

On the other hand, in Mi'esso, "the tiny Republic of Djibouti seems to inherit the responsibility of Mogadishu for the realization of Issa dream if not Greater Somalia dream. After the break-down of Somalia the Pan-Issa dream led by Djibouti takes the stage" (Yasin, 2010: 124; Klosowicz, R. 2015:95). Moreover, the Somali Regional officials argued for long time that the conflict bears no external factor associated with it, but only the common pastoralist day to day conflict in search of water and pasture.⁷⁸ The key informant from this region depicted that "... the conflict between pastoralist communities along the borders of both regions has a long history, and it is basically on livelihood and competition over resources but it has nothing to do with the ambition of the greater Somalia." To the contrary, the data obtained from the archive of Oromia Regional Government, argue that the conflicts are attributed to the westward expansions by the Somalis which has an implicit agenda of promoting the 'Greater Somalia'. This has continued in its intensity and frequency in the last two decades. The recent instances of conflicts that have occurred in districts of East Hararge, West Hararge and Bale, Borana zonal administrations would prove the extension of the westward expansion and the proper image has been camouflaged under the disguise of the pastoralist society (Oromia Government Archive, 2017).

5.3.2. Dynamics of Conflict in the Post-1991 Context

The demise of the Derg is considered as a turning point where the issue of nations and nationalities has become the fundamental tenet which brought the present federal system into existence in Ethiopia (Abate, 2004:6). Accordingly, in post 1991 Ethiopia, Oromo-Somali relations have been reframed within the new political context. The two ethnic groups have got their own regional administration. This situation reshaped the already existing competition over resources to have aregional form. Indeed, within the new system not only the magnitude and frequency of the conflict has intensified but its dimension has also been broadened since the adoption of ethnic federalism policy in Ethiopia. At this point, I argue that the introduction of the decentralized federal

⁷⁸ This information was obtained from the introductory part of the report made by Oromia and Somali regional states' officials on issues of joint management of border conflicts, convened in Dire Dawa town, 2004.

administration system failed to be accompanied by strong conflict prevention, early warning and response institution and resulted in violent deadly conflicts. The next section analyses the political factors of the conflicts.

5.3.2.1. Federal Restructuring and the Oromia- Somali Border Conflict

The federal restructuring of the country has brought political significance to the question of whether a clan is from Oromo or Somali (Schlee and Shongolo 1995: 8). Federalism and ethnic conflicts are generally about politics of States. In the Ethiopian context, economic, social and political forces intertwine with ethnic conflicts attributed to the federal restructuring of the country. For instance, John Markakis argues that in the Horn of Africa, the State, as it controls the production and distribution of material and social resources, has become the object and instrument of conflicts (1994: 212).

The regime has constitutionally divided the country into nine autonomous regional states.⁷⁹ These regional states organized their lower levels of administrative units (zones, districts [woredas], and kebeles). Oromia and Somali regional states are two of the nine regional states. As soon as the ethnic federal structure was put in place, the Oromia and Somali regional states engaged in protracted claims and counter-claims of territories along their nominal but unclear borders. Especially in the pastoral areas that characterize most of the Oromia and Somali regional states borders, where the livelihood of the people depends on movement, borders are practically permeable. Likewise, some scholars also argue that inter-regional boundary conflicts between the Somali and the Oromia were intensified particularly in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas following the post-1991 period as the result of the territorial reconfiguration and regionalization of the country along ethnic lines (Fekadu, 2011; Asnake, 2009:182; Hagmann and Mulugeta, 2008).

Oromia and Somali regions share long borders. Five zonal administrations from Oromia side such as West Hararge, East Hararge, Bale, Eastern Guji and Borana share border

⁷⁹ According to Article 47 of the FDRE Constitution, the nine regional states are the state of Tigray, Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, Benshangul/Gumuz, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, Gambella and Harari.

with the Somali Region, and six zonal administrations from the Somali side comprising Siti, Negob, Fafan, Afdher, Liban and Dawa share border with Oromia. The territories where the claims and counter claims prevails, include grazing fields, watering points, kebeles and towns. These contested border areas stretch from Mi'esso District in the north-eastern plateau to Moyale District in the south eastern lowlands that affects vast areas. The north-eastern landmass comprises West Hararge, Eastern Hararge and Siti, Negob and Fafan zonal administrations from the Oromia and the Somali regions respectively. The Oromo groups such as Ittu, Nole and Jarso reside in the area either neighboring or intermingled with the Issa and Hawiya clans of the Somali. The south - eastern part consists Bale, Eastern Guji and Borana zones of Oromia region and Afdher, Liban and Dawa zones of the Somali region. The Oromo groups such as Arsi, Guji and Borana and the Somali clans such as the Gurra, Marrehan, Digodia and Garri predominantly inhabit along the borders of these areas. The situations in these indistinct border areas are known for their frequent conflict between the two regional states. Thus, the new line of division between the Oromia and the Somalia regions was considered enormously important for both the local actors and regional authorities for consolidating the territorial and political identity of their ethnic regions. In other words, the conflict now has regional and ethnic dimension between the Oromia and the Somali regions. When local dispute coincides with the boundaries between regional states, conflicts between ethnic groups transform to conflicts between regional states (Asnake, 2009, 187). This caused a prolonged boundary conflicts along the adjacent areas of Oromia and Somali regional states. It has worsened ethnic tensions among local agro pastoralist and pastoral areas.

As this thesis tries to show, the boundaries are not clearly demarcated and remained blurred as a result of which frequent conflicts continued resulting in numerous humanitarian and material crisis. On top of that, the introduction of the new federal system was not accompanied by strong and comprehensive conflict prevention, early warning and response institutions to contain, mitigate and prevent conflicts from escalation to destructive outcomes. Thus, the local traditional resource conflicts have been transformed into more complicated politics and they have fueled local conflicts in

the contested districts into destructive crisis. BBC News broadcast stated that Ethiopia's political arrangement - federalism structured along ethno-linguistic lines - dictates that ethnic borders are also usually political ones. Critics argue that this structure is a tinder box that allows minor conflicts to escalate (BBC, 15 September 2017). In addition, the current political elites have also tried to secure as large territory as possible from resourceful areas such as water points, grazing areas, trade routes and towns under their jurisdiction. They seemed to mobilize local people along the ethnic lines. In some areas, local people have started permanent claims over areas they had shared with their neighbors or lived side by side in the past. This kind of local conflicts were previously confined to just rural areas and now they have spread to major towns, settlements and revenue centers such as Mi'esso and Moyale towns. Increased division and hostility ruined the peaceful co-existence among different neighboring communities in these areas. The existing local resource conflicts have taken political dimensions mainly due to the state political and structural changes in the country (Getachew, 2006). Likewise, the new system seemed to politicize the existing difference and added a dimension of "us" from "them", which diminished the elements of similarities and magnified the differences. Hence, the conflict demonstrated the potent force of ethnicity in creating hostilities and conflicts between dichotomized groups, once activated for political or economic motives.

On the other hand, following the establishment of the ethnic based federal system in the country, various ethnic-based political organizations have become operationally active in these border areas. Some of them were also created within or as a result of the new system. Among these organizations were the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization (OPDO), Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Issa Gurgura Liberation Front (IGLF), and Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL). All of them have contributed in one way or another to the intensification of the conflict either rhetorically or practically. In general, during the years following the commencement of the ethno-regional administration, the issue became political strife resulting in gaining or losing more territories. Using any possible means they try to win the game and thereby defending their rights of territorial integrity from encroachment. The conflict is political, it is not just about resources anymore, and it is about having administrative power and

control over land. . The next section details how resource competition became a cause of conflict and was politicized along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regional states.

5.3.2.2. From Competition for Scarce Resources to Territorial Claims

5.3.2.2.1 Introduction

This section focuses on issues related to competition for scarce resources, conflicts over territorial claims and conflict triggering factors.

5.3.2.2.2 Competition for Scarce Resources

Muhabe (2015) states that resource is everything useful and that it can be scarce and if is poorly governed, it can lead competing groups to violent conflicts. This map of conflict in the Horn is further complicated and tensioned by factors like chronic poverty, unemployment (especially youth), unfair distribution of the resources and extreme contest over scarce resources. These are fertile grounds for political elites in the areas who usually instigate conflict even in a stable political environment for the purpose of rent seeking. This is, nowadays; a headache for almost all countries of the Horn (Muhabe, 2015:1). Quite a lot of literatures explain that several conflicts in Africa arise from scarcity of resources. Most of the conflicts among pastoralists or agro-pastoralists are connected to resources, either natural or economic in nature. These appeared among different groups of the same ethnic group or different ethnic groups within the same territory or in cross-border phenomena (Markakis, 1992⁸⁰; Bassi, 1997; Siyoum, 1999; Oduwa Liban, 2009⁸¹; Bamlaku et al 2015).

⁸⁰ As Markakis has stated, there is general agreement that the root cause is intense competition for resources. The study of pastoralism in the Horn of Africa shows that communities on the move in search of pasture and grazing land, permanent sources of water and unhindered access to routes leading to these resources frequently compete and fight over them. Moreover, increasing resource scarcity due to climatic change, loss of land and water to cultivation, and other reasons have led to increasing intensity of conflict in the pastoralist zones (Markakis 1992).

⁸¹ On the other hand, Oduwa Liban (2009) also argues that pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities in the Horn rely on land and water in advancing their livelihoods. Such resources are scarce and under increasing pressure. Nowadays, the nature of local conflicts over land and water has been intensified due to the ever-increasing demand as a result of rapid population growth and increased consumption of such vital resources. Endemic poverty, recurrent drought, and harsh climatic conditions constitute some of the major contributing factors to local conflicts over natural resources. These circumstances complicate the use of the natural resources, as well as modes of management. (Oduwa Liban, 2009).

On the other hand, the growing demands for natural resources and the increasing complexity of conflicts make conflict prevention, management and resolution more difficult. Hence, institutionalizing proper mechanisms of prevention, management and resolution to address natural resource issues matters the most. Bamlaku et al (2015) explained that subsequent to the establishment of the federal system and ethnic based territorial demarcations, frequent conflicts surface in eastern Ethiopia between Ittu-Oromo and Issa- Somali pastoral groups. The conflicts are attributed to competition over the scarce resource along borders. During severe draught, the pastoralist and agro-pastoral groups of both communities in the area have tried to move out to their neighboring rival groups by crossing their border which often leads them to violent conflicts (Bamlaku et al, 2015:31). This assertion explains that conflict along the borders over resource competition is a factor for conflictual relations between communities residing along the borders. Pertaining to this issue, an informant depicted that

*The environmental degradation happened in the 2015-2016 El-Niño and the frequent draught has immensely exacerbated resource competition among the communities along the bordering areas of Oromia and Somali regional states due to the decline in the availability of resources. Hence, the competitions are becoming more intense. This in turn has pushed the contending groups to cross the border of counterparts from either side for pasture and watering points and for controlling and owning those areas which resulted in frequent armed clashes.*⁸²

Two important issues are inferred from the view of the above informant. The first one explicates that issues that conflicts between Oromia and Somali population group in the area were often caused by intense ethnic competition over resources such as grazing land and water points which are attributed to environmental pressure. This forced them to cross borders. The other was the attempt to control and own the area which presumably indicates the shift from resource competition to territorial claim and intensified mistrust between the two ethnic groups. This in turn led them to an aggravation of the protracted armed clashes that resulted in huge physical and material loss from both sides. Similarly, an informant from the Oromo community explained:

We lived together for long time in the adjacent districts of Mi'essoo of Oromia and Mi'esso of Somali. There has been fierce competition among us on grazing lands and watering points between us. This competition has a long history and continued until

⁸² Interview with official in western Hararge zone of Oromia Regional States, Chiro town, 16 February 2016. (use this pattern for writing your dates).

*recently. There were times when we resolve our problems through customary mechanisms. And also, there are times when we enter into clash over resources. Recently, however, due to the climatic change, the competition has changed its shape and intensity through advancing to cross the border of one another. For instance, when Somalis cross our borders for grazing and watering their cattle, they will not go back to their original place but stay, settle and claim our land for ownership. They also took the places decided for us by the 2004 referendum. This forced us to push them back by force as a result fatalities occurred from both sides. The local leadership from either side do not prevent or solve the problem at its earlier stage but they become part of the conflict.*⁸³

Likewise, an informant from the Somali side also stated that

*[...] There was quite obvious intense competition over resources between us along our common borders for long time. Recently, the environmental pressure had impacted our livelihood and we were forced to cross borders to Oromia. Often times, this has led us to experience conflicts. Sometimes we agree to resolve our problems through traditional ways. However, this could not sustain for long because the leadership on both sides becomes either an actor or attempt to intervene later after the conflict has already escalated.*⁸⁴

The continuity of the conflict is explained on the Somali side in terms of the quest for water and grazing land as a result of environmental impacts which is seen as a simple competition over natural resources on their part. The informant refrained to respond on the issue of the ownership of the land. Nonetheless, the Oromo version of the story is by far counter argument that underlies non-resource explanation. Accordingly, retroactive review of places taken which was decided through referendum and the subsequent illegal settlements were key factors which often lead to violent conflicts. On the other hand, the leadership from both regional states were either actors in the conflict or lagging behind to institute preventive conflict early warning and response systems to contain the conflict before its escalation along the borders. This surfaces the way for Somalis to associate their claims with livelihood as a pastoralist way of life and for the Oromo groups to defend the Somalis from crossing in to their border lands.

Woodward (1996) argues that scarcity of water and pasture triggers conflict among pastoralist communities of neighboring countries. This conflict may develop into a more complex political dispute between two or more states of the region, since “there has been

⁸³ Interview with Oromo elder in Mi'esso of Oromia, Mi'esso Town, February 16, 2016.

⁸⁴ Interview with Somali elder in Mi'esso of Somali, Mi'esso Town. February 16, 2016.

covert and overt interference in the affairs of neighboring states for a variety of motives” (Woodward, 1996). In line with this argument, the conflict between Oromia and Somali border areas was on the verge to shift from resource competition to territorial ownership and was politically motivated. In this regard, Fekadu (2017:28) argues that the primary causes of violent conflict in pastoral areas of southern Ethiopia is competition over grazing resources which is mediated by politicization of administrative boundaries.,.

In addition, many of the interviewed pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and individuals working on peace building and development activities in the in western Hararge reflected that competition over access to scarce resources (grazing land and water) was an important factor that instigated frequent conflict along the common borders. It was highly politicized and linked to constant claims over territories that resulted in violent confrontations among the bordering communities. Local politicians and the elite from the respective ethnic groups took advantage of this situation to sponsor conflict. Hence, this implies that confrontation for scanty resources has been politicized by elites and escorted by poor resource governance. These were transformed to territorial claims and increased the likelihood of the conflicts to occur along the borders.

On the other hand, informants from the Borana and Garri around Moyale environs reflected that inter-regional boundary making and the subsequent split of the Borana Awraja administration and loss of resource has led to sporadic conflicts and massive internal displacement over years in the area. Both Borana and Garri informants argued that after the demarcation they had to move to their respective regional areas because of the violent conflicts. Most informants from both sides claim that the main reason for most of the clashes that they have had since 1991 were resource issues linked to claims and counter-claims over territory along the adjacent areas. The FGD participants also explained that the conflict has been there for long time and disputes were resolved through customary procedures. However, since the beginning of ethno-regional administration, the conflict has not only been limited to resources, like watering and grazing fields but has also transformed to occupation and ownership of land and expansion of regional territories.

5.3.2.2.3. Conflicts over territorial claims

Mancini (2013) argues that territorial disputes remain serious challenges to peace and stability. In fact, interstate disputes, those over territory tend to lead to armed conflict. A mix of political and economic interests, normative reasons, and competition over scarce natural resources have been drivers of conflict over disputed territories (Francesco Mancini 2013:1). Repetitive redrawing of administrative and political boundaries is an attribute of institutional instability that leads to different and frequent claims (Asnake, 2009:187). Moreover, delimitation and demarcation of borders between the ethno-national states has been the most challenging exercise in the ethnic based federal set up in Ethiopia (Fekadu, 2011, Asnake, 2010; Asebe, 2007). Thus, the recent territorial division between the Oromia and the Somali regions was considered enormously as a challenge. Hence, claims and counter-claims over territories around the borders of these regional states in Ethiopia became the center of conflicts (Fekadu, 2011). Parallel to territorial contestation and negotiation between the two ethno-national states, neighboring pastoral communities who belong to either of the ethnic groups fight on the ground. Pastoralists on both sides blame that each regional government has used regional militia and police forces in the fight. In other words, militia and police forces armed by both governments have been fighting under the guise of local people but this has been strictly concealed at the administrative levels. Over all, the Oromia--Somali conflicts have been disputed in a number of cases and have remained with both change and continuity over time. A key informant depicted that,

*The contemporary nature of the conflict between the communities along the borders is changing over time. In the pre-1991 period the conflict was over pastures and water points that has directly attached to the pastoralist way of livelihood. The current situation is however, distinct from the old ones in that it is not merely trying to access the pasture and watering points rather pastoralists tend to spend days in the resource sites and soon raise questions of ownership where in the regional state's border where the resource site lay and claim that it belongs to them. In addition, local government officials are the major actors in promoting such claims and mobilize their respective ethnic groups.*⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Interview with Official from Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, August 7, 2015, Addis

This is supported by the works of Said (1997) that explains the conflicts over water and pasture are gradually introducing the element of which group should permanently own resource areas in the virtual expansion to the other resulted in the ethno-pastoral territorial claims. Hence, traditional conflict over scarce resource has been complicated with an upsurge of territorial claims (Said, 1997). In other words, the fact that the border between the Oromia and Somali regional states has not been demarcated means that it presented a fertile ground for conflict to crop up around the border areas. An informant from Oromia region stated that,

*Somalis have strong appetite for expansion along the border areas through illegal settlement schemes and tried to change demography of the area between both regional states. Moreover, they are making tactical shuttling and are deliberately delaying the implementation of joint discussions and agreements including the results of the 2004 referendum. Furthermore, they change their positions and obstruct the agreements reached for border demarcations. The act of the Somalis is beyond the competition for resources but compounded with political motivation to control the area. This is backed by the regional government.*⁸⁶

The informant added that the potential conflict clouds are still hovering in the sky of the borders of Oromia and Somali regions so long as the Somali regional state government adheres to its unabated claims of territories over its neighbor (Oromia).⁸⁷ Moreover, another informant, also explained that

*In the earlier periods, conflict along the adjacent areas of both regions is common used for grazing and watering purposes. Both communities tend to resolve their disputes through customary mechanisms. However, since the introduction of the new federal system, the nature of the conflict was gradually transformed from grazing and watering disputes to controlling bordering areas through expansion which have manifested in the form of illegal settlement schemes and erecting flags crossing counterpart's border. Administrative boundaries are not clearly demarcated by the regional and federal governments. This has immensely triggered frequent territorial claims and conflicts.*⁸⁸

Likewise, the informant from the Somali region explained that

“... The Oromo and the Somalis experience conflicts even long before the introduction of federal system and they resolved them through their respective customary mechanisms. But, since the introduction of the federal system, the conflicts have become more frequent and violent along the borders. The livelihood of the

⁸⁶ Interview made with Oromia government official, January 10, 2016, Addis Ababa.

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Interview with Oromo elder in Mi'esso wereda, February, 16, 2016.

*pastoralists would force them to move and cross borders to access water and grazing fields.*⁸⁹

From the view point of informants, it is observed that the intensity of conflicts in the post 1991 has been more frequent and violent and the traditional ways of resolving disputes related to resources competition have been weakened. Moreover, the absence of clear demarcation along the contested areas has contributed to territorial claims over times. As discussed above, making clear demarcation could not dodge from challenges. Watkins and Fleisher's (2002) observation on the fluidity of boundary names and shapes in the Horn of Africa finds its typical ideal realization in the case of the Oromia- Somali Regional borders. Up to this day, there has not been geographic map featuring the correct politico-administrative boundaries of zones and districts between Oromia and Somali Regional States in accordance with the reality on the ground. In this regard, Abdi (2017) also argue that states ethnic regionalization under federalism and the need to demarcate borders between both regions came up with challenges from the very start that both regions laid claim to some of the same borderline areas as their own. The issue of instituting territorial demarcation is re-awakening and sharpening the old and traditionally dormant ethnic conflict between the two sides.⁹⁰ As discussed earlier, the system pursued in the post 1991 in the country posits ethnic federalism and the regionalization process involves ethnic groups who ethicized territorial demarcation. Hence, one could observe that such a process could be a conflict factor that generates anxiety between both regional states.

After a decade of territorial contestations and at the height of the violent conflicts, the referendum was carried out in October 2004 pursuant to the agreement reached between both regional states (see chapter six). The referendum was believed to decide to which administrative region (Oromia or Somali) people in the contested areas would want to be included and to resolve the claims and counter claims between Oromia and Somali regions. The HoF⁹¹, which is responsible for resolving inter-regional conflicts, instructed

⁸⁹ Interview made with Somali government official, February, 20,2016, Jijjiga.

⁹⁰ See Imael Abdi, 2017, Somali blogger in his Article, Shedding Light on the recent violence in the border areas between Somali and Oromia regions of Ethiopia. aigaforum.com/article2017/somali-romia-border-issue-explained.htm. March 11, 2017 accessed April 15, 2017.

⁹¹ See Article 62 of the FDRE Constitution.

the NEBE to hold a referendum in 420 kebele along the contested borders of the Oromia and the Somali regions including the highly contentious, politically and economically strategic districts of Mi'esso and Moyale. Accordingly, the referendum in Mi'esso was conducted successfully in 15 kebeles out of which 14 voted in favour of Oromia and 1 (one) voted for Somali (NEBE Report, 2004). However, soon in the aftermath of the referendum, allegations and claims continued to challenge the result of the referendum (as shown below). On the other hand, with regard to the referendum around Moyale, the process was taken "successfully" in other kebeles, but it failed to materialize in nine kebeles around Moyale and surroundings due to procedural reasons like; Moyale 01, Moyale 02, Chamuk, Keбенawa, Bede, Buledi, Moyale Elgof, Maddamigo and Meleb. NEBE and HOF reported that the reason was due to disagreements between the two regions on a number of issues such as disagreement over election of public observers, registration irregularities (bringing people who are not residents in the area), displacing people from one area to another for the sake of election and mutual suspicion (NEBE Report 2004:6). Subsequently, these areas were left to the dual administration of the two regions with competing and at times conflicting jurisdictions. This left a contested boundary area for the Borana (Oromo) and Garri (Somali) people living in the area.

Local Oromo and Somali officials, however, blamed each other for the cancellation of the referendum. An Oromia official alleged that the referendum was 'cancelled because of the fact that the Garri brought thousands of people from other areas including Kenya and Somalia so that they could prevail over the Borana and secure the ownership of the town.'⁹² In contrast, officials of the Moyale Somali woreda allege that the pressure from Oromo officials at the regional level, who feared holding the referendum as planned, meant Oromia would lose Moyale, spoiled the referendum.⁹³ After the failure of the referendum and the situation remains tense and incident could trigger violence in the area, the federal government deployed federal police to deter violence.

⁹² Interview with Official in Oromia Moyale woreda, September 15, 2015.

⁹³ Interview with official Moyale of Somali woreda, September 15, 2015.

Both Borana and Garri informants reflected that they were unhappy with the results of the referendum; while most of the Borana completely condemned the principle itself, the Borana elder stated that

*We didn't agree on the demarcation. The Somali took our historical land. We are never happy about it. We are still fighting for the lost grazing land and deep well Gof and Lae that was dug by the Borana long time ago. We cannot access it now, we allowed the Garri people to stay on our territory when they came as a guest from Somalia, now they took it.*⁹⁴

On the other hand, the Garri informants have also reflected their unhappiness with the result of the referendum and they still claim some areas and they reject the Borana claim. They were disappointed with their loss of some kebeles across the border and those particularly in Moyale town and its surrounding. An elder from Garri stated that “the Borana want all the land, it is never enough for them. We are claiming our historical territory too. Our people had left some of the areas during the Ethio-Somalian war and we are reclaiming that again”⁹⁵ Thus, it was observed that the result of the referendum had neither been implemented nor the existing territorial claims and conflicts had been halted, though it has temporarily decreased the magnitude of the conflict. Beyond the numerical result of who won what, the referendum did not result in peaceful sharing of resources and co-existence of the neighboring Oromo and Somali peoples. In some areas the result of the referendum itself became part of the on-going conflict. In many areas where the border was delimited in accordance with the referendum, the previous good social relations that had existed between people of differing ethnic identity deteriorated. For example, the Borana and Garri fought three deadly conflicts over their borders in June 2008, February 2009, and July 2012 around the bordering districts of Arero, Udet and Moyale. As a result, some 80,000 people were internally displaced by the conflict (IDMC, 2009: 10; See also Fekadu, 2011: 10).

Both Oromo and Somali have been attempting to re-structure and create new kebeles, woredas, and zonal administrations along the un-demarcated border areas. In this regard, Haggmann stated that the subdivisions of Somali have been changed several times, often

⁹⁴ Interview with Borana Oromo elder in Moyale, September 15, 2015.

⁹⁵ Interview with Garri- Somali elder in Moyale, September 15, 2015.

due to local clan groups claiming their own woreda (Hagmann, 2005:12). The assertion of Hagmann does not seem convincing for the reason that in the current context of the conflict along the bordering areas, since both regions provoked the design as a strategy to control and own more territories and incidentally attempted to change the demography of the area. However, it could be a contributing cause to trigger conflict. For instance, Oromia regional state has restructured weredas which border with Somali region in West Hararge and Borana zonal administrations. Gumbi Bordode was the newly established wereda in western Hararge as a result of the claims and counter claims of territories around Mi'esso. Likewise, Chamuk, Wachile and Guchi districts were formed newly as a result of the territorial claims between Borana and Garri around Moyale district.

On the other hand, the Somali Regional state restructured and increased the number of new weredas along the contested areas. For instance, Hadhagaale, Geblalu and Gota Biki are newly structured Weredas in Shinille (Siti) zone around Mi'esso of Oromia. The Somali regional state increased the number of zonal administration from nine to eleven. The former Liban zone becomes two zones; the newly structured zone is named as Dhawa comprising four districts; Moyale, Hudet, Mubaarak and Qadhaadhumo. Both Mubaarak and Qadhaadhumo are newly structured Weredas as a result of claims over territories around Moyale of Oromia.⁹⁶ Hence, the boundary between the Somali and Oromia Regions has been disputed, leading to ambiguity over the status of border areas. In addition, a key informant emphasized that "...The reconstruction of residential areas in the name of development on the contested kebeles around Moyale will further trigger future conflict."⁹⁷ Moreover, most informants from Borana and Garri claim that the main reason for most of the contests that they have had since 1991 were border issues, claims and counterclaims over territory along the border. The conflict has been there since long time mainly due to land and water recourse. But now it became all about territorial ownership. Subsequently, another data obtained from the archive of Oromia Administration and Security Bureau revealed that conflicts along the bordering areas of Bale zone of Oromia comprising six districts; Beltu, Guradhamole, Rayitu, Dawe

⁹⁶ The name was derived from Dawa River where the Borana used to water their cattle. The new structure is an attempt to blockade the movement of the Borana cattle towards the river.

⁹⁷ Key informant Interview, Moyale (Oromiya), Sept.15, 2015.

Qachen, Dawe Sarar and Madda Walabu and Filtu and Afdher zone of Somali were areas where territorial claims, border expansion and illegal settlements prevailed. Furthermore, conflicts have recurrently ascended over expansion of territory and grazing lands because of the absence of clear border demarcation and these conflicts have been coupled with theft and raids of cattles. For instance, in Eastern Guji zone in some areas the observation data supported by interviews and archival sources showed that the Somalis crossed 30 kilometers into the territories of Oromia, for instance in Arero district of Borana zone (Oromia OBAS Archive, November, 2016).

Box: 1. the Gura Dhamole District Case

In 2013, when the researcher was working in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, both Oromia and Somali regional states organized joint committee to observe the situation of the conflict between Gura Dhamole District of Bale zone and Guradhamole district of Nigob (Fiq) zone of Somali region as both districts experienced conflict along their bordering kebeles. Accordingly, the committee visited the area to observe where lays the point of contention. The Somali ethnic groups crossed about 12 kilometers into the boundary of Oromia and established illegal settlement schemes in which 150 houses were built and the committee found out that territorial contestation was the main reason for conflict. In the meantime, the team members from Somali region promised to take the case to their regional government to decide and move back the illegally settled Somalis. However, the case has remained impractical until to date and the conflict at this locality has continued frequently and unabated.

In this regard, media sources such as *All African Report*, citing the representatives of Oromia who said an invasion of their region by a special *Liyu* Police and militia force stated that the causes of deadly border clash have also been contentious territorial subject. In contrast, Somali officials on their part referred to situation as some aggressive regional police targeting unarmed peaceful Somali civilian (All African Report, October 6, 2017). Though the officials counter argued, one could observe that the bone of contention between them is territorial claim. BBC in this regard reported that the long-standing conflict between the large regions has its roots in territorial competition (BBC News. Com, 6 October 2017).

A key informant from the Somali region reported that [...]the major cause of conflict along the adjacent districts was conflict over territorial borders which claimed numerous lives and properties, much of the districts and kebeles of the Somali region were wrongly occupied by the Oromo communities along these borders since the 2004 referendum.

However, the informant did not mention particular districts but listed the names of zones (Siti, Nigob, and Liban) experienced most.⁹⁸ From both sides of the same equation, observation could be made that, on the one hand, the non-demarcation of the contested areas was used as an opportunity to claim and counter claim territories of counterpart areas and this gave way to the disruptive communication among the communities and further exacerbated the conflicts. On the other hand, there was no proper conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanisms in place that would institutionalize conflict early warning and response systems. An indication of the scale of the conflict came in when the FDRE Prime Minister, referred to it in a speech to parliament in March 2017. According to the Prime Minister

Oromo and Somali communities were in border conflict until recently. Though the referendum was held in 2004 to resolve territorial claims, the conflict on the same continued with its destructive consequences. The problem of border conflict between Oromia and Somali Regional States is not a conflict between communities from both sides. The communities from either side do not enter in to a conflict. The conflict is between militias, Special Forces and leaderships of both regional states. It is the local leadership that is commanding the conflict. Those leaderships who have wrong perceptions against the conflict are complicating conflict issues. Narrow mindedness and chauvinist perceptions are trying to pretend as if it is a conflict between nations. The conflict has nothing to do with national issue. Jarso Oromo and Jarso Somali are speaking both Oromo and Somali languages. This is a connector that refrain them to enter in to a conflict. It is the conflict between the leadership. There are also other rent seekers assuming themselves as a representative and deriving profit from the conflict. The perpetrators should be brought before the court of law. This is the responsibility of the Federal government to execute the case (EBC NEWS Broadcast, 10:30 AM. March, 16, 2017; Reporter Gazette, Ser.22 No.1764, Sunday, March 26, 2017, Section one, page 10).

From the speech of the Premier, three things could be unveiled from the above comment. First, it witnessed the prevalence of border conflict between both regional states. Second, the main actors in the conflict were not the communities but the officials and security personnel at lower hierarchies of the government. Third, the result of the referendum held in 2004 has not yet been enforced. The cumulative effect of these implies that the communities along the borders were in conflict for the last thirteen years and suffer the strife and the conflict has not been addressed due to lack of strong institution for conflict prevention, early warning and response systems.

⁹⁸Interview Somali official, Jijjiga, February, 20, 2016.

Likewise, Kassa Tekleberhan, the former Minister of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, added the same view with that of the Premier when he depicted the fact that “... there was an open conflict between Oromo and Somali communities along the borderlines of both regions. The cause for the conflict was over territorial claims. The leadership failed and it took too long to demarcate the border lines...” (Oromia Television Broadcast News, March 13, 2017, 8:30 PM). He admittedly reported that there was an open conflict along the border lines of both Oromia and Somali regional states and noted that the hostility could be attributed to the failure from the part of the federal, regional and local leadership to draw administrative boundaries along the contested borders. In the same token, the higher executives of the regional governments also witnessed that the conflicts over the border claims were evident until recently due to the reluctance of the leadership to address the conflicts in due courses. Lemma Megerssa, the President of Oromia National Regional State stated that

... the cause for the border conflict between both regions was due to the interest of territorial expansion. This has resulted enormous damage on lives and properties. The problem lies with the failure and lack of commitment from the officials of both regional states. He noted that the episode was worry some. He also mentioned that both regions had convened peace conference and signed peace accord to enforce seriously the result of the referendum held in 2004. He noted that administrative boundaries will be demarcated along the border lines of 33 weredas and 147 kebeles... (Oromia Television Broadcast News, March 13, 2017, 8:30 PM).

Besides, Addisu Arega, Head of the Bureau of Communications of Oromia Regional State stated that

Oromia and Somali regional states were in conflict for the last ten years and continued until March 2017. The main cause of the conflict is the interest of some of the government leadership mobilizing the community to expand the border territory for their own economic interest. The border conflict from both sides resulted in deaths and displacements of the communities. The peace accord was signed between the two regions to halt the conflict and resume the communities' normal way of life. (Reporter Gazette, ser.22 No.1774, Sunday, April, 30, 2017)

Both prominent executive members of Oromia regional State validated the sources of information obtained from other informants discussed above. Likewise, Abdi Mohammad, the President of Somali National Regional State stated that “...the conflict on territorial borders was devastating. It shouldn't have happened. With the failure of us to work

closely and respond to it timely, it has caused much humanitarian and material losses. For the future, we are committed to work on to improve the situation.”(Oromia Television Broadcast News, March 13, 2017, 8:30 PM). Obviously, these higher government executives should have known better, given their core position in the governance system, how institutions of conflict prevention, early warning and response systems matter in the mitigation of border conflicts. Surprisingly enough, neither of them both at federal and regional state levels mentioned about to strengthen the institutionalization and operationalization of conflict prevention, early warning and early response mechanisms at both levels. The above comments do not seem to justify that the officials are ignorant of the system but they might not have given emphasis on curbing the impending crisis that the communities along border belts were confronting through strengthening the institutions. It could be argued that the absence of any authority to assume the responsibility of attending to institutionalize strong institution of conflict prevention, early warning and response systems for the disputes between members of different ethnic groups living in adjacent regions. These disputes have at times developed into serious conflicts, resulting in the death and displacement of many citizens and the destruction of public and private properties. The next sub sections discusses some of the most prevalent and triggering factors to Oromia and Somali border conflicts.

5.3.2.2.4. Conflict Triggering Factors

Triggers are the factors that affect the timing of the onset of armed conflict; referring to these can help explain not why a conflict starts at all, but why it starts then. They are often events or actions undertaken by significant actors, which narrow the choices of the players, making peaceful approaches less, and violent options more, attractive (Smith, 2004:8). There are many conflict triggering factors along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regional states. Only two, which are most prevalent and critical, are discussed in the next sub-sections.

5.3.2.2.4.1 Availability of Illegal Small Arms and Weapons

According to Weiss, (2004:27) the availability of automatic weapons is possibly one of the key components of pastoral conflict and indeed are part of a vicious conflict cycle. As

noted by Buchanan-Smith, the sophisticated weaponry available along the Oromia-Somali bordering areas, mainly came from trade between the neighboring communities of the countries bordering each other that were also caught up in long histories of conflict (Buchanan and Lind, 2005). The arms circulation of these bordering has never been entirely controlled by their respective states. The firearms led to arming various groups by their clans. The consequences were unmatched figures of death. The big number of deaths recorded frequently. In the past, the conflict between pastoralist communities was fought with traditional weaponry such as spears. Today in the bordering areas it is believed that every male above 17 carries a weapon (Jesse Creedy, 2011). The easy access to and proliferation of arms along the contested border areas was the main security factor that escalated the existing conflicts. Increased proliferation of small arms was just like adding fuel to the existing conflict in the area. As a matter of fact, from both side, people were killed and wounded, many civilians were displaced, hostilities and animosity were committed. For instance, pertaining to this issue, an informant from Mi'esso of Oromia reported that:

*Most pastoralist communities traditionally possess arms claiming that they use it for security of their cattle and property. However, the actors of the conflict used modern and mass killing armaments like RPG, PKM, AK47, M14 and others. Here, because of weakness /absence of local security provision, each ethnic group attempts to strengthen its armed power in order to provide security for itself. Small arms, including automatic and semiautomatic weapons have become widely available and are increasingly used in the conflict-ridden areas. These weapons come from a variety of sources, including conflict torn areas of Somalia and elsewhere in the Horn, as well as from insecure official weapons stockpiles. Such arms availability has made traditional raiding deadly, which in turn has made conflict management and resolution more difficult. Insecurity from criminal activity has increased as a result of wider access and use of semi-automatic weapons, particularly in relation to livestock rustling by criminal gangs.*⁹⁹

Therefore, the possession of arms has been viewed as an important security guarantee in the culture and tradition of pastoralists. Accordingly, Oromia and Somali pastoral groups along the bordering areas possessed automatic rifles. The increased availability of automatic rifles has exacerbated inter-ethnic conflicts in the area (Asnake, 2013). Teshome (2003) argued that the unchecked proliferation of small arms and light weapons

⁹⁹ Interview with police officer in Mi'esso of Oromia, February, 16, 2016.

and the deliberate arming of certain communities without due regard to the security of others and the unchecked increase of small arms in the border areas was a major threat to peace in most of the Ethiopian pastoralist areas and had a negative impact on the peace and security. In the areas the chance of getting small arms from respective clans and from informal market was also very tremendous (Teshome, 2003). The provision of illegal arms large markets for local circulation might be an aggravating cause of conflict. Hence, the production and distribution of small arms and light weapons were catalyzing factors, as it made easy for the communities in Oromia and Somali border areas to engage in frequent armed conflicts.

A lot of questions have been raised about the role of regional states in the provision of security and administration along the borders. Security is the most important need a country can provide to its citizens. The wide-ranging unlawful ownership of firearms was suggestive that the states have failed and disregard security issues along the border belts (Kamenju J. Mwachofi and Francis Wairagu, 2003). The deplorable state of abandonment portrayed by regional states along the borderlines has continued to sustain violent criminal activities that continued almost unabated. This state of affairs forced the communities own firearms in order to defend their survival.

5.3.2.2.4.2 Cattle Raiding

In pastoral societies, cattle rustling is generally considered as acceptable means to acquire assets whether in times of retaliatory conflicts or under normal circumstances. Moreover, cattle rustling has taken on commercial character providing income to the youth who have no assets, especially when their inheritance is often small because it is divided among many siblings (Asnake, 2013). To the pastoralists, livestock are more than an economic asset. Cattle rustling has been emphasized throughout much of the bordering areas of Somali and Oromia population groups (see also Tigist, 2014; Temesgen and Lemma, 2010; Yasin, 2010). In addition, some argue that cattle rustling has also moved beyond limit among pastoralist communities as it has been often embedded with wider criminal networks serving national and regional black markets (see also Ronald and Mesfin, 2006).

The report obtained from Oromia and Somali regional states also explained that raiding of livestock was the other triggering and frequent causal factor of the conflicts around the borders. The reports noted that thousands of livestock had been subject to raids out of which only a few returned to owners. The report indicated that the raids and theft practices in the adjacent Weredas of Moyale, Wachile, Dhas, Arero and Guchi from the Oromia side and Moyale and Udet weredas of the Somali side were more frequent and rigorous in triggering conflicts (Oromia Region 2016). On the other hand, an elder from Somali stated that

*the young members of communities on both sides undertook raids in the past for cultural reasons such as retaliation of assaults. They kept the raided livestock with their respective groups and the return of the cattle would be possible through joint efforts of elders. That means the elders or the respective traditional leaders knew who undertook raids and the raiders often complied with orders.*¹⁰⁰

With regard to the current problem, a focus group discussant explained that

*Currently, most of the livestock raids have nothing to do with the cultures of the conflicting groups. Nowadays, not only are the elders largely unaware of the raids themselves but also are involved in them, for which the elders have no reason to spare their time as the raided livestock are in most cases soon sent to markets. This means that the contemporary raids appear to be devoid of any reason for elders back up during their preparations.*¹⁰¹

The discussants also mentioned that “... the young raiders have no room for their traditional leaders and the traditional leaders virtually have no say over those who advance their own economic interests, irrespective of the blood shade that follow the raids.”¹⁰² Thus, the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms were caught in a situation where the young members deny recognition to traditional rules and were determined to secure economic benefits. The challenge was two-fold: the young raiders were not only defiant but also ignorant of traditional institutions. Unlike the historical period when the Oromo and Somali elders took an active role in spearheading livestock raids for cultural reasons (Bekele, 2010), they have “little to do with the motivation of young raiders these

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Somali elder in Moyale town, September, 15, 2015.

¹⁰¹ Focus Group Discussions with Oromo and Somali elders, February and July 2016.

¹⁰² Ibid.

days to bear any meaningful influence” to urge exercise of restraint from conflict or comply with post-conflict demands of diffusing retaliatory moves.¹⁰³

Most of the key informants (particularly the youths from Oromia and Somali sides) argued that the pursuit of diametrically divergent interests between local elders and the government (politically) poses a substantial challenge to any meaningful functioning of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. Hence, this practice of taking away the basic source of survival of the pastoralist community along the border lines leaved them with nothing to do but work on conflicts to continue. In general, both arm circulation and raiding are major factors triggering conflicts along the common borders. They in turn contributed towards insecurity and generated a climate of fear between Oromo and Somali groups and made members of both communities vulnerable and further caused unending violent revenge attacks among them.

5.4 The Establishment of Regional Special Forces

5.4.1 Introduction

The sub-sections below discuss the creation of para military forces in Oromia and Somali regional states for the reason that the conflict must also be understood by the role played by the states. An attempt was made to show in detail how the establishment of these regional forces was connected to border conflicts. It has serious implication on the conflicts along the bordering areas of the regional states.

5.4.1.1. The *Fetno-Derash* of Oromia National Regional State

The *Fetno-Derash* of Oromia National Regional State is a para-military force primarily established to counteract the OLF which resumed guerilla warfare in different parts of Oromia including the Oromo- Somali border areas after it had withdrawn from the TGE. The shift in center-periphery relation with respect to Borana (Oromia) and Garri (Somali) by Ethiopian governments was first in favor of the Borana during the Imperial and Derg regime and later in favor of the Garri during the EPRDF. This had also profound impact

¹⁰³Discussions with Somali youth, Mi'esso February 17, 2016.

on Oromo- Somali relations and the border conflict. Hence, the conflict could be understood by the role played by the states. For example, the Borana informants noted that they had felt that the government was on the side of the Garri during most of the fights since 1992. There was suspicion by the government that the Borana inhabited territories were a 'breeding space' for the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). The Borana, who were in the past alliance of the Ethiopian Imperial and Derg government, were suspected by the EPRDF that they had given support to the OLF. This made a shift in the center-periphery relation,¹⁰⁴ which seems to have served the local balance of power in favor of the Garri (Asnake, 2010:621). Moreover, it appears that the Garri were emphasizing their Oromo identity during the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) when the OLF was considered the second most important political force in the country behind the TPLF/EPRDF (Asnake, 2010: 621). Soon after, when the politics of the post-1991 Ethiopia began to change; when OLF became no more part of EPRDF the Garri ended their affiliation with the Oromo and decided to join the Somali (Tigist 2014: 50).

One of the informants explained that maintaining peace and stability in the country especially in Oromia regional state and along its borders encountered a big challenge following the withdrawal of OLF from the Transitional Government. Accordingly, the *Fetno-Derash*, a para-military force of Oromia was established in 1995 to fight against OLF and safeguard the peace and security in the region and along its borders.¹⁰⁵ This force is accountable to regional police commission and was organized under one command and was not to be dispersed like ordinary police. The level of the training provided to this para military force was much better than that of the regular police and was closer to the training provided to the federal defense force. This force is deployed in hostile areas assumed to be beyond the control of the regular police. Main responsibilities of this force within the jurisdiction of the regional state are controlling guerilla fighters and anti-peace elements, if any, control riots and public unrest border related conflicts.

¹⁰⁴ It is beyond the scope of this thesis.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with ex-police commissioner of Oromia National Regional State, Addis Ababa, November, 20, 20016.

The structure of the *Fetno-Derash* was reformed and strengthened twice in 1998 and 2002 to ensure peace and stability within the jurisdiction of the regional state. However, in 2005, the then Ministry of Federal Affairs dissolved this force with the suspicion that it could be a challenge to federal forces if heavily armed and began to commit extra-judicial acts. Soon after the dissolution, some of the *Fetno-Derash* members were fused within federal police force; some with regular police of the region, some with the newly established Riot Control Force and a few resumed to work with the VIP¹⁰⁶ guard in the region. After the dissolution of the *Fetno-Derash police* in Oromia regional state, as will be discussed in the next section, another comparable *Liyu Police* (special police) was established in Somali regional state in 2007.

5.4.1.2. The Liyu (Special) Police of Somali National Regional State

The federal government's security objectives in the Somali Regional State has been threefold: the containment of armed resistance by the ONLF and its Eritrean patrons; securing the porous border between Ethiopia and the Somali territories from enemy infiltration, notably by radical Islamic groups like al-Shabaab and, before that, by al-Ittihad al-Islamiyah and the United Western Somali Liberation Front (UWLSF); and influencing political developments in neighboring Somalia in line with Ethiopian interests (Hagmann,2014:29). In April 2007, an ONLF attack on the Abole oil field in Degehabur became a turning point in the Ogaden conflict. At least 65 Ethiopian soldiers and oil workers, as well as nine Chinese employees of the Zhengyuan Petroleum Exploration Bureau, a subsidiary of Sinopec Limited, a Chinese oil and gas company, were killed in the attack.

As the result of the attack the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) escalated its operations against ONLF in the Somali Region. It was reported that most Ethiopian government repression had been carried out by the federal ENDF, but from 2010 onwards, the *Liyu* (Special) police, the regional militia which is composed of ethnic Somalis, mostly Ogaadeeni, has been running counter-insurgency activities against the ONLF and its supporters. A key point in the creation of *Liyu Police* was that Ethiopian

¹⁰⁶VIP represent Very Important Persons who are exclusive to public offices.

authorities wanted to fight ONLF using the same clans as the ones that ONLF recruited from the Ogaden clans especially from the Abdille (Ali Yosuf) clan. The people in the region often refer to Liyu Police as «Abdille» and defectors from ONLF. Thus the Liyu police is often considered merely as a tool of repression in the hands of the federal government (International Crisis Group 2013: 12; Hagmann, 2014:32; Land info, 2016:6).

In the wake of the attack on an oil field near Abole in April 2007 by the ONLF, *Liyu* Police was established in 2008 with about 42,000 well trained and heavily armed and has been operating with a high degree of legal impunity (Africa Intelligence 2015 cited in Land info, 2016:6). The *Liyu* police force which is accountable to the regional president was established under the current regional President Abdi Mohamed Omar in his capacity as chief of the Regional Bureau of Justice and Security. He has earned reputation for being a mercilessly anti-ONLF and for using cash and coercion to subdue, eliminate, or co-opt ONLF supporters by submitting them to important figures in the federal security apparatus (Hagmann,2014:24). It is also the outcome of a new set of patrons– client relations connecting powerful officers from ENDF to Somali Regional State president. As a result, since 2008 his regional presidential career has been dominated by the conflict with the ONLF, but his interest was subordinate to those of the Ethiopian military. The Eastern Command of Ethiopian military which was entrusted with the duty of protecting Ethiopia's borders with Somalia, Kenya, and Djibouti has economic interests in the Ogaden (Ibid). The Liyu police has been accused of extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, and torture of dissidents in Somali regional state. In March 2012, Liyu police force massacred 19 peoples in two days (HRW, 2013).

On the other hand, *Liyu* Police today is not only responsible for fighting ONLF, but also for protecting the border and for handling general security challenges in the region. *Liyu* Police has accomplished these tasks among other things by operating regional checkpoints and patrolling border areas. A number of media reports in 2015 showed that *Liyu* Police has been involved in battles and other incidents on the Somali side of the border of the Oromia Somali conflict (Land Info, 2016:2). Consequently, in January 2016, allegations appeared claiming that Liyu Police was deployed against

demonstrations, including in the city-state Dire Dawa and in Bedeno in the Ethiopian regional state of Oromia (Ibid:4). During its fact-finding mission in April 2016, Land info stated that there were rumors that *Liyu* Police had begun operating on the Oromian side of the regional state border (Landinfo, 2016:4).

It was reported that after the clamp down of the ONLF in Somali Regional State, the *Liyu* Police made repeated incursions well beyond their jurisdiction into neighboring Oromia. Oromo farmers reported that the *Liyu* police has been routinely deployed to settle even minor pastoral disputes between Somali and Oromo along the common border. A similar police unit in Oromia was disbanded in early 2000s, leaving locals and poorly armed militias to defend Oromia's territorial integrity against heavily armed paramilitary force. As a result, the *Liyu* Police faced little to no opposition in its cross-border raids, aggressive expansions and abuses inside Oromia state.¹⁰⁷ Likewise, VOA News reported that the *Liyu* Police, based in SRS, have been accused of killing the Oromo ethnic group (VOA News, September 29, 2017 1:14 pm).

In all incidents of conflicts between Oromia and Somali regional states, several reports on several occasions since 2011 were brought to the MOFPDA from regional states, zones , districts and local residents in several towns and villages along the borders, including Chinakson, Babile, Midhaga Tola, Deder , Gursum and others in East Hararge and Mieso in West Hararghe; Moyale, Wachile, Guchi , Arero in Borana; Liben and Gumii Edelo in Guji Zone in southern Oromia; as well as in Sewena, Rayitu, Beltu, Dawe Serer, Guradhamole and Meda Walabu wordas in Bale, south east Oromia. These incidents depicted that the incursion of the *Liyu* Police and attacking civilian communities since its establishment. Some practical instances are, the incident between Mi'esso district of Western Hararge zone of Oromia and Mi'esso of Shinille (Siti) zone of Somali from 2011-2017. Pertaining to this, an informant reported that,

In 2011, when conflict occurred between bordering communities on territorial expansion in Haro Merdema kebele of Mi'esso district, the Liyu police of SNRS have been found fighting with local militia of Oromia and fatalities mounted to 12 deaths,

¹⁰⁷See Zecharias Zelalem, Oromo-Somali conundrum: Can Ethiopia tame the *Liyu* police? Available at <http://www.opride.com/donate/september> 26, 2017 accessed October 10, 2017.

*19 injuries and 1750 IDPs coupled with destruction of properties and raiding cattle. In addition, the Liyu Police of SNRShave participated in clashes with local militia most frequently every year. When conflict started the Liyu police appeared forefront every time.*¹⁰⁸

Similarly, as chain of similar events followed, a fighting between local residents and the *Liyu* Police quickly spread to the south and south eastern Oromia, particularly in areas around Moyale and Negele Borana and has claimed unknown numbers of lives. In February and March, 2017, hundreds were reported to have been killed in the southern Oromia district of Negele Borena after an incursion by the *Liyu* Police, which was backed by the Somali region (BBC, 15 September, 2017). Pressured by media reports, the Communication Affairs Bureaus of both regional states made press releases on 27th of February 2017 in the middle of the severe conflict. Both regions acknowledged that violent conflicts were going on around their borders. However, both of them cautiously stated that the conflicts were neither between the people of the two regions nor between the two regional states. The statements were politically framed, and deliberately kept dubious in terms of stating the actors of the conflict. However, VOA News September 18, 2017 11:49 AM citing the head of the Oromia Communication Affairs Bureau, reported that members of the Oromo ethnic group were angered by the alleged recent detention and killing of four respected community figures by special police, known as the *Liyu* police which came from the Somali region. Members of the *Liyu* Police crossed over to villages under the administration of the Oromia regional state and attacked civilians. However, the Somali regional government has rejected the allegations. The Oromo and Somali leaders accused each other of committing atrocities (Africa News, 09/10/2017).¹⁰⁹

Sometimes later, this issue attracted the impetus of the highest law-making organ of Oromia National Regional State (ORNS) which reflected the matter on the “Caffee” Oromia meeting or Regional Council Meeting convened in Adama town. The discussion in the meeting, which was transmitted live on Oromia Television, was dominated by the issue of the conflict. Being nervous to the situation on the ground, members of the

¹⁰⁸ Interview with resident in Mi’esso, February, 16, 2016.

¹⁰⁹ Available at <http://www.africanews.com/2017/10/09/oromo-families-cry-foul-in-recent-conflict/> accessed on September 13, 2017.

council openly spoke out that “the Oromia regional state was under attack by the Somali regional state *Liyu* Police at the forefront”. The member of the regional council representing the border district from Eastern Hararge openly said:

... on the current ongoing conflicts, I am conveying to you a situation we are living in (communities around the border), we have been frustrated by the conflict, we experience daily. We have been attacked and invaded by the Somali Liyu Police backed by the Somali leadership at different levels. The scope of the conflict is beyond the competition for resources (watering and grazing points) but it is about territorial expansion. The Somalis are in war to ensure this expansion. In our eight districts most kebeles were invaded by this force and they (the Somalis) erected their flags. They are not satisfied in rural areas, now they are trying to invade the district capitals. We were denied services from our district offices. Public services such as Hospitals, schools were looted, destroyed.... When the Somali regional government was violently attacking us, the Federal army was watching. Why this army was not doing anything? [...] what has gone wrong in our relation with the Federal army? We have raised this issue before but the Federal government was pretending as if the issue was a conflict over water and pasture. In reality, it was not. It was rather a war for expansion of territory. The Federal force was reluctant to prevent such a conflict...In West Hararge, Mi'esso district, a member of the Liyu police have been captured and is in custody.¹¹⁰

The open and emotionally charged discussions in the *Caffee* meeting implicates that the conflict has been transformed to territorial expansion. The *Liyu* Police has made attacks on the communities along the borders and revealed the political tension between the two ethno- national regional states and exposed the usually concealed actors in the conflict. In addition, not only the *Liyu* Police but also the Federal army has been implicated in the conflict through inaction which poses the question with regard to the intention of its neutrality. Over all, the members of the council also clearly articulated that the violent and deadly conflict taking place between the borders of both regional states was over territorial disputes pushed by the *Liyu* Police and backed by the Somali leadership.

On 16 September 2017, the Communication Affairs Bureau of Oromia NRS reported that Selama Mohamed, Gursum (Oromia) wereda administrator, Mohamed Abdurrahman former security affairs deputy head of Deder wereda (Oromia) as well as Tajudin Jamal, a member of the Oromia police in Harar, were abducted from a car on their route to Harar

¹¹⁰ Taken from the speech of a member of Caffee Oromia on Ordinary Session of the Caffee Meeting, Adama, Galma Abagada Hall, and March, 2017.

from Jijiga, the capital of SNRS, were taken to the police station of Somali by *Liyu* police. Selama and Tajudin Jamal were found dead in the local place called Bombas, half way between Harar and Jijiga, while Mahammad Abdurrahman got hurt but escaped and referred to Dil Chora Hospital in Dire Dawa for treatment. The incident triggered mass protest in August and September in different cities of Oromia including the city of Awaday. In retaliation to the killings of the mentioned persons by the *Liyu* Police, in an incident in Awaday, a locality in the Oromia region, though not confirmed, it was reported that the Oromos killed 18 Somali traders of khat, a popular euphoria plant in Ethiopia (Africa News,09/10/2017). The revenge to one another spread to other districts, Hawi Gudina and Daro Labu districts in Oromo region which do not share border with Somali-Ethiopia attacked Ibssa and Ta'oo localities. Here, 29 Oromos were killed as a result of the retaliation. He also added that 360 houses were burned down by the gunmen from SNRS. On the other hand, according to Addisu Arega, the killings of 32 persons of Somali-Ethiopians-whom were sheltered in the area following a previous round of violence in Gadulo kebele appeared to be a vengeance killing organized and coordinated by an Oromo named as Ziad Teha who lost his brother Ahmed Teha, whom Addisu Arega described as a very popular person in Hawi Gudina and Daro Labu, in protecting people in Hawi and Daro region (Addisu Arega press release in OBN TV). With regard to the number of casualties in Gadulo which Addis Arega put to 32 was much lower than figures reported by other media outlets (Aaron Maasho, Reuters Dec. 18, 2017, at 2:01 a.m.). In the next sub sections, the analysis focused on two cases – Mi'esso and Moyale – that would help to explain the Oromo-Somali border conflict around the Oromia-Somali regional states.

5.5. Selected Cases Explaining Oromia- Somali Conflict

In this following sub sections, I will discuss two cases –Mi'esso and Moyale – in order to explain the Oromo-Somali conflict around the borders of Oromia and Somali regional states. These districts are selected following their similarities and differences. Their similarities lay on the fact that both of them have been conflict prone areas and have experienced frequent conflicts since the regionalization process in the post 1991. In both districts, the 2004 referendum was conducted along contested kebeles. The Mi'esso

referendum was “successful” but allegations and claims followed subsequently after the announcement of the results. The referendum in Moyale, in certain kebeles, failed due to procedural irregularities. Hence, conflicts have continued until recently and aggravated since post 1991 in both districts. Both districts are geographically strategic for the regions. Mi’esso is found on the outlet of the railway line that connects Ethiopia to the port of Djibouti and Myole (Oromia) is a border town that connects Ethiopia and Kenya. Their difference is that Mi’esso district is located in the eastern most in which the Ittu/Nole Oromo groups confront with Issa of Somali clan whereas Moyale is located at the southernmost where Borana Oromo and Garri of Somali. Dual administration of Oromia and Somali regional states in Moyale town could be a reason for unabated conflict in the area since 1991. Henceforth, both districts are used to explain the boundary disputes between Oromia and Somali regional states.

5.5.1. Mi’esso District:

5.5.1.1. Background

Geographically Mi’esso district is located 291 km to the east of Addis Ababa. It is found in the lowland area next to the Awash valley, nearby the Hararge Mountains. The railway that connects Addis Ababa to Djibouti and the highway that connects Eastern and central Ethiopia passes through Mi’esso. Due to the existing contestation over that area, both Oromia and Somali regional states use Miesso as the name of the two neighboring districts belonging to the two regions.

Both Mi’esso districts are inhabited by Oromo and Somali. The two major Somali clans inhabiting Mi’esso are Issa who are largely pastoralists and Hawiya who practice mixed farming. Most of the Issa speak only Somali language, while Hawiya and other minority Somali clans in the district speak both Somali and Afan Oromo. The Oromo local groups include Ittu, Alia, Noolle, and Obora. The majority of Oromo clans in the district are agro-pastoralists and sedentary farmers. They speak Afan Oromo. In the towns, apart from Somali and Oromo, there are also small number of Amhara, Gurage, and other minority ethnic groups (Getachew, 2006; Shide, 2003). The district residents draw their

livelihoods from the livestock rearing and mixed farming under a harsh ecological environment, where inadequate rainfall and recurrent droughts are common.

During the Derg regime Mi'esso district was under Asabe-Tefari sub-province (Awraja) of West Hararge Province. Following the formation of ethnic-based regional states in 1991, both the Oromia and Somali regional states started to claim and counter claim over the ownership of the district. Consequently, the district was divided into two and put under Oromia and Somali regional states' administrations with no clearly demarcated border between them.

Initially, it was the Oromia regional state which opened its district administrative offices in Mi'esso town. After a while the Somali regional state started to open a parallel office in the town (Getachew, 2006; Shide, 2003). Both regional states continued expanding their sphere of influences to the other towns and rural *kebeles* in the district. When these developments took place shaping the prospects for conflicts no early response was given. During the transitional period, the government institutions at all levels were weak. The district hosted several ethnic-based political parties among, OPDO, OLF, IFLO forces on the Oromia side, and IGLF, DUP, and later on ESDL on the Somali side. All these political parties have been directly and indirectly involved in the dispute (Shide, A.2003; Getachew, M. 2006). Obviously, ethnicity has become the primary means of ethnic mobilization. A key informant explained that:

*The claim of each of the ethnic-based political forces (especially OLF, IGLF, DUP, and after the transitional period OPDO and ESDL) to include Mi'esso and its neighborhoods into their respective jurisdictions have spoiled the peaceful co-existence between the residents of Mi'esso and especially between Hawiya (Somali) and Ittu (Oromo). Their relationships have been spoiled by the growing Oromo and Somali nationalism. Initially, this situation has affected the areas jointly inhabited by Hawiya and Ittu clans. As a result, the two groups started to separate their grazing land, then continuous violent conflicts took place between the two....*¹¹¹

According to Ahmed Shide, (2003);

Violence initially broke out between Issa and Hawiya Somalis, and Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) fighters in Afdem, Mullu and M'ieso areas in 1992.... "In Mi'esso

¹¹¹Interview with official in Mi'esso of Oromia, February,17, 2016, Mi'esso Town.

town alone, more than 10 people died from both sides. But OLF Forces retaliated by killing 17 Hawiya senior elders and, as a result Hawuya were displaced from Kora area in the district and from the other neighboring districts of Oromia regional state. Similarly, local Oromos living in a neighboring adjacent to Afdem district have been displaced from Afdem town during the violence between OLF and Issa pastoralist fighters (p.23).

These violent conflicts between the contending ethnic-based political forces ended after various clan-based Somali political parties merged into ESDM and later on ESDL party, and when OLF left the Transitional Government in 1992 and went back to guerilla war against federal government (Getachew, 2006; Shide, 2003). Local conflicts in the district have also taken a new shape in the years following the transitional period as the rebels got weakened. From this period on wards, the Somali and Oromo local conflicts over disputed areas along the boundary has become intensified and developed into an inter-regional state boundary dispute. In their attempt to enlarge areas under their jurisdiction primarily the urban settlements and revenue sources in the district, local elites of both sides started to mobilize people in the district along ethnic lines. This again fueled the traditional resource conflicts and territorial dispute and animosities established during transitional period (Ali, 2005; Ahmed, 2003). The intensity of conflict has increased after the 2004 referendum (see section 5.3.2.2.2.). The referendum took place in October 2004. Residents of fifteen contested *kebeles* around Mi'esso casted ballot to determine to which administrative region they wanted to belong. Accordingly, fourteen *kebeles* voted in favour of Oromia and only one *kebele* voted to be administered by the Somali regional state (NEBE Report 2004; OBAS Report, 2016). Though the Somali regional state officially accepted the overall result of the referendum at the time, the its officials now argue that they rejected the result of the referendum. Pertaining to this, Somali informant stated that:

*The referendum was conducted when the number of Somalis who were in the area were limited due to their seasonal movement, the Oromia Regional State exploited the opportunity and won Mi'esso town as a result. Somalis did not accept the outcome of the referendum and claimed Mi'esso town especially the surrounding Kebeles.*¹¹²

¹¹² Interview with former Somali Mi'esso Woreda official, Mi'esso town, February, 17, 2016.

The Somalis retrospective argument uses pastoral way of life – seasonal migration as a reason for their loss in the referendum. However, not only the Oromo informants argue against the accusation, but also the official result from the HoF proves the falsity of the allegation from the Somali side.¹¹³ The Somali local officials were quite open that the Somalis were regretting the loss of territory in the referendum¹¹⁴. Actually, that was why the officials from Oromia side stated that the major cause of the conflict between Oromo and Somali groups around Mi'esso area was by no means grazing and water points but control of the territory including the Mi'esso town by the force which lost the vote through referendum. Mi'esso's economic importance due to its location as an outlet to Eastern Ethiopia and Djibouti has been usually raised in attracting Somali attention¹¹⁵. The next, discussion deals with the competition over resource.

5.5.1.2. Competition over Natural Resource

While conflicts caused by territorial claims and counterclaims are political, there are also competitions over resources such as grazing land, water and forestlands in the everyday lives. These competitions have contributed in escalating the existing local tensions in the study sites. The Oromo inhabited areas of Mi'esso are relatively highland, better endowed with pasture, water and forest. The majority of Oromos also practised agro-pastoralism. The inhabited area, which is east of the Oromia, is drier and the Somali mode of life is dominated pastoralism which is characterized by frequent mobility in relation to seasonal change in search for grazing land and water.

The grazing land particularly the water wells dried and decreased in number as a result of climate change. Documentary evidences showed that as a result of deforestation and desertification in the area, the forests of Asabot Mountain and its vast grass land decreased and reached to the point where it could not supply the huge livestock in the area with grazing land and water. Yet, the area which is owned by the Oromos is relatively rich compared to Somali inhibited areas, in terms of grass land and water.

¹¹³ Interview with Oromo elder Mi'esso, February, 16, 2016.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Somali Mieso Woreda official, Mi'esso, February, 17, 2016.

¹¹⁵ Interview with member of the parliament formerly resident in the area, August, 2016

During dry season, the Somalis move towards the Oromo land in search of pasture and water for their livestock and settle in the area temporarily (Dereje, 2009). Describing this tradition an Oromo elder stated that they [Oromo and Somali] shared the resources together when they came to the area for short time of settlement. The two ethnic groups used to resolve their misunderstandings which arose from the use of water and grazing land through traditional resource management mechanisms. But after the resource became scarce the Somalis began to hold the remaining resources for themselves alone and they started to settle in the area for a long period of time unlike the previous practices. Finally, their prolonged settlement in the area resulted in seizing our land and resources. The Oromo eventually are forced to protect their land from the occupying pastoralists.¹¹⁶ An Oromo focus group discussant who lived with neighboring Isa Somali stated that drought is directly related to the conflict in two ways: first we are unable to plough our land even when there is good rainfall because we are engaged with the Issa in conflict or in peace conference arranged by the local government officials. Second, the Issa let their camel to the farm which results in damage of the harvest.”¹¹⁷

Regarding the natural resource competition, Somali elders underscored the fact that “...these days the environment is not enabling for pastoralists. The dry season is becoming more longer than it used to in the early years and the Somalis are forced to stay at the Oromo area for longer time than the usual times. This resulted in Oromos feel fear of losing the land to Issas permanently.”¹¹⁸ This was also further noted in focus group discussion with Somalis. They avowed that “... there were mutual agreements between the ethnic groups using the resources in the past but now things have changed. While reflecting on their relationship they said that in the old good days our herdsmen and the Oromos were like brothers but now when they see each other they started to shout at each other and fight.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶Interview with Oromo elder, Mi’esso, February, 16, 2016.

¹¹⁷Focus group discussion with Oromos Mi’esso, February, 18, 2016.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Somali elder, Mieso, February, 16, 2016.

¹¹⁹ Focus group discussion with Somali, February, 18, 2016.

Elders of both Somali and Oromos believed that the recent drought was actually affecting both Oromo and Somali pastoralists equally and made them to compete for resources particularly water and pasture and still the tension in the area continued. The information obtained from elders and local government officials in the area indicated that conflicts were typically triggered due to the current El Niño which forced them to settle close to each other in order access the available resources. Rainfall variability in these dry zones affected forage availability, livestock production, access to water resources and ultimately the human security of pastoral communities. In this sense, variability in precipitation may directly or indirectly instill conflict or cooperation among pastoral communities.¹²⁰ Another informant added that when there was a drastic change in climatic conditions, especially with reference to drought, which is caused mainly by decreasing rainfall and rainfall variability, the area was characterized by worsening and increased competition over diminishing scarce resources. Dwindling resources compelled pastoralist communities to fight with one another. On top of this, the problem associated with 2016 El-Niño related drought in the country has exacerbated the problem more than the usual in these areas.¹²¹ This indicates that since the key natural resources are getting scarce and scarce; there are multiple claims over the access and ownership of such resources. Due to this, the agro pastoralists and pastoralist communities in the area have become alert and sensitive to any attempts that may lead to conflict.

In summary, the above discussion indicates that the major cause of the conflict around Mi'esso was related to scarce resource competition pressurized by environmental changes and claims over territories. These conflicts were further triggered and manipulated by different factors and finally brought about mass sufferings for decades along the borders. On the other hand, the nonexistence of viable conflict prevention mechanism in place has obstructed in the mitigation of the conflict in the area.

¹²⁰ Discussion with Experts of Mi'esso Rural and Agricultural Development Department, Mi'esso, February, 17, 2016..

¹²¹ Ibid.

5.5.1.3.Territorial Claims and Conflict

The territorial claims and counter claims between Oromia and Somali regions were discussed in general terms above. The focus in this section is to substantiate the earlier discussion with an account from Mi'esso. Talking about the causes of the conflict and territoriality, a key informant from Mi'esso of Oromia elucidated that

*The Oromo-Somali conflict in the post-1991 around Mi'esso revolve mainly around two major causes. These are competition for resources due to environmental changes year after year and the push of one ethnic group to cross into the territory of other groups and resistance over controlling that area. The second cause is related to expansion of the Somalis into the territory of the Oromo as clearly seen over the past two decades. This created frequent clashes between Oromos and Somalis along the borders. The government has tried to curb the problem by conducting peace referendum in 2004 but no demarcation has taken place. In the aftermath of the referendum, following the announcement of the result, the conflict again erupted in the area.*¹²²

In addition, another informant said that Somalis have strong ambition to control the fertile areas in every direction because their land is now becoming less hospitable to their livestock. As a result, they raise the issue of territorial claim and start to expand into two directions to have more land; the directions are in the border areas of Afar and Oromia regional states.¹²³

In addition to this, an Oromo elder stated that the conflict “is purely [attributed to] the expansion policy of Somalis towards Oromo land in the name of administrative boundary”. Both informants recount how the Somalis evacuated the Afar from their place in the past thirty years and now how they wanted to do the same to Oromo. They argued that had the problem been about administrative border, it would have been resolved through the 2004 referendum. “The Somalis still do not accept the result of the referendum and they claim the town of Mi'esso. Their design is to the territories they claim by creating tensions in the surrounding”.¹²⁴

¹²² Interview with an official from Oromia- Mi'esso wereda Administration, February, 17, 2016.

¹²³ Interview with an official in Mi'esso of Oromia administration and Security office, Mi'esso, February, 17, 2016.

¹²⁴ Interview with Oromo elder, Mi'esso, February, 16, 2016.

FGD participants in Mi'esso further explained that the Somali elites at kebele, district, zone and region levels have repeatedly devised new and divergent mechanisms to create tensions and conflicts, sometimes simply due to their personal dissatisfactions in their political positions. Some of these mechanisms of creating tensions and conflicts in the community were encouraging illegal settlements and building schools in the contested areas. The other was hoisting of the regional flag outside of their respective administrative regional boundaries which had its own implications regarding entitlements of ownership to such areas. In addition to this, a local police officer described that "... territorial claims and conflicts along the boundaries of the two peoples in Mi'esso district are in most cases triggered and accompanied by other factors such as influx of arms, unemployment and deficit in good governance from both sides of the regional state borders."¹²⁵ From the above discussions, it should be clear that multiple factors instigated conflicts even though it is usually called conflict over contested borders.

5.5.2. Moyale District

5.5.2.1. Background

Moyale, a border town between Ethiopia and Kenya, has strategic significance as a gateway to Kenya from southern Ethiopia. An asphalt road connects it to Addis Ababa. Like other towns in southern Ethiopia, the development of the Moyale town was associated with the expansion of the Ethiopian State at the end of the 19th century and the formation of administrative and military centers in conquered territories. The Ethiopian town of Moyale was initially a military post established to control the border of the Ethiopian empire against the British in Kenya. The Moyale town became the capital of Moyale district in the 1930s. This was changed to the Oromian Moyale district in 1991. In 1995, the Somali national regional state established its own Moyale district, inhabited by the Garri, and opened administrative offices in the same town, Moyale (Fekadu, 2011; see also Bassi, 2010). Since then, political control of Moyale has been contested between the Borana and Garri at the local level, and by the Oromia National Regional State and Somali National Regional State in the national political arena. Currently, there are two

¹²⁵Interview with police commander in Mi'esso of Oromia, February, 17, 2016.

competing administrative structures based in the same town, one for Oromia and one for Somali. The competing state structure is a real challenge for the residents of Moyale.

Most existing literature indicates that the conflict over Moyale has often been between Borana Oromo and Garri Somali pastoralists at the local level (Fekadu, 2011; Asnake, 2010; Melkamu, 2016:48; Tigist, 2014; Gololcha, 2015). The Gabra clan are also another major actor. The Borana, Garri and Gabra predominantly live in the former Borana¹²⁶ province. All the three groups straddle the international border to northern Kenya (Asnake, 2010:620). The Garri also inhabit in the Southern Somalia. In the present politico-administrative setting in Ethiopia, the Borana and Garri are found in the Borana and Dawa¹²⁷ zones of Oromia and Somali regional states respectively (Fekadu, 2011; Asnake, 2010:620). The Gabra are divided between the two, though the majority of them live in Oromia. Linguistically, Afan Oromo is the lingua-franca of the region, though the Garri have increasingly adopted Somali recently. The relationships among the three groups have been reconfigured and politicized over the course of many decades. Actually, the dispute between the Borana and Garri goes back to the Italian occupation of Ethiopia (1935-41), when Garri supported the Italians and the Borana remained loyal to Ethiopia. The conflict was intensified and took a territorial conflict shape during the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia following the latter's independence in 1960. This period politicized inter-group relationships among these three Afan Oromo speaking groups with a lasting impact (Gebru, 1996; Getachew, 1996, 2002; Markakis, 1987; Schlee, 1989; Yaqob, 1997 cited in Asnake, 2010: 620). However, it is the post-1991 Ethiopian ethnic based administrative decentralization that caused contestations between the three mainly over Moyale. Ethnic regionalization required the Garri and the Gabra, who share both Oromo and Somali ethno-linguistic features, to identify themselves with either the Oromia or the Somali region. The process of inter-regional boundary making was thus intertwined with renegotiation of identity (Asnake, 2010: 621).

¹²⁶ Currently the former Borana Region is divided into three administrative zones: The Borana and Gujii zones of the Oromia region and the Liban zone of the Somali region.

¹²⁷ The Somali regional state divided the former Liban zone in to two and created new and named it Dawa zone.

Moreover, the large influx of Garri and other Somali ‘returnees’ to the town of Moyale and its surroundings through the controversial refugee repatriation programmes provided an additional incentive for the Garri to demand their inclusion in the Somali region (Bassi,1997; Getachew, 1996 cited in Asnake, 2010:621). For the Gabra, by contrast, deciding on the question of whether to join the Oromia or the Somali region proved internally divisive and brought those more conflicts with the Borana. The position of the Gabra is one of vacillation between the two regions (Asnake, 2010:621).

Along similar line, Teshome argues that the Borana and Garri developed mutual suspicion after the Ethio-Somali War in 1977/78. One of the reasons was that the Garris were considered as the supporters of the Somali government during the war. Hence, when the war ended, some of the Garri members became refugees into Kenya and Somalia. After the overthrow of the Derg Regime in 1991, the Gerri returned to Ethiopia as returnees and settled in and around Moyale Woreda. Since 1992, both the Oromia and Somali regions have claimed the town and its surrounding areas and has become a areat of flashpoint. The claims and counter claims resulted in the formation of double administration for one and the same town. This invited both regions' local administrations and local ethnic-based elites to get involved directly and indirectly which aggravated the conflict (Teshome, 2009).

5.5.2.2. Resource competition and Territorial Claims

A long-standing resource and territorial disputes between the Borana on one side and the Garri and other Somali clans on the other turned into inter-regional boundary conflict between the Oromia and Somali regions in the post-1991 political context. The Garri lived under the Oromia administration, and the Garri ethnic entrepreneurs chose to join the Somali region immediately after its establishment in January 1993. Soon after that decision, they began laying claim to territories which were either jointly used by them and the Borana or belonged to Borana. These included two of the nine prominent Borana permanent water wells named El Ley and El Gof as well as Moyale town (Asnake, 2010:624).

By the same token, Teshome (2009) argues that during the transitional period, fighting started between the two groups. According to the Borana version of the story, the Garri, with the assistance of some government officials reoccupied areas like Ela Ley, Ela Gof, Dhoksu, Igal, Badde and the like and thereafter, the area under question were confined to Somali regional state. But the Garris argued that the land they settled on belongs to them. They claimed that they had been pushed away from that area during the Derg regime and that they had only repossessed their own land that they believed lost. The argument *over the ownership of land* between Gerri and Borana was not limited to grazing land but also dealt with land for watering and traditional gold mining, and furthermore the right to administer Moyale town (Teshome, 2009).

Asnake (2010), argues that the continued standoff over Moyale shows how inter-group relations have become entangled in the new politics of the Somali and the Oromia regions. The federal government has attempted to resolve the conflict through both political and legal instruments, but without success. The two regions still contest the ownership of Moyale town which lies on the Ethiopia–Kenya border and because of this unresolved territorial dispute, there are now dual and conflicting Somali and Oromo administrations within the town, including Oromo and Somali police stations, courts, public prosecutors’ offices, finance and educational institutions, all with overlapping and competing jurisdictions. The town has been unofficially divided into two zones the eastern part of the town for the Garri and the western part for the Borana and the asphalt road that dissects the town serves as unofficial boundary (Asnake, 2010). Pertaining to this issue an informant from Moyale of Oromia explained that:

*The causes of the conflict along the borders of Moyale Oromia and Moyale Somali are multiple. The first is that in the post – 1991, the Garris are claiming the land area which originally belonged to the Borana. The second, is that the intention of the Garri is to control the areas of Moyale district including Moyale town through strategic illegal settlement and border expansion schemes. The third is that the absences of clear administrative boundary and the unresolved long standing and frequent conflicts between both communities. Fourthly, the scarcity of natural resources accompanied by environmental impacts has also detrimental effect on the conflict in the area.*¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Interview with official in Moyale wereda, Moyale, September, 15, 2015.

Likewise, another informant from Moyale Oromia stated that the context of the conflict has been changed around Moyale for the reason that when the Gerri came back from their refugee life in Somalia, they settled on the land which was formerly belonged to Borana. In addition, Borana has a tradition for receiving settlers to allow using grazing and watering on its land. However, the Gerri violated this long traditional practice first to contact the Aba Ela. The practice forced the settler first to contact the Abba Ela. Later on, the Abba Ela elders and the leaders of the area (Dida) would consult each other, and then allow a certain family to settle and share grazing land and water points. This traditional practice of the Borana was violated by the Gerri returnees and settled in the area without securing the permission of Abba Ela and erect their flag claiming that they have the right to settle and live in the area.¹²⁹

This implies that the causes of the conflict in the area are supposed to be multiple. The grazing and watering points of the Borana were taken without the will of the Borana and thus they considered this as border expansion and the Borana felt that their traditional practices of receiving settlers was undermined. The Borana viewed these situations as the Garri had a dream and strategic plan to control and own economic and administrative power over the rural and urban areas of Moyale district. This would make the Borana community nervous and forced them to prepare themselves for frequent conflict. These areas are considered historic to Boranas'' where both Kenyans and Ethiopian- Boranas had lived and still living, but with an anxiety and constant fear of recurrent conflict. On the other hand, the Somali informants counter argued the Borana narrative saying:

*It is the nature of pastoral livelihoods that demand mobility guided by the need for access to water and grazing land rather than expansion for bordering lands. The cause of the conflict is about competition over resources. When this movement is restricted often it ends up with violent conflict with neighboring groups. The Garri's interests and what they seek to achieve in this conflict is to have access and use of all resources in the southern part of Ethiopia in equal foot with that of the Borana.*¹³⁰

In this regard, Gololcha (2015:61), states that the objective of Garris in the area was that of owning all the economic and the political benefits of Moyale town. Likewise, Melkamu (2016) noted that being closely linked with leadership of Somali region, the

¹²⁹ Interview with Aba Gada in Moyale of Oromia, Moyale town, September, 15, 2015.

¹³⁰ Interview with Garri elder of Moyale (Somali), September, 15, 2015.

Garri were tasked to ensure the territorial autonomy of the land under their control and in some case to herald the redefinition of the boundary in areas which they suppose the Borana took over their land using historic advantages (Melkamu, 2016:49).

An official from Garri depicted that “the Borana still stick to their traditional and historical positions which grantees them upper hand in the area. In this regard, the Garri are forced to enter in to conflict to avert the status-quo to share the resource that Borana is usually claiming ownership and the Garri are also entitled to own the resource in the area.”¹³¹ Another informant also reported that “... Conflict memory continues to be a motivation for attacking, injuring and killing. Each community has memorized the incidence of violent attacks by their adversaries, and as a result the feelings of hatred have gradually been built up and passed over the decades to generations.”

On the other hand, all the informants from both groups portrayed unanimously that in most rural areas of Moyale districts of Oromia and Somali regions, recurrent drought aggravated the causes of the conflict. Food sources for livestock of the area could not satisfy the existing need throughout the year. Indeed, extended droughts usually do lead to conflicts once the meager resource supplies get exhausted. During the dry season, the problem was mostly cross border resource sharing. In general, as observed from all sources, the causes of conflict between Borana and Garri were a combination of territorial contestation, scarcity of livelihood resources, culture, politics, socio-economic and life style. The next figure shows the major conflict senarios around Moyale since 1990.

¹³¹ Interview with a Garri official in Moyale, September, 15, 2015.

Table 2: List of some of the Major Conflicts in the Moyale Area since 1990

Period	Place	Parties involved	Bone of contention
1990	Gofa, Wachile, Raaroo	Borana v. Garri, Gabra	Resource; border
1992	All over Borana area	Borana v. Garri	“
1992-93	Madar, Orotoo, Wachile, Udet, Borbor, Gobso	Borana v. Garri	“
1993	Guchi and Chamuk	Borana v. Garri,	“
1997-98	Areas bordering Gujii, Galaba	Borana v. Guji	“
2000	Arero	Borana v. Gabra	“
	Lae	Borana v. Garri, Sarawit	“
2001	Dhas	Borana v. Garri	“
2002	Ley, Gof, Udet, Amiko, Dambala, Wacu	Borana v. Garri	“
2002-03	Tate, Guchi, Moyale	Borana v. Garri, Gabra	“
2004	Oroto, Wachile, Dhas, Mata, Arba	Borana v. Garri	“
2006- 08	Areo, Udet	Borana v. Garri	“
2012	Moyale, Tuqa	Borana v. Garri	“
2013- 2016	Moyale, Tuqa	Borana v. Garri	“
Since Aug2017	Moyale, Guchi, Lag sure, Chamuk	Borana v. Garri	“

Source: Oromia Administration and Security Bureau Archive, 2016 and Own compilation from Interviews

The above table indicated that since the introduction of the regionalization process in the country, frequent local conflicts have persisted between Oromia and Somali regional states around Moyale. Moreover, one could realize that the failure in instituting viable mechanisms of conflict prevention and early warning and response systems to mitigate conflicts along the borders. Moyale not only has two separate administrations, segregated schools, and parallel court systems but also rival police forces and confrontational local militia. More than 20 years after ethnic federalism was introduced, tensions between the

two sides - Borana Oromo and Garri Somalis – were as fraught as ever. Gardner¹³² interviewed Ibrahim in Moyale

There is a serious problem emerging,” said Ibrahim, an elderly Somali man in the courtyard of a hotel on the Oromo side of the road. As a clan elder, he has freedom to sit in places that younger Garri men would avoid, he said. Ill feeling between the two communities stretches back decades, but recent events have reopened old wounds. A clash between two armed groups near Moyale in April resulted in tit-for-tat killings, with at least one Garri and one Borana reported dead (both groups claim more), and injuries on either side (May, 16, 2017).

The data obtained from Oromia Administration and Security Bureau explains that each conflicting group from both areas were strengthening power by gathering gunmen, initiating others to cooperate with them, provoking each party to fight, equipping members with gun, hiding or accommodating criminals and creating alliances. Consequently, each group sought its own way of defending itself against the perceived menace or danger to come from other ethnic community. Such an action by one of the ethnic groups would become a kind of early warning” for a neighboring ethnic community which would feel that its security was being threatened (OBAS Archive, 2013).¹³³

As discussed earlier, factors behind the Moyale conflict were several some of which were explicit while others were quite implicit and also largely diverse and multi-dimensional. One of the factors for conflict, according to some informants was related to the history of the “Greater Somalia” ambition leading to territorial claims. In 1970s the Somali forces guided by that ambition and attacked Moyale. In this regard, an official from Oromia regional state reported through media that in the conflict broke out around Moyale (Chamuk, Guchi, Lag sure and Wachile localities) in September 2017, a member of Somalia Republic National Army was captured with his ID Card while fighting on the side of the Somali regional state guided by the Garri against the Oromia regional state

¹³² Tom Gardner is the editor journalist of the *Guardian Newspaper* on issues of Governance; see the *Guardian Newspaper*, Tuesday, May 2017.

¹³³ The researcher could not manage to get written document from Somali region to make comparison in this regard. However, the informant from the same region depicted the causes mentioned above are the main head ache of the region.

where the Borana were at the forefront.¹³⁴ However, the Embassy of Somalia based in Addis Ababa, did not confirm this allegation. No matter whether the conflict was treated from the pastoralist dimension of resource competition or from the politics of ethnic federalism which required the assignment of territory to one ethnic group against the other territory was a crucial element. As a result, conflict over territory often combines strong economic and emotional values (USAID, 2012: 16).

Demarcating the boundary of the two regions around Moyale have become contentious because not only there were longstanding resource and territorial conflicts among the three groups but also due to the difficulty of dividing the three groups into clear-cut ethnic categories/regions (Melkamu, 2016). This implies that conflict over territory could express itself in the form of identity conflict so long as the members of identity groups have interest in articulating their claims through the lenses of ethnic identity. Elites can easily politicize ethnicity to access political or economic benefits. Based on this argument, one can easily understand that the conflicts in Moyale and its areas exhibits politicized ethnicity. On top of this, the other cause of conflict was that the area is the main route of contraband revenues which is the backbone of contention among the local elites.¹³⁵ Over all, territoriality, politicization of ethnicity, socio-economic factors and environmental pressures emerged as critical factors in understanding the conflict dynamics around Moyale.

5.6. Consequences of Oromo- Somali Border Conflict in the Post 1991

The bulk of existing literature tends to ignore any discussion of the effects of ethnic conflict, although this matter deserves special attention. The intensity of the effects of an ethnic clash is determined by the nature and scope of the conflict concerned. The adverse effect of violent ethnic conflict could be categorized into political, economic and social factors. As experiences in other contexts have shown, the political effects of ethnic conflicts can result in weakening and at the extreme cases in the collapse of central government and disintegration of the country. Seen from economic angle, ethnic conflict

¹³⁴ Addisu Arega, Oromia Regional State Communication Bureau Head, Oromia Broadcast Network News 1:00 hr. 13, Sept 2017

¹³⁵ Interview with Oromia (Moyale) official, 2016, Moyale Town, September, 20, 2015.

destroys the very bases of development. The resources that could have been invested for development would be shifted to cover the expenses of the conflict. The social impact of the conflict is perhaps the most severe outcome (Danye, 2009:23). What is hinted above could justify the cases of Oromia and Somali border conflict.

As I have discussed above, in the Oromo- Somali border conflicts have been built over a long period of time, and thus early warning signs were noticed in most cases but not reacted to and as a result brought about numerous economic, political and social (humanitarian) crisis due to lack of viable institution of conflict early warning systems.

It is difficult to come up with the exact number of fatalities, humanitarian crises and material damages wreaked to the people in relation to the conflicts along this border line since 1991 to date. In this regard, I sought to get documentary evidences from both regional states. Accordingly, the Oromia regional state Administration and Security Bureau have provided me with some non-compiled reports and documents which were cumbersome to work with it. However, if not at all, I took the opportunity to collect and compile the casualties from the years 2011- 2017. From the Somali side I relied on the explanation of key informants who reported that the casualties of conflict were disallowed according to the culture of Somali community and every harm inflicted was kept secret.¹³⁶ However, the key informant pointed that significant number of civilians including innocent citizens; the elderly and children have died, wounded, displaced in the conflicts and encountered huge material damage. In addition to restraining the social relationship, the conflict also damaged social fabrics and economic institutions. Although some of the informants were unwilling to unveil the approximate number of deaths, they it was understandable that hundreds have perished since the conflict began.

At the time of data collection for this research, the magnitude and intensity of the ongoing border conflicts were at peak and active in most Woredas and Zones of Oromia and Somali regional states. Although not exhaustive, the general figures and impacts of the Oromo- Somali border conflicts from the Oromia side was that about 2,806 people

¹³⁶ Interview with Somali informant, March, 2016, Jijjiga.

were killed and 1,588 were wounded, 184 raped, and 63 kidnapped in the conflict (OBAS Archive, 2015- 2017). In addition to this, the border conflict has been the main cause of internal displacement of persons along the borders since the 1990s. Regarding this, there is no available official figure with regard to the people internally displaced by the conflict. This is mainly due to the fact that information on internal displacement provided by the federal government on the one hand and the regional and local authorities on the other were contradictory. However, estimates suggested that over 655,470 people have been internally displaced and fled in panic along the borders between July, 2011 and July, 2017 to neighboring districts and zones leaving back their meager belongings and some of their livestock. This figure included 340,612 people displaced in Borana; 38,453 people displaced in Guji, 187,981 in East Hararge; 58,438 in West Hararge; 29,986 in Bale (OBAS Archive, 2015- 2017). In addition to this, a woman informant depicted that "... during the 2015 conflict between Oromo and Somali around Mi'esso district the elderly, children, women and people with disability bear the most severe consequences of violent conflict".¹³⁷ This implies that conflict affects different categories of people differently and calls for institutional conflict prevention and response mechanisms in which particular care to be accorded before, during and after conflict to women, children, elderly and people with disability.

In addition to this, a report jointly released by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicated that close to one million people have been displaced due to the conflict along the borders of the Oromia and Ethiopian Somali regional states (The Ethiopian Reporter, 3 February 2018). These displaced people are currently living in 400 locations across Oromia, Ethio-Somali and Harari Regions, as well as in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa cities. On the other hand, 637,000, almost 60 percent of the total displaced people were sheltered in camps. From this, the 68,000 were Ethiopian Somalis who were displaced between 2015 to end of 2017, according to the report. At least 93,000 conflict-displaced school-aged children in Oromia and Ethio-Somali Regions were forced to

¹³⁷ Interview with an elder woman in Mi'esso of Oromia, February, 16, 2016.

interrupt their education. More than 1,500 children in Oromia and Ethio-Somali regions were also reported to have been separated from their families (The Ethiopian Reporter, 3 February 2018:1). Other sources also depicted that tens of thousands of people were forced to leave their homes due to the inter-ethnic conflicts from Jigjiga a capital of Somali region and its surrounding (OBAS Archive, 2017; BBC News Broad Cast, September 15, 2017; VOA News Broad Cast; September 18, 2017 11:49 AM). About 3000 persons were displaced from Somaliland (Reuters, Associated Press). Moreover, reports indicated that from the adjacent districts of Oromia and Somali regional states, about 636 schools; 14 livestock clinics; 220 kebele offices; 10 water service project were burned down and 126 schools; 35 health centers; 200 farmers and pastoralist training centers were shut down. About 41,014 livestock were raided and looted between 2011 and 2017 (OBAS Archive, 2015- 2017).

...Goldsmith et al (2007) observe that traditionally, African communities living in close proximity had strong cultural ties that bound them. These ties were solidified over time and articulated through inter-community activities such as inter-communal marriages, joint holidays, community celebrations of important seasonal activities, and others (Goldsmith et al 2007:44). Neighboring communities even shared pasture and water resources. Over time, one of the greatest tragedies of pastoralist conflict along Oromia-Somali borders has been the gradual but steadily erosion of such noble and time tested social ties.

The FGD in Moyale reported that community members of both Borana and Garri had strong negative feelings and distrust towards each other. The distrust decreased the motivation and the capacity of the communities to choose peace.¹³⁸ Likewise, an elder from Mi'esso noted that these days the intensification of the conflict had broken societal bonds, hence animosity and persistent conflict. Fear and mutual suspicion characterized relationships between Oromo and Somali. The hostile and frequent attacks led to the relation which further fueled the conflict.¹³⁹ All the data shown above implicates that an overt conflict is often disruptive and threatens the survival of society itself and destructs

¹³⁸ Focus Group Discussion, Moyale, September 15, 2015.

¹³⁹ Interview with an elder of Mi'esso Oromo, Mi'esso town, 16, February 2016.

properties. As a result, copious humanitarian and material crisis have occurred in the consecutive years due to the lack of early warning and early prevention mechanisms and institutional failures occurred along the borders of Oromia and Somali regional states.

5.7. Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the Oromia and Somali National Regional states interaction, conflicts, causes and impacts in the post 1991. The competing versions of Ethiopian and the Somalia nationalism in defining nationhood and national border caused one of the devastating wars in the Horn of Africa. This has an implication on Oromia-Somali border Conflict. The dream of “Greater Somalia” to expand west ward to gain territories, an influx of weapons in the areas fueled the conflict, some of the ex-soldiers of the ousted Said Barre regime immigrated to Ethiopia to the areas of Somali ethnic groups and attempted to influence some Ethiopian Somalis to share their ambition of “Greater Somalia”. This could be considered as a historical cause for the border conflict between both regions. On the other hand, the new regionalization process that created the new sets of ethno-political actors (Oromo and the Somali) in the post 1991 became crucial for the local groups around the borders of the two regional states to compete for resources and territorial claims. This led counterparts from the two regions to frequent deadly conflicts which consumed lives and properties. These are combined with other triggering and politically motivated factors. Nonetheless, the conflict prevention, early warning and response system was not institutionalized. This brings to the light the importance and rethinking to design a framework of comprehensive and viable conflict early warning and early response mechanisms in Ethiopia to prevent the escalation of conflicts to violent level along the bordering areas.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL CONFLICT EARLY WARNING AND RESPONSE SYSTEMS IN THE MITIGATION OF OROMIA – SOMALI BORDER CONFLICT

6.1. Introduction

This chapter aimed at examining how actually the national conflict early warning and response system based at Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA) worked to stem or alternatively failed to mitigate border conflict between Oromia and Somali region. In addition, the chapter analyzed how the MOFPDA based early warning system communicated its findings/warnings to the different levels of government and the concerned public for response actions. It also discussed factors that led to the development of conflict early warning and response system in Ethiopia. Since the system was initiated in Ethiopia by MOFPDA in the post-1991, the opening section analyzed the conflict intervention approaches so far employed and the failures in the interventions. The second section dealt with the technical, institutional and operational steps of conflict early warning and response systems of MOFPDA in mitigating the conflicts along the borders of Oromia and Somali regions taking sample practical cases. In this section, the analysis mainly focused on technical features of early warning (information collection and analysis in the situation room); institutional (communication channels and decision-making processes) and the response aspects. The last section examined the operational constraints of early warning.

6.2.Context: Establishment of MOFPDA

Before the formal establishment of the Ministry of Federal Affairs, the conflict prevention and resolution activities in the country were executed by the Regional Affairs Bureau in the Prime Minister's Office. The bureau as a pivotal institution to connect regions with the central government, undertook its activities through the organ called 'technical advisors', i.e. senior TPLF/EPRDF cadres who represented the Ministry at the regional level. They followed up politics and conflict situations within each region on a

daily basis. They were directly attached to the office of regional presidents. Critics commented that the bureau used to interfere a lot in the affairs of regions without any constitutional basis (Hagmann, 2005:13). Later, the bureau was re-organized as a new ministry, the Ministry of Federal Affairs, in 2001 under the proclamation No. 256/2001 that defined the powers and duties of the reorganized executive organs of the FDRE. It was first organized into two main sectors, namely called regional Affairs and Urban Development. The Ministry was again reorganized under the proclamation No.471/2005 with additional powers and duties and the Urban Development was excluded. In order to provide assistance to the support deserving regions, the Federal Board from which various Ministries were evolved was established to deliver overall support to the regions. In 2009, by proclamation No. 641/2009, the Ministry was re-organized and given additional power and duties of handling religious and faith affairs in order to maintain sustainable peace and security for the overall development of the country by ensuring tolerance and understanding among different faiths. Furthermore, by the proclamation No 691/2010 the Ministry was again given the power to ensure the proper execution of functions relating to the registration of charities and societies and possession or use of arms, firearms and explosives at the federal level. Hence, the core processes of the Ministry were to bring about equitable development in the emerging regions, prevent and resolve conflicts, strengthen Federal system, uphold Federal Regional relations, and to maintain good relations, peace and tolerance among different religions and beliefs in the country.¹⁴⁰

6.3.Attempted Conflict Intervention Mechanisms

This section explores the effectiveness of the intervention mechanisms employed by MOFPDA and Regional States to resolve conflicts. The pursuit for lasting solution for the conflicts along the border areas of Oromia and Somali has been detailed a long with list

¹⁴⁰ Available at <http://www.mofa.gov.et/files/Document/Organization%20Profile.pdf> accessed on 20,09,2016.

of barriers. The major ones were discussed the modest detail in the following sub sections.

Both the federal government and the two regional states have been trying to resolve conflicts between the bordering areas of Somali and Oromia regional states. They went long way to ease the tension between these regions. As Lionel and White argued, conflict management is the action taken to mitigate or contain ongoing violent conflict in order to limit the scale of destruction and human suffering (Lionel Cliffe and White, 2002). On the other hand, Cliffe and White argue that conflict resolution needs to follow two approaches. The first refers to immediate action taken to halt violence which involves mediation, negotiation, facilitation and conciliation. The second refers to long term action designed to remove structural causes of conflict to transform relationships, change attitudes and bring lasting peace (Cliffe and White, 2002). As discussed under chapter five section 5.3.2.2.2, the claims over territory and competition for resources and politicization of these causes along the contested border areas between both regional states were at the heart of the problem.

6.3.1. Federal Government (MOFPDA)

Article 48 of the FDRE constitution provides that all State border disputes shall be settled by agreements of the concerned States. In addition, it stipulates that the House of the Federation shall decide such disputes on the basis of settlement patterns and the wishes of the peoples concerned. Hence, the primary responsibility for resolving border disputes was the duty of the administration of the two concerned regional states. After recognizing that the two regional states failed to resolve the border dispute, the Federal Government started to take its own initiative such as organizing peace conferences for community representatives living along the border on both sides, conducting referendum in the contested districts and deploying federal forces to stabilize the areas.

The major conference was the Peace and Development Conference that took place at Addis Ababa University from 12-15 February 2000, and in which about one thousand people including the representatives of the Oromia and Somali regions and elders from

all clans of the two groups participated (Dereje, 2010). Similar consecutive conferences and meeting were held every time in adjacent districts at lower administrative levels to familiarize and discuss with the local community representatives and local officials on issues of conflict prevention, management and resolution.¹⁴¹ However, focus group participants disclosed that the process of organizing conference and discussions was not free from political leaders' and local administrators' manipulations who have significant role in fueling and creating mistrusts among Oromos and Somalis along the borders. They wanted to win on their own side.¹⁴² Critics, however, argued that peace conventions and conferences were held following incidents of violent conflict between two groups after humanitarian and material damage were tormented (Ronald and Mesfin, 2006; Getachew, 2013; key informant Interviews, 2016).

Successive efforts by the two regional states and the Federal government did not bring about a lasting solution. The two regional states preferred political solution to the territorial dispute through conducting referendum in the border dispute wrecked Woredas. The Ministry of Federal Affairs with the National Electoral Board administered the referendum in 420 kebeles on October 14, 2004 in the adjacent kebeles of East Hararge, West Hararge (Mi'esso), Bale, Borena and Gujji Zones of Oromia region and the adjacent *Kebeles* of Shinile (now Sitti), Jigjiga (now Fafan), Afder, Liban and Fiq Zones of Somali region. According to the official results of the referendum, about 80 percent of the disputed areas fell under Oromia administration though there were numerous allegations related to vot irregularities in many of them.¹⁴³ Paradoxically, the referendum did not still resolve the border conflict, on the contrary it overblown as a result of resistance against the referendum and counter mobilizations by local elite in the respective localities from October 2004 to September 2005.

Recurrent claims and counter-claims by both sides meant that the referendum gave undue advantage or otherwise by increasing or decreasing the territory available to each side.

¹⁴¹ Interview with official in MOFPDA, 2016.

¹⁴² Focus Group Discussion, at Mi'esso, February, 17, 2016.

¹⁴³ "Somali- Oromo border referendum of December 2004", Internal Displacement Monitoring website, accessed 2/12/2016.

For instance, the referendum which was conducted in Mi'esso woreda¹⁴⁴ moved Mi'esso town and some cluster kebeles to Oromia Regional State. The Somali ethnic group refused to accept the result of the referendum for the reasons discussed in section 5.3.2.2.3 above. As a consequence, tension and conflict continued between the two groups in general and in Mi'esso town in particular (Teshome, 2004:88). On the other hand, around Mi'esso in the aftermath of the referendum. Federal authorities believed that the number of people who were relocated were overstated by as much as 11,000. MoFPDA put the number of internally displaced persons in Doba as 6000 and in western Hararge zone in Mi'esso more than 40,500.¹⁴⁵ The same episode found to be proved in Bale zonal administration which borders the Afdher zone of Somali region. For instance, in February 2005, an estimated 5450 people were expelled from Bale Zone due to the conflict between Dawe Qachan district of Oromia and Goro Bakaksa district of Somali region following the results of the referendum. Moreover, there were reports of people being displaced in the border areas of Moyale and Borana zones because of the boundary disputes (ICRC, 2007; Yohannes, 2013:288).

Despite all these displacements, there were no boundary demarcations following the release of referendum results. The absence of clear-cut demarcation has, in short, created overlapping jurisdictional authorities within the majorities of disputed *Kebeles* along the borderlines of both regions; and as a result, conflict has exploded from time-to-time. Thus, it could be argued that the Federal government failed to enforce the result of the referendum (the public voice) by demarcating along the contested areas that exerted ceaseless costs of human and material damage. During field visit in February 2016, I observed people feared the situation on the ground which they thought would trigger another conflict which soon turned out to conflict and violence. In fact, it is obvious that referendum alone should not be the last resort to resolve conflicts. However, I argue that the failure to put demarcation on the ground presupposes non-enforcement of laws which by default instituted anarchism that destabilized peace and security in the area. On top of that, as indicated earlier, the Federal and regional governments glued on the “fire

¹⁴⁴ Wereda represents District in Ethiopia

¹⁴⁵ See Regional Overview: Oromia Region", Focus on Ethiopia, (April 2005) p.5. Accessed 2/12/2015.

brigade “approach rather than instituting a system of conflict prevention (early warning and early response}, management and resolution. On the other hand, regarding the intervention mechanisms by MOFPDA and regional states in the episodes of the conflict around Mi’esso, a local police officer reported that

*The conflict prevention and resolution approach along the border area failed for the reason that there was no early intervention rather it followed the crisis. The underlying issues remained unaddressed. The peace initiatives were employed after the violence. For example, investigating incidents at the local level to clarify who was involved and what actually happened, controlling rumors and malicious reports to correct misunderstandings, facilitating dialogue with people on each side came too late. This can only serve to postpone the conflict. The intervention of local police and the Federal force in the area can mitigate and suspend the possible violence, but cannot solve the problem from its roots for once and for all.*¹⁴⁶

Likewise, another informant disclosed that

*the 2012- 2016 trajectories of conflict around the district of Qumbi between East Hararge of Oromia and Fafan Zone of Somali, the 2012 conflict around Moyale between Borana and Garri communities, the 2011-17 conflict around Mi’esso between Ittu community of Oromo and Issa clan of Somali, the Bale (Rayitu and Madda Walabu), the Guji (Liban) etc, were intervened by MOFPDA and Regions after the conflict had escalated to violent level and resulted in numerous humanitarian and material consequences along the borders.*¹⁴⁷

Both the above sources explicate that the approach followed by MOFPDA and regional states was mainly after the conflict had already occurred and violently exploded and did not pro- actively dealt with it that can be considered as firefighting. It aimed at containing the state of hostility and finding solution to the conflicts at the later stage. One could also observe that it was temporary and wouldn’t have addressed the underlining causes and failed to recognize the relapse of conflicts along the borders.

In contrast to theory of conflict prevention and early warning and response discussed under chapter two above (sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2.), the intervention approach employed by MOFPDA and regional states has failed to identify at what stage of the conflict phases prevention of conflict could be employed to mitigate the escalation of the conflicts. In

¹⁴⁶ Interview with local police officer, Mi’esso Town,

¹⁴⁷ Interview with a senior expert in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, 2016.

addition, the purpose of conflict early warning and response systems was meant to save life and property at the earlier stage of the conflict. However, due to lack of strong and viable institution, the approach focused on managing the crisis. The other conflict prevention and resolution approaches followed by MOFPDA and Regions are briefly also discussed below.

Late in April 2017, however, Oromia and Somali states signed an agreement aimed at bringing an end to the hostilities stemmed from the recent border disputes in line with the 2004 referendum. The ex- Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs Minister, Kassa Teklebirhan, on the occasion said that the agreement came to existence with active involvement of local communities and administrative bodies in the border demarcation. He stated, "They have realized the value of the prevailing development and peace in the areas ". Kassa also said that the agreement would compensate the victims of the conflict and would bring criminals to court. He added that despite delay, the agreement was a living witness to the long-standing co-existence and tolerance between the Oromo and Somali pastoralists. It also indicated the unwavering commitments of the people and leadership to fight against anti-peace forces, according him. The Somali State President, Abdi Muhammed, on his part said that the agreement has a significant role in enhancing development and peaceful co-existence among the people of both states. "It is bad news to those who instigated violence in these two states". The Oromia State President, Lemma Megersa, also commented that it was unacceptable to fuel unrest in the pretext of border dispute as both states are administered under the same Federal government. He added "both states have vast land area that could be used for development." The demarcation of administrative boundaries was carried out in seven zones, 33 Weredas, 147 Kebeles and villages.¹⁴⁸ Despite the peace accord, the implementation of making borders along the contested Kebeles was confronted with a number of challenges. The peaceful environment that reigned following the agreement did not last more than a few months. Conflicts never ceased along the borders. For instance, from mid-August to beginning of September 2017 violent conflicts broke out in the border areas that covered Mi'esso in the east and Moyale in the south, specially in Chinaksen of Eastern Hararge

¹⁴⁸ See Ethiopian Herald 21 April 2017 and <http://allafrica.com/stories/201704210581.html>

and Mi'esso of Western Hararge. An informant, a senior expert in west Hararge, reported that

*Since mid-August 2017 the conflict has further intensified along the borders. Deadly conflicts broke out in Chinaksen and Mi'esso frequently and take away human lives. It is the fight between the special force of Somali and the Militia of Oromia. In the recent conflict around Mi'esso 16 people were dead 4 wounded from the Oromia side and 22 reported dead and 7 injured from the Somali side on 30 August 2017.*¹⁴⁹

This implies that when agreements were reached between regional states local communities were not fully consulted to own the peace process and might have felt that the peace accord was imposed. On the other hand, it seems that the leadership was mobilizing scene than working to end and halt the conflict in the contested areas. The process suggested that government bodies and communities on both sides, worked together to demarcate the boundaries mutually but mostly on non-binding agreements. This means that they were able to reach agreements on a number of outstanding issues in many of the disputed territories within the area. They also established joint planning and working manuals around a number of activities; even though most of those activities and targets were left unaccomplished. However, my argument is that institutionalizing conflict prevention, early warning and response systems were out of the focus of the agreement and mere agreement could not warrant peace and stability along the borders unless accompanied with a strong institution.

Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs was challenged in terms of deploying Federal Police Force. Claims frequently followed the intervention and questions of impartiality lodged to the Ministry by the conflicting groups and this was a strong challenge in the engagement for the prevention and against seeking resolution to the conflict. These issues were counterproductive to the credibility of the intervention of the Federal Police Force from the part of conflicting groups. MOFPDA Report (2012) indicated that during the conflict between Issa/Somali and Ittu/Oromo on the district of Mi'esso, the Issas accused the Ministry and the Federal Police for favoring the Oromo while Oromo on its part complained that the Ministry and the Federal Police did not take

¹⁴⁹ My Conversation through telephone with a senior expert in Western Hararge zone of Oromia, 31 August 2017.

strong measures against the Issa group. This diminished the credibility of the Ministry and eroded trust on the part of the conflicting parties Dereje (2010) indicated that the deployment of Federal Police to intervene in conflicts in this particular Woreda was not welcomed by both conflicting parties. The Oromo accused the Federal police as unfair in its intervention approach during the conflict and in disarming them. They also blamed the Federal Police stationed in the Woreda for its delay to take action. The elders of the Oromo complained that although there was a unit of Federal Police at Mieso town during the conflict, it did not intervene during conflicts. Dereje (2010) interviewed elders and an Oromo elder said: “The government (implying the Federal Police) was watching us by binocular from a distance while we were eating each other (killing each other) the Federal Police intervened when we were both exhausted and unable to continue the fighting”. Moreover, the various mechanisms that were arranged to resolve the contention between the Oromo and the Somali lacked fairness, and even legitimacy in the process and in terms of forces meant to prevent and resolve the dispute (Fekadu, 2011: 780). Despite the intervention of the Federal Force, the conflict along the border continued and exacerbated until recently. The 2014-2016 border conflict along eight (8) districts between Somali and Oromia (Eastern Hararge) showed the same thing (OBAS Report, 2016). As a result, loss of life and property destruction is observed due to frequent conflict. In this regard, Birikiti (2010) argues that the core value of conflict prevention and conflict early warning should be the protection of individuals and communities by the state. However, this failed to operate along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regions. The reason for this was the unfavorable political environment for conflict prevention, management and resolution and lack of institutionalized and comprehensive early warning and response systems in place.

6.3.2. Horizontal Development Cooperation between the Regions

In the vast border districts of the Oromia and Somali regional states, conflict and tension have become a daily activity since the establishment of Regional States in Ethiopia. In addition to the efforts discussed above (see section 6.3.2.), regional states have attempted to introduce another mechanism to resolve border disputes through horizontal cooperation. To this end, both Oromia and Somali Regional Governments

have agreed and preferred to apply an intervention approach based on administrative and political solutions by bringing their financial and material efforts to establish project coordination Unit (PCU) in 2006 to address the causes of the conflicts and to rebuild the relationship between the two peoples in conflict. It was designed in order to mitigate the long-standing conflicts during the aftermath of the failure of consecutive attempts MOFPDA and the Federal Police Force. The project was based in Jijjiga, the capital of Somali regional state. It was aimed to work jointly on the social and development issues along the adjacent corridors of the districts to prevent conflicts through development interventions. The program activities were designed to focus on activities including conflict resolution and peace building; infrastructure and natural resource development and institutional capacity building. The budget allocated for the *first phase of the five year plan* was more than **16.5** million which was drawn from both regions (PCU Report, 2013).

The project was planned to be implemented in 42 borderin Woredas (districts) of 10 zonal administrations of both regions. Following the agreement, 69 projects (primary schools, health centers, hand dug wells, small scale irrigation, and others) were constructed along the common borders. Unexpectedly, the agreement which started bearing fruits was terminated soon as a result of change in the presidential leadership on the part of the Somali region. The Oromia Government had shown interest to continue the cooperation while the new Somali leadership refrained from sustaining its commitment. This eventually became a bottle neck to prevent and mitigate conflicts counter to earlier anticipation of both regions. Ultimately, PCU ceased to operate (PCU Report, 2013). The project coordination unit office still remained open and the personnel were paid monthly salaries without any visible activities.¹⁵⁰ Surprising enough, late after the April 2017 a peace accord was signed between the presidents of both regional states. During the signing of the accord, promise was made to restore the project to its normal undertakings. However, many questions could be asked: why did the project stop its activities at its initial stages and why was it restored after the communities in the area had suffered consequences of frequent conflict for a decade? The answer to these

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Executive Director and deputy Executive director, of PCU, 24 February 19, 2016, Jijjiga.

questions were that there were lack of political will, accountability and legal framework of intergovernmental relations to bound both regions for the good cause. Importantly, bilateral agreements and joint development endeavors need to be reinvigorated to address the underlying causes of conflicts providing development interventions along the common borders.

6.3.3. Customary Conflict prevention and Management Mechanism

Ruto et al. (2004:8) argue that it is worth to appreciate traditional approaches used as conflict prevention and management methodologies that are indigenous to the particular community involved in conflicts. Consistent with this argument, the “Negelle Borana Peace Conventions” was one of the attempts developed by representatives of ethnic groups, traditional leaders and other concerned figures residing in three pastoral zones of Borana, Guji of Oromia and Liban of Somali region with active participation of representatives of Federal and the Regional governments (Michael, 2012).

Conflicts, although a little contained now, have been common along bordering areas of Oromia and Somali for a long time. As a result, traditional conflict prevention measures have been initiated. Compensation for losses is a traditional move towards conflict prevention among them. This mechanism involves returning the stolen livestock and working hand in hand as to guard pastures of each other against damage by animals.¹⁵¹ The employment of compensation as the backbone of successful peace accords was demonstrated by elders from both groups. The agreement stipulated amounts of compensation to be paid in cases of the damage incurred. For instance, if an individual steals an animal from a member of another group, it was declared that the individual or his family then will pay five livestock in compensation. This requirement for compensation was assumed to reduce internal cultural pressure for revenge by providing a clear alternative that satisfies these norms without violence. At the same time, it created a deterrent to what would initiate conflict otherwise. However, recently, the

¹⁵¹ See Conflict Assessment Northern Kenya, downloaded at www.pragya.org.

implementation of the traditional declarations was weakened and conflict continued to persist along the borders.¹⁵²

Both ethnic groups along the adjacent districts have rich tradition of resolving conflicts within their own ethnic group and with other ethnic groups. The institutions have good record in resolving conflicts which arise from resource utilization and cattle rustling. However, the significance and contribution of these institutions have become less important in conflict prevention and resolution effort in the border areas these days. An Oromo elder stressed that the institutions were no more capable in resolving conflicts in the area due to the fact that conflicts involve political issues which are beyond the capacity and experience of the institutions. The elder further noted that previously he and the elders were resolving conflicts which arose from different causes but nowadays the causes and actors of the conflicts have changed dramatically since the beginning of regionalization in the country. For instance, the Issas and the Hawuye clans of Somali region began to claim the territory of Oromo as their own territory even though both the elders knew where the territory lays.¹⁵³ On the other hand, the Hawuye elders accept the deteriorating role of the traditional institutions in conflict prevention and resolution attributing it to the involvement of political leaders in the process which was out of the norms of the traditional conflict resolution experiences. They argued that both political leaders who were found in different positions created pressure on them to entertain their agenda at the gatherings of the traditional institution leaders.¹⁵⁴ The West Hararge Security Bureau official said that the resolutions passed by the traditional institutions were not respected as they used to be during early time by the parties in conflict due to the fact that the conflicts nowadays involved the issue of land ownership and the expansion of Somalis into the Oromia land in an alarming rate.¹⁵⁵ This was linked to political interests of actors at local and regional levels. Sometimes these actors did not favor peace but were interested in instigating conflict for political or economic reasons.

¹⁵² Interview with senior expert in Oromo Pastoralist Association, Addis Ababa, 2016

¹⁵³ Interview with Oromo elder, Mieso, February 2016.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Somali elder, Mi'esso, February, 2016.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with official in Western Hararge Zone Administration and Security office, Chiro, February 2016.

On the other hand, as the dynamics of conflict take on new trends, the traditional conflict prevention and management structures were getting more and more unproductive in preventing conflict for the reason that there is a growing co-optation of customary authorities by the government which might require transformation (Hagmann and Alemayehu, 2010:167; Ronald and Mesfin ,2006). Thus, erosion of traditional values and relational ties accompanied with the new socio-economic and political interests in the area has impacted efforts to bring lasting peace along the Oromo- Somali borders.

Regardless of all conflict intervention approaches to bring about peace, security and stability, no a meaningful peace has been realized and conflict along the border belts has continued until recently. A number of reasons were given. However, the major points pertaining to this issue, a key informant reported that

*The methodology of conflict prevention and resolution put in place functionally and structurally has provided to be deficient in meeting the complex configurations and challenges that the communities of the border areas are facing, notably its politicization. Local elites manipulate their ethnic group wrongly so as not to reach to resolution. The other sort coming is the emphasis of resolving the symptoms of conflict rather than the underlying causes and emphasizing on dealing to resolve one conflict at a time. The underlying causes are things such as development infrastructures and others along the common borders for joint utilization. Local initiatives are not encouraged and they are not convinced by the intervention of Federal and regional authorities.*¹⁵⁶

This implies that the intervention approach followed by the government could be seen as they were not methodologically well designed, resolving one conflict at a time in a piece meal, isolated approaches to the various conflicts thus seem to have brought at best limited success and at worst have become complete failure. For instance, the single approach used to solve by referendum taking it as a last resort was a failure because it neglected other subsidiary issues such as the demarcation procedures, joint development efforts, etc.,. In addition, the underlying causes such as joint development initiatives and popular participation had not been dealt with.

At this point, I argue that the intervention approaches at all levels failed to bring peace and security along the borders due to lack of strong institutionalization of conflict

¹⁵⁶ Interview with official in Somali Regional State, 19, February 2016.

prevention, early warning and response systems along with the conflict management approaches in a continuum. In addition, various governments that happened to presided over Oromo- Somali case had not been addressing the basic issues, but were responding to the reflections of the conflict on ad hoc bases and did not touch the root causes that determine total underpinning elements which continued for decades across the borders. The fire brigade nature of conflict resolution currently employed by the Ethiopian state at large and the regional states in particular, had been another setback that lengthened the conflict lifespan and gave the vital impetus of transformation of the nature and level of violence; and hence, the rationale for the protracted nature of the conflict. The next section discusses the development of conflict early warning systems in Ethiopia.

6.4.The Emergence of Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Systems in Ethiopia

Since the end of Cold War, civil wars, inter and intra-ethnic conflicts and religious animosities, economic dislocations have contributed to conflict and political instability in the Horn of Africa particularly in Ethiopia. These conflicts and instabilities frequently challenged national security interests and at times the human rights issues in the region. It is against this backdrop that the idea of preventing wars and conflicts came to existence in Africa in general and the Horn region in particular. Nonetheless, attempts to prevent conflicts through the use of early warning and response system have been a very recent phenomenon, mainly in the post 1991 in the Horn and in Ethiopia too. The formal establishment of the institution of EWER system in Ethiopia has a root in the establishment of CEWARN/IGAD. The Establishment of CEWARN was followed by recognition by Member States to address conflicts in the region by revitalizing the IGAD Charter. Lately, Ethiopia domesticated the notion of conflict early warning and response mechanism from CEWARN (IGAD) and initiated a national system through MOFPDA.¹⁵⁷ The major reason for launching the initiative was the prevalence of internal and inter-regional conflicts since 1991.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, 2016, Addis Ababa.

6.4.1 The Institutional and Structural set up

It is believed that building an institution can boost the value of early warning through institutionalizing a systematic way of identifying, diagnosing, and defusing conflict drivers that might have a negative impact on the capacity and resilience of states. For instance, the presence of IGAD and its preventive arm, CEWARN have enabled East African region to engage in conflict prevention, management, resolution and mitigation in a systematic way. In the context of CEWARN, institutionalization was meant to give a sound legal decision-making base in which it can operate (Mwagiru, 2002). It is by virtue of this that the institution for conflict early warning and response system in Ethiopia was introduced.

In the Ethiopian context, the system was instituted in the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Directorate General (CPRDG) in the MoFPDA. Accordingly, it was hierarchically structured in line with the structure in MOFPDA. The Minister was at the top apex to the directorate for Conflict Prevention and Resolution Directorate General which comprised two directorates namely; the Directorate for Conflict Early Warning and Rapid Response, and the Directorate for Culture of Peace.¹⁵⁸ The Directorate for Conflict Early Warning and Rapid Response was accountable for the CPRDG in the hierarchical ladder. Though nascent, the establishment of Conflict Early Warning mechanism in the MoFPDA was a significant step towards institutionalizing conflict prevention mechanisms. MoFPDA has commenced various change processes aimed at overhauling and renovating the overall business process of the institution, creating new structures and systems as well as developing guidelines¹⁵⁹ in order that the Ministry properly discharges the duties accorded to it. Nevertheless, pursuant to its mandate, MOFPDA has not gone to ensure the establishment of similar early warning and response structures at regional levels and strengthen them to mitigate border conflicts.¹⁶⁰ Regarding this issue, an informant from MOFPDA stated that

MoFPDA has physically instituted the system and the structure. However, the system is practically weak and hardly operationalized. It appears only in name and hangs up

¹⁵⁸ Interview with official n Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs Addis Ababa.

¹⁵⁹ See the guideline prepared for EWER at MOFPDA in 2014.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with senior expert in Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, Addis Ababa.

*without practically linking itself with the corresponding system at regional states. As a result, conflicts continue to escalate to violent level along the borders. The case of conflicts along the bordering areas of Oromia and Somali is the manifestations of the weakness of the institution at MOFPDA level.*¹⁶¹

On the other hand, the IPSS Research Team Report (2016) presented that despite some efforts of the CEWER at MOFPDA level, there was not so a strong institution to contain intra-regional conflicts. Strong link has not been observed with regional states; neither similar structure exists at the regional and lower levels. Exceptionally, with all its short comings, the Oromia regional state has tried to institute a system in the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Core Process within the Administration and Security Bureau assigning a team at the regional level and a focal person at zonal and Wereda levels. In Somali, SNNPRS, Gambella and Afar regional states, there were no separate institutions or structures for conflict early warning and rapid response as the work was still done principally within the structure of Conflict Prevention and Resolution located in regional head offices. Hence, MOFPDA lacked adequate institutional structures to be implemented at lower levels (IPSS Research Team, 2016:5). The above sources alluded to the fact that strong and vibrant institution for conflict early warning and responses system has not yet established at MOFPDA level to contain border conflicts. This does not mean to under estimate the effort of MOFPDA; however, there were observable institutional and structural failures in terms of operationalizing the early warning. Relating to this, Alem (2010) argues that strengthening robust institutions (HOF, MOFPDA, traditional institutions, etc.) to prevent , mediate, resolve and/or manage inter-communal conflicts would enhance the conditions for peaceful and cooperative coexistence of all cultural and territorial communities, unless otherwise it would be a challenge to the Federal system (Alem Habtu, 2010:33). This suggests that the structures at MOFPDA as well as at regional levels need to be strengthened and complement each other in line with their own respective jurisdictions to prevent or mitigate conflicts before reaching violent level.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

6.4.2 Institutional Status and Mandate of Conflict early warning and Response systems

The House of Federation (HoF) and MOFPDA come to the forefront in establishing a framework in Ethiopian Federation. The House of Federation is responsible to find solutions to disputes or misunderstandings that may arise between regional states.¹⁶² For instance, if a border dispute arises between two or more states; it is the mandate of the House to organize a forum for disputant-states to negotiate and settle the issue amicably.¹⁶³ The House facilitates such forums and umpires both sides to get the issues resolved. If this attempt fails, the House can render decisions to resolve such disputes on the basis of settlement patterns and the wishes of the peoples concerned¹⁶⁴ within the time frame laid down under the Constitution.¹⁶⁵ However, the HOF has a limited involvement in conflict prevention, except establishing consultation forum among regional states. The House is expected to take measures to instill the culture of tolerance and cooperation for common goals, to enhance democratic culture of people and to raise constitutional awareness on the Federal and Regional constitutions. However, the action of HOF was rarely observed at regional and local levels and thus it rarely contributes to conflict prevention and peace building endeavors in Oromo – Somali border conflict.

The national conflict early warning and rapid response (CEWRR) in Ethiopia was conceived and initiated by MoFPDA in the post-1991 as a means of preventing and mitigating inter -regional, intra-regional and cross border conflicts from escalating to violent confrontations and to safeguard people's life and property by sharing early warning information concerning potentially violent conflicts. Information has been channeled to the Federal level through hierarchies in such a way that the local posts report to District Administration and Security offices which sends them to zones. In turn, the zonal offices pass over the information to the regional states and the regions to the

¹⁶² See article 62 (6) of the FDRE Constitution

¹⁶³ Interview with official in the House of Federation, Addis Ababa, 2016

¹⁶⁴ See article 48(1) of the FDRE Constitution

¹⁶⁵ See article 48(2) of the FDRE Constitution

Federal government where it is finally gathered together and analyzed in the Situation Room of the MOFPDA and communicated to decision makers for prompt/action.¹⁶⁶

At the national level, the mandate for conflict early warning and early response at MOFPDA emanates from the power and duties bestowed to it through the revised Proclamations No. 471/2005; Article 21 and Proclamation No. 691/2010: Article 14. Both proclamations provide the same powers and duties for MOFPDA. Pursuant to these proclamations, the Ministry shall have the powers and duties which states: that without prejudice to the provisions of Article 48¹⁶⁷ and 62(6)¹⁶⁸ of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, MOFPDA facilitate the resolution to resolve misunderstandings arising among Regional States. Therefore, following this mandate, the conflict early warning and response system has been institutionally located in the MOFPDA. Jesica and Luis (2015) contend that the place for early warning and early response systems need to be within the institutional architecture where political and strategic decisions are sought. It reflects the weight that should be assigned to the system and sends message to other institutions on how they should treat and relate it. In other words, the place given to the system in the state apparatus is an initial message about its significance and recognition. Thus, it is said to be the institutional anchoring of the early warning and response system which is a fundamental decision for the timely and effective operation of the system (Jessica and Luis, 2015).

The main mandate of the directorate on conflict early warning and response systems in MOFPDA includes but not limited to monitoring conflict indicators and working proactively on conflict mitigation and transmitting reports to the Minister on weekly basis and to the Prime Minister's Office every two weeks to inform both to undertake appropriate and immediate action. Furthermore, it is also mandated to prepare a report on trends of peace and security of a given region on annual basis (IPSS Research Team¹⁶⁹Report, 2016). However, the directorate does not have adequate support structure

¹⁶⁶ Interview with higher official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, 20016, Addis Ababa.

¹⁶⁷ Art 48 of the constitution states that

¹⁶⁸ Art 62 (2) of the constitution

¹⁶⁹The research team was organized in Addis Ababa University, Institute of Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) to conduct a research for the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs on the topic: 'In-depth Assessment of

in the regional states to implement these mandates and related day-to-day activities to mitigate conflicts on the ground. For instance, in all regional states, the Regional Security Administration Bureaus do not have an independent early warning and rapid response institution or infrastructure capable of collecting, analyzing and reporting early warning information on actual and potential inter-and intra-regional state conflicts in order to support MoFPDA accomplish its mandate (Ibid).

In this regard, the IPSS research team has taken samples of early warning and rapid response system in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Region (Yeki Wereda) and in Gambella regional state (Godere Weredas) and found out that the early warning systems were fragmented. Each Wereda had a Security Head, Conflict Information Desk Officer and Conflict Prevention and Resolution staff. The Conflict Information Desk Officer communicates with the Kebeles within the Wereda on conflict information and verifies them. In Yeki, two field monitors were assigned per Kebele while in Godere information was mainly sourced from members of Peace Committees. In Yeki, critical and informed insights or feedbacks could come from Peace Committee members directly as well as from the wider population.¹⁷⁰ In this study the field observation in Oromia and Somali regional states particularly in Mi'esso of Oromia and Somali, in Chinaksen of Oromia and Tullu Guled wereda of Somali revealed a similar pattern. But, this does not mean that the Regional Administration and Security Bureau has totally disregarded the important activities within the purview of conflict early warning. Such activities were conducted by traditional institutions. In many rural areas across the study sites, rudimentary conflict early warning and rapid response is practiced using traditional and informal means.

On the other hand, ideally, if there is a conflict incident in one area, the lower structure is expected to make report to the immediate higher office/structure. But, they could only do so without the requisite tool or even clear protocol and frameworks on what to identify,

the Institutional and Operational Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention and Resolution (CPR)'. The writer of this thesis was also a member of the IPSS Research Team and visited Oromia and Somali Regional States of Ethiopia and also gets the chance to obtain information of other regions from the team members.

¹⁷⁰ Interview made by the research team, Yeki and Godere weredas, March 2016.

collect, analyze and report. Therefore, it was observed that no viable early warning systems in regional states found which directly support the mandate of MOFPDA of implementing timely interventions for conflict prevention and rapid response.

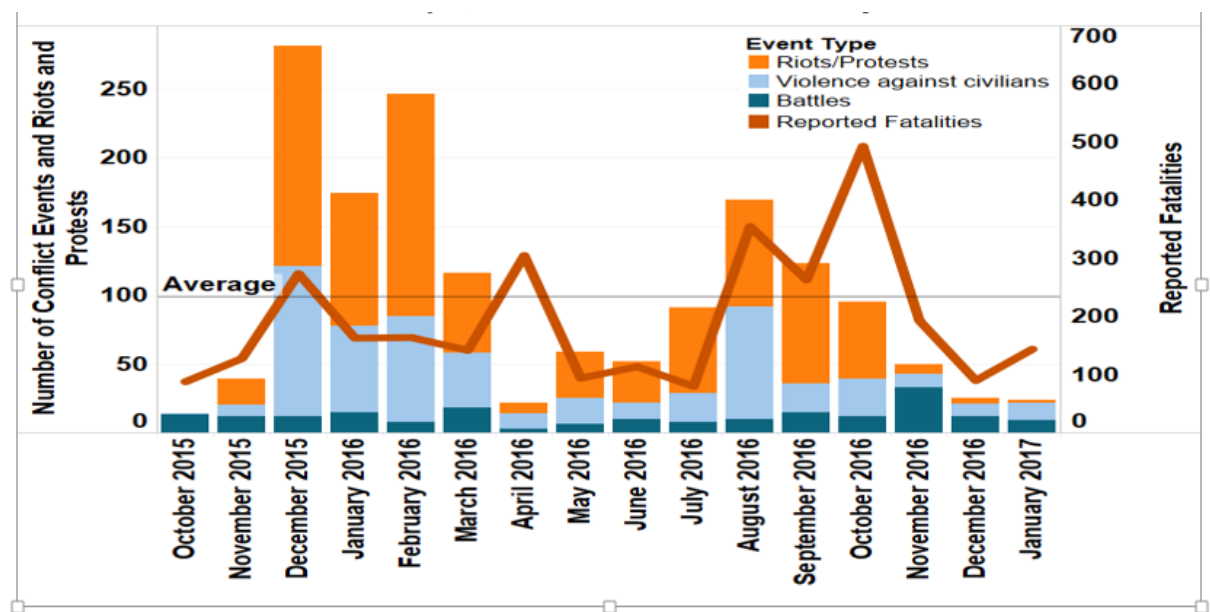
6.4.3 The Prevalence of Conflicts

Federalism as an alternative political system is meant to entertain diversity. The system is the most suitable tool for Ethiopia, a home of diverse Nations, Nationalities and Peoples with diverse cultural, ideological and religious backgrounds. However, many scholars argue that the introduction of the system in the post 1991 period experienced cumbersome intra-regional, inter-regional and cross-border conflicts emanating from different causes. These causes were multiple and diverse including competition over resources, claims over territorial borders, dearth of good governance, religious extremism, traditions such as revenge killing, and poorly developed culture of peace and weak institutions. The triggering factors that fueled conflicts were found to be lack of information about these factors (see also Ahmed, 2003; Teshome, 2003; Rechard and Mesfin, 2006; Sisay, 2007; Tadesse, 2009:191-200; Asnake, 2009; Dereje, 2009; Mitiku, 2011; Fekadu, 2011, Mesfin, 2011; Asebe, 2012; Yidnekachew, 2012; Tigist, 2014; Gololcha, 2015; Melkamu, 2016,).

The institutionalization of ethnic federalism led to the process of drawing inter-regional boundaries with the premise of creating ethnic, regional and in some cases sub-regional boundaries. This induced intra-federal boundary conflicts. Some practical examples were the cases of the Oromia and Somali National Regional States protracted border conflict (Oromia Government Archive, 2016; 2017; Ahmed, 2003). There have been many cases of intra-regional border conflicts since the inception of the federal system that connoted the employment of conflict early warning systems. These conflicts have given the lesson on how to prevent conflicts and employ conflict early warning and early response systems in the country. On the other hand, new types of conflicts have been expounded in the years 2014 to 2017 claimed to be attributed to dearth of good governance. This also exerted pressure on Ethiopia to have a system of conflict early warning in place. These recent cases included the Addis Ababa Integrated Master Plan and the Oromia Special zone case, the Wolkait case between Amhara and Tigray Regional States and the civil

unrest around Konso in SNNPR which resulted in civil unrest. These were found to be the highest show-cases that necessitated the installation of conflict early warning and response systems to mitigate conflicts. The following figure traces the episodes of conflicts in Ethiopia in the years 2015-2017 that strengthened the need for the institutionalization of conflict early warning and response systems.

Figure 6: Number of Conflict and Riot and Protest events by Type and Reported Fatalities in Ethiopia from October 2015- January 2017



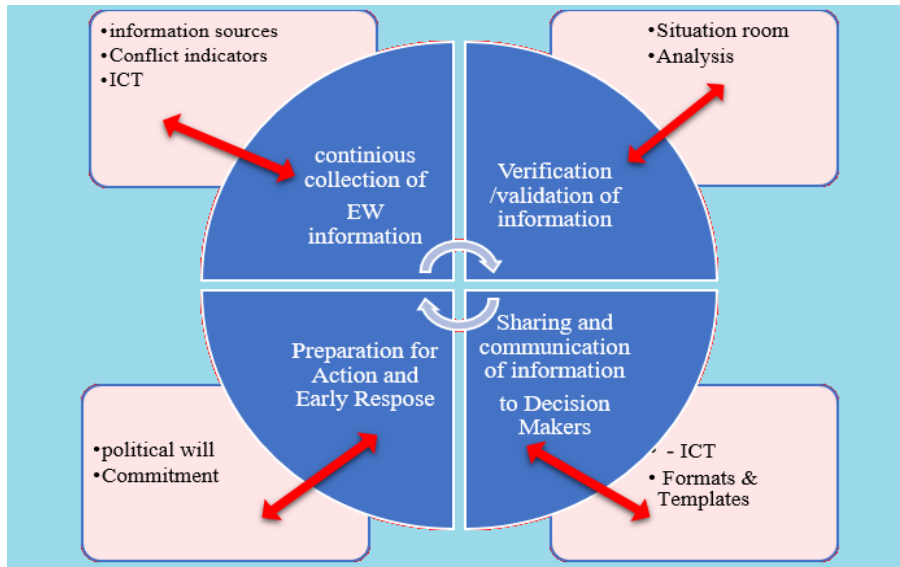
Source: Raleigh, Clionadh, Andrew Linke, Håvard Hegre and Joakim Karlsen (2010), Armed Conflict Location and event data, *Journal of Peace Research* 47(5) 651-660

6.5 Analysis of Technical, Institutional and Operational Steps of Conflict Early Warning and Response Systems

As conceived by Austin (2004), early warning denotes a series of activities in which records are accrued, put together and evaluated with the sole purpose of discovering and categorizing the preliminary indications of an upcoming predicament prior to explosion of violence. In practice, early warning entails three steps: information gathering (data collection), processing and analysis (detection), translation and signaling (prognosis)

(Marwala and Lagazio, 2011: 220). In the subsequent sections analysis is made how early warning steps and processes were implemented at MOFPDA to mitigate Oromia-Somali border conflicts. Below is a diagram that highlights inter-linked activities of early warning steps.

Figure 7: Conflict Early Warning and Interlinked Activities



Source: Adopted from George Otieno (2014)

The above diagram indicated that every step-in early warning system are inter-linked. That is, one step is incomplete if not inter-linked with peculiar activities. For example, as shown in the diagram above collection of early warning information has a direct link with sources of information, indicatrs and ICT. On the other hand, early response to conflict indicators is hardly possible without linking to political will and commitment of the decision makers. Thus, observation could be made that every step-in conflict early warning has a direct linkage with corresponding activities.

6.5.1 Monitoring Conflict Early Warning Indicators

Indicators in this study refer to signals of a potential conflict. The basic premise of an early warning system is that social conflicts can be monitored through follow-up and analysis of key pre-defined indicators (Jessica and Luis, 2015). Therefore, identifying

early warning indicators are critically important in the operationalization of early warning. Regarding the importance of detecting early warning indicators see Gregory Santon, 2009:16.

The main challenge of producing sound indicators is, however, related to the uncertainties of the cause and effect relationship of events and violence. Though, in general, scholars seem to agree that there is no one variable indicator that can explain the incidence of conflict, some try to explain it by dividing the causes of conflicts into *root/structural* causes and *triggering factors* (Ackermann, A., 2003: 347). The former has a wide spectrum which looks into the basis of problems that are likely to lead to violent conflict. This can be poverty, economic and political marginalization, human rights violation, gender imbalance, bad governance, border claims, and competition over resources etc. On the other hand, the trigger factors can be those immediate things that could lead to violent conflict in a short period of time like the killing of the leader of another clan which may end up with an immediate violent conflict (Ibid:348). Understanding the mechanisms of identifying conflict indicators is relevant in conflict prevention in Ethiopia in general and in regional states in particular. As is common in many contexts, due to lack of monitoring early warning indicators urban or rural, pastoralist or agro-pastoralist and inter or intra-regional border conflicts could be turned out to violence and may consume human lives and destroy properties. Thus, detecting conflict indicators in early warning systems is crucial for preventing conflict.

In this respect, the practices of MOFPDA, identification of conflict early warning indicators was found to be in line with the guideline prepared for conflict early warning. Accordingly, Section 8 of the guideline deals with indicators and states that field monitors and conflict early warning experts shall identify area of specific indicators of violence and collect information in accordance with indicators (MOFPDA 2014). It stipulates that whenever recognized indicators are prevalent, corresponding appropriate and rapid response could be coordinated. In addition to the specifically identified indicators regions and city administrations are also expected to regularly update existing rosters of indicators of violence in their designated area of coverage which would support immanent indicators.

Pertaining to the above presumption, different reports were obtained from MOFPDA to analyze whether the conflict early warning indicators were practically identified and clustered in their own peculiar characters (demographic, economic, social, political, environmental, security, human rights, etc.). Three reports were examined in this regard. The *first* report described that the Ministry had tried to identify about forty-four conflict early warning indicators including but not limited to pastoral and agro-pastoral area indicators, urban areas and University related indicators manifested throughout the country. The identification of conflict early warning indicators was dependent on the activities and reports of regional governments. The regional states categorized indicators based on the types and contexts of conflicts experienced in their respective jurisdictions (MOFPDA, 2009). However, another report explained that at district and local levels had capacity problems that they were inefficient in the identification and utilization of conflict indicators (MoFPDA report, 2012).

The above information reveals that in the former one it pretended as if *forty-four* indicators (see annex 6.) the list of these indicators) were categorically identified nationwide and the dependency in the activities of regional states while the latter showed the inadequacy in the identification of the monitored indicators. Though there was an attempt to categorize indicators, data from field observation it suggests that both documentary evidences obtained from MOFPDA were inconsistent regarding identification and categorization of conflict early warning indicators. It showed contradictory and obscuring views regarding the identification and utilization of conflict early warning indicators at MOFPDA as well as at regional states. On the other hand, an informant from the MOFPDA stated that:

*Currently, MOFPDA, except listing them, does not have well identified and clustered modules of conflict early warning indicators. There are no indicators regularly sent to MOFPDA which would explain their peculiar characters either from the regional or any other organ of the government. Some of the early warning information/signals are conveyed into indicators at MOFPDA in an informal way. Others are sent after the incident of the conflict and most early warning information/ signals are left unreported.*¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Interview with senior expert in MOFPDA, 2016.

This evidence implies three things. Firstly, it could suggest that the flow of conflict early warning information/signals lacked standardized format and protocol to be communicated in real time. Secondly it depicts that the signals were sent to MOFPDA after humanitarian sufferings and material destruction took place though the purpose of early warning is saving peoples' life and property from damage. Finally, it reveals that there were instances under which conflict early warning signals were observed but concealed and not reported for different reasons. Thus, it is observed that the principles described by MOFPDA in the guideline for early warning indicators did not correspond with the reality and practices on the ground. This unveils imappropriateness and fragmentation of identification of early warning indicators in the country in general. On the other hand, by virtue of the proclamation 691/2010, MOFPDA had a duty to solve disputes that arise among regional states. Hence, identification and monitoring of conflict early warning indicators at MOFPDA level has a direct implication to mitigate Oromia – Somali border conflicts. In this regard, an informant from Oromia regional state explained that

*Except in certain cases, conflict indicators are not formally identified and clustered as economic, social, political, humanitarian, governance, environmental security, etc., in strict sense in the case of these regional states. These indicators are well known to everybody but there is no formal way of reporting to MOFPDA. MOFPDA requests to identify indicators after crisis had already occurred. Early warning indicators related to cattle raiding, arm circulation and, border expansion by the Somali through illegal settlement schemes, etc., along the borders had been noticed; but MOFPD failed to monitor these indicators and on time.*¹⁷²

In the same token, another informant from the Somali regional state stated that:

*In Somali region, the system of conflict early warning system is not institutionally established. There is no situation room. Conflict early warning indicators are not strictly monitored. They are not identified according to their categories. However, there are visible indicators whenever the conflict starts along the borders between Somali and Oromo groups; like everybody is searching purchasing arms, rustling and raiding cattle, insulting each other, etc. MOFPDA has not established the system and failed to prevent the conflict before it turns to become violent conflict. The information channel is mostly informal and gathering the same is usually after the conflict has occurred.*¹⁷³

¹⁷² Interview with an official in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, Addis Ababa, February, 2016.

¹⁷³ Interview with an official in Somali Regional State Bordering Affairs Bureau, Jijjiga, February, 2016.

The information obtained from both Oromia and Somali informants portrays that the conflict early warning indicators which are likely to escalate conflicts to violent level were not formally monitored by the MOFPDA to mitigate the conflict around the boundaries. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier (see section 6.5.1.), indicators are widely used in many different fields and play a useful role in highlighting problems, identifying trends and contributing to the process of setting priority, formulation of policy, and evaluation and monitoring of processes. However, for indicators to play these roles, they must capture all aspects of targeted manifestations. Regarding indicators along the border areas, an Oromo elder in Moyale disclosed that:

*There are lists of indicators of conflict along the boundaries such as rumors, insults, war of words, shepherds' fighting, arms trade, hiding of arms, rape, cattle raiding, illegal settlement and construction of houses by crossing borders etc. These indicators usually manifest earlier before conflicts occur. They are known to everybody among the communities. These indicators are sometimes reported after the incident by the local officials and at other times they remained unreported at all. Formal ways of delivering the information is not in place.*¹⁷⁴

This implies that potential indicators could possibly be identified using local level stakeholders and communities at grassroots level but formal ways of exchanging information were not in place in its true sense. Though MOFPDA has informally tried to identify a set of indicators which are capable of capturing the dynamics of agro-pastoral and pastoral conflicts along the boundaries, they have left out an important indicator shown in the form of commercialized livestock rustling. Regarding this issue, an informant stated that:

It is that commercialized rustling that has increased the intensity of raiding and leading to major changes in conflict in the border areas of Oromia and Somali regions. It is creating a black market for commercial trading that straddles the localities, urban areas and the wider region. Access to arms has also become essential to successful commercial raiding. This kind of rustling poses a unique problem since it is usually initiated by well-resourced individuals with access to weapons and whom funds to recruit perpetrators from the area. Those individuals also have access to major urban areas where the stolen livestock are sold making recovery impossible and in other cases they have hidden networks which guarantee them protection. All these should be included into EW indicators since they

¹⁷⁴ Interview with an Oromo elder in Moyale, 2015.

*increasingly shape the mood of pastoral based conflicts and their attacks are characterized by large number of casualties.*¹⁷⁵

This implicates that indicators such as rustling, arm circulation and recruitment of perpetrators which are virtuous signals were not recognized and were left unmonitored before the maturity of the criminal act. This designates that the conflict early warning institution at the MoFPDA level was incompetent in managing conflict. From these findings, it could be hypothesized that early warning could be successful if indicators are properly monitored and analyzed for proper response action. However, there are times when conflict signals are on the ground but not formally identified, reported and responded to on time. In my view, every forthcoming conflict or crisis presupposes signals at an early stage which invariably herald their arrival in advance since they do not usually happen overnight. The issue is associated with the drawbacks of failing to formally recognize conflict signals and employing corresponding preventive action. Considerably, MOFPDA needs to commit itself to change this scenario to have a set of well identified and bunched conflict early warning indicator modules to mitigate border conflicts before they get escalated to violent level.

6.5.2 The Role of Situation Room

Situation room is a center and a point of contact where the latest information on conflict early warning is channeled.¹⁷⁶ It is an important component in the overall framework of conflict prevention and should provide alarms on imminent conflicts to the policymakers and give them sufficient time to undertake preventive action. This information comes from a wide range of sources such as reports from individuals, local authorities, NGO representatives and the local media which are to be streamlined and contextualized in terms of appropriate criteria in the situation room (GTZ, 2006:11; Bercovitch, 1998).

In Ethiopia, the situation room was established in the Early Warning and Rapid Response Directorate within MOFPDA. The role of the situation room includes; collection of early warning information, making analysis and producing reports and briefs and disseminating the analyzed information to decision makers and stakeholders for preparing response

¹⁷⁵ Interview with official in Borana zonal administration and security office, Moyale, 2016.

¹⁷⁶ Taken from 'Random House Unabridged Dictionary,' 1997, by Random House, Inc.

action.¹⁷⁷ However, none of the roles of the situation room is properly implemented at MOFPDA level. Some of the reasons among others are informal and untimely flow, biased and disorganized information system, inadequate capacities of data collectors, researchers and analysts in the MOFPDA.¹⁷⁸ In addition, the situation room at MOFPDA level was dependent on the early warning reports drawn from regional states. However, regional states themselves had their own peculiar problems that plagued the transmission of early warning information. An informant depicted that the major problems were related to lack of capacity and infrastructure such as telecommunication network and electric power at Wereda and local levels to report early warning indicators.¹⁷⁹ Moreover, another informant described that there are cases where Wereda officials were not reporting early warning signals/ information for fear of politicized evaluation “gimegema”¹⁸⁰ because if they report what actually existed on the ground, they are considered as inefficient performers of their duties and might be deposed from their public office and position. This encourages them to send false and unreliable information. Obviously, it was observed that some officials were praised for this. In addition to this, there were also officials who might have an interest in the conflict. They tended to wait for the outbreak of the conflict than preventing the conflict at its earlier stage. For instance, during the conflict, the local officials were conspiring with certain local elders and making share of a raided cattle instead of returning to the original owner.¹⁸¹ All interviewed informants and FGD participants confirmed the prevalence of such an act in certain and conflict hotspot areas (see also OBAS Report 2016).

On the other hand, some major early warning indicators or information about triggers of conflict along the border areas were frequently reported to the situation room of MOFPDA by regional states in the years 2011 to 2017. Most of them included; issues

¹⁷⁷ Interview with an official in MOFPDA, November 7, 2016.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with senior expert in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, 2015.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with zonal official in Oromia regional state,

¹⁸⁰ *Gimegemais* is an Amharic word literally translated into English as evaluations? It refers to the practice of criticism and self-criticism within the EPRDF and its affiliate organizations. The EPRDF like other ML parties uses evaluations and the principle of democratic centralism to maintain control within the party organization.

¹⁸¹ Interview with zonal official in Oromia regional state,

related to illegal settlement scheme and expansion by crossing ones border, erecting or hoisting flags in the territory of the other, raiding cattle, prevalence of circulation of arms, rape, etc., These piece of information were drawn from east Hararge zone in the districts of Qumbi, Babile, Mayu, Midhaga Tola, Chinaksen, Gola Odaa, Muyu, Babile, Gursum districts; from West Hararge zone of Gumbi Bordode, Mi'esso, Doba districts; from Bale zone the districts of Gura Dhamole, Beltu, Rayitu districts; from Guji zone the district of Liban and from Borana zone the districts of Moyale, Wachile and Arero and Guchi districts;(Oromia Administration and Security Bureau Archive, 2015, 2016 and 2017; Key informant Interviews, 2016). In the subsequent section below, some practical cases on incidents of conflict and early warning information/ signals and on how the reports were conveyed to the situation room of MOFPDA and/or unreported; and how timely they were responded to and/or not are demonstrated.

6.5.2.1. Incident Reports and MOFPDA's Response Action and/or Inaction

As discussed earlier (see section 6.5.1.), though formal protocols and guidelines were not applied in the flow of information, messages of early warning indicators/ information were borne to the government offices and concerned stakeholders for early response. On the contrary, some pieces of information were kept unreported though they had been noticed at grass roots and some were not even collected from potential sources at local level. However, the rush out for intervention and response to contain violence was employed late after the damage had ensued. The next set of cases were selected to demonstrate the realities on the ground with regard to early warning reports to the situation room of MOFPDA and actions taken by the same to mitigate Oromia- Somali border conflict. All cases were based on key informant interviews, field observation, archival reports as well as literature.

Box 1. The 2016 Miesso Incident Case

Mi'esso (capital- Miesso) is a district of Western Hararge Zone of Oromia and Mi'esso (capital- Mullu) is a district of Siti zone of Somali. They are bordering districts and experience frequent conflicts between Ittu community of Oromo and Iss/Hawiye of Somali since the introduction of regionalization process in Ethiopia. A dispute emerges over control of Bordede, a customs and tax collection point connecting the eastern region to the center of the country. The dynamics of the border conflict was complicated after the 2004 popular referendum which allocated 20/21 of the contested kebeles to Oromiya. As a result, the Issa "undertook indiscriminate retaliatory attacks on non-Somalis, to punish the ethnic groups that favoured Mieso administration under Oromiya. Many people were displaced or lost assets" (Ahmed Shide, 2005). Up to 2005, conflict intensified, with frequent incidents of indiscriminate killings when federal army not present in the area. Since then, the conflict early warning indicators/signals were noticed in different forms in the local kebeles of the district of Mi'esso of Oromia and Somali. Among all the border expansion and illegal settlement scheme was specifically identified and reported. The kebele officials reported this signal to wereda administration and security office on July 5, 2016. The wereda officials in turn made a report to zonal administration and security office on July 5, 2016 and the zonal administration reported the same case to the regional bureau of administration and security on July 6, 2016 and finally the regional bureau reported to MOFPDA situation room on the same day. However, prior to the response action to the conflict early warning information, the conflict broke out on July 10, 2016 between the Somali Liyu police and militia of Oromia near the river Kuko in the local kebele of Mi'esso wereda of Oromia. The incident resulted in casualties of 32 deaths, 29 injuries, about 3300 IDPs; 5 women were raped; destruction of properties and the raiding of 665 cattle. Later after the incident had escalated, the federal police and defense force intervened to contain the violence (OBAS Report, 2016; MOFPDA Report, 2016; Key informant Interviews in Mi'esso, 2016).

The above case elucidates that conflict early warning information were sent to MOFPDA when manifestations of conflicts started to develop but the intervention becomes reality after the communities from either side suffer the consequences of the conflict. The next case is unique from the former cases in that it exhibits the unreported conflict early warning signals to the concerned stakeholders. Given signals are open out before the conflict, yet they are not reported to take preventive action.

Box 2: The 2012 Moyale Violence Case

Moyale (capital- Moyale) district of Borana Zone in Oromia and Moyale (Capital Moyale) district of Somali region. As discussed in the previous chapter, the conflict around Moyale is generally presented as an intermittent engagement between the Borana Oromo and the Garri Somali. In addition, the existing literature, for instance, Tigist (2014), treat the conflicts of the area as a pastoralist conflicts between the Borana and the Garri. Frequent conflicts were experienced in the area. In the 2012 Moyale incident, the conflict early warning signals were discerned as *illegal settlement scheme and expansion* around Chamuk kebele of Moyale district of Oromia. Previously land treated mainly as a pastoralist asset from which they gain water and grazing for the time being after they move to other places, but since 1991 seen as a political boundary which gives entire control to one ethnic group against the other in permanent basis. The early warning signal/information on illegal settlement and expansion was reported from kebele to Wereda on July 15, 2012. The wereda administration and security office after confirmation reported this information to zonal administration and security office on July 17, 2012. The same report was made by the zonal administration and security office to the bureau of administration and security of Oromia regional state on 20 July 2012 and the region reported the information to the situation room of MoFPDA on the same day. Though the conflict early warning signals was reported, no timely response action was imposed to the alarming situations. The Conflict broke out in Chamuk kebele and spread in to Moyale on 25 July 2017 for three days. There was a serious ethnic clash between Borana and Garri. The Borana took gun to push back the settlers it would become the starting point of the violence. Sadly, there were individuals who were tasked in the institutions to protect the security and peace of the community from both sides could take part in violence against their responsibilities (OBAS Report, 2015; Key informant Interviews,). 18 people were killed and 12 injured in the conflict; 20,000 people were displaced and fled to Kenya to escape fighting (BBC News Broadcast, July12; Red Cross of Kenya; OBAS Report, 2015; Key informant Interviews). Later, after the conflict had escalated to violent level, the federal police and defense force intervened to contain the violence and imprisoned perpetrators of the conflict from both sides. Late after the incident and violence however, the local communities are largely mobilized by government bodies and different stakeholders to convene conference and dialogues to preserve peace around Moyale (OBAS Report, 2015; Key informant Interviews). I was also in Moyale in person during the event to support the process and observed the reality on the ground.

The case shows that the signals and early warning information was reported to the concerned stakeholders (from kebele to MOFPDA situation room) but the intervention was employed after the fatalities. Hence, early warning information was disconnected from the response actions. The next case reveals the conflict early warning information / indicator related to the 2012 conflict and violence in Moyale between the Borana Oromo communities and Garri clans of Somali.

Box 3. The 2015 Invasion of Qumbi District Case

Qumbi district (Capital- Mino) of Eastern Hararge zone of Oromia borders Qubi district of --- Zone of (Capital- Gara Lencha) of Somali region. Both districts experience frequent conflicts along the border areas. Illegal settlement scheme and border expansion as a conflict early warning signal/ information were noticed late in the months of July 2015. However, the signals / conflict early warning information were not reported by the local, zonal and regional officials to the situation room of MOFPDA. The reason for refraining to do a report was testified from two reasons. The first is the local and zonal officials in the district of Qumbi feared the political evaluation “Gingema” (in Amharic- language; political evaluation developed by EPRDF party) and removal from the public office for non-performance and inability to maintain peace in their respective districts. They scared this and hide the reality that portrays clear signals that are likely to lead to conflict. Instead, they pretend as if the situation data on the ground is moving normal. No sooner or later, the conflict broke out on 13, July 2015 between the Somali Liyu police (special force armed by the Somali regional government) and the local militia men of Oromia. It was severe and highly destructive. The town of Mino was burned internally displaced and fled to the neighboring district, Gola Oda to escape the fighting. Later after two days, the federal police and defense force intervened to contain the conflict after the conflict had escalated. In addition, one team organized from MOFPDA and Oromia regional state went for investigation of the causes and identifying the casualties of the conflict. The team confirmed that the signal and conflict early warning information was not reported earlier before the outbreak of the violence by the lower to the higher hierarchies of the government. The actors in the conflict were identified as the Liyu police of Somali and the militia men Oromia side. Perpetrators from both sides were not brought before the court of justice. This could be again a reason for the occurrence of future conflict. However, conferences and dialogues convened after the incident of the conflict between the bordering communities to resume peaceful coexistence. Usually, conferences and dialogues follow after the conflict had already occurred and resulted in humanitarian and material crisis. The approach is the fire brigade and firefighting. Soon later, from the Oromia side, the government disposed the zonal members of the cabinet including the zonal administration from the public office for the failure to critically monitor and reporting the conflict early warning signals/ information for the concerned bodies.

The above case portrays that the signals/early warning information along the adjacent districts were known to everybody earlier before the conflict broke out. However, the local leadership refrained or concealed to report the information because of anxiety that might come to it through “gingema” and no preventive response was made in time. The situation brought about numerous crisis that passed human lives and destroyed the properties of the people in the area.

On the other hand, it was found there was a tendency to undermine the role of women as informants for early warning information. Conflict- affected women spontaneously describe and refer to early warning indicators. There were two cases regarding *arm circulation* as an early warning signal/information between contested boundary areas of Oromia and Somali regions. The data below illustrates the kinds of information women had about arms/weapons, and the kinds of dangers and barriers they faced in presenting early warning information:

*In Mi'esso District I met a woman who told me that when she saw arms caches (supplies) growing in early 2014, she realized that armed conflict was imminent between Oromos' and Somalis'. But she had no one to tell and doubted that her concerns would be taken seriously. 'At a certain point, the young men I suppose, my own nephew also went up into the house of his friend and bought a gun and got trained,' she said. 'That was the beginning. Then there were guns, first only some, which was usual, but then a lot of weapons were talked about. I didn't see them, but I heard about them. We knew all these, but still nobody was watching or listening to us in Mi'esso.' Sometimes, women have nowhere to turn with their information.*¹⁸²

In addition to this, when I made a field visit to Moyale district, southern Ethiopia,

I met another woman and used the opportunity to talk to her. She said,

*We knew roughly where and when the young men were planning something big against the other clan. My friend and I, we wanted to tell someone, but it was hard, we were afraid how we pass information, it would take a long time to walk in the night to go and tell the clan leaders, and we saw it was dangerous. It was a big pity too, because the young men took the guns and they left to attack a member of the clan whom they had planned to kill. We were scared again, which was exactly what they wanted.*¹⁸³

These two case accounts represent the potential reservoir (pool) of experience and insight that women have about weapons accumulation and proliferation, one of the principal signs of an impending conflict. Besides, local women often know the location of arm hides, the routes used to transport them, and the social changes brought about by an influx of arms. However, there was no inclusive early warning system to exchange such crucial information. All the above cases implicate that the failure of institutionalized and system-based conflict prevention, resolution and management approaches in the study

¹⁸² Interview with a resident woman in Miesso, February, 16, 2016.

¹⁸³ Interview with a resident woman in Moyale, September, 2015.

sites. The conflict early warning apparatus for the flow, monitoring and analysis of indicators was disconnected from timely response action.

Likewise, the research conducted by IPSS Research Team¹⁸⁴ showed that the situation room (SR) at the Federal level existed in name and was non-functional in its true sense. Attempts were however made to exchange information with the regional states but the means of verification was sometimes difficult and mostly involved contacting the Federal Police. The challenge in practice was that the system was not properly designed and instituted to have functioning role as a situation room. Indicators were not properly identified, monitored and analysed in the situation room so as to provide the analysed information and the output to end users¹⁸⁵ in MoFPDA on a weekly basis and to the Prime Minister's Office every fortnight. Besides, the research team has found out that there were no clear protocols, frameworks and guidelines for data collection and transmission. Lack of, or limited, skilled manpower made it difficult, if not impossible to collect, process and distribute daily reports. Moreover, the work of the situation room was still manual because the IT backbone has not been fully implemented. (IPSS Research Team Report, 2016: 7).

The personal observation data at the situation room of the MOFPDA indicated that sparsely equipped with only two computers and two telephones. Early warning and conflict prevention and management were done by the same staff, thereby confusing analysis with action. Moreover, there were no permanent desk officers owning the activities of the situation room. There were eight staff members working on rotational basis (two every month) in the situation room. Tools for data collection and analysis were not yet developed. Information on conflict incidents was therefore collected and transmitted mostly through informal ways (IPSS Research Team Report, 2016: 8). This reflects an important insight regarding inter-governmental relations in early warning and conflict prevention work between Federal and Regional governments – vertically and neighboring regions horizontally. However, one could observe that the situation room at

¹⁸⁵The end users in this regard includes the Minister of the MOFPDA, the departments in the Ministry, the Prime Minister office and the Regional States and other related departments who are in charge to decide and take response action.

MOFPDA existed in name, improperly designed; ill equipped in terms of human and infrastructure and poorly strengthened its link with regional states to accomplish its proper roles to mitigate the Oromia-Somali border conflict. This shows that the willingness of the political leaders and decision makers to have a vibrant institution of early warning and response system was weak when compared to the conflict dynamics along the common borders.

6.5.3 Sources of Early Warning Information

By virtue of Article 12(3) of the Peace and Security Protocol, the AU- CEWS envisages as an open-source system in which data is gathered from a variety of sources, including inter alia, governmental and intergovernmental actors, international and NGOs, the media, academia and think-tanks.

One of the preventive aspects of working with conflicts is the ability to get real time early warning information on which one could base a rapid response that would help prevent the escalation of the conflict into violence. Accordingly, the sources of information for conflict early warning at MOFPDA, the report obtained from MOFPDA indicates, were mainly from the institutions of Regional Administration and Security Bureaus', the Federal Police, the Defense Force, and the intelligence organs (MoFPDA Report, 2013). On the other hand, regional states, in majority of the cases relied and used reports from the police institution, report from the lower level government structures, from peace committees structured by the government, elders and clan leaders as a source of information.¹⁸⁶ Hence, it is observed that the data sources were mainly from the institutions and groups which might have a direct or indirect affiliation to the government. In addition, it suggests that the sources of data for conflict early warning in Ethiopia were not fully collected from an open - sources.¹⁸⁷ This seems to limit the diversification of information from different sources pertaining to conflict early warning.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with an official in Oromia administration and security bureau, Addis Ababa, 2016.

¹⁸⁷ Open early warning systems embrace bottom-up approach where all stakeholders and actors from lower levels to the highest levels of decision- including CSOs are involved in the process (see also Wanani,A,2003,Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanisms in the IGAD sub-region:An analysis of the Ethio- Eritrean conflict 1996-2000) .

Moreover, the involvement of CSOs¹⁸⁸ and gender were limited in the conflict early warning information system. A gender perspective has been excluded from conflict analysis, conflict early warning and preventive response system. Early warning and preventive activities can be made more effective by utilizing the untapped potential of women. The transition from gender blind indicators to gender sensitive analysis in transformative societies is critical to early warning and response, which is geared towards enhancing positive peace.¹⁸⁹ Lopez and Schmeidl (2002) have suggested that “Incorporating gender-sensitive indicators will fine-tune existing information collection and analysis mechanisms, allowing for previously overlooked signs of instability at a grassroots level that can anticipate conflict before it spreads to formal politics”. The United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 stipulates full involvement of women in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and underlines that they are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

In Ethiopian case, the current policies regarding the participation and empowerment of women underline positive implications in all fields. However, it is still plagued with problems obstructing women’s roles in conflict prevention and early warning and response systems and their participation as an important source of information. In addition, when I was collecting data from the Oromia (Borana - Moyale) and Somali (Garri Moyale), I have got a chance to observe the challenge that the women are confronting in the conflict stricken areas. Both the Borana and Garri are sociologically organized in patriarchal clan structures. They are male-dominant in many social affairs, which have left women with no or less independent voices. As a result, women were assumed to share a similar view as their husbands and the men at large. However, the

¹⁸⁸ The current CSO landscape has drastically changed as a result of Ethiopian legislation from 2009 that restricts the ability of CSO’s to provide information and support peace committees. As a result, there is no possibility to get conflict early warning and early response information from them. In 2009, the Ethiopian government adopted the Charities and Societies Proclamation (Proclamation No. 621/2009), which has had a considerably negative impact on civil engagement in conflict transformation. According to the Proclamation, CSOs receiving more than ten per cent of their funding from foreign sources cannot engage in the advancement of human and democratic rights, the promotion of the equality of nations, nationalities, people, gender, and religions, the promotion of disabilities and children’s rights, the promotion of conflict resolution or reconciliation, or the promotion of the efficiency of the justice and law enforcement services. Hence, actively integrating CSOs into the operational conflict prevention and early warning and response systems is a political impossibility. See also Article 14 of proclamation no.621/2009.

¹⁸⁹ See “Training Manual on Developing Capacity for Conflict Analysis and Early Response.” Available at <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan011117.pdf>. Accessed 25/03/2016.

voice of women was not proportional to men, not because they provide no views on topics related to issues on the ground, since the culture itself obstructs women from forwarding their opinions and information on issues outside of the household activities. However, in the episodes of conflicts along the border areas of Oromia and Somali regional states the most vulnerable groups in the conflict were women. This implies that the role of women in conflict early warning and response system in Ethiopia was still significantly lacking. Moreover, pertaining to the issue of information sources, an official of MOFPDA stated that

*The sources of conflict information are mostly drawn from regional and local government institutions such as administrative and security bureaus, police and in rare cases from local peace committees. As a matter of unfortunate, the information drawn from all stakeholders is after the crisis has already occurred and the information does not serve the purpose of early action. Moreover, the transmission modality is not guided by standardized formats and protocols. More specifically, information gathered from local providers is smothered with unreliable, inconsistent, untimely evidences. Sometimes, it also does not correspond with the actual local conflict situation and does not qualify methodological analysis.*¹⁹⁰

In this regard, Schmeidl (2002) argues that information must meet certain standards. It must be timely, accurate, valid, reliable and verifiable. The other attributes are interconnectedness and be from reliable sources that can be trusted and traced back to the actual source (Schmeidl, 2002:81). Nevertheless, like that of the AU-CEWS and CEWARN/IGAD, MOFPDA did not try to use multiple media sources and did not extract information to streamline and contextualize it to border conflicts in terms of appropriate criteria in the situation room. The reason according to an informant was, "... lack of capacity and due to structural obstacle revolving around installation of technological infrastructure."¹⁹¹ Importantly, it has to be noted that information here refers to the benefits of preventive action and to rescue people's life and property. The timely, reliable, accurate, verifiable and inclusive information sources would reward the efforts made towards early warning and preventive actions. Hence, information that depicts the realities on the ground need to be drawn from multiple and open sources at the earliest time possible.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Addis Ababa,

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

6.5.4 Information Collection and Exchange

According to Adelman and Schmeidl(1995), in early warning and conflict prevention, collection of information involves: information collectors; the modality of collection of information ; the categories (shared or conflicting) for naming and classifying the collected information; the standards for evaluation of reliability of the information ;the elements of confidentiality which can reconcile the issue of security for the data collectors, the ability to continue their efforts in gathering information and the mode for transmitting the information. The outcome of this process should be an easily discernible alert that must instigate the policy making community to plan a strategy for lessen or avoid the emerging threat.

The guideline for conflict early warning and rapid response established at MOFPDA channeled information exchange from the lower levels to upper hierarchies (EWRR guidelines, 2014). Accordingly, section 9 and 10 of the guideline of MoFPDA (2014) describe that conflict early earning warning and rapid response mechanism shall facilitate the flow of information from local field monitors level to Federal levels in a consistent manner. In addition to this, the guideline provided that exchange of information and coordination of rapid response is also to be facilitated diagonally among parallel structures, such as region to region, zone to zone and Wereda to Wereda. More often than not, the situation on the ground was different. The official in MOFPDA described the modalities, formats, time table and schedule of information gathering and flow:

*Though the guideline articulated the procedures, in practice, MOFPDA confronted different barriers in the regular early warning information flow. The regional states and local level stakeholders did not report on time based on the existing formats. Many actors which keep information refrain from passing it due to their concerns over the circles that may utilize them for what is viewed as a hostile action. Also, communication on EW is relayed to relevant governments on receiving the information have discretion on who accesses the information. This defeats the whole notion of open access. Significantly, in situations where the government has received the warning which is complicit with pastoral conflicts, such information loses its purpose.*¹⁹²

¹⁹² Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Addis Ababa, 2016.

In contrast, all informants and FGD participants disclosed that MOFPDA has not yet designed information transmission modality and the regularity of monitored events. It only appears to be active only when conflicts broke out requesting information to be communicated to it. Even, when the report is sent to MOFPDA at the earlier stage, there is no immediate feedback and intervention to contain the conflict before it matures to violence from the MOFPDA side (see discussion under situation room section 6.5.2. above). Thus, observation showed that the practice of information collection at MOFPDA level reveals that there was lack of prescribed protocols and detailed guidelines. The existing information exchange mechanism was largely informal and sometimes sent biased information about a conflict which invariably made reaching credible decisions difficult so as to rectify and prevent Oromia – Somali border conflict.

Furthermore, the IPSS research team report (2016) depicted that the system for information gathering and exchange became informal at lower hierarchies. In all regions, only rudimentary information was gathered through informal and traditional channels employed by the leadership and concerned stakeholders. Since there were no well-functioning situation rooms at regional levels (and no in-house analyst at the Zonal, *Wereda* and *Kebele* levels), there was no corresponding and empirically grounded early warning information available. The end-users only received basic information, with some oral explanations rather than the analytically enriching insights that should go into such products. It would seem that the end-users themselves did not expect much as they knew the challenges and limitations of information gathered at various levels. Thus, the content of the information was hardly ever free from bias just as they were not up to the standard required to make informed decisions on how to respond to a conflict. In the existing setup of the EWERS, there was no formal and functioning system of feedback from the end-users. Moreover, distribution of information was not formalized as it usually relied on informal- even sometimes- personal ways (IPSS Research Team, 2016: 10). In fact, data gathering and analysis are critical, not only in assisting analysts to anticipate a crisis, but also in determining the appropriate early response for a particular situation. As the Rwandan case outlines, international actors could not draw the appropriate conclusions on events unfolding on the ground. This was partly because there was a strategic failure

to collect and analyze the data that was available and inability to translate this wealth of information into strategic plans and actions (Stanton, 1998). On the other hand, in MOFPDA, Oromia and Somali regional states, most collected data were not recorded and classified systematically. Due to these shortfalls, much information was either under-used or not used at all. Quite often lack of “political will” as discussed elsewhere in the chapters, was cited as the reason for all failures, but a deeper analysis revealed that the failure must be attributed to several serious challenges in terms of realizing an early warning system.

6.5.5 Methods, Models and Analysis of Conflict Early Warning Information

The purpose of analysis is to examine possible connections that exist between dynamic factors and historical variables and their impact on potential conflict. It also helps in understanding formation of conflict and formulating a prevention strategy. Therefore, the analysis informs decision-making process by formulating strategic options directed at taking preventive action. The analysis is also needed to look for both the positive developments so that they can be reinforced and negative ones can be countered.

Important here to note is that conflict analysis methodology is an important first step in the conceptualization of interventions and is a basic stage towards prevention and resolution of conflict. In this regard, Nyheim (2001) points out that mapping conflict through conflict analysis needs to answer the following questions. What factors contribute to conflict (e.g. territorial (border) conflict land distribution, availability of light weapons etc.); where is the conflict located (e.g. local, national, regional, etc.); and when and how conflict developed over time (history, time line). He further explains the links between the what, where, and when of the conflict to the issues of governance, security, economics and socio- cultural aspects in order to use indicators to facilitate the subsequent analysis (Nyheim, et al. 2001:7). In addition to this, the Peace and Security Protocol of the African Union emphasizes that strategic analysis and the timely development of policy options require the continuous monitoring of political, economic, social, military and humanitarian indicators (PSCP Art 12 (4); See also Keysler and Kompf muller, 2003:13). Despite the state of conflict along the borders of the regional

states, especially Oromia and Somali, in the engagement of MOFPDA, the informant stated that

*There is no regular and in-depth analysis at all levels (national, regional, Zonal and Wereda) due to serious skills deficit. Let alone at the regional and local levels, there are no analysts at the national level. In addition, there is dearth of required infrastructure to plan and conduct analysis capable of producing accurate, in-depth and user-friendly products. The raw information collected on indicators of conflict is therefore mostly transmitted without giving meaning. In other words, majority of the challenges related to early response have much to do with shortcomings linked to the outright paucity of designed analysis. Structures and working mechanism for early warning and lack of identification of conflict indicators largely impaired making analysis. Informal ways of analysis is used as a caveat emptier.*¹⁹³

On the other hand, FGD discussants explained that “... due to lack of institutional and analytical capacity, less formulation of scenario, poor educational back ground to support more robust action on EW-ER either at the MOFPDA or in-Regional State level, lack of prediction skills and commitment at all levels, certain information is wrongly analyzed and transferred to the government.”¹⁹⁴

This implies that many opportunities for conflict early warning and the prevention of violent conflict were missed because of the inability to effectively consolidate and analyze the information by MOFPDA and regional states to arrest the conflict. On the other hand, in certain cases, both Federal and regional levels analyze information differently and were talking different languages on the same issue due to lack of established methods and models of analysis. The practice of information analysis for prediction, scenario building and reporting is not guided by proper methodology/model for conflict early warning and response systems both at Federal and state levels. This jeopardized rescuing border communities from humanitarian and material crisis. This implies that MOFPDA has the best opportunity than any other member states in the IGAD region to draw experience and domesticate models and acquire knowledge from AU- CEWS as its head quarter is in Addis Ababa and from CEWARN/IGAD for its closer proximity. Hence, the unfolding truth pertaining to the methodological aspect of conflict early warning system in MOFPDA was argued as neither formal nor the modular

¹⁹³ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, 2016, Addis Ababa

¹⁹⁴ Focus Group Discussion with senior experts, 2016, Adama.

identification in their own peculiar context and accepted formats of indicators. Hence, using different sources of information and bringing diverse roles of stakeholders to analyze innovatively for policy framework and contributing to responding to conflict need to be well-thought-out to the intricacies of border conflicts.

6.5.6 The Use of Information Communication Technology for Early Warning

In recent years, information communication technologies have special role in preventing and managing conflicts including facilitating conflict early warning and response systems. Those seeking to prevent conflict and save lives need to adapt their strategies to the context at hand through technologies (Singer, 2009; Daniel et al 2005: iii; Mancini and Oreilly, 2012). Likewise, *Insight on Conflict* (2014), stresses that information and communications technologies (ICTs) and mobile phones in particular can be aids in early warning and violence prevention at the local level, where both the knowledge and the desire to prevent violence are available. So, if we understand violence as the outcome of a lack of information, or an information space where rumors of violence or hate speech predominate, then mobile phones can play a critical role in helping people share information that can defuse violence before it starts. In the *Insight on Conflict* (2014) states that in Kenyan technological landscape, there are good examples of using mobile phones for violence prevention this way. The main attributes of these programs are that they operate at the local level, and focus on information sharing and narrative change in areas affected by violence.

In the case of Ethiopia, MOFPDA believed that information communication technology infrastructure such as telephone, radio satellite, internet, e-mail, letters, Wereda net were critical in the conflict early warning and response processes. However, utilization of ICT tools has not yet been developed and their activities were limited only to telephone, internet and desktops at the Ministry level. Pertaining to this issue, the informant from MOFPDA stated that

Both at federal and regional levels utilization of information communication technology with regard to conflict early warning and early response is almost non-existent. Until recently, the conflict early warning system in the Ministry has not taken full advantage of new technologies. This has significantly impacted the

*collection of information on timely basis and making analysis and developing scenario so as to put forward peacemaking proposals for decision makers. Technology infrastructure has not yet been installed to receive or analyze information. Even remote areas do not have satellite radios, networks and other necessary tools. Similarly, the utilization of info technology is very limited at regional and local levels. In addition, lack of information technology infrastructure is escorted with lack adopting with local language as most communities in conflict prone areas use languages other than English.*¹⁹⁵

The informant also argued that let alone at MOFPDA level, Gambella and Benishangul Gumuz regional states bordering countries like South Sudan and Kenya respectively which experience frequent cross-border conflicts along their borders, lacked technological infrastructure for conflict early warning and response systems.¹⁹⁶ With the same token, focus group discussants reported that

*There are host of problems plaguing conflict early warning systems. The conflict early warning data collection is not supported with a well - designed data collection formats and transmission technology. Coupled with this, there is a gap in regular, timely and fast flow of conflict early warning data from Kebele to MoFPDA level due to lack of communication technology, poor network, and lack of proper logistics which undermines the rapid response effort. Another limitation is that in many areas due to limited skills in tracking conflict early warning signals and delay in the timely flow of conflict early warning data; and most data are received after the conflict have escalated into violence. This hampered the Directorate's ability to provide rapid responses.*¹⁹⁷

The facts above depicted that lack of information communication infrastructure contributed to poor, unchecked and unreliable provision of conflict early warning information and analysis at every stage. The utilization of information communication tools in the Ministry and regional states failed to meet timely communication of information. On the other hand, local level informants commented that "... they use mobile phones to convey early warning information and messages. However, due to the remoteness of their residence from the center, the electric power is not available to charge their mobiles and they have to go to the nearer districts and towns to charge it. In between there are situations where conflicts erupt incurring consequences. In addition, the same

¹⁹⁵ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, Addis Ababa,

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Focus Group Discussion with Oromia, Somali and MOFPDA officials and senior experts, Adama.

would happen when network is not available in the area and impossible to forward information”.¹⁹⁸ Hence, the implication of all sources in this regard was that MoFPDA had to go a long way in reinvigorating this apparatus and ensure regular, timely and fast flow of conflict early warning by putting in place a well- designed data collection format, staffing the system with well-trained analysts, motivated and adequate workforce as well as equipping it with state of the art in communication technology such as employing solar technologies and others means in remote areas. One must have the right skills in sufficient quantities to operate the system over time. The full potential offered by the pool of information obtained from various sources can only be tapped if the right skill sets are assembled to make sense of the data and to channel it for action at state and community levels to enhance preventive action and early response. Hence, MOFPDA needs to harness the potential of ICT for viable conflict early warning and response systems and for the benefit of the people to be affected by the conflict.

On the other hand, while the positive impact of the use of technology can be emphasized, certain rebuffs should be acknowledged. There is always a potential risk of using misinformation and SMS text messaging for negative purposes, and indeed mobile phones can easily be used to organize violence more efficiently (Godfrey M. Musila, 2013)., I am of the opinion that while every technology can be used for good or bad, and no technology is a panacea for human problems, understanding the potential and proper use of technologies can allow us to work more effectively and in ways that would not otherwise be possible. Importantly, peace-building professionals need to understand the context in which they are using these technologies. In general, lack of ICT infrastructure at the MOFPDA and regional states could be operational challenge to capture and mitigate conflicts along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regions.

6.5.7 Conflict Early Warning Outputs/ Products

Conflict early warning output is the production of analyzed early warning information for decision makers and the public through reports and other means for proper action. Nyhiem (2009) argues that early warning products refer to outputs of the data collection and analysis processes which are often delivered in the form of briefs or reports. They are

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Oromo informant in Mi’esso wereda of Oromia, February, 16, 2016.

essential to conflict prevention in general and to the process of early warning in particular in that they link early warning with response instruments and mechanisms by providing policy makers with synthesized and actionable information about a threat of violence. The perspectives of conflict early warning systems delivery of information is mainly based on formats of reporting modalities as well as the types of early warning reports (alerts, updates, risks or threats, base line studies etc.), frequencies or how often reports are made (like, as needed, immediately, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.) and various levels of reports (national, regional, zonal, district, local) (Nyhiem, 2009:48, See also Jessica and Luis, 2015:56).

In the MOFPDA, as discussed above, analyses of early warning information were hardly conceived. However, the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Directorate produced situation reports on weekly bases and reported to the CPRDG, the Minister and the Prime Minister's office.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, MoFPDA used to receive additional weekly updates from the National Research Institute under the IGAD-CEWARN system before two years and now ceased to operate.²⁰⁰ Moreover, the conflict rapid response system has been plagued in many areas with untimely conflict early warning data flow and limited skills of tracking the conflict early warning signals that most data were received after the conflict have escalated into violence. This hampered the ability of the Directorate to provide rapid responses (Getachew, 2013). Thus, the delivery of the outputs of early warning information to decision makers were not instrumental for taking proactive measures. Therefore, for proper utilization of early warning products, the process of early warning in the MOFPDA should align with the work of Nyhiem. More importantly, warnings are disseminated in order to impact especially the communities at risk.

6.6 Early Response Systems and the Costs of Delay

In the Ethiopian case, the Directorate for Conflict eEarly Warning and Early Response Systems at MOFPDA produced a guideline that helped in preventing the escalation of conflicts by implementing a coordinated rapid response using information passed through

¹⁹⁹ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, Addis Ababa, 2016

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

the conflict early warning system. The guideline, pursuant to the mandate bestowed to it by 691/2010, states that efforts are made to contain, manage and resolve conflicts before they turn out to be violent.²⁰¹ Although attempts were made to undertake early responses, problems associated with response actions were encountered in using instruments of conflict early response systems. Regarding this an informant said that “the instruments used for early response such as peace- making dialogue, consultations, negotiations, mediation, administrative actions, and others are not strictly introduced in their true sense in the response system. But they are designed and convened after the crisis of the conflicts had already occurred.”²⁰² Pertaining to the response actions an informant added that

*The relevant actors for early response at the national level are the House of Federation and the Ministry of federal and Pastoralist Development affairs. At regional level, regional governments, zonal and local officials, local community (peace committees: elders, clan leaders, Aba Gadaas field monitors). The early response instruments are mainly dialogues, peace committees' engagements and joint meetings.*²⁰³

Nevertheless, how these actors effectively respond to the early warnings before it turns into violence remained a critical point for the analysis. In this regard I sought to obtain information from prominent informants and the leadership. Pertaining to the delay of early responses to the conflicts, an informant from MOFPDA portrayed that:

*The speed of decision making on early warning information is potentially a constraint to MoFPDA for the reason that coordination between the federal and regional actors is weak and bounded by bureaucracy and failure of the leadership to take initiatives. The majority of actions that the MoFPDA has undertaken have been responses to conflict rather than responses to early warnings. It is the response made after the conflict has already arisen and killed many lives and destroyed properties. Another obstacle to appropriate responses to early warning is lack of adequate skill in data analysis and lack of trust in this regard. Moreover, there are times when the lower level leadership is an actor in the conflict and gives deaf ear not to provide proactive engagement while early warning information is available.*²⁰⁴

²⁰¹Proclamation no. 691/2010. A proclamation to provide for the definition of powers and duties of the executive organs of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia.

²⁰² Interview with a Senior Expert in Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development, Addis Ababa, February, 2016.

²⁰³Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, Addis Ababa, 2016.

²⁰⁴ Interview with an official in the MOFPDA, Addis Ababa, 2016.

Likewise, an informant from Oromia regional state commented on some instances as;

*the cases of the 2012 deadly conflict between Borena (Oromia) and Garri (Somali) around Moyale and the 2013, 2015 and 2016 cases Eastern Hararge (Oromia) and Jijiga zone (Somali) around Qumbi, Midhega Tola, Babile, Chinaksen districts; the 2011-2016 deadly conflicts in west Hararge around Mi'esso; Rayitu, Gura Dhamole and Madda Walabu in Bale zone are noted as practical instances where the lower level leadership involved in the conflict rather than responding to the conflict. In addition, the leadership is reluctant in monitoring and classification of indicators of early warning so as to make proactive engagement following the cycle of the conflict. The response systems are usually event based followed by fire-fighting approach. This has also impacted the response systems and a challenge to bring sustainable peace along the borders.*²⁰⁵

From the above demonstration one could infer that the weak synergetic coordination between federal and regional governments and lack of political will largely impaired the response system. Campbell and Meire (2007) define political will as the willingness to use political clout to push for action. Lack of capacity is often blamed to explain lack of response but political will is often cited as the main culprit responsible for late (or no) response (Campbell and Meirer, 2007:4). In context, MOFPDA did not develop a strong institutional framework and operational capacity in terms of early response. It could be argued that lack of capacity partly reflects a lack of political good will. The best that an early warning system can do depends on how decision makers may wish to allocate resources for response actions. The allocation of resources determines in part whether the institution has the necessary capacity to respond. Moreover, the system lacked a coherent response structure in which all stakeholders at various levels would feel that they are involved in the process. Therefore, it was observed that there was lack of effective response strategy to give out feedback to reports of early warning. As a result, the early warning information/ signals reported to MOFPDA could not pro-actively used to mitigate conflicts. On the other hand, both Federal and regional authorities have gone from denial to pointing fingers at one another to explain the root causes of what was visibly becoming an alarming breach to peace and stability in many areas bordering the Oromia and Somali regional states. However, after the increasing number of civil

²⁰⁵ Interview with official in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, Addis Ababa, February, 2016.

causalities due to the failure to respond to the conflict, the Prime Minister of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia explained that

Border conflicts between Oromia and Somali regional states continued for years without proper response. Our response to the requests and claims of the people was very minimal. Though sufficient information in the development of the border conflict, it was not responded at the earlier stages due to the failure and attitudinal problems of the leadership. These attitudinal problems emanated from narrowmindedness and nepotism that exists in the leadership. The Primer confessed that there is no unveiled information about the border conflict and prior information about the conflict was known to its government but not responded in real time (Reporter Gazette, Ser.22 No.1764, Sunday, March 26, 2017, Section one, page 10).

Likewise, Kassa Tekleberham, the former Minister of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs stated that

Due to the delay in response to the conflicts along the bordering areas of Oromia and Somali Regional States, enormous damage has occurred. The leadership could not manage to respond to the conflict. However, our federal system can promote the honest cooperation and peace among the Oromo and Somali Communities. When one is harmed by the conflict the other could not get relief. Hence both regions need to work together (Oromia Television Broadcast News, March 13, 2017, 8:30 PM).

Abdi Mohammad, Somali National Regional State President, also confessed that “... due to our failure to work and respond to the border conflict a devastating impact of conflict has occurred along the borders of Oromia and Somali regional states. For the future, we are committed to work on”(Oromia Television Broadcast News, March 13, 2017, 8:30 PM). Likewise, Lemma Megerssa, Oromia National Regional State President, also shared the same view (Oromia Television Broadcast News, March 13, 2017, 8:30 PM).

The sources obtained from prominent leaders and decision makers of the country and the regional states reveals that they had received the required information but did not respond to. This unveils the lack of political will. In this regard, Banim (2006:273) argues that early warning systems are particularly important because they create political responsibility for action. When the occurrence of conflict is foreseen, politicians have the duty to react and they can no longer claim that they did not react because of any other reasons they are going to construct. Otherwise public accountability for inaction needed to be entertained for the failure. However, the case in point in Ethiopia diverged from the

above argument. Conversely, it validated that the data obtained from the other sources that there was lack of link between conflict early warning and early response system in the country. This gap was between early warning and organization of early response capacity- a political process (Campbell and Meirer, 2007:5). Hence, the system was not institutionally operationalized at MOFPDA level to mitigate Oromia and Somali border conflict and this surfaced a way for the conflicts to continue frequently. As a result, there was a growing realization that the price paid for not acting early was extremely high. When the conflict vibrations on the ground are ignored, when human rights violations in conflict prone areas go on and we wait for the conflict to turn into a civil unrest, then the price to be paid in terms of lives, money, property, time and the reputation of the government become enormous. This is supported by the argument of Wulf and Debiel (2009) who explain that the link between warning and response remains weak and response is often lacking, despite clear warning signals.

Presumably, cooperation between Federal government, regional states, police force, intelligence institution, CSOs, CBCs, local communities, etc. are critically important in the engagement to conflict early response. However, this remained impractical. Pertaining to this, an official from the Federal Police Commission disclosed that:

*the coordination and joint interaction between the federal and regional governments and other stake holders is weak and impaired the rapid response system. Lack of inclusiveness and strict coordination preponderates among stakeholders, CSOs, CBOs and others due to the lack in commitment among the leadership in different ladders of the government. Biased information has also impacted the rapid response system. The activities jointly planned by the stakeholders are not implemented by strict discipline because of rent seeking attitudes and the intention of each group to act separately with its own and the failure of joint action. The intervention made to respond to the conflict is usually after the conflict had already escalated.*²⁰⁶

From the discussion made above, it could be possible to realize that, though considerable attempts have been made at federal, regional and local levels, the conflict early warning and response systems in the country was fragile over the course of the preceding years and yet remained inactive.

²⁰⁶ Interview with official in Federal Police Commission, Addis Ababa, February 2016

I argue that the conflict early response system in the study sites has failed due to lack of cooperation, commitment and political will of the leadership. Therefore, concerned leaders are expected to show political will and commitment to support early prevention and address issues of potential conflicts than significantly spending after the crisis has materialized.

Warnings often went unanswered even though the conflict signals were noticed on the ground and reported to MOFPDA. The issues that triggered conflict flashed a wider concern in Ethiopia for which early warnings were ignored. An unmistakable example, in the current practice, was that the conflict between Oromia and Somali regional states which was escalated more than ever between 2015 and 2017. We have witnessed the failure to translate early warnings into early action of public concerns resulted in the civil unrest in the regions. Citing the interviews of the federal government officials, reports indicated that the conflicts continued until recently along the borders of Oromia and Somali regions and resulted in the death of hundreds of people, displacement of tens and thousands of people, which violated the constitutional right to life, movement and own property (Reporter News Paper. September 28/2010 E.C.; ser.23. No.1820; Addis Admass News Paper, October 18/2010 E.C., ser.16, No.928; EBC News Broadcast, 14/01/2018). Thus, one could observe that the reason behind these devastating effects was lack of strong institution, political will and the failure of the federal government to respond to the conflict in pre and post crisis.²⁰⁷ What matters is political will. Ultimately, early response at scale depends up on the political will. However, political will rarely favors early response and often makes inaction expedient. In this regard, institutions matter most because the frameworks that shape response decisions are hard-wired and decision makers do not feel accountable for preventing crisis but do feel accountable for other competing priorities. Decision makers favor crisis management over early response. More generally, the whole episode was also a sharp reminder to a renewed focus for the country to institute viable and strong conflict early warning and response systems in place.

²⁰⁷ In reaction to this the perception of the public was reflected on the *caffe* Oromia Ordinary meeting in 2017.

Moreover, neither the Federal government nor the regional states institutionalized and strengthened the local level- community based early warning and response systems to employ local knowledge for local action. Community based early warning systems involve community driven collection and analysis of information that enable warning messages to help a community to react to conflict violence and reduce the resulting loss or harm. Effective early warning system does not only need strong technical foundations and good knowledge of the risks but also should be people centered (Macherera and Chimbari, 2016; UNISDR, 2009). I am of the opinion that local communities should be better capacitated and strengthened to identify the indicators and corresponding response for imminent dangers, because they are closer to the location of the conflict and are the most affected so that they can prepare themselves for mitigation. They might complement the national early warning systems rather than replacing them. This is because communities may not have resources to respond to all types of conflicts at local level but can inform the national early warning system.

In a nut shell, the operationalization of early response system is, therefore, almost non-existent and non-operational in its material sense in the study sites' context. This invigorates institutional strength, capacity and infrastructure development and political will as an imperative. The subsequent sections discuss operational challenges facing early warning systems in (MOFPDA) Ethiopia.

6.7 Operational Constraints Challenging Early Warning Systems in Ethiopia

The effort made by the CPRDG at the MOFPDA to institute the system and produce guidelines to suit peculiar national and regional circumstances were a step forward to strengthen the conflict prevention and resolution mechanism across the country. Despite short comings, the availability of the strategies and awareness of the need to use them represents bold steps in the right direction. However, there are several constraints noted of the existing gap in operationalizing conflict early warning and response systems. The next sections will discuss the major constraints and challenges in the early warning system.

6.7.1 The Constraints of *What* Information to Collect

Information is at the heart of conflict early warning systems. In collection of conflict early warning information, the first question one needs to answer is: early warning of what? If one looks at the early warning literature one finds agreements as to what early warning should be about in the human rights and humanitarian field. Should it focus on: Intra-state border conflict, ethnic conflict, armed conflict; genocide, political, IDP flows; complex humanitarian crises; internal displacement; state failure; minorities at risk; political terror; or gross human rights violations? (Davis and Gurr, 1998:40).

In Ethiopia, in general and along the border areas of Oromia- Somali regional states, a good understanding of the local context and the type and list of conflicts like; resource-based conflict, intra-regional border conflict, inter-group conflict, and cross-border, humanitarian governance, value conflict etc. were not adequately identified in the process of information collection. This means that not only the type of information to be reported but also from what type of conflict it was collected is crucial for preventive purpose. Another bottleneck is to categorize and systematize these reports into significant themes (Mark Last, 2010: 224). Such violent events may be essentially local ones between communities but they may have the potential to escalate and the opportunity to involve international frontiers. However, such identification issues and understanding local conditions in data collection process was a challenge in Ethiopia and regional states.²⁰⁸

George and Holl cited in Mwaura and Schmeidl (2002) tend to argue that too little information leads to misinterpretations or lack of understanding of the situation. Another challenge was that some data collectors could report biased information for the benefit of their own group as most of them came from the same communities.²⁰⁹ This would lead to credibility crisis. It could have been appropriate to have multiple sources to make rigorous and meticulous collection of data to minimize bias and secure validity. Several attempts have made to categorise regional states in terms of their vulnerability to conflict.

²⁰⁸ Interview with official in Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Ethiopia, February, 2016.

²⁰⁹ Interview with an official in Mi'esso wereda of Oromia, February, 17, 2016.

However, the biggest impairment has been obtaining valid information from the grassroots communities and translating it in to practical action.

6.7.2 Constraints of Analysis of Information

There are critical malfunctions constraining analysis and operationalization of conflict early warning in MOFPDA and regional states. Mwaûra and Schmeidl (2002:77) noted that in the case of Rwanda and Yugoslavia, there was enough information, but there was no enough analysis, which in turn led to misunderstanding of the situation at hand. Nyheim (2009) also emphasises that failure to foresee important events, late in analysis, inadequate linking of operational response to warnings are major constraints in conflict indicator analysis. Faulty analysis has also a possibility to lead to inaccurate prediction (Nyheim, 2009:16). Two things could be observed from the above assertions. The former one explicates that information although information was on the ground, they were not analyzed while the latter portrays that inadequate linkage of the analysis to response options and faulty analysis has the possibility to lead to inaccurate prediction.

As discussed above, MOFPDA and the regional states sensitize how information can be gathered, analyzed and evaluated in order to establish the nature of threats to peace and security and how the findings can be disseminated in a real time to the relevant decision makers which are colossal challenges in conflict early warning system. Pertaining to this issue, focus group discussants described that:

*Often times, major difficulties come up in reporting and making accurate analysis of the early warning information. Information about the forthcoming conflict is immense. Some of the information are unreported 'like the Qumbi district invasion case in East Hararge and information in others were reported but most of them were reported like, the violence in the districts of Moyale 2012, Arero 2016 in Borana zone; incident in the district of Mi'esso, 2005, 2009, 2013-16, Gumbi Bordode, 2015-16 in West Hararge, etc.,but failed in analysis to produce response option. As a result, many casualties occurred. There was sufficient information but enough and timely analysis was not done due to lack of political will, commitment and capacity problems at every level to make accurate predictions and ultimately resulted in frequent violent conflicts.*²¹⁰

²¹⁰ Focus Group Discussion with senior experts, 2016, Adama.

This implies that although there was sufficient information on the ground, analysis was not made using the existing information. This finally resulted violent conflicts. In addition to this, another senior expert in conflict prevention and resolution from MOFPDA stressed that "... the Ministry and regional states neither designed an analytical framework nor adapted from somewhere else; hence the analysis system at every level was under qualified to make response options but brought about a serious problem".²¹¹ Thus, an observer could capture that the analysis of early warning information is an operational constraint at MOFPDA and regional states level.

6.7.3 When to Provide Information –*How Early is Early?*

There are several explanations as to why decision makers often take time to act in response to early warning: the warning may be vague; it may not be well-timed. On the other hand, due to approaches of "passing the "buck" and "waffling" by lead actors, pertinent information may not be obtainable or decision makers at times may just misunderstand the warning (Odote, 2010: see also Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff, 2010:173). This in most cases turn out to be a major challenge to the ability of the conflict early warning systems to avert escalation of conflict to violence. Because of the systems 'propensities' to act very late anywhere, it may not assume response at all. Mwaûra and Schmeidl (2002: 77-78) argue that the failure for how early is early is time and again associated with bureaucratic complications or breakdowns. As shown earlier, in Rwanda, well-timed alerts were communicated to the UN and other international stakeholders to put a stop to the genocide, but there was no intervention. A different aspect that clearly exposes the crack in conflict early warning and early response is the tendency of early warning bodies depending on a bureaucratic arrangement of transmission early warnings. For instance, scholars such as Wulf and Debiel (2009) argue that international and regional actions are predisposed to update policy makers at the top-level. A lesser amount of consideration is accorded to the strength and handling capacities at the local level.

²¹¹ Interview with senior expert in MOFPDA, 2016, Addis Ababa.

In a similar vein, as discussed earlier in this chapter (section 6.5.2.1.), illustrious example is the case of Midhaga Tola²¹² district in East Hararge Zone administration of Oromia. In that case the district administrator sent warning to the Federal and regional governments an impending conflict of Oromo-Somali communities at the adjacent kebeles on December 28, 2016. His appeal to intervene at earlier time as possible was not successful. Afterwards, the conflict broke out and resulted in 26 deaths, 40 injuries, internal displacement of 32400 people and robbery of huge amount of private and government properties.²¹³ Moreover, such an untimely and response after fatalities was a very common anexperience along the border areas of both Oromia and Somali regional states. In this regard, it is argued that lack of political will and/or resources often makes the whole exercise redundant and untimely even when the need for response is obvious (Matveeva, A. 2006). This implies that early warning without real - time early response is counterproductive.

6.7.4 Warning and Response Gap

This sub-section discusses the challenges to act on early warning information. For a long time, the existence of conflict early warning machineries does not necessarily mean a success in conflict early responses. The relation between warning and response still remains inadequate. This is as a result of reduced excellence of early warning and undeveloped mechanisms and response strategies coupled with a variety of individual, institutional and political weaknesses that impinge on decision making. In OECD (2009) it is stated that if initially the challenge in “early warning is not wired to the bulb”, presently it could be the existence of countless “bulbs” opposing each other or not operational when need be. In the same line of argument, there appears to be a disconnect of information flow between actors working at the very local level to respond to tensions or incidents (community early responders) and actors working at the national or regional state level to manage information on conflict and coordinate early response activities. Regarding this, a key informant portrayed that:

²¹²Due to lack of effective early warning and early response that takes in to consideration structural and systemic casual factors that constitute the root cause of emerging or ongoing conflicts, Qumbi district has been invaded by the Somali actors four times since 2013 and suffered and recorded 2077 deaths, 92 wounded people, 44,689 people internally displaced, 767 cattle raided, 1094 cattle shot down in the conflict and 23 million ETHB has been robbed.

²¹³ Interview with official in Eastern Hararge zone of Oromia, February, 16, 2016.

*First, whilst all the state-level early warners are connected to some community early responders (often trained by them), the same is not true in the opposite direction: not all community early responders are aware of state-level early warning. Second, most actors operating at the state level have trained their own network of local monitors and / or responders. These local monitors are charged with sending information and alerts to focal points at the state level. At times, they are also the first line of response to incidents. This duplication has resulted in some communities having three or four different sets of monitors reporting through different channels; in other communities, the same monitor may be reporting to three or four different systems. Third, and related to the second point, although there is some information sharing already taking place, there is a very limited coordination of early response actions. All actors have their own channels to communicate alerts to relevant security agencies and / or local leaders and mediators who can intervene. The networks discussed above do not have systematic processes to coordinate with each other on response activities.*²¹⁴

In addition, the field note at Moyale also revealed that MOFPDA, federal police, intelligence, regional level actors such as administration and security bureau and police have their own respective local networks trained by each of them. All these networks were expected to report to their higher-level networks. Consequently, there were a number of duplication of reporting systems on similar issues and all of them were not coordinated and created complication in timely responding to the forthcoming crisis. This implies that uncoordinated efforts would have an impact on taking preventive measures. Moreover, such diverse data were not adequately cross referenced and used at the decision making stage.

6.7.5 ICT Challenges

Communication in crisis zones is confronted by two major obstacles. The first challenge is access to communication technology. Access is mainly restricted due to political necessity and lack of economic development. The second challenge is safety, both in terms of field-security and data security. These challenges affect the “big world” and the “small world” in an alike and unlike ways (Odote, 2010:129). Nevertheless, all informants and focus group discussants depicted that the ICT was the back bone of EWER at MOFPDA and regional states but was found to be a structural problem. Lack of information communication infrastructure (website, satellite radios, electric power cut

²¹⁴ Interview with official in Moyale District of Oromia, September, 20, 2016.

to charge mobile cells, etc.,) contributed to the poor, unchecked and unreliable provision of early warning information at every level.

6.8 Summary

The chapter discussed conflict intervention approaches and the failure behind resolution attempts. Regardless of the intervention approaches, however, the intervention attempt failed for different reasons. The most critical ones were the following. First, contrary to the expectations of most of the stakeholders, the results of the 2004 referendum was not accepted and demarcations along the borders were hardly possible due to allegations on voting irregularities from the Somali side who further triggered conflict rather than ending hostilities along the borders. Moreover, the conflicts along the borders were politically motivated in which the leadership at different levels became actors in the conflict and/ or mobilized supports through invisible hands. Second, the bilateral development effort between the regions was expected to mitigate conflicts through development interventions but failed due to lack of political will, strong and binding framework for noncompliance to horizontal cooperation. Third, the traditional conflict prevention and management structures were getting unproductive in preventing conflict for the reason that there was co-optation of customary authorities by the government. Forth, despite efforts made by MOFPDA, the conflict early warning and response system has failed to prevent the escalation of border conflicts between Oromia and Somali regions and has led to numerous humanitarian and material crisis on the communities residing along the borders. This was largely attributed to the failure to institutionalize strong and viable conflict prevention, early warning and response systems that accompany the Federal structure of the country. Accordingly, the failures were distinguished as failures associated with early warning technical features (information collection and analysis), lacks clear strategic analysis which is needed to anticipate potential conflicts, poor institutional features (communication channels and decision-making processes), as well as untimely response on either side. The failures at the response side of conflict were not only associated with technical or institutional constraints but also to the commitment and political will of the leadership. Lastly, this

chapter demonstrated operational constraints that should to be reinvigorated by MOFPDA for the future directions of the early warning system.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN FEDERAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE OPERATION OF EWER SYSTEMS: THE CASE OF OROMIA AND SOMALI REGIONAL STATES

7.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to investigate how the Federal and regional governments anchored their cooperation to prevent and/or mitigate Oromo-Somali border conflicts within the framework of conflict early warning and response systems. To this end, the chapter consists three sections of which the first discusses the rationale for the Federal and regional cooperation. The second section analyzes the current status of cooperation in the operationalization of EWER systems. Under this section, issues of cooperation on improving institutional capacity for early warning, implementation of policies and strategies, consolidation of regional institutions for EWER systems, capacity building on key processes of CEWER, ICT and early response are examined. The third section discusses challenges constraining institutional cooperation on EWER.

7.2. The Rationale for Federal - Regional Cooperation

When conflicts are of an inter-regional state type, the role of intergovernmental relations and cooperation becomes salient. In this regard Hashim (2007) argues that the jurisdictions of the federal government and the regional states are distinctly delineated but remained interdependent in a wide range of matters such as economic, social, development and maintenance of peace and order (Hashim, 2007:10). Hence, the relevance of this approach for the discussion of cooperation that underlies this thesis is based on the implication that regional states security in Ethiopia would be served through cooperation which could be made through choices of local, regional state and federal actors. Hutton (2010) argues that the manner in which cooperation would manifest is based on the institutions, frameworks, beliefs, and norms at various levels. When I highlight the cooperation and synergy between the Federal and Oromia and Somali regional states in Ethiopia on early warning and early response approach, I would focus major existing literature, trends and experiences related to federal practices on

intergovernmental relations to juxtapose and explain the Ethiopian case. I believe that this would also help to understand the study at hand because the experience of other countries would provide many possibilities of cross learning which could be used as springboard for assessing a particular federal state institution and practices, which, in the case of this thesis, is Ethiopia and Oromia- Somali regional states. Accordingly, as there is no a single ‘pure model of federation’ seen as panacea, looking into trends of different federations would help not only to learn about their successes and failures but also to draw working lessons that would be applied to the present particular study (Watts, R.1990:1). Thus, even though there is no single federal model that is applicable everywhere, there is much to be gained from examining the trends in different approaches to federalism in terms of facilitating and managing federal-state cooperation and coordination which underlie conflict prevention, early warning and response systems.’

Conceptually, intergovernmental relations connect governments and deal with the activities and interactions between governments at different levels. It involves communication, coordination and cooperation, all directed towards achieving common or mutually acceptable goals. It is also sometimes used to describe the detail governance of managing interdependence among nation states.²¹⁵ Although, the emphasis in the analysis of intergovernmental relations is on federal-states relations, the full picture also explains how both levels relate to the local government units established within each state.

In Ethiopia, federal-states intergovernmental relations refer to the political, economic and social interactions that exist between the federal government and nine ethno-linguistic based national regional states and two city administrations. Thus, for this study however, the focus is on how the day to day activities and interactions of all aspects coordinating conflict prevention, early warning and responses systems between federal government and Oromia and Somali regional states. On the other hand, there are a number of factors and variables that affect and vary a character of federal-states intergovernmental relations. Some of these factors on which the cooperation between levels is based and

²¹⁵ See Deil wright 3rd ed (1988), ‘Understanding Intergovernmental Relations’, pacific grove, CA; Brooks/Cole publication. He defines Intergovernmental Relations as conventionally important interactions between government units of all types and levels within political system and it is not synonymous with the study of federalism- in that it is narrower and one of the many aspects of federal system.

seem relevant to this study are highlighted under this section. These determining factors of federal-states intergovernmental relations are constitutions, institutions, party politics, second chambers and dimensions of IGR. I will discuss the trends of some countries and experiences of each and relate with Ethiopian context. The constitution, as a supreme law, defines the scope and the kind of Intergovernmental Relations, and provides basis of intergovernmental relations in all federations (Watts, R.2001:113). The Ethiopian constitutional so clearly envisage the nature of allocation of power to each government i.e. the extent of concurrent and frame works powers for both the federal and the states. In almost all federations, institutions established to manage and enhance effective relations are other determinant factor of federal-states intergovernmental relations. Federations, either directly through their constitution or indirectly through legislation (proclamation) establish the institutions that manage and coordinate intergovernmental relations between different spheres. Effective federal-states intergovernmental relations are possible when intergovernmental institutions become effectively operative (Akhtar Majeed, 2002:8). In practice, all federations, but most notably Australia, India, South Africa, Germany and Canada has a variety of intergovernmental councils, commissions and committees to facilitate intergovernmental relations. In the absence of adequate provisions of intergovernmental relations in their constitution, federations rely on well, strong and effective institution established to manage and coordinate relations between different spheres of government through constitution or legislation. Canadians established a new council of the federation to better manage their relations and build more constructive and cooperative relationship with the federal government (Watts, R., 2008:119-20). As discussed earlier, MOFPDA is the other federal body which has engaged in organizing IGR and facilitating cooperation. It has established a Directorate in charge of formalizing IGR and also organized IGR forums. The ministry is working toward the strengthening IGR sectors within each federal ministry and its respective counterpart at regional bureaus.²¹⁶ However, some argue that the constitution is not detailed in terms of IGR, and a comprehensive legal, policy, and institutional framework

²¹⁶ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Addis Ababa, 2016.

is not in place.²¹⁷ Moreover, IGR is the less treated subject in the federal set up of the country (Assefa, 2007:386; Alem, 2003:21). Having these arguments in context, the next section examines how federal and regional states cooperate to operate CEWER in Ethiopia.

7.3. Analysis of the Current Status of Federal and Regional States Cooperation on the Operationalization of CEWER Systems

In the preceding chapter, it was discussed that the national conflict early warning system in Ethiopia was instituted by MoFPDA. Despite overwhelming weaknesses, this endeavor of MOFPDA could not be undermined in conflict prevention, management and resolution. In this and the subsequent sections an attempt was made to analyze the synergy between MoFPDA's purview and the regions; mainly Oromia and Ethio-Somali regional states. As discussed elsewhere in the previous chapters, the purpose of conflict early warning is to avoid threat and save and rescue life and properties. In this regard, Davies and Gurr (1998) pronounce that the goal of early warning as "proactive engagement in the earlier stages of potential conflicts, or crises, is to prevent or at least alleviate their more humanitarian and material destructive expressions". Therefore, to achieve this purpose, cooperation among conflict early warning institutions at different levels such as the continental and regional; national and local is vital.

Pertaining to this, I highlight the practices of cooperation between AU peace and security and RECs. In Africa, despite implementation challenges, Article 12 of the Peace and Security Protocol (PSC) establishes the coordination and collaboration required between various stakeholders. The AU CEWS has established relations with RECs for early warning system in terms of developing comparable and compatible methodologies and tools for implementing early warning. Accordingly, PSC Protocol stipulates that the regional mechanisms are part of the overall security architecture of the Union, which has the primary responsibility in Africa. It further offers for the conclusion of a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms to enhance

²¹⁷ Interview with, the Speaker of the HoF, Addis Ababa, 2016.

coordination and cooperation. Likewise, at the Regional level, Article 5 of the CEWARN/ IGAD protocol stipulates the need for collaboration and inter-linkages among member states of the IGAD region to operate its functions.²¹⁸ In the same vein, in Ethiopian context, it is logical to argue that the cooperation in the approach to implement CEWER between federal and regional states could be seen in line with the practice between AU-CEWS and RECs practices. Hence, the effectiveness of the cooperation between both levels of the government could be examined against this determination. Although the cooperation has been in place between AUCEWS and Regional levels, Wulf and Debiel (2009) poses critics that violent conflicts are not responded to on time. Regional organizations often fail to respond in time to prevent violent conflict not because of a lack of information on an emerging conflict but due to several barriers or weaknesses, namely political differences and lack of common values within organizations, hesitation to overrule the principle of non-interference in internal matters of a state, lack of capacity to intervene, and the unclear and competitive mission and geographic reach of regional organizations (Wulf and Debiel, 2009:2).

The integration and cooperation among different levels must be framed up on certain variables. In this regard, Carment and Schnabel (2001) argue that integration and coordination among all actors need to be carried out at both the analytical stage (information gathering, risk assessments, evaluation and impact assessment) and at the implementation stage (engaging local, regional and international actors) in linking conflict prevention to broader concerns such as enhancing human security and development at all levels of a government structure (Carment and Schnabel, 2001: 9).

As discussed earlier the federal and regional states in Ethiopia have their own constitutional jurisdictions over their own domestic concerns. However, the federal and

²¹⁸The protocol states that the functions of CEWARN/ IGAD includes; the promotion of the exchange of information and collaboration among member states concerning early warning and early response guided by the principles of timelines, transparency, cooperation and flow of information; gathering, verifying, processing and analyzing information about conflicts in the region as per existing guide lines and communicating all such information and analysis to decision makers of IGAD policy organs and the national governments of member states. Thus, the discussion above justifies that there is a logical ground for the inter-linkages and cooperation among continental, Regional and member states on the approach to conflict early warning and response systems.

regional integration and partnership on conflict prevention and resolution could be in agreement with the duty vested in MoFPDA under Article 14 of the Proclamation 691/2010 which stipulates that MoFPDA has a duty to facilitate the resolution of disputes arising between regional states and cooperate with concerned federal and regional state organs in maintaining public order and preventing conflicts. Keeping this in mind, it seems logical to take thematic areas of cooperation and explain how cooperation in improving institutional capacity, adaptation and implementation of policies and strategies, establishment and consolidation of early warning institutions and capacity building with a view to mitigate conflicts along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regions have been practiced. The next section discusses the cooperation on improving institutional capacity of early warning.

7.3.1. Cooperation on Improving Institutional Capacity for Early Warning

The major objective of the strategic task of institutionalization of conflict prevention and resolution at MOFPDA level is to ensure sustainable peace and security in the country so as to create encouraging environment for sustainable development (MoFPDA report, 2011). The federal and regional governments have roles in common to maintain peace and security. The cooperation is expected to save lives and properties of the people through addressing the challenges of conflicts in a more integrated way. To this end, the next section discusses federal regional cooperation in terms of policies and strategies; establishment and strengthening of the institution of CEWER at regional levels; capacity building on key issues of conflict early warning and response systems and convening forums, meetings and dialogues in the course of conflict prevention along the border belts of Oromia and Somali regional states.

7.3.1.1. Cooperation on Adaptation and Implementation of Policies and Strategies

In the context of Ethiopia, policies and strategies of the federal government are expected to be replicated and adapted by regional states. For this reason, conflict prevention strategy and guidelines for conflict early warning and early response systems are initiated

by the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs and communicated to regional states to adapt in their specific context.²¹⁹

In September 2010, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Directorate General (CPRDG) was conceived in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs (MOFPDA) and it put in place an in-house strategy which summarized the root causes of conflicts, implementation modalities, targets to be achieved and prospective challenges. The overall goal of the strategy was to promote peace values, conflict prevention and sustainable peace building in conflict prone areas. In addition, directives were issued on conflict early warning and the mandates of Peace Committees by the CPRDG in December 2015.

The key informant depicted that “the newly revised conflict prevention strategy of 2010 and the guideline for conflict early warning and early response systems of 2014 were prepared by the MoFPDA and distributed to the regional states so that they could adapt them to their respective regional context. The informant also noted that during the preparation of both strategy and guideline the regional states were consulted in order that regions would replicate and adapt according to their own context.”²²⁰

The guideline outlined the modality of procedure. The system worked in such a way that field monitors at the Kebele level gathered conflict early warning information and fed that data to the Kebele administrator or vice administrator who was assigned to decide if the issue needs administrative decision or the involvement of the peace committee for rapid response. If the issue could not be handled by either the peace committee or the Kebele administration, then it was referred to the Woreda administration and security head that was responsible to lead a rapid response in collaboration with the Kebele administration and the peace committee. Still, if the case was beyond the purview of the Woreda administration and security then it was referred to both the zonal or regional administration and security bureaus for solution. The region would try to provide rapid

²¹⁹ Interview with official in Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, February, 2016, Addis Ababa.

²²⁰ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Addis Ababa

response for issues within the same region. However, the issue may sometimes be cross regional and may need inter-regional collaboration for solution. Then, the concerned regional authorities sat together to find solutions to the situation. If they could not do that then the issue would be reported to MoFPDA's situation room and MoFPDA would decide on the course of action and would collaborate with the regional authorities to resolve the issue. The early warning data, irrespective of who gave the rapid response, would reach MoFPDA's situation room for analysis which would then be produced into a situation report that served for further rapid response.²²¹

The CPRDG also took steps to sensitize regional states and lower structures on the strategy and directives. Because they did not have specific strategies and directives of their own, the regional states have so far not been able to fully embrace and domesticate those from CPRDG to suit their peculiar local contexts. Pertaining to this, an informant from Oromia regional state observed that:

*The regional state receives the Amharic version of the guideline without translating to the Afan Oromo language to meet the working language of the region for its practical application. Consequently, this has impacted the utilization of the guide meeting the context at the local level. Though the complementarity at this level is unchecked, the Oromia administration and security bureau, however, had tried its best to make use of it but there is loose inter-linkage between federal-regional institutions to jointly discuss and design how the Amharic version of the guide line is to be translated and used to support conflict early warning and early response activities.*²²²

On the other hand, an informant from the Somali side argued that:

*The guideline sent from the MOFPDA has never been used in the region for different reasons. First, it has not been translated in to the Somali language and no one has the capacity to do translation in the region. Second, neither the leadership nor the experts have participated in the design stage of the guideline to provide the actual information about the dynamics of the conflict along the boundaries. These situations create a problem. As a result, no one has planned to adopt the guideline.*²²³

²²¹ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Addis Ababa, February, 2016.

²²² Interview with an official in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau. Addis Ababa, February 2016.

²²³ Interview with an official in Somali Regional State Bureau of Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Neighboring Affairs, Jijjiga, February, 2016.

The sources of information discussed above divulges that the strategy and guideline prepared at MOFPDA level was not duly communicated to the regional states in a way that it could be adopted and implemented in the context of regions. The language issues and the inclusiveness of stakeholders from regional states were not fully well-thought-out. In addition, the field observation data of this study reveals that the regional states neither adopted the prevention strategy and guide line nor translated the Amharic version to their respective languages. The regional states switched themselves to do conflict prevention and resolution activities based on the job description bestowed to them by their respective regional proclamations²²⁴.

On the other hand, there was no fully established and system-wide regulation on how to utilize strategies, guidelines, protocols, frameworks and indicators in the regional states. Even in areas where some rudimentary activities were already taking place, it was hardly possible to find any specific template for information gathering and transmission. By and large, then, they relied on very traditional and mostly oral means of information gathering and transmission using personal cell-phones.

This practically brought failures in the early interventions in certain conflict prone areas where the regional states could not avert the situation without the Federal support. As discussed under chapter five above (section 6.5.5.), for instance, the conflict ignited along the border of Oromia and Somali regions in Moyale in 2012 which caused a huge devastations, the 2013 and 2015-2017 incident around Mi'esso, the 2013-2017 incursion around Qumbi of East Hararge, the devastating crisis of conflict around East Guji-Negelle and others were suggestive of poorly and dysfunctional federal and regional integration in terms of implementing conflict prevention strategies and early warning systems.

This was a clear manifestation of lack of proper intergovernmental relations at both federal and state levels to jointly implement policies and strategies. More importantly, the integration and collaboration between federal and regional governments for effective

²²⁴ See proclamation no.163/2003 on Oromia case and proclamation no. 64/2000 for the Somali case.

utilization of strategies, protocols and frameworks based on clearly defined indicators were critical for conflict prevention, early warning and immediate response. In this regard Getachew (2013) argues that apparently, the conflict prevention approach at the MOFPDA has failed to integrate preventive statures with regional states and the tasks of conflict management were haphazard and uncoordinated. The focus was mostly on ad-hoc interventions and the approach was what is informally referred to as the “fire-brigade” approach in which attempts are made to arrest on sets of violence and reduce humanitarian crises instead of institutionalizing a viable system and integrating the federal and regional collaborations for the implementation of strategies and guidelines. As a result, unnecessary waste of resources and failure to minimize the consequences of violence were the major bottlenecks of the system (Getachew, 2013). Despite efforts made by MOFPDA in line with its mandate, the procedures were fragmented and flawed in that it lacked strategic and systematic means of integration with regional states to systematically address border conflicts at grassroots level.

7.3.1.2. Establishment and Consolidation of Institutions for CEWER

As discussed under Chapter Three above, AU CEWS and Regional Organizations (RECs) were collaborating on a number of issues to strengthen institutional efficiency. This included, ensuring regular and secure exchange of selected early warning briefs and reports; holding annual early warning meetings with rotating hosts (RECs) facilitated by AU Commission; continuing the exchange of personnel with RECs and other early warning systems; initiating joint trainings / capacity building for RECs / AUC personnel; establishing focal points on early warning systems within AUC, every REC and at national level; developing a system on how to treat classified information; ensuring interaction among RECs and African Union with key partners in civil societies, UN institutions, universities, research institutions, etc.²²⁵ The case in point in this section was the discussion on how the institution of CEWER which was initiated at federal level created institutional link and collaborative support with regional level early warning system.

²²⁵ See Report On The Status of The Establishment of The Continental Peace And Security Architecture; 57th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, PSC / PR / 3 (LVII), 21 June 2006, P.42.

Before dealing with institutional cooperation and support in this regard, I want to discuss how Oromia and Somali regional states have instituted conflict early warning and response systems. Keeping in mind the federal state nature, regional states are expected to establish their own conflict early warning and response systems in line with two major concerns. The first one is made by regional proclamation as regional governments have separate constitutional jurisdiction and have their own specific context. In this regard Jessica and Luis (2015:2) argue that each system can and should be designed and developed based on the needs and realities of each context. The second was to make an alignment between federal conflict prevention and resolution frame works. Early warning and response systems (EWRS) are just one of the many existing tools to prevent and resolve potential social conflicts and should be part of a comprehensive prevention strategy (Jessica and Luis, 2015:2).

To begin with the case of Oromia regional state, the legal rationale for the establishment of conflict early warning and response systems was attached to the power conferred to the Bureau of Administration and Security by the regional proclamation No. 163/2003 which was adopted by the regional Council “Caffee”. Pursuant to this, the powers and duties were listed in the proclamation.²²⁶ On the other hand, in Somali Regional State, the mandate for conflict early warning and early response emanated from proclamation No.64/2000. The conflict prevention management and resolution mandate and structure of the Somali Regional State were provided in Proclamation (No. 64/2000 E.C.) adopted by the Legislative Council of the Somali Regional State in 2000. This Proclamation specifies the power and duties of the ‘Security Affairs and Justice Administration Bureau’ (see Art. 18).

The institutional and structural setup of conflict early warning and early response system in Oromia regional state was placed under the Administration and Security Bureau. In this regard, Jessica and Luis (2015) argue that the place assigned to the EWS/EWRS within the institutional architecture was a political and strategic decision. In other words, the place given to the System in the state apparatus was an initial message about its

²²⁶ See Article 23 of the proclamation No.23/2003 enumerates the powers and duties of the Oromia Administration and Security Bureau.

significance and recognition. The institutional anchoring of the EWS/EWRS is a fundamental decision for the timely and effective operation of the System (Jessica and Luis, 2015:19). As indicated earlier, conflict prevention, management, resolution and peace building were assigned to this bureau. With regard to institutional and structural setup, a key informant stated that

*Under the bureau head, there are five core processes. These include, Conflict Prevention and Resolution core process headed by the deputy head, Security Issues core process, Militia core process, Religion and Beliefs core process and Communication Affairs core process. Other supporting staff are also included. Conflict early warning and early response is structured as one team comprising three senior staff members. The Peace Building team is also structured in the same way having three senior experts. Both teams are accountable for Conflict Prevention and Resolution core process.*²²⁷

With regard to the Zonal, Woreda and Kebele level institutional and structural setups the informant reported that:

*at zonal level, one focal person for conflict early warning and early response system and one focal person for peace building are assigned in the conflict prevention and resolution department. At Wereda (district) level the same step is followed having one focal person for conflict early warning and response system and one focal person for peace building. At the kebele level there is no formal structure and the local government officials are taking the responsibility to run the activities.*²²⁸

The above sources elucidate that there was an effort to institute the system in the structure at every level by assigning a team in charge of conflict early warning at regional level and placing focal persons at zonal and Wereda levels. However, this does not amount the full-fledged institutional and structural setup and capacity that holds the complex activities of conflict early warning and response systems in the regions.

In Somali Regional State, the informant explained that the structural setup of conflict early warning and response system is quite different from that of Oromia region. There are two bureaus. These are the Security Administration and Justice Bureau and the Neighboring Regions Affairs and Conflict Resolution Bureau. The Neighboring Regions Affairs and Conflict Resolution is structured separately at the bureau level but

²²⁷ Interview with higher official in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, Addis Ababa, 2015.

²²⁸ Ibid.

accountable to the bureau of Security, Administration and Justice Affairs (SAJ). There are seven (7) experts under this bureau. The structures of conflict early warning and response systems and peace-building are non-existent at regional level. The bureau of Neighboring Regions Affairs and Conflict Resolution (NRACR) has only two departments. These are Conflict Prevention and Resolution (CPR) and the finance division.²²⁹ With regard to the activities of conflict early warning and response systems an informant reported that:

*There are neither structures nor focal persons at the zonal and Wereda levels in the Somali Regional State. Unfortunately, the duties and responsibilities of EWERS which include collecting, analyzing and building scenario, and providing timely data and advice to decision makers are not structurally operational and the system fails to adequately accomplish the most basic tasks.*²³⁰

In addition to the above explanation, another informant depicted that there was also another critical challenge that plague the institutionalization and operationalization of the conflict early warning and response systems along the borders of both regions:

*Having formal structure and institutional setup matters less in Somali region. The clan-based structure has a great impact on conflicts along the borders. All clans have their own respective clan leaders (the main clans are; Ogaden, Merhan, Geri, Girrii, Issa and Hawuya). The communities prefer their own respective clan leaders. Hence, state functions are loose. The clan leaders do not heed the government authorities at every level. Every local decision is in the hands of clan leaders. If the clan leaders decide on certain issues pertaining to their own localities, the government authorities do not have the capacity to reverse it. This has its own impact to put conflict prevention mechanisms in place.*²³¹

In all its forms, the data obtained from both regional states explains that the early warning and response systems as an institution were not formally and comprehensively established in both regional states. This does not mean that the attempt made by Oromia regional state to assign the team and focal persons at regional, zonal and woreda levels respectively for conflict early warning duties was less valuable; however, it simply means that this could not serve to mitigate the complex conflict dynamics along the borders of both regions. In Somali regional state, there were no uniform structures and assignment of focal persons at every level in the government structure but the duty was entirely left

²²⁹ Interview with higher official in Somali Bureau of Neighboring Affairs and Conflict Resolution, Jijjiga, 03/04/2016.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Interview with senior expert in Somali

to clan leaders. Thus, mechanism the corresponding government structures and authorities from both regions join their efforts to deal with the border conflicts were an ostensible problem.

The need for cooperation and institutional and political support among federal and regional states come in to picture at this point. In this regard, Jessica and Luis (2015) argues that political support may be fundamental for access to key sources of information, cooperation with other public entities, facilitation of adequate interinstitutional coordination (horizontal and vertical) and for guaranteeing access to the highest decision-making levels (Jessica and Luis, 2015:19). However, the cooperation between Federal and Regional states in Ethiopia in providing institutional support for Oromia and Somali regional states to institutionalize the conflict early warning systems hardly complied with the above argument. In real terms, when both governments initiated the establishment of the system in their respective jurisdictions, the federal government could have provided strong guidance and facilities. Missing this collaboration, as shown above, might have led to little attempt in Oromia and total neglect in Somalia regional state as regards the institutionalization of the system. This could be a challenge in maintaining uniform systems and strengthening intra-state relations to prevent border conflicts and ultimately recurrent conflict continued along the common borders.

On top of this, both regional states are wide in their geographic size and they have often experienced frequent conflicts along their common border as well as intrastate inter and intra clan rivalries for decades. As a result, mounting casualties have occurred along the borders (see Chapter Four above) which implies that the existing institutional, structural setup and staffing procedures hardly correspond with the wide complex nature of conflicts along the borders of these regions. Moreover, the problem was escorted with inadequacy and inappropriateness of experts in the field. The staff capacity gaps continue to pose major challenge. This has greatly impacted proper operationalization of conflict prevention mechanisms and early warning and response systems. Ultimately, this sort of institutional fragmentation unveils the deplorable coordination and cooperation of federal and regional governments. On the other hand, the failure to acclimatize joint peace and security strategy which Mwagiru et al (2008) have characterized as critical, provides a

road map on where the regions intend to go in terms of security (Mwagiru and Njeri, 2008:254). Furthermore, with reference to the issue of federal and regional cooperation, focus group discussants reported that

*Regional states were infuriated requesting the relationship between both levels to be improved especially in consolidation of conflict prevention, early warning and response systems through finance and capacity building endeavors to halt the unprecedented crisis along the common borders. They also made heated debate that the federal level authorities are ear-deaf in timely responding to the requests a result they mistrusted each other. Institutionalization of conflict early warning and response mechanisms at federal and regional states need to be recasted from scratch and envision promotion of frameworks which reconcile the gap between them. They have to re-build trust to converge common federal and regional interests.*²³²

This implies that in the absence of trust and cooperation, federal and regional efforts are not conceivable. Hammerstad (2003) has argued that there are two main basic conditions which must be met if security integration is to take place. These are mutual trust and common value basis (Hammerstad, A. 2003: 2). Where these are absent, federal and regional governments hardly operate a consolidated conflict EWER system. It seems that both federal and regional states in principle need to reinvigorate uniform early warning and response institution to complement each other so that the lives of their people and properties would be saved. Even so, this alone could not be a guarantee; and both governments should facilitate the process of strengthening the inter-linkage of traditional institutions and authorities of both regions.

7.3.1.3. Cooperation on Capacity-Building on Key Processes of CEWER

As discussed under Chapter Two above, the relationship between the UN and AU is multidimensional and multilayered in relation to addressing a wide range of issues through a variety of mechanisms to maintain peace and security in Africa. In this regard, Williams and Solomon (2015) noted that the main elements of the UN-AU partnership with respect to peace operations include consultative meetings, desk to desk reviews, joint mechanisms, and common field deployments. They also revealed that in 2006, the UN's "Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU" was established to enhance the capacity of the AU Commission and African sub-regional organizations to act as

²³² Focus Group Discussion with senior experts of Oromia and Somali Regions, February 20, 2016 Adama.

effective partners in addressing security challenges in Africa. As this program reached its end in November 2016, attention was turned on how to operationalize some form of more enduring UN-AU compact (Williams and Solomon, 2015:3). Likewise, the AU has established relations and collaboration with RECs (IGAD/ CEWARN) early warning systems in terms of developing of comparable and compatible methodologies and tools for undertaking early warning and thereby initiating joint trainings / capacity building for RECs / AUC personnel to maintain peace and security. This type of cooperation has also been maintained by default among the RECs and member states. Equally, there were times when local issues spill over and became national and regional anxieties. Hence, member states by virtue of their peculiar systems leaned towards cooperation with their respective sub- national governments which was in fact explained in the Ethiopian context.

The momentum towards mainstreaming conflict prevention, early warning and response systems has been gaining speed in the current context of Ethiopia in general and in Oromia and Somali regions in particular. MOFPDA's documentary evidence reveals that the main tenet of the implementation modalities to ensure the strategy of conflict prevention was designed through capacity development. This included empowering the community on conflict prevention, resolution, management and conflict early warning and response system; strengthening institutions regional conflict early warning systems and analysis methods; establishing peace committees, forums, mediation and reconciliation forums and provision of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (MoFPDA Report, 2014). MOFPDA dealt with intra-states border conflicts through enhancing capacity building deeds. It involved conflicts among communities of two or more regional states. Obviously, addressing such conflicts requires effective federal and state government cooperation (IGR). Pertaining to this issue, an informant from MOFPDA stated that

The reason behind the cooperation between both levels of the governments on capacity building is to enhance the efficiency of the relevant stakeholders. These includes; officials at different levels, local community representatives; elders, religious men, women, youth, traditional leaders and experts at different levels. The

*training manual on conflict prevention and management has been prepared. The Ministry has provided Intensive and frequent trainings.*²³³

How this promise is to be interpreted into practice will be seen in the following subsequent sections. As discussed under Chapter Five above, the causes of Oromo- Somali border conflict were multiple and diverse. Prevention and containing of these conflicts indeed was impossible without streaming capacity development in this regard. Hence, coalescing policy-specific knowledge with conflict prevention expertise with the help of social, economic, political and security gadgets was found to be critical. With this view in mind, I turn now to specific aspects of the federal and regional cooperation pertaining to capacity development regarding key issues of conflict prevention, early warning and response systems (data gathering, situation room, methodological analysis of early warning and conflict early response). As discussed elsewhere in the previous chapters the rationale behind conflict early warning is about gathering early warning information through monitoring indicators, making analysis and risk assessment and communicating the results of early warning to decision makers to take timely response. Hence, capacity development as a thematic expanse between both levels of the government could be analyzed in line with these issues.

7.3.1.3.1. Strengthening the Role of the Situation Room

As discussed under Chapter Two and Six earlier, the Situation Room for conflict early warning and early response systems is responsible for monitoring social, economic, political, environmental, military and humanitarian indicators, analyzing and producing a wide range of reports such as news highlights, daily reports, and other ad-hoc reports for proper action. Furthermore, the formal duties of situation room are to provide monitoring and situation awareness and early alerts.

In this regard, Colliers (2008) stated that in the AU (CEWs), regional organizations such as ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD are considered an integral part of the overall security architecture of the Union; and the Peace and Security Council (PSC) is mandated to

²³³ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, 2016, Addis Ababa,

harmonize, coordinate and work closely with the conflict prevention and management established at these levels. Thus, the situation room of the AU based in Addis Ababa is to be linked to the regions (Colliers, 2008:45). The PSC protocol also provides that Observation and Monitoring Units of the Regional Mechanisms are to be linked directly through appropriate means of communication to the situation room of the AU, which shall collect and process data at their level and transmit the same to the situation room (PSC, Article 12 [2, a, b]). This is to establish diagnostic linkages and enhance capacities between AU- CEWS situation room and RECs so as to provide the AU with regular reports on conflict situations.

By the same analogy, it can be argued that at sub- national levels, the Administration and Security Bureaus in Oromia and Somali Regional States are considered to be an integral part of the overall security architecture of their respective regions and the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA). The Conflict Prevention and Resolution Directorate General (CPRDG) at the MOFPDA is expected to harmonize, coordinate and work closely with conflict prevention and resolution departments established in Oromia and Somali regions. To this end, the situation rooms (observation and monitoring units) in Oromia and Somali regions are expected to be linked unswervingly through the appropriate means of communications to the situation room at MOFPDA, which shall collect and process data at their level and transmit to the decision makers through the situation rooms. Pertaining to the practice of such inter-linkages between regional states and MOFPDA, the key informant in Oromia regional state elucidated that:

*The situation room in Oromia regional state was not separately established and was organized in the bureau of administration and security. There is no situation room at the regional level that is formally linked with the situation room at MOFPDA level. The purpose of the situation room at this level is not conceptually well understood the situation on the ground. The activity of the conflict early warning and response system is accomplished by a team of three members. The conflict prevention and resolution department in the bureau is in charge of all duties. There is no situation room at regional level. But there is an informal way of delivering conflict information when requested by MOFPDA.*²³⁴

²³⁴ Interview with Official in Oromia Administration and Security Bureau, Addis Ababa, 2016.

On the other hand, an informant from the Somali side stated that:

*At the regional level, there is neither institution for conflict early warning and response system nor situation room exists at the bureau level. Hence, one could not expect the inter-linkage with the situation room at MOFPDA. There are structural and organizational snags in dealing with conflict early warning and response systems as a whole. On the other hand, this bureau is accountable to the Justice Affairs Bureau at the regional level. There is no regular way of communicating early warning information except when requested and conflict issues arise along the borders.*²³⁵

On top of this, the limitations have always been known to local officials; including those who responded to interviews as well as participated in FGDs. They recognized, for instance, that there was no uniform mechanism or systems in place to enhance collaboration on information gathering and utilization at all levels. They further agreed that information sharing only took place on the basis of direct and specific requests from federal, region, and Zone and *Wereda* levels rather than through an established, mandatory and routine processes that would allow easy retrieval. The exchange of information, let alone the analysis and linking with the federal level, was a persistent problem along the border lines of both Oromia and Somali regional states.

This implies that in the current practice of the operationalization of conflict early warning and response systems at federal level, there was no corresponding and viable institution for conflict early warning and response systems in both Oromia and Somali regional states. Besides, there were no functional situation rooms in both regional states. Hence, the observation and monitoring units in both regions were not interlinked with the situation room at MOFPDA. This in turn posed the challenge to comprehend on how economic, social, political, environmental and humanitarian early warning indicators are collected, analyzed and transferred to decision makers. Therefore, one could possibly observe that in the absence of situation rooms at these levels and with the failure to integrate to the federal level would be the cause for non-pro-activeness to respond to border conflicts that resulted in enormous humanitarian and material crisis along the common borders.

²³⁵ Interview with official of Somali Region Bordering Affairs Bureau, Jijjiga, 2016.

7.3.1.3.2. Enhancing Data Gathering and Methods of Analysis

Information gathering and analysis are at the heart of conflict early warning. Collection and analysis of data may be regarded as signals of potential violent conflict. It is about indicators, human security and rumormongers of future conflict. Thus, data was collected to prevent imminent violence. Reliable data must therefore be collected (Lund, 1994). Therefore, how the federal and regional governments cooperated to enhance the capacities of the stakeholders in charge of gathering and analysis of information were the point under investigation. In this regard, an informant from Moyale of Somali region reported that

*The federal and regional governments hardly coordinate their efforts to capacitate the local stakeholders. Rather, they separately collect data from their respective information networks. Conflict early warning data is collected by multiple sources such as peace committees, police, elders, youth, women, field monitors. These data gatherers are, however, under-knowledge and lack capacity to identify which data goes to which issue but simply collect unclassified, biased and misleading information and send it to regional and federal states. However, both governments were not cooperatively providing an enhancing capacity on how the collectors should identify and collect information. They simply make use of conflicting data.*²³⁶

On the other hand, the IPSS Research Team Report (2016) portrayed that there is an absence of formal protocols and detail guidelines for information collection and exchange. The dominating experience is collection of information through informal means. The partisanship of officials at different levels means that they sometimes send biased information about a conflict that invariably makes reaching credible decisions difficult. This implies that both levels of the government neither have protocols and guidelines nor have enhanced the capacity of the actors.

As discussed under Chapter Six above, one of the stringent problems plaguing conflict early warning was the problem of analysis both at federal and regional states. They trigger many questions: Do they have analysis models? How far they capacitate the stakeholders on these models for proper analysis to prevent border conflicts? How does the change come out of this capacity building? Are critical questions hardly be replied to?

²³⁶ Interview with an official in Moyale (Somali) wereda Administration,

It is obvious that low capacity contributes to poor decisions. Ideally, early warning analysis provides information in a form that is easily digested by senior decision makers, serving as a first step in planning conflict prevention. Practical early warning analysis can be undertaken by identifying the central early warning factors, i.e., socio-economic, political, environmental, human right and civil liberty, public discourse, ideology factors and elite behavior (John L. Clarke, 2005:71-97). Pertaining to this issue a key informant portrayed that

... at the federal or regional levels, the methodological model and framework of conflict analysis has not yet been developed or adapted. Despite gaps, depending on border conflict dynamics, MOFPDA prepared a training manual entitled “conflict prevention and resolution manual” in Amharic language in consultation with regional states²³⁷. This manual was a guiding and basic source that MOFPDA used for training stakeholder drawn from regional states regarding conflict prevention, management, resolution and transformation. MOFPDA did not prepare a separate document for conflict analysis but it provided awareness creation on issues including causes, actors, context, dynamics, impacts and interventions of conflict following every conflict incident.²³⁸

It is observed from the above source that there was lack of deeper understanding on the concept of methodological analysis and adapting pertinent models that fits to the context at hand (see also chapter six section 6.5.5.). On the other hand, FGD discussants depicted that

...the capacity building efforts at MOFPDA and regional states overlooked pool of analysts and experts in the field of conflict early warning. In most cases, the participants on the trainings and awareness creations were those not related to the subject matter. This means that the trainers were not professionals and the trainees in most cases were those irrelevant for the analysis. The experts on operational level were disregarded to cope up their analytical skill pertaining to analysis and scenario building with the existing conflict dynamics.²³⁹

The above data suggests that from the outset the methodological analysis for conflict early warning lacked understanding at both federal and regional levels. In addition, the performers in early warning analysis were not strictly identified to clutch the issue of the analysis. In other words, the issue of early warning analysis was handled by others than

²³⁷ Amharic Language is a working language at federal level in Ethiopia.

²³⁸ Interview with an official in Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, Addis Ababa, 2016.

²³⁹ Focus Group Discussion with senior experts of Oromia and Somali regional states, Adama. 2016.

the concerned professionals. As a result of this, the reports communicated to decision makers seemed likely to be misleading. Therefore, one could understand that the overall capacity building effort on methodological analysis of early warning was suffocated by perils and dearth of conceptual understanding and lack of well-articulated planning glitches. Important to note at this departure is that conflict analysis requires a great deal of care and sensitivity due to the highly political nature of the information gathered.

In most cases, risk assessments were premised largely on imperfect information. Because the range of factors associated with conflicts vary according to the type being evaluated, it is extremely difficult to forecast specific events with perfect reliability. In addition, other relational, psychological and dynamic patterns of interaction often associated with accelerators and triggering events also determine conflict escalation. This means that analysis must tend to not only an appreciation of underlying structural factors but also human behavior as well, including individual, intergroup and intra-group dynamics. It also means that an analysis must have a clear sense of interests of stakeholder and an understanding of factors that generate peace and not just conflict. This complexity renders difficulties in producing sound analysis but not impossible, however, demanded capacity. Hence, these issues could challenge the inter-linkage between federal and regional governments in preserving actual capacity in place.

7.3.1.3.3. Capacity on Conflict Early Response

According to Haider early response systems refer to timely and appropriate prevention initiatives, usually undertaken during dormant or latent stages of perceived potential violent conflict (Haider, 2014, p. 49). He also puts forward his explanation that responses and interventions can include direct prevention mechanisms, including preventative diplomacy (diplomatic persuasion to prevent armed conflict); incentives and sanctions to influence the behavior of key conflict actors and to alter conflict dynamics; and peace-building dialogue to get conflicting parties to talk, to build up trust and to transform relationships (Haider, 2014: 52-54). Realizing peace building dialogue in fact requires intensive capacity building endeavors. The collaboration between MOFPDA and regional states in this regard, an Oromo elder stated that

*Conflict early warning signals at the grass root are known to the local community than anybody. The clan elders, women, religious figures are the first to notice these indicators. They are also the ones who are nearer and capable to respond at its earlier stage before it escalates. But the federal and regional governments overlooked the potentials of the local community and enhancing their capacity on a regular basis so that they will be able to prevent destructive conflicts. In most cases, both governments attempting to organize capacity building and awareness creations too late in the post- conflict situations.*²⁴⁰

On the other hand, all informants and FGD discussants suggested that the capacity building efforts planned on early response was designed after the conflict had already broken out and numerous casualties were ensued. They also added that it focused not on response to prevent conflict but to stabilize moves after the episode of the conflict. This is to mean that the capacity building was not proactively designed and intervention for response endeavor late and followed the crisis which had already flared. In addition to this, a key informant from Oromia region commented that

*Currently, there is no permanent and systematized linkage and cooperation on building capacities of stakeholders across the frontiers of Oromia and Somali regional states. It is only when the conflict occurs and when the financial and logistical issues are available that these units come together. The ad hoc arrangements could not bring fortunate outcome when compared with the complex nature of conflicts along regional borders. This limits the chance of getting added experience and skills that could be applied to enhance working on conflict response. Prior planning and implementation on how to gather, analyze and building scenarios of conflict information and responding to conflicts is immensely lacking. Informal ways of dealing with such issues predominated and outweighed the formal procedures. It also limits the chance of building intra-state capacity and enhanced cooperation.*²⁴¹

The information obtained from the above sources implicates that the joint capacity building endeavors by federal and regional levels on conflict early response issues was poorly designed and by and large fragmented. As discussed under Chapter Six above, the approach followed was crisis management but not prevention. Hence, the cooperation between both levels of governments did not bring expected change in early response actions. Further, local networks and potentials were not fully capacitated and mobilized against response activities. In this regard, Krummenacher argues that the local

²⁴⁰ Interview with an elder from Moyale of Oromia, September, 2015.

²⁴¹ Interview with official in Oromia Regional State, 2016, Addis Ababa.

information networks are composed of indigenous professionals whose access to and understanding of local information and responding to the contexts far exceeds that of national and international actors (Krummanacher, 2007 cited in Wisler and Ateya, 2007: 9). By implication, this means that the local communities, if capacitated, would bring out their local knowledge for response actions. However, the above data clarifies that the integration between both levels of governments with regard to capacity building initiatives have not yet reached the level expected to avert the complex dynamics of conflicts along the border lines of Oromia and Somali regional states. Conspicuously, both levels need to go long way in this regard.

National governments are not only responsible for high-level policies and frameworks but are also expected to facilitate early response capacity building activities for local leadership and communities at the grassroots to deal with response actions at their level best. This is because they are closer to the context to respond to the conflict at its earlier stages before anyone else. Hence, it is essential that communities understand the risks; respect the warning service and know how to react. To this end education and capacity building play a key role. The community in the conflict-prone areas should be well informed on options for safe behavior, available escape routes, and how best to avoid damage and loss to life and property. Moreover, when responding to conflict it is essential to recognize that different groups have different vulnerabilities according to culture, gender or other characteristics that influence their capacity to effectively prepare themselves for prevention of and response to conflicts and crisis. Women and men often play different roles in society and have different access to information in conflict situations. In addition, the elderly, disabled and socio-economically disadvantaged are often more vulnerable.²⁴² It is necessary that communities recognize the impending dangers; value the warning structures available and have a slight idea of how to act in response. Instruction and awareness programmes are vital. It is also crucial that the available risk management preparations are habitually exercised and assessed. The community should be aware of alternatives for safe behavior, available escape routes, and

²⁴²See Developing Early Warning Systems: A Checklist, Third International Conference on Early Warning, and From Concept to action, 27-29, 2006, Bonn, Germany, p. 2.

how best to prevent destruction and loss of property through building capacities.²⁴³ Grasso also argue that “... public awareness and education are critical aspects on conflict early warning and mitigation” (Veronica F. Grasso, [n.d.]:3). Despite efforts, it was unfortunate to learn that the cooperation and collaboration between federal and regional states early warning and response systems in general could not institutionally capture and contain conflicts along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regions. The next section highlights the impacts attributed to capacity gaps in implementing early response to conflicts.

7.3.1.3.4. Haunting Impacts due to Capacity Gap in Early Response to Conflicts

Early warning assumes averting violence is always the desired option and it should be able to facilitate response. The operational challenges and the gap between early warning and response systems in Ethiopia have been discussed earlier under Chapter Six. The present section focuses the impacts inflicted due to failures in enhancing the capacity of of early response actors. In this regard, an informant reported that:

in both regional states, the major instruments for conflict early response include peacemaking dialogues, involvement of peace committees, joint conferences with local, wereda, zonal, regional and federal officials including different influential sections of the community and use joint planning approaches to respond to and prevent conflicts. However, due to infrequent capacity building constraints and awareness problems, only in a few instances did they approach responding to conflicts persistently and realistically. They rely mostly on ‘fire-brigade’ approach well after a conflict has gathered momentum. In the end, responses either tends to come too late or too little as premium is placed on quick-fix solutions that cost more in terms of loss of lives and the destruction of properties.²⁴⁴

Another informant also explained that:

In cooperation with Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs and regional states, peace committees are organized from Weredas to Kebele levels in the regional administrations thereby making them the key actors in conflict prevention

²⁴³See EWC III Third International Conference on Early Warning From concept to action 27 – 29 March 2006, Bonn, Germany, Developing Early Warning Systems: A Checklist

²⁴⁴ Interview with official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, 2016, Addis Ababa.

*and response. However, they do not seem to have any joint planning activities to perform at the earlier stages of conflicts but only until a conflict largely becomes full-blown and they are invited for trainings and to serve as intermediary between conflicting parties. Like other components at the local level, they also face serious capacity shortfalls and constraints that limit their ability to deal with conflict and they do not get much support from those institutions. In addition, there is limited participation of women, youth and victims of conflict in peace committees.*²⁴⁵

This denotes that the strategy designed at the federal level could not be efficiently implemented due to lack of augmenting capacities, rigorous follow ups and necessary support for the stakeholders at grass roots. Although there was an attempt to consider the role of youth and women in recognition of the vital role they play, but they had limited participation in conflict prevention activities. Although victims of the conflict in the areas could have become an additional avenue to engage them in conflict prevention and peace building, they were generally excluded from active participation in peace committees.²⁴⁶ Though it is difficult to measure how much input they make into such efforts in concrete terms, since they are prone to conflicts, they could have significant roles in conflict prevention and early warning and response systems. This shows the existence of the synergetic vacant in dealing with conflict prevention, early warning and response systems between federal and regional states. On the other hand, there were situations where conflict early warning indicators /were discerned by federal and regional governments but remained unresponded to. This failure resulted in humanitarian crisis and material damage. Regarding this, an informant from Oromia region stated that:

*During the violence in Oromia regional state (2016), there was signal that people including the border communities cried over governance issues. In addition to this, there were considerable signals between the bordering areas of Mi'esso (Oromia) and Mi'esso (Somali) on the occupation and illegal settlements of the Somali community around the locality called Hardim, Asebot and Bordode that still triggers conflict. The illegal settlements in Madda Walabu (Bale zone of Oromia), the influx migration of the Amarka clan of Somali from eight districts of West Hararge of Oromia and settlement in Babile Wereda of East Hararge (Oromia) are additional instances. The timely inaction finally led to toll deaths, IDP and property destruction.*²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ Interview with official in Somali Regional State, 2016, Jijiga.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Interview with official in Oromia Regional State, 2016, Addis Ababa.

This comment entails that both levels of governments failed to solidly cooperate to avert the perils on the ground. In addition, a recent report from the archive of Oromia government illustrates that since 2010, there has been active conflict along the bordering areas of both regions. The most destructive one was the conflict in Qumbi district of East Hararge zone in Oromia region. In the district, in 2010, 34 deaths and 15 wounds were recorded. In 2012, 120 deaths and 37 wounds were reported. From 2015 up to July 2016, 40 deaths, 40 wounded, 44,689 people were internally displaced, 23.04 million Birr was robbed, 231 houses burned down, 767 cattle were raided, and 1094 cattle were shot dead in the conflict (OBAS Report, 2016). Furthermore, conflicts recurrently occurred over expansion of territory and grazing lands because of the absence of clear border demarcation and conflicts were coupled with theft and raids along the borders of West Guji zone (Liben and Gumdelo Weredas in the Kebeles of Yelut, Hadhesa, Haredot, Bulbul, Simneto, Dhaka Qallaa, MalkaGuba) of Oromia and Liben zone (Dheka Softu and Udetweredas) of Somali (Oromia OBAS Archive, November, 2016).

Further, due to the conflict over territorial border expansion, competition on resources and illegal settlement between the Oromo community in nine Weredas (HawiGudina, DaroLabu, Boke, Burka Dimtu, Mesela, Habro, Guba Koricha, Gamachis and Oda Bultum) of West Hararge zone and the Somali communities, 2148 households and 11,182 family members of the Somali (Amarka clan) were displaced and fled to East Hararge zone Babile Wereda of Oromia and illegally settled in the place known as Dakata. Fear of this illegal settlement led to conflict over claim for land and thus the Oromia regional state reported to the Federal government to intervene and reduce the tension and anxiety (Oromia OBAS Report, November, 2016). Pertaining to this situation, I was not successful in my attempt to access reports or data from Somali regional state. From the Somali side, I could not get access to documentary evidences on the costs of life incurred and impacts on development for non-responsiveness to the conflict. However, a key informant explained that

All calamities resulted along the border lines of Oromia and Somali regions are the results of the failure in the commitment to establish strong inter-linkages between Federal and these regions. The institutional cooperation is haphazard. Everyone was running after the conflict vigorously which impacted both communities from either sides. On the conflict which occurred on December, 28, 2016 in Qumbi Wereda due

*to claims over border expansion and fierce resource competition, from Oromia side 13 people (6 police, 4 civil servants and 3 militias) have been killed in the conflict. Whereas, from the Somali side 12 members of the special police force have been killed. In fact, telling the casualties of conflict is disallowed according to the culture of Somali community and every harm inflicted were kept secret. When the Somali actors in the conflict dies they do not take away the body of the deceased to their own locality but buried at the place of the conflict and put marks on the burial place. The reason is, the plot of land where Somali fighters are buried will be claimed in the future as if it belongs to them. That is, the marked burial place is assumed to be the land of Somali whenever the claim comes in to the picture.*²⁴⁸

This suggests absence of cooperation between the levels of the governments which paves the way for on and off conflicts along the border lines that have pitted the communities against each other. Hence, it has remained difficult to maintain peace and seek for lasting solutions to date. In addition, although there are informal ways of dealing with the state of affairs, the conflict early response system has not yet been stemmed to curb the realities and dynamics of conflict on the ground through assessing structural, proximate and triggering causes. Moreover, the instruments for response systems, like preventive negotiations and dialogues involving relevant stakeholders have not been fully exerting to meet the challenges. This, in turn has incurred costs and impacts between both regions. Further, the limitations of early response within the regional states could be seen in different dimensions plaguing the efforts. The most central ones include but not limited to lack of political will, lack of viable institution for conflict early warning and response system, inability to listen to warning signals and institutional capacity to act, lack of engaging local peace potentials such as peace committees and traditional institutions as they are closer to the situation and expected to provide local remedies.

7.3.1.3.5. Capacity in Improving Technological Infrastructure for EWER

This section discusses how the Federal and regional governments cooperate on information communication infrastructure for conflict early warning. The rationale behind ICT for conflict early warning has been discussed under Chapter Two earlier. Utilization of technology, according to Rhoda Misaka (2014), David Nyheim (2015) and Mancini (2013) facilitates in speeding up information collection and in sharing

²⁴⁸ Interview with key informant in Somali Regional State, Jijiga, 2016.

information on alerts for conflict early warning and response processes. Moreover, using technology for early warning relies on much greater levels of community involvement and local input needs to be integrated throughout (Pham and Vinck, 2012; Mancini, 2013). It also requires a rethink of conflict response that specific response plan is part of the early warning system for it to be effective. Using technology in early response also creates new roles, relationships, and responsibilities for affected populations, civil society, governments, multilateral organizations, and even perpetrators of violence, which raise some new major concerns about ethical challenges (Pham and Vinck, 2012).

As discussed under Chapter Six earlier, the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs believes that information communication technology tools such as telephone, web-sites, fax, radio satellite, internet, e-mail, letter, post, telegram, Wereda net are critical in the conflict early warning and response processes. However, in the area effective tools were limited to telephone, internet and desk computers at the Ministry level. On the other hand, in regional states, the availability of ICT and other infrastructure found to be inadequate. Hence, the ICT which is the backbone of conflict early warning and response systems at federal and regional states was no better than non-existent (IPSS Research Team Report, 2016).

In this regard, according to informants of both Oromia and Somali regions there were huge problems with regard to utilization of information communication technologies. It was found that equipment and logistics at all levels were inadequate for the transmission and analysis of warning information. The synergy between Federal and regional states to alleviate such a structural problem was left behind the deed. Hence, the use of information communication technology was neither introduced in its full scale nor developed and functioning. The regional states have not gone beyond the use of cell phone and SMS for data collection. In order to resolve such a problem reference could be made from AU-CEWS and CEWARN/IGAD.

In the AU- CEWS context, an explication of the ICT requirements for the establishment of the CEWS, including the linkage between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution, were outlined in July 2000 Protocol

Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC). This shows a clear integration and inter-linkages between AU- CEWS and Regional Mechanisms. More importantly, ICTs are instrumental for data collection and analysis. The single and most important consideration is that the ICT system is to support the early warning objective. The analytic capacity of the staff is explicitly recognized as the locus of the early warning process. Thus, capacity building to secure and sustain these analytic tool skills is emphasized. IGAD, in the eastern Africa, has developed a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) in order to respond to and prevent conflict in their region. In partnership with ICT4peace,²⁴⁹ CEWARN has assessed how ICTs could be used in areas that generally have no access to communication technology, and started using high- frequency radio, satellite phones, and other technology to access places that used to take days to travel to and review (IGAD/CEWARN, 2006).

7.4. Cooperation in Convening Forums, Meetings and Dialogues

Cooperation concerning the performance of responsible bodies is actually facilitated through various forums such as conferences, workshops, exchange of personnel and technical experts, or through personal exchange of information between the authorities of the levels of government. But the meetings, discussions and other forms of cooperation between the center and the regions took place as the occasion demands in Ethiopia (Solomon, 2006:98).

As discussed in Chapter Two and Three above, AU- UN cooperation was critical for the survival of AU efforts at promoting peace. First, to legitimize the actions of the AU, the UN has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace. Second, the UNSC was solicited to oversee parties, dispute settlement efforts and most importantly to allow cooperation with UN agencies and departments. Among other efforts, it organizes desk to desk meetings between the two bodies for the purpose of cooperation, capacity building, integration, and to share values (Boutellis and Williams, 2013; ECOWAS, 2010, Emanuel Kojo, 2014:24). The AU CEWS and Regional organizations (RECs)

²⁴⁹ See: The ICT4Peace project was designed to exploit ICTs for timely transmission of early-warning information on violent conflicts to decision makers in IGAD member states, to facilitate a timely response.

collaborate to hold annual early warning meetings with rotating hosts (RECs). This is facilitated through AU Commission in which they continue the exchange of personnel with RECs and other early warning systems and initiate joint trainings / capacity building for RECs / AUC personnel to prevent conflict and improve peace and security in Africa.²⁵⁰

By the same token, like any other fields and activities, conflict prevention and peace building endeavors have been steered by forums, conferences, workshops and meetings between federal and regional governments (Oromia and Somali) in Ethiopia. There are also similar trends in other federations with regard to coordinating policies through conferences and forums. In this regard, Jeffery Parker (2015) states that “numerous conferences and forums have come into existence to coordinate policy within the federation and among the *Landers*²⁵¹ in Germany.” In other federations, the introduction of a new government program requires collaboration between national and sub-national²⁵² authorities, (it is the agreements, conferences, forums and meetings between federal and state/regional/provincial governments, like Health in Canada, education in USA, water resources in India) (Jeffery Parker, 2015:102)²⁵³. The same grip is true in Ethiopian Federation. In addition to this, federal and regional cooperation succeeded in Australia. Cooperation in this context which means the search for common ground as the basis for joint action, is among several ways of solving problems. Uncoordinated and individual decisions eventually produce counterproductive outcomes for each and for all (Elinor Ostrom, 1990:106). This thesis gives an utmost priority to collaborative forums and meetings on conflict prevention and early warning systems between the Federal and regional states in Ethiopia.

In the context of the Ethiopian and Oromia- Somali regions, despite major challenges, feats have been accorded by the efforts of both levels. MOFPDA representing the Federal

²⁵⁰ See the Report on The Status Of The Establishment of The Continental Peace and Security Architecture; 57th Meeting of The Peace And Security Council, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, PSC / PR / 3 (LVII), 21 June 2006, p.42.

²⁵¹ Landers are equivalent to provinces/ states/

²⁵² Sub- nationals are structures below the national structures.

²⁵³ See Jeffery Parker (2015), *Comparative Federalism and Intergovernmental Agreements: Analyzing Australia, Canada, Germany, South Africa, Switzerland, and the United States*, Routledge, London and New York. PP.102-104.

government is doing its level best in facilitating auspicious conditions of relations and meetings, conferences, workshops and forums so as to solve misunderstandings that instigate conflicts between states. If the case was beyond the political and administrative capacity of this institution, it was solved in collaboration with the House of Federation²⁵⁴. MOFPDA's major function was facilitating the prevention of conflicts through peace and democracy conferences by fetching on board conflicting and interest groups. Documentary evidence from MOFPDA (2011) reveals that various peace and democracy conferences were held to prevent and resolve conflicts between the Oromos (Hararge, Bale, Moyale, Borana) and the Somalis (Garri), the Oromos (Gujii, Borana) and the SNNPR (Sidama, Burji); the Afars (Hawiya) and Somalis (Issa), the Oromos (Wollega) and Benishangul Gumuz (Kamashi); the Dubae and Shakkash in Somali; among the Gambella factions (MoFPDA report, 2011). Besides, in some of the border conflicts, MOFPDA intervened and executed border demarcation following the consent of both regions. Instance could be the demarcation of contested areas executed between Wollega (Oromia Region) and Kamashi (Beni-Shangul Gumuz Region) (MoFPDA report, 2011). However, the hurdles and tensions of demarcation trialed in the north-eastern and south eastern parts of the bordering areas, especially around Mi'esso and Moyale districts which were not cleared to date. On the other hand, regarding meetings and joint forums the informant explained that:

*Based on its mandate, MOFPDA has organized a forum on peace and security. Participants of the forum were representatives of the Federal and Peace and Security office heads of the regional states. Other stakeholders hosted by the Ministry on issues related to conflict, security, religious and criminal matters. In most cases the participants were drawn from Administration and Security Bureaus', Federal Police Commission, Regional Police Commission, Federal Prison Commission, Regional Prison Commission, Federal Customs Authority, Defense Force, Intelligence and National Security Advisors. This forum is active in exchanging information and is backed by a memorandum of understanding which clearly defines the role of each level of government. They meet every three months to evaluate their performance, identify problems encountered and determine directions for future action.*²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ According to Art. 48 and 62(6) of the FDRE constitution, HoF has a mandate to find solutions to disputes or misunderstandings that arise between states and similarly, proclamation 691/2010, give the same task to MoFPDA.

²⁵⁵ Interview with Official in the Ministry of Federal and Pastoralist Development Affairs, 2016, Addis Ababa

There was a joint meeting undertaken on ad hoc basis. The purpose of these multi-stakeholder joint sessions included but not limited to review of the status of cooperation and joint engagements, implementation of the strategy and cultivation of initiatives for peace. Strategic issues relating to trends of community conflicts and security concerns were analyzed following the reports from the government institutions. In addition, deliberations were conducted in these sessions with suggestions on how to tackle these strategic concerns. Conflict early warning was one thematic topics of deliberations and consultations in these high-level sessions.²⁵⁶ However, the meetings and forums jointly convened could not evade critics. In this regard, an informant from regional state argued that:

In the first place, conferences, workshops and forums are intensively arranged through federal and regional cooperation but what matters most is they are usually facilitated in the aftermath of conflicts and crisis. Prior focus on conflict prevention and peace building initiatives are hardly persuaded. Secondly, those individuals on operational levels and victims are in most cases not partaking on the forums though they very well know about the coincidence and context of the border conflict. Thirdly, the decisions of the prior forums were not implemented as per the agreement and directions set for the purpose. Fourthly, follow up and monitoring mechanisms on the decisions are hardly put in place. Finally, the decisions are not binding for incompliance. So that, conflicts soon turn out to violence along the border lines of Oromia and Somali regional states. In this regard, the informant cited the conferences held along the border conflicts around Mi'esso of Western Hararge Zone, Babile, Qumbi, Chinaksen, Midhaga Tola districts of Eastern Hararge Zone; Gura Dhamole, Goro Baqaqsa of Bale Zone; Moyale of Borana Zone frequently continued every moment after agreements are reached on meetings.²⁵⁷

On the other hand, another informant depicted that (MoFPDA, which is legally responsible to facilitate these relations but has not fully engaged itself in connecting the respective federal and state offices. In some situations, the relations have not promoted real partnership between the center and the states rather the superiority of the federal government has been reflected. On the other hand, there is lack of commitment to bring perpetrators from either side in the conflict to the court of law. The informant also adds that the MoFPDA seem widely to focus on assisting the least developed regions instead of facilitating the interactions and relation with regard to conflict prevention and

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Interview with official in Oromia Regional State, 2016, Addis Ababa.

resolution between Oromia and Somali regions.²⁵⁸ As it is observed from the sources, MOFPDA sources viewed that conferences and forums on issues related to conflict prevention and peace building were convened regularly with Federal and regional joint endeavors. However, the sources from regional states depicted that conferences and forums usually followed soon after the conflict had already occurred and created devastating effects. This means that no engagements were made at the earlier stage of the conflict. They also query the inclusiveness of the forums. Besides, perpetrators from either side were not brought to courts and the joint decisions of the forums were hardly enforced. On the other hand, all focus group discussants agreed that conferences, forums and dialogues were trustworthy in mitigating border conflicts and strengthening federal and regional cooperation had it been engaged at earlier stages. However, they also stated that their arrangements geared towards ad hoc and late intervention. This could not exonerate the efforts from “fire brigade” approach.

This implies that despite repeated conferences and meetings, the agreements reached by the parties have no legal force to be enforced and often failed to bring lasting solutions in most areas. Besides, the conferences were held following incidents of violent conflict between the counter groups and followed “fire-fighting approach” rather than engaging proactively by monitoring conflict indicators from the perspective of conflict early warning and response systems. On the other hand, there is no legal framework and strong intergovernmental relations to bind the parties in case the parties fail to comply with the agreement. These relations were without duly established rules and procedures. Thus, one could observe that the Federal and regional state cooperation was by far weak to coordinate joint activities.

In addition to this, some key informant also depicted that side by side the Federal and regional forums were expected to be venues for strengthening horizontal collaborations among regional states under which joint activities would be brought to prevent and resolve border disputes. However, they were by and large overlooked by the federal government. The informants added that horizontal cooperation entered by Oromia and Somali regional states for the period 2006 – 2011 had contributed a lot in preventing

²⁵⁸ Interview with official in Somali Regional State, 2016, Jijiga.

border conflicts but lately freeze by the lack of willingness from the leadership (see Chapter Five above).²⁵⁹

Regarding horizontal cooperation, literature suggests that many federations practice and make use of this cooperation for good cause. For example, in Germany, there are numerous examples of cooperation between the *Lander* and the federal government and among the *Lander* themselves. The purpose of such coordination efforts is to resolve practical problems, requiring cross- boundary cooperation, which can be either temporary or permanent in nature. Further, horizontal cooperation between and among the *Lander* is said to take place at a kind of extra-constitutional “third” level between the federation and the *Lander*. The conferences of *Land* prime ministers take place about three months to consider common demands on the federation; and subject ministers in the *Lander* meet regularly to consider a wide variety of themes. The most common and best known legal instrument of cooperation among the *Lander* is the interstate compact. It is based neither on federal law nor on *Land* law but rather on “cooperative customary law” (*Kooperationsgewohnheitsrecht*) that exists between the federation and the *Lander* at the “third level” (Jeffery, 2003:89). In the case of Ethiopia, however, the emphasis given to the horizontal inter-governmental relations between regions was a meagre hypothesis than pragmatic. Moreover, the conferences were not inclusive. Importantly, decisions need to be enforced to save the life and property of the communities in conflict prone areas. Further, meetings should have been inclusive and trustworthy.

7.5. Challenges Constraining Institutional Cooperation and Synergy on EWER

7.5.1. Lack of Strong Framework of Intergovernmental Relations

The Ethiopian Constitution describes the two levels of government as being distinctive, interdependent, and interrelated which enjoys the same to cooperate with one another in mutual trust and good faith. An important element of this cooperative framework is that there should exist a set of institutions, principles, and guidelines to facilitate and realize

²⁵⁹ Interview with an official in Oromia- Somali Project Coordination Unit, Jijjiga, 2016.

harmony among actors. IGR is nothing but an aggregation of technical, executive, and legislative consultative forums. There are plenty of convincing reasons to argue in favor of such formalized or semi-formalized intergovernmental consultative forums held so far on different socio-economic, peace and security issues, as they have the potential of achieving the required level of harmony among the levels of government. The establishment of permanent forums of intergovernmental bond has crucial roles in negotiation and non-hierarchical exchange of information, as well as in facilitation of cooperation between the institutions of the two levels of governments, especially the institutions of conflict prevention, early warning and response systems.

However, the Ethiopian federation still suffers from lack of legal framework in place that best harmonizes federal and regional conflict early warning and response institutions. There exists neither a law nor a formal institutional framework that governs the mutual relationship among and between the different levels. In this regard one observed and recently wrote, “There is lack of an independent institution in charge of consolidating IGR and this, in turn, has led to gaps in the regularity, continuity, and effectiveness of the interactions” (Nigussie Afesha, 2015:341). On the other hand, another informant depicted that “...MOFPDA is a federal executive organ. As a result, it does not gain full acceptance and trust on its neutrality by the regional states. Building vertical and horizontal cooperation is about bringing people together to prevent and resolve conflicts. But the leadership at all level were seeking to stay in power and not to leave office than establishing a connection for strong relationship among the residents along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regions”. Hence, this has greatly impacted the cooperation between federal and regional governments and has an implication to institutionalize the CEWER systems to mitigate Oromo- Somali border conflict. This challenge can be minimized only by establishment of an independent intergovernmental body to facilitate cooperation vertically and horizontally.

7.5.2. Conceptual Problems of EWER in MOFPDA and Regional States

Gaverus and Weismann argue that there are several reasons why EWER is not used effectively and why a warning response gap is so apparent in many conflicts (Gaverus

and Weismann 2003). Institutional rigidity and cognitive biases; conflict escalation process and, in particular the role triggers and single events is still under researched. While structural indicators fit into relatively simple models, the escalation of a tense situation into violence does not result from the linear summation of a neatly defined set of causes, but from interactions among multiple phenomena in a complex system with several levels of organization (Patrick, Meier, 2009).

There is also disconnect between EW advisers and early action decision makers at both levels. Even if the EWS is accurate and timely, it does not automatically lead to action. Laurie convincingly argues that above all, it must be useful to the senior officials who are responsible for making decisions on early action. The system will have a scant value its outputs are not tailored precisely to meet their needs (Nathan, 2007:49-60). The various decision makers at federal and regional levels who deal with governance and preventive dialogues all of whom are engaged in peace and security missions need tailor made information rather than general reports on potential emergence of violent conflict. Specific information for each conflict requires. EWER mechanisms according to Meier are based on “hierarchical structures” that cannot adequately cope with nonlinear developments (Ibid). These arguments suggest that the effectiveness of EWS is affected not only by the quality of alerts, but also by institutional factors and cognitive biases. Such biases can skew the empirical evidence and thus the reliability of early warning risk assessment or forecast.

Political interest, probably the most important structural deficiency in the sufficient use of EWER by regional states is that they do not want to or are unable to react. Governments are usually quite aware of acute or emerging major conflicts. Often, they are sometimes actors in this conflict. That is why the conflicts along the bordering areas of Oromia and Somali regional states was not addressed for decades.²⁶⁰ Sophisticated early warning indicators are not needed to warn about such conflicts. However, governments are usually not interested in the fact that abuses of civil rights and violations of human rights are documented or cited on. Thus, numerous conflicts and tensions with

²⁶⁰ Interview with a resident in Moyale of Oromia Region, Mi’esso town, February 2016.

potential to turn into violent conflicts remain unobserved and unreported by lower level structures. The ultimate goal of early warning is early action. It is therefore, not enough to generate information and hand it to those who might be in situations to take necessary responses. If the recipient of early warning is not placed, capable or willing to take action, EW analysis would be nothing but an academic exercise without any effect on improvement of the volatile situations by federal and regional states.

Attached to the conceptual problems, an informant portrayed that leadership commitment has a role to play as a challenge in institutional cooperation. Pertaining to this, an informant depicted that:

*The leadership in both Oromia and Somali regional states are sometimes actors in the conflict. They provoke their respective communities mobilizing ethnicity as an issue. They are not accountable for their malicious actions in the episodes of the conflict. Moreover, they flop to enforce laws and joint decisions and keep pending conflicts without response and resolution until it reaches the violent level. They did not keep promises reached on forums and meetings. In most cases they derive their respective communities either to informally restructuring administrative units; Weredas, and kebeles through expansion or claiming to gain back different locations. The federal level authorities refrain themselves to take necessary actions when the regional authorities misbehave and fail to resolve issues at their earlier stages. This has resulted in missing trust from the community and enormous impact up on federal-regional synergy and cooperation.*²⁶¹

This implies that the conceptual challenges of early warning and response systems was mainly impacted by lack of commitment from the leadership to ensure rule of law, implementing joint decisions to avert the escalation of conflicts and building trust. This in turn hampered to make the institutional cooperation between levels be improved.

7.5.3. Weak Local Governments

Local governments are the lower hierarchies of the government where the federal and regional policies and strategies are landed and implemented by the communities. However, most local governments in pastoral and agro-pastoral communities were incapable of implementing government policies and asserting empirical control over their territories. Most of them were either assigned by their networks and favoritism or were

²⁶¹ Ibid.

designated by traditional leaders without having necessary capacity and skills.²⁶² These are quite evident along the conflict prone and adjacent districts of Oromia and Somali regions. Consequently, there were vast territories (kebeles) where there were minimal state presences as they are distant from the center. These Kebeles and territories are vast uncaptured spaces that thrive on the margin of existing regions and are characterized by privatization of the use of force by community, cattle rustlers, and bandits. It is in these territories that pastoral conflicts are located and the affected local government structures were not capable of effectively deploying their power even in the face of warnings.²⁶³ In response to this inability, the local government officials have responded to let local communities to be armed and to take care of their own defense needs.²⁶⁴

In other situations, owing to the availability of small and light weapons (SALWs) and government inability to provide security, communities organized themselves for defensive and offensive reasons. First, they needed to protect themselves and their livestock from being plundered by hostile group. Second, they used the arms to forcefully raid other pastoral communities. The culture of arming one another among communities illicit sources and fostered localized arms race in the areas such as Mi'esso, Moyale and other pastoral areas.

Another informant stated that pastoral areas were overwhelmed by illegal arm dealers and arm circulation. He added that different pastoral communities were locked in cycles of cattle rustling. Neither of the local governments reported the issues to the Federal and regional governments nor worked to change the dynamics at its level. Such a circulation of arms undermined the whole idea of preventive culture and management of pastoral conflict.²⁶⁵ Thus, such a situation implies that how the weakness of the lower level government hierarchies and impacted the institutional cooperation between Federal and regional levels to deal with conflict prevention. Importantly, Federal and regional states need to jointly work to capacitate and strengthen the local level stakeholders.

²⁶² Interview with a resident in Mi'esso of Somali region, Mi'esso, February, 2016.

²⁶³ Interview with a senior expert in Somali Region, Jijjiga, February, 2016.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Interview with an official in Mi'esso wereda of Oromia administration and security office, Moyale, February 2016.

7.6. Summary

The chapter highlighted the conceptual clarifications of inter-governmental relations and the rational for having the same in federations. In doing so, the chapter examined the current status and practice of inter-linkage and cooperation between the Federal and Oromia and Somali regions on the operation of conflict early warning and response systems. The chapter observed the weakness in institutional relationship, non-complementarity and suffocated by constraining challenges of the system between federal and regional levels in ensuring the operation of EWER systems to mitigate the Oromo-Somali border conflict.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

8.1. Conclusion

This dissertation has attempted to address the need for comprehensive conflict early warning and response system to mitigate border conflicts between Oromia and Somali NRS. The main questions the dissertation set to answer are how the national conflict early warning and response system of the Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs (MOFPDA) worked to mitigate border conflict between Oromia and Somali regions and how the Federal and regional states cooperated in terms of conflict prevention, early warning and response mechanisms in the mitigation of border conflict between the two regions.

The theoretical framework of forms of federal governance and local conflict and prevention theory (Lund, 2009) underlies this research. As shown under chapter two of the conceptualization of conflict, the causes of conflict are diverse and can manifest in social, economic, political, religious, etc. forms (Kayode et al, 2013). Conflicts are multi-layered and are often inter-linked with local, national, transnational actors and interests (Jürgen et al. 2006: 19). In the same line of argument, I attempted to show that the underlying causes of Oromia- Somali border conflicts are multi-dimensional which find expression in economic, social, political, environmental, governance and unemployment terms which are multi-layered and highly interwoven. Most noticeably the dissertation focused on historical, political and economic factors which manifested in the form of competition for scarce resources and transformed into politicized claims over territorial boundary. I have also shown how the politicization of ethnic territoriality exacerbates conflict between these people which share common borders.

The historical causes to which the Oromia and Somali boundary conflict has been attributed to in this dissertation, was related to the international border dispute and war between Ethiopia and Somalia and was locally manifested in the conflict between Borana Oromo and Somali. The change of mind of the Somali parties counter to their longstanding

war of irredentism to to struggle within the new political space in Ethiopia in the post 1990, following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime, was a turning point for the development of Somali nationalism (Hagmann, 2009:509) in general and the relationship between the Oromo and Somali around border areas. The incident that led to the Ethiopia- Somalia war of 1977/78 and the influx weapons might have been an historical reason and have an implication in the area to fuel the conflict between the communities along the common borders. In addition to the inflow of weapons in the area, the political mobilization has also had some influence on Ethiopian Somali ethnic groups. Some of the ex- soldiers of the ousted Said Barre regime immigrated to the Ethiopia Somali Region and succeeded in influencing some Ethiopian Somalis to share their ambitious ideology of “Greater Somalia” and the situation seemed to continue overtime (Alem Habtu, 2010: 165; Ewnetu, 2006). This has had a direct impact on the Oromia and Somali regional states border conflict in the post 1991.

On the other hand, the implementation process of the federal system in Ethiopia in the post 1991 has contributed to exacerbate and shape the existing traditional resource competition to be politicized and has steered territorial claims and resulted in protracted and violent conflicts between Oromia and Somali National Regional States along the common borders. This means that the criteria regarding border demarcation within the federal constitution which focused on ethnic identity encouraged competition between the regional states. The demarcation was basically governed by Article 46 of the FDRE constitution which provides that states shall be delimited on the basis of the settlement patterns, language, identity and consents of the people concerned. The long running border and resource contestation led each group to accumulate collective memories that in turn inculcated mistrust and fear.

Although a couple of decades have passed since the conflict emerged, the humanitarian and material crisis experienced in 2017 was extremely high. The Federal and regional governments have made several attempts to resolve the conflict... All major means for resolving conflicts suggested by Rothchild (1997:99-108) as coercive, non-coercive and mixed incentive strategies have tried by governments of Ethiopia and the two regional states but to no avail. They could not contain and prevent the conflict. Thus, humanitarian

and material crisis have continued in the border areas numerous humanitarian and material fatalities have been sustained in both regions as a result of the ongoing conflict along the borders. These all confirm the lack of viable institution of conflict prevention, early warning and response systems to mitigate conflicts at its earlier stage.

In this dissertation, I argue in line with Lund (1994) that the failure to institute strong and viable institution for conflict prevention, early warning and response mechanisms to prevent conflicts from escalation. Conflict prevention theory propounds that conflict interventions should be pursued at the earliest stage of the conflict phase (Lund, 1994). As shown in Chapter Six, conflict prevention theory postulates that knowledge of the root causes of conflict is fundamental in choosing the right strategies for prevention and the right targets for intervention. The Conflict prevention approach implies looking at the causes while thinking about the solutions (Wallensteen & Möller, 2003:3; Wegner & Möckli, 2003:18). In Ethiopia in general, and along the common borders of Oromia and Somali national regional states in particular, the conflict prevention encountered serious failure. The leadership from both sides were accused for not having employed proper conflict preventive strategies to respond to conflicts before the confrontation had reached climax which now has sustained for more than two decades. Moreover, bringing about peace and stability in the conflict prone areas failed for a number of times as there is lack of viable and strong institution for conflict prevention, early warning and response systems. Hence, it was found that the Oromo and Somali conflict both revolve around the competitive approaches which are usually regarded as a 'zero-sum game' for the reason that the underlining causes of the conflict are unaddressed. The study found out that it would be a futile exercise to attempt to work out on conflict resolution without taking into consideration the institutionalization of strong conflict early warning and response systems in place. To reduce the likelihood of these conflicts it is essential to promote participatory development interventions along the borders; tackle unemployment; improve governance via national and intra-regional endeavors through institutionalizing conflict prevention and EWER mechanisms.

State intervention to resolve disputes over boundaries through the 2004 referendum along the borders of Oromia and Somali caused more territorial claims to take place. The result

of the referendum was neither fully implemented nor stopped the conflict. The practice along the common borders has shown that resolving border related conflict through the referendum has not ended violence. The underlying causes of the conflicts along the borders of Oromia and Somali national regional states have not yet been addressed. The reason for this seems to be lack of political will and leadership commitment. Both the leaderships are of a mind to win in the conflicts. Joint administrative decisions and frequent peace accords signed between both leaderships of the respective regional states were not implemented as all and they are not in a position to show up commitment to ensure the observance of such agreements. As a result, the conflict along the borders has still continued with its destructive effects. The attempts to resolve the problems pursued by both governments were ad hoc and have failed to address the root cause of the border conflicts. These longstanding unabated conflicts could be attributed to the lack of viable institution for conflict prevention, early warning and response systems.

I have discussed various conceptual clarifications and theoretical frameworks on conflict prevention, EW and ER, key steps and processes of early warning under Chapter Two. Accordingly, these conceptual clarifications have been found instrumental in the data analysis and thus to find answers to the research questions. Under Chapter Three, I have highlighted that the global, continental, regional and national reviews on conflict early warning and response systems were made and devoted to identify the trend, location, development and institutional operation through analysis of documents and works containing information related to a research problem under investigation. This was made due to the interconnectedness of peace and security issues and the spillover effect of conflicts in the post-cold war period. This would help to develop a mechanism to promote peace and stability and create a system for the prevention, management and resolution of inter and intra-state conflicts (UN, 1992; AU CEWS Handbook, 2000; AU, 2008; IGAD/CEWARN Protocol Art. 7(g)). This review underpinned a direction for drawing and distilling a lesson on successes and challenges and helped to relate how the key and inherent variables (key steps of early warning information gathering, indicators, situation room, ICT, etc.,) of early warning systems are developed and operationalized

and how these variables contribute to bring about a more effective early warning systems and mitigate conflicts for the study at hand.

In addition to this, in the same chapter I have highlighted the challenges that the UN faced and it was forced to push for the decentralization of some of its roles in maintaining international peace and security to continents including Africa. The pressure was based on the report prepared by the UN Secretary General (Boutros Ghali) in 1992 which was taken as one of the first milestones for conflict prevention and which called for more systematic efforts directed at the timely prevention of conflicts and gave the initial impetus to the development and adoption of conflict early warning systems. I have also shown that the AU also encountered a challenge and was unable to involve itself into the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts in the whole continent and wanted its sub-regional bodies to carry out the burden of maintaining peace and security in their respective sub-regions (AU- CEWS Handbook, 2000). The sub-regions also did the same to their member states. Finally, I have highlighted that the member states also started to take their national and local concerns mainly during the post 1991. Thus, it is assumed that conflict early warning is a new phenomenon attracting attention in the post 1991 in the UN system, Africa, as well as in Ethiopia.

Different global models of conflict early warning and response systems were discussed under Chapter Three which highlighted the fact that governments and organizations across the world have developed early warning systems which comprise independent indicators. All these different approaches offer perspectives for adding value to EWER systems. As new indicators are identified, different systems can be enriched to produce better models. Therefore, it was drawn that an effective model is the one which is adjustable, flexible and robust in accordance with a conflict context. Accordingly, the AU-CEWS and CEWARN/IGAD adapted the FAST-Swiss Peace model while neither of the models was adapted to Ethiopian national early warning system. FAST International used a comprehensive methodology that combined the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative analyses of conflictive and cooperative trends in the societies under observation. FAST which combines qualitative and quantitative elements in its methodology was found to be beneficial in that it uses a comprehensive approach and

comprises multiple methods. Thus, FAST was found to be a working model compared to other models because it takes the advantage of the benefits of either method and thus in every monitored country, FAST International established Local Information Networks (LINs) (Heinz Krummenacher et al (2002

Under Chapter Six, I have shown how the national conflict early warning and response system which was initiated by MOFPDA has worked to mitigate border conflict between Oromia and Somali regions. Nevertheless, when examined pursuant to the conceptual frameworks of conflict early warning discussed in Chapter Two and Three, the system appears only in name and has not yet been instituted in its true sense. In the realm of conflict prevention systems, institutions are the functional structures that exist to undertake the conflict EWS and response process (Hannah, G., et al, 2005). However, with regard to that of MOFPDA, the CEWER system was physically instituted but was practically weak, fragile and not operational. It was found to be the same if not worse in Oromia and Somali regional states as well; there was an attempt in Oromia but totally missing in Somali region. Thus, the system could not be able to capture and mitigate the Oromia – Somali border conflict. The prevention initiatives have mostly taken *ad hoc* forms employing a “fire brigade” approach after the crisis.

In spite of minimal and most likely informal efforts made at federal and regional levels, the failure was evident. The first obvious question here is whether there exists an institutionalized early warning system in the first place. This does not mean that the effort made by MOFPDA could be underestimated. However, there was a clear institutional and structural failure to operationalize the early warning. Neither of the key stages and processes of early warning systems were proficiently accomplished at MOFPDA level to prevent Oromia- Somali border conflict. Indeed, we can distinguish certain areas where the organizational framework for risk assessment, preventive action, monitoring, warning or response was missing. Often, these kinds of gaps were identified only after they have become obvious through an early warning failure in a major crisis, or when the perceived risks had grown to full-blown. MOFPDA did not build a strong system to solve inter-regional conflict.

The decision – making structure of the government was much, if not more, significant than the principles enshrined in the proclamation on the powers and duties of MOFPDA which explained the weak performance of the Federal government on the issues of conflict intervention. Lack of human capacity and infrastructure were found to be the major obstacle to conflict early warning and response system (see Chapter Six). As a result, the national conflict early warning and response system in Ethiopia has failed to prevent, contain and mitigate the frequent border conflict. However, the establishment of the conflict early warning and rapid response in the MOFPDA is commendable as a commitment for ensuring lasting peace and stability in Oromia and Somali regional states; though in its more than two decades of existence, the MOFPDA had little success in either type of intervention. This research found out that the operational and technical aspects of EWER system at MOFPDA has failed to prevent, mitigate and contain the Oromia – Somali border conflict due to lack of viable and strong institution early warning and response mechanisms. In other words, the system at federal and regional state conflict early warning institutions were inaccurately and inadequately structured and organized. The MOFPDA Conflict Prevention Strategy and the Conflict Early Warning and Rapid Response Guideline (2014) provides some ideal mechanisms of conflict prevention. However, it was found out that the system does not pledge the regional states in order for them to adapt, utilize and follow its mechanism consistently.

Information is the heart of conflict early warning. The research has shown that the information sources were in most cases government affiliated institutions and were hardly open- sources. CSOs were banned by proclamation and have no role in conflict early warning and response systems while they played critical role in CEWARN/IGAD and AU CEWS. In addition, at all levels the information gathering modality was not guided by protocols, frameworks, guidelines and formats. There was no formal way of information flow and exchange to end users except for the nominally produced data in the directorate of conflict early warning and response systems at MOFPDA. Information gathering was not made at the pre or latent stage of the conflict rather they have been attempted to be gathered only after the crisis had taken place. Early warning systems use open source materials and generally aim at serving human security, not the

national or state interests (Colliers, 2005:1). However, in the study context, early warning information was hardly gathered from open sources. Most stakeholders for conflict early warning information were not inclusive (E.g. Youth, women, CSOs were not involved). Theoretically, 'early warning systems tend to be decentralized and dependent upon the involvement of CSO for information input and analysis (Colliers, 2005:1). However, this was not the case in Ethiopia (MOFPDA) as CSOs have been banned from engaging in conflict and peace building activities by proclamation. More devastating was that the information obtained through different sources was found to be duplicated, uncoordinated and sometimes contradictory and biased. There were also unreported cases on critical conflict issues. Although women and youth have the capacity to support in conflict prevention, they generally did not have a significant presence in conflict prevention, early warning and response systems especially at Woreda Peace Committees. Since women tend to be more visible and active at local levels as compared to national and international levels, working with women at grassroots levels would have contributed to conflict aversion and improved access to early warning information (Arnando, 2012).

Early warning indicators are predictors, precursor events or other telling signals which are explained qualitatively and /or quantitatively and are used in forecasting about the likely conflict to occur and to monitor the same (Steven Leach, 2016:15; Jessica and Luis, 2015). However, at both MOFPDA and Oromia and Somali regional states, conflict early warning indicators along the borders of both regions were known to everybody though nobody responded to them. Besides, indicator modules have not yet developed to identify, monitor and classify them in terms of economic, social, political, environmental, human right, justice, etc. Informal means dominated the activities at all levels. On the other hand, lack of individual and collective capacity in monitoring, managing and transferring information on indicators at their earlier stages of the conflict plagued the early warning system at federal and regional levels. If the early warning system was not integrated and coordinated, the early warning signal would not be received or identified even if the monitoring system as such is in place. For instance, two organizations may have individually important information, but it becomes an early warning signal only if these two information sources are put together.

Situation room is a head quarter, center, and serves as a point of contact and is responsible for monitoring and collection of potential, actual and post conflict situations and analysis and dissemination of information through, daily news highlights, daily reports, flash reports and updates, briefs, etc. (GTZ, 2006:11). However, at the MOFPDA level, the research has found out that the situation room existed in name but was not fully operating in its capacity due to lack of infrastructure (mainly ICT), and skilled professional (desk officers). In Oromia and Somali regional states the situation rooms were not established. Consequently, interlinkages have not been established between MOFPDA and regions in this regard. Ultimately, information flowed without proper verification across all levels due to lack of designed framework. Hence, regular analyses were not available. Moreover, at both MOFPDA and regional levels formal early warning, models and methodology for analyses that suit their particular context were missing. It was blurred to realize which model was practically applicable and the analysis was guided informally by informal mechanisms. Hence, information was poorly analyzed at different levels (Wereda, zone and region and federal levels) and interpreted by personnel with inadequate skill and capacity. There was lack of commitment; as a result wrongly analyzed information or information without rigorous analysis was passed over to decision makers. All of the levels talked different languages on the same issue due to lack of proper model and method for analysis. The use of different sources of information and diverse stakeholders for analysis was hardly practical.

The role of ICT in preventing and managing conflicts is very critical mainly in information transmission and analysis. However, the ICT which would have been the backbone to EWER at MOFPDA and regional states was found to be in structural problem. Lack of information communication infrastructure (website, satellite radios, electric power cut to charge their mobiles, etc) contributed to the poor quality, unchecked and unreliable provision of early warning information at every level. On top of that, in remote areas where pastoral conflicts were intense, information technology was not used. Conflict early warning supporting technology tools were inadequate to use them in their full potential. Hence, the research has found out that lack of communication network in pastoralist areas disadvantaged the effort of conflict prevention.

The failure to employ the entire constituents of conflict early warning has resulted in persistent disconnect between early warning and response at MOFPDA and both Oromia and Somali regions. In Chapter Two it has been conceptualized that the early response systems need instruments such as dialogues, forums, etc., before or prior to conflict escalation (Haider, 2014:52-54). However, at MOFPDA, all instruments are arranged after the conflict had occurred. The untimely intervention, failure in defining early warning indicator modules and their ownership at all levels, inadequate technological infrastructure, limited financial and human resources, and the sheer lack of political will on the part of the regional states have immensely affected early response. Moreover, the local level systems such as community based early warning and response systems have not been strengthened though they are closer to the local context and the ones to respond in the absence of the government.

Different societies that make up the global village today are interconnected as never before, because they face threats that no nation can hope to master by acting alone and provide opportunities that can be much more effectively exploited if all nations work together. Traditional concepts of security do not provide adequate solutions to the current challenges of intra-state conflict and regional instability (Emanuel Kojo, 2014:27). The institutional link and cooperation, as found out by this dissertation is contrary to the above notion in that there was weak interlinkage between the levels to work out on conflict early warning mandates by virtue of the CEWARN/ ICAD protocol and national conflict prevention strategies. This plagued the operationalization of the system. In addition to this, lack of focus on small events and local level conflicts that take place and monitoring systems have not systematically been established. While there is a possibility of conflict to spill over from one context to another, local issues in most cases are becoming national or regional headaches. Hence, as Habib argue, that the value of the continental, sub-regional, and national systems and their contribution to conflict prevention on the continent would depend on how strong the linkages between them will be and how they can adequately complement each other (Adam Habib, 2011). Moving forward, continental and regional organizations have a lot to contribute to EWERS on the continent but can only be successful with closer engagement with grassroots actors and

organizations. Due to the problems pronounced above, the research has found out that the national conflict early warning and response systems initiated by MOFPDA could not capture, prevent and mitigate the Oromo – Somali border conflict.

In addition, the federal process and, more especially, intergovernmental relationships have not been established in such a way to encourage regional elite groups to advance inter-group federal co-operation. In Ethiopia, HOF enters into federal-state relations in fiscal IGR and dispute resolution (Article 62 of the FDRE constitution). However, it hardly accomplished its role with regard to early warning and response systems in the country. MOFPDA is a federal executive accountable to the Prime Minister's office. Most scholars and regional states perceive that it was established for controlling and oversee the regional states and allegedly not neutral. Its establishment was against the spirit and concept of intergovernmental relations that is practiced in other federations. Due to this, it lost trust and confidence. The intergovernmental relationships between the federal and regional states seemed to be fragile and institutionally uncoordinated and largely dependent upon informal mechanisms. There were no formal binding responsibilities and procedures that governed inter-governmental relationships, so interaction remained informal, ad hoc and dependent on the good will of leaders. When relationships between regional leaders were good, relationships between the lower level leaders and other institutions also improved. Hence, as I discussed in Chapter Seven, the federal and regional states cooperation to strengthen and consolidate conflict early warning and response systems was negligible.

8.2. Policy Implications

This study has some recommendations for researchers and policymakers that would significantly contribute to the development of conflict early warning and early response systems. The researcher feels that the following aspects which have emerged from the findings of the study merit a particular attention:

- Beyond a ‘fire-fighting’ approach to crisis, there is also a need to consider more predictable policy approaches to conflict prevention and to address the structural causes of border conflicts and not only its symptoms.
- Referendum should not be regarded exclusively as a last resort but should be seen as part of an integrated strategy of conflict prevention to be used in conjunction with political and economic instruments.
- Meeting new challenges of conflict requires a reform of conflict prevention and management institutions. Hence, rethinking to re-invigorate the existing early warning and response institution both at Federal (MOFPDA) and regional levels for preventing conflicts would be of great significance. MOFPDA should review its strategy, protocols, and guidelines with a view to identifying and rectifying all forms of key early warning processes.
- The responsibility of local leaders and politicians in preventing deadly conflicts need to be increased. They need to be capacitated and accountable in times of their failure.
- There are various actors in every conflict situation. There are also other conflict actors which benefit from the continuation of a conflict whether they are officials like governments, or groups or individuals who mobilize ethnicity for control of resources and power. On the other hand, arms dealers might have an interest in the conflict and might want one party to win, in the hope that it can get large arms orders from the loser. Thus, the policy makers should introduce stronger policies to regulate their operations.
- There needs to be increased community awareness on early warning signs and response mechanisms that speaks to the experience of the residents of Oromia - Somali. This may include the early signal gathering criterion, scrutinizing the signs, sharing warning information and taking proactive and appropriate preventative measures. The community education may be carried out by the assigned field monitors but the partnership with other agencies such as religious leaders, clan leaders, Aba Gadas, women, government officials, peace committees and CBOs needs to be utilized more meaningfully-actively engage the community figures (clan leaders, elders, Aba Gadas) in leading the campaigns against ethnic

clashes along the common borders of Oromia and Somali regions by preaching peace, love and unity among the residents and to eschew raiding and killing each other.

- There is a need to harness customary knowledge on early warning and response for successful operations at grass root level. Numerous conflicts emerge from the grassroots where community early warning becomes feasible and local response becomes a reality. However, traditional or community-based conflict early warning and response systems were not fully supported or either co-opted. This approach needs to be shaped in order to exploit the local potentials in conflict early warning and response and to enhance local ownership. The design and management of early warning systems should be closely interconnected with the local knowledge and preventive measures. The range of activities should be varied and tailored to community needs, but included joint analysis of the local context and identification of potential conflict issues and corresponding responses or solutions.
- Local commitment and action is often more important than any external funds provided. If addressed quickly, local dispute can be prevented from escalating into conflict. This may not cost much but does require a local and rapid response which may involve the use of traditional conflict resolution techniques. Intensive capacity and follow up is however at stake for the actors. External resources often are needed when a situation is already escalating and needs to be contained. However, distilling experiences from other countries such as Kenyan local peace committees would also be helpful for local response.
- Early warning and response should be part of a wider peace infrastructure. Long-term peacebuilding endeavors are important in sustaining peace, not just managing overt violence. Use of local knowledge and a more collaborative approach involving all stakeholders is critical for early warning and response to be successful at the community level.
- Linking early warning with early response: One of the greatest challenges that emerged from this study is that most conflict early warning systems have not yet been partnered with an effective preventative response mechanism. However,

close interaction with decision-makers through meetings and consultations may ultimately minimize what frequently has been called the warning-response gap.

- New technology can greatly help the residents along the borders to actively engage in data gathering and conflict prevention; organizations and interested parties should make better use of these developments. Hence, support technology design for key EWER actors and technology provision in locations where tensions are essentially important.
- Meeting the threats of the border conflicts in the Ethiopian federation will require greater coordination between federal and regional states. One way to develop this cooperation between federal and regional states is to establish institutions, design joint forums and trainings. Hence, it is of immense importance to institutionalize vertical (federal-states) and horizontal (state to state) cooperation among the level of governments to enhance the link and synergy for proper operationalization of EWER systems by drawing experiences of other federations.

8.1.2. Suggested Areas for Future Research

The study reveals that there are various issues that may constitute areas for further research in the discourse of role of early warning systems on conflict prevention in Ethiopia and regional states. Consequently, it will be important if further research is extended in the following areas:

- First, further research is needed on early warning and response gaps to effect decision making on mitigation of inter-regional conflicts as overt conflict still persists along the frontiers of Oromia and Somali regions.
- Secondly, the study reveals that inter-linkages of early warning systems is weak at local, national, sub- regional and continental level. There is a need for further research in which coordination of early warning systems can be sought to improve the synergy among frameworks.
- Thirdly, further research is needed to look into how the community-based early warning systems and conflict resolution mechanisms can be incorporated into the national conflict prevention mechanisms.

- Fourthly, since early warning and response system is an integrated process, there is inadequacy in understanding the perceptual nature of indicators used for analysis in inter-regional conflicts; further research is therefore needed on indicators to reflect policy relevance and correlate information sources.
- The fifth concern revolves around the role of the media in conflict prevention. Further research need to be undertaken to establish how the media can be positively used to curb the new trends of conflict such as intra-regional conflicts by strengthening shared values of frontier communities and shifting the ideas of enmity to amity.

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Annexes

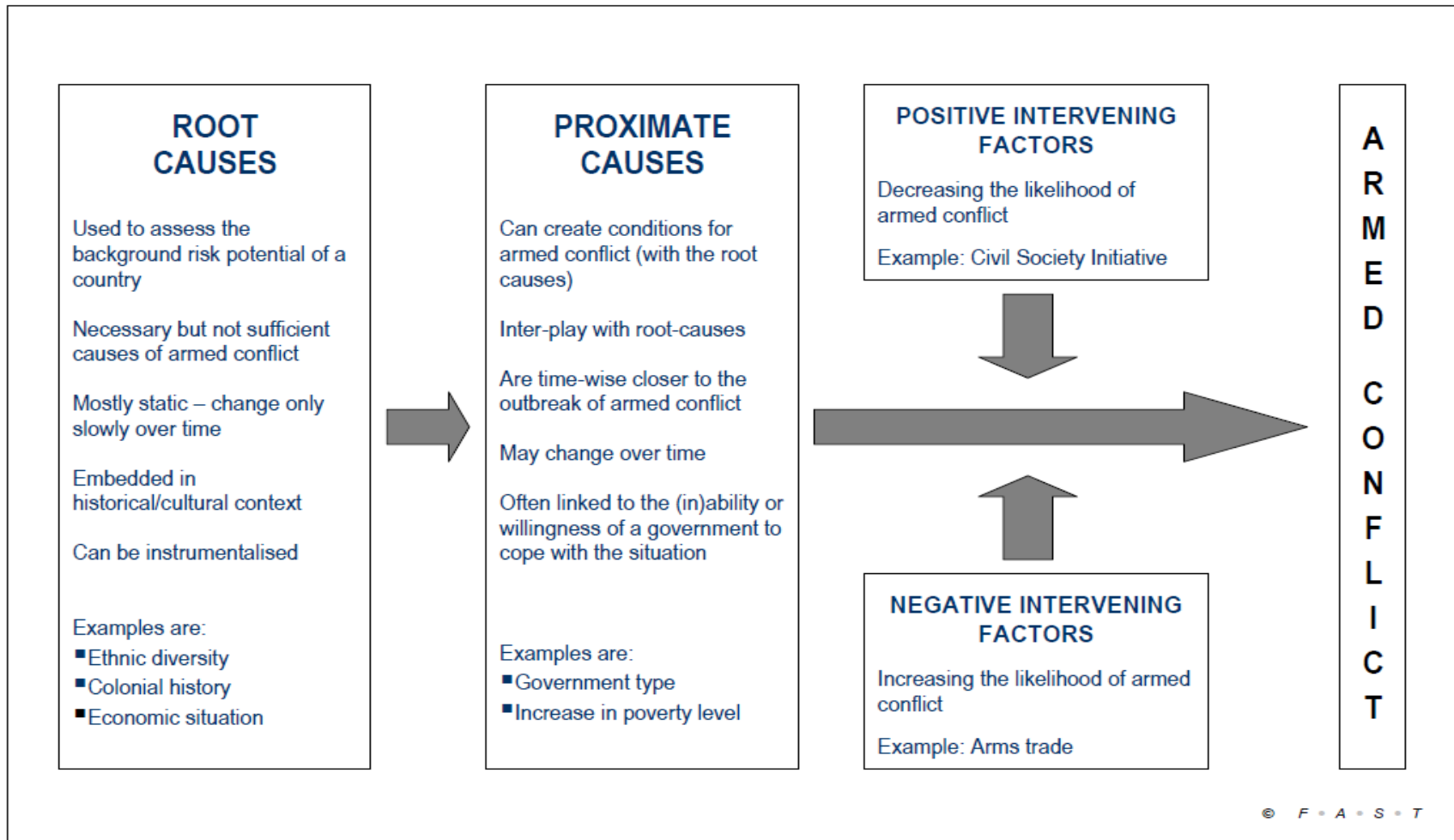
Annex 1. Common Indicators for Conflict Early Warning

Thematic area	Specific category	Intervening variables	Adaptation in Eastern Africa
Justice and Human Rights	Access to justice Protection of human rights Freedom of Civil society and media	Change of government General election	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN
Economic Factors	Inequality, economic growth, unemployment, inflation, price of basic commodities, dependence on few raw materials export, macro-economic instability	Structural industrial shift	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN,
Socio-cultural factors	Ethnic tension and division Politicization of identity/ ethnicity Structural and historical factors	Globalization/ world order	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN,
Demographic and historical factors	Demographic/population pressure, non economic regional inequalities, criminalization of political dissent, violence, IDPs and Refugees, history of armed conflicts and structural instability, Lack of institutions and tradition of conflict resolution, unaccountable leadership	Migration	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN,
Geopolitical location	Regional and international factors, territorial disputes, external alliances	Country and region specific factors	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN
Military and Illegal armed groups	Small arms proliferation, non state organized armed groups, lack of democratic control of armed forces, high per capita military expenditure	Transnational arms trade/arms control	CEWS, CEWARN, EACWARN

Environment and Resource Management	Environmental disaster, scarcity of resources, resource management, conflict minerals, oil and gas, competition over scarce resources	Climate change and adaptation	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN
Governance	Regime legitimacy, rule of law, independent judiciary, separation of powers, constitutionalism, political parties, corruption	Globalization/ world order	CEWS, CEWARN, COMWARN, EACWARN

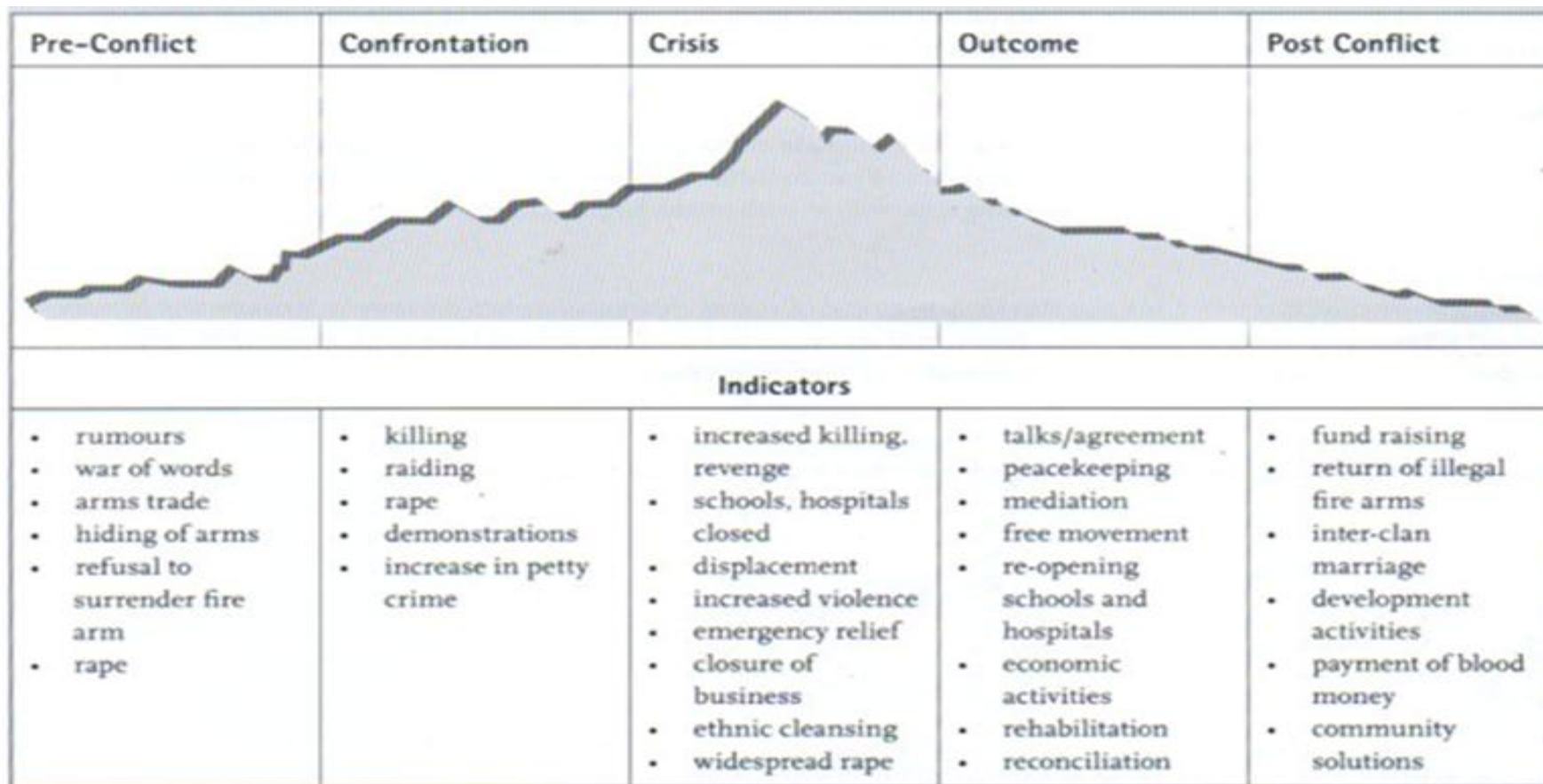
Source: J.K Mbugua's Adaptation from SIPRI's 'Early Warning Indicators for Preventive Policy', Working Paper, 2003. International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) (2014), Conflict Early Warning and Response Systems in Eastern Africa: Do they Work? The Role of IGAD in Security Stabilization in Somalia and South Sudan: Effective Strategies for Responding to Contemporary Conflicts in Eastern Africa. ISSUE BRIEF.

Annex 2. Graphic display of analytical framework Model of EW indicators



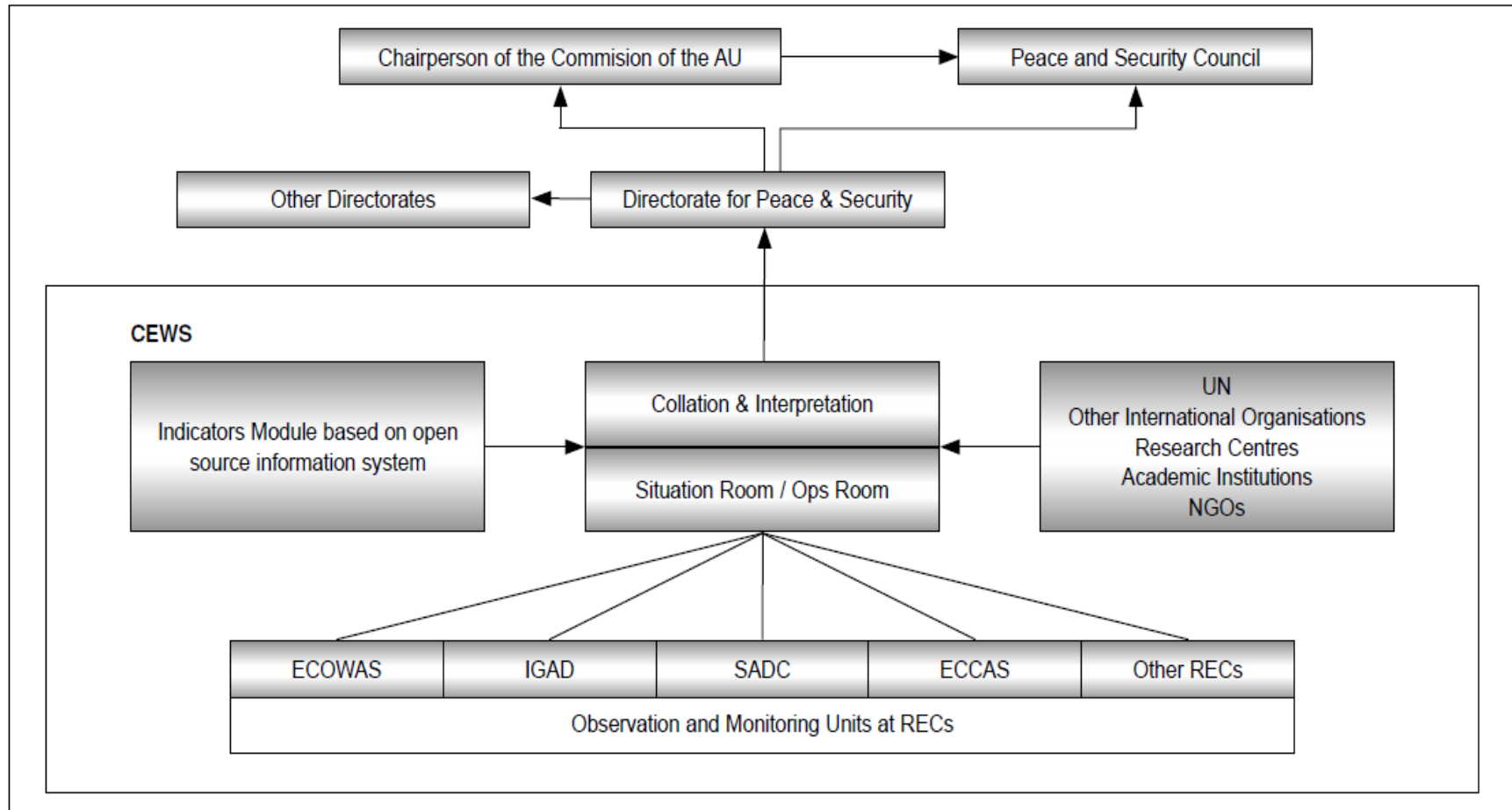
Source: FAST Swiss peace, 1997.

Annex 3. Phases of Conflicts and Corresponding indicators of Conflict



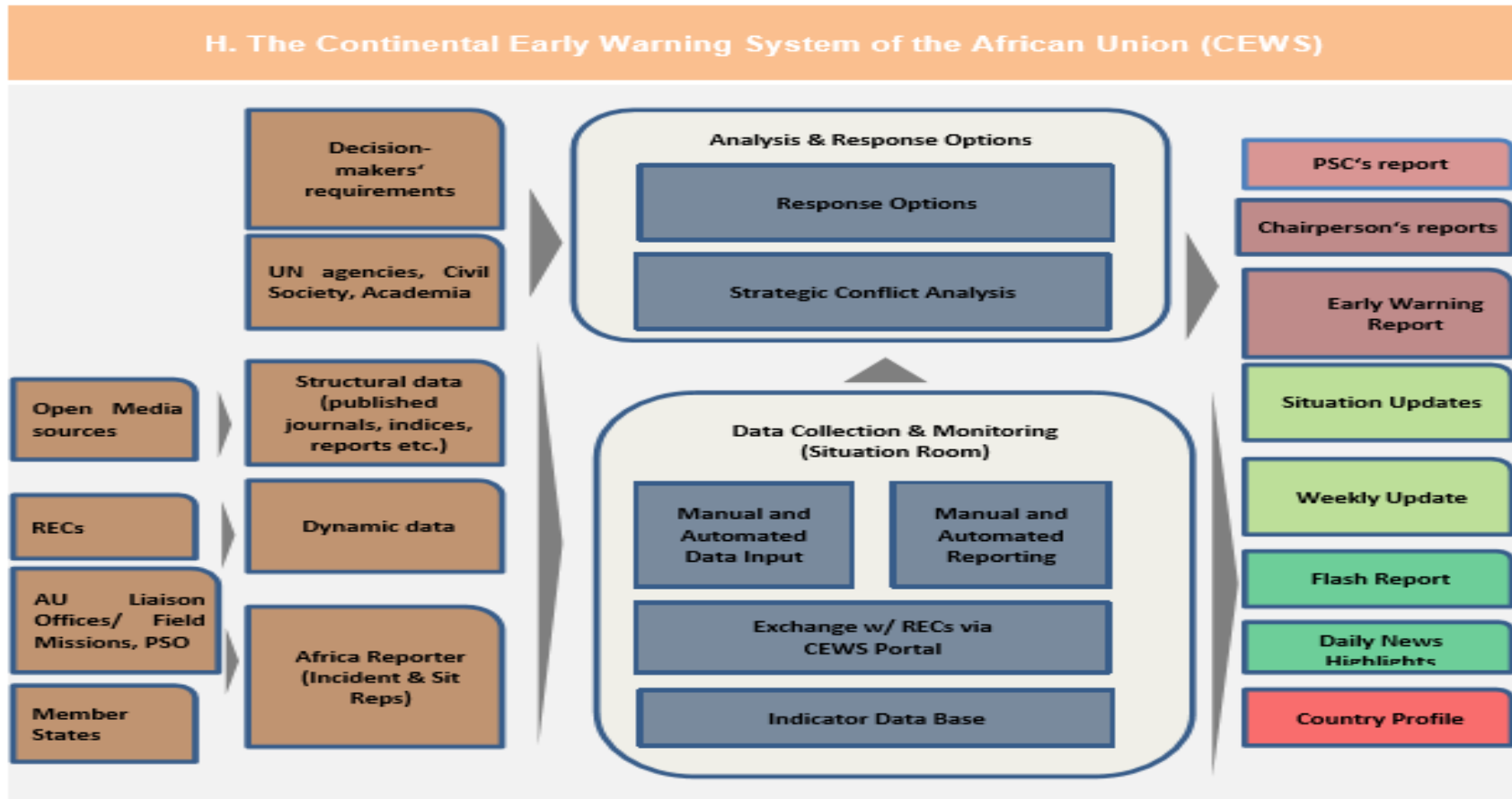
Source: Compiled from Lund, M (2009)

Annex.4. Institutional Structure of AU- CEWS Pictorial Representation



Source: African Union (2008)

Annex 5. The AU- Continental Early Warning Process



Adopted from *Impact Analysis of Interventions by the African Union and Regional Economic Communities in Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa Report*, GIZ 2015, P.18.

Annex 7. Interview Questions

I. Interview Questions for MOFPDA officials

1. How the conflict situations between Oromia and Somali regional state are explained? What are the causes? Who are the actors? How is its dynamics?
2. What are the conflict prevention, management and resolution approaches followed by the MOFPDA?
3. What is the historical background for early warning and rapid response system in MOFPDA? How was the institution established?
4. What is the source or mandate for the early warning and rapid response system at MoFPDA level?
5. Do you use operational strategies, protocols, procedures, guidelines or templates in the CEWER system? How are they implemented?
6. How the conflict early warning and response systems are operating to respond to the conflicts between regions? What activities and processes are underway? (Sources of information and its flow, identification and collection of indicators, analysis and communication of information for response action by decision makers)
7. Do you have a situation room? If so, how is your assessment on its functionality?
8. Do you use defined conflict indicators for the conflicts? How much of the indicators developed at MOFPDA level is being applied?
9. Is your CEWER system-computer based? Comment on the quality of data collected (primary, secondary) and if there are quality checks? How is data processed or analyzed? Are trend analysis and scenario projections conducted? Use of technology?
10. What does the data storage system look like?
11. Do you have partners in the CEWARN system? Both internal (such as peace committees, NGO's, civil society organizations...) and external (Such as IGAD, AU...)? Sources of EWER?
12. How does the rapid response system look like in terms of structure? What are the federal governments, particularly MOFPDA's, involvement? Comment on its challenges and successes so far? Do you provide a feedback for regional states?
13. In general, what do you think should improve in the whole EWER system and how?

II. Interview questions for Regional States

1. How the conflict situations between Oromia and Somali regional state are explained? What are the causes? Who are the actors? How is its dynamics?
2. What are the conflict prevention, management and resolution approaches followed by the regional state?
3. What is the historical background for early warning and rapid response system in MOFPDA? How was the institution for early warning and response systems established?
4. What is the source or mandate for the early warning and rapid response system in your regional state?
5. How is the CEWER system in your region financed? Where do the resources come from?
6. What strategies, protocols and guidelines for CEWER are used?
7. How the conflict early warning and response systems are operating to respond to the conflicts between regions? What activities and processes are underway? (Sources of information and its flow, identification and collection of indicators, analysis and communication of information for response action by decision makers)
8. Do you have a situation room? If so, how is your assessment on its functionality?
9. How the information flow is structured, Kebele- Woreda- State –Federal applicable? What information is reported? What information is not reported? Comment on the functionality of the structure?
10. Is your CEWER system-computer based? Comment on the quality of data collected (primary, secondary) and if there are quality checks? How is data processed or analyzed? Are trend analysis and scenario projections conducted? Use of technology?
11. On what base is your regional state network/framework with the MoFPDA system connected?
12. Do you have a situation room? If so, how is your assessment on its functionality?
13. Do you use defined conflict indicators for your state? How much of the indicators developed with MOFPDA is being applied?
14. Have there been any capacity building activities taken place in your CEWARN system?

15. How does the rapid response system look like in terms of structure? What are the federal governments, particularly MOFPDA's, involvement? Comment on its challenges and successes so far? Do you get a feedback from MoFPDA?

III. Questions for discussion with CEWERS focal persons at regional states

1. How long have you worked as a focal person? What are your functions and responsibilities?
2. How is the CEWARN system and the information flow organized? -Do you use defined conflict indicators? What conflict indicators are applied in your regional state? Do you use indicators developed with MOFA? How do you assess the knowledge of actual field monitors at Kebele level about these indicators?
3. Do you do a validation of information?
4. Have you received trainings on conflict in general and CEWER in particular? By who? Were they useful? Have you trained others?
5. Describe the CEWER technical structure (use of computer, internet, e-mail ..) at your regional state?
6. Are there any formats of receiving information (incident and situation reports)?
7. What does the reporting to MOFPDA actually look like? How often do you report? Using what mode (telephone, email...)?
8. What are the strength and weaknesses with the network with MOFPDA? Interlink of communication and information flow?

IV. Interview questions for local officials

1. How long have you worked in the office? What are your functions and responsibilities?
2. Have you received trainings on conflict in general and CEWER in particular? By who? Were they useful? Have you trained others?
3. What are the causes of the conflict along the borders? How often the conflicts occur? Since when? Who are the actors in the conflict? What is their interest? How is the trend of the conflict? What are the triggering causes of the conflict? What are the impacts of the conflict?
4. What conflict indicators are manifested before the conflict? How are they identified?
5. Are there any formats of receiving information (incident and situation reports)?

6. Who are the sources of information? Is the information reported or unreported to the next higher level? How often?
7. Are there any response systems at this level? How they operate?
8. How looks the role of traditional leaders in responding to the conflict?

V. Interview questions for elders, clan leaders, local residents, peace committees

1. How long you lived in the area?
2. Do you ever get to know that a conflict is going to take place in your village, kebele?
3. What are the causes of the conflicts? Who are the actors in the conflict? Their interests? How often the conflicts broke out around the common borders? What are the triggering causes of the conflict?
4. What are the most commonly observed signs/indicators of potential conflict in your area? How can you identify them?
5. How do members of your ethnic community behave when there is a possibility of a conflict?
6. Who in your community has the greatest ability to know the possibility that a conflict is going to occur?
7. From where do you get information about possible inter-ethnic conflict in your village/ kebele?
8. How do conflict related information sent to the officials of weredas/ district?
9. Are there influential people who contribute to violence by interfering with efforts to prevent acts of inter-ethnic conflict?
10. Has there been a looming conflict in the recent past which was successfully prevented from escalating into violence in the area? What measures were taken to stop its occurrence?
11. Who do you think is not doing enough to help prevent occurrence of conflict even after signs have been spotted?
12. Who do you think will be helpful in offering timely response to information about potential attack?
13. On average, how long does it usually take between the time a sign is spotted and the time that an attack is executed?

VI. Questions for Focus Group Discussion

1. What are the causes and triggering factors of overt conflict between members of your ethnic community and members of neighboring ethnic communities?
2. Do you ever get to know that a conflict is going to take place in your kebele and how to you get to know that? Can you share with me the signs/indicators of conflicts in the area?
3. About how many incidents of violent conflict between members of your ethnic community and members of another ethnic community would you say have occurred in this area in the past ten years? How are these incidents being reported?
4. What else can you say about the conflict in the Oromo- Somali conflict?
5. What does governments of federal and regional states do in preventing conflict in the Oromia- Somali border conflict?
6. Can you mention any Institutions that contribute towards conflict prevention in the Oromia – Somali border conflict?
7. Can you share with me the role of elders in reducing hostility and prevent future incidents of inter-ethnic violence?
8. What do you think slows down peacebuilding initiatives along the common borders of Oromia and Somali?
9. Which category of people are most vulnerable to the effects of conflict whenever it occurs in your village?

Annex 7. List of In-depth Interviewees, key Informant and FGD participants

Anonymous Names	sex	age	Ethnic Group	Role in the community	Interview date	Interview Place
E1	M	67	Oromo	Community elder	Feb 16,2016	Mi’esso (O)
E2	M	62	Oromo			
E3	M	55	Oromo			
E4	M	49	Oromo			
E5	F	42	Oromo			
E6	M	66	Oromo			
E7	M	62	Somali	Community elder	Feb 16,2016	Mi’esso (S)
E8	M	58	Somali			
E9	M	56	Somali			
E10	M	49	Somali		Feb23,2016	Mi’esso (S)
E11	M	61	Somali			
E12	M	55	Somali			
E13	M	61	Oromo	Abba Gada	Sep.15,2015	Moyale (O)
E14	M	59	Oromo	Community elder		
E15	M	65	Oromo			
E16	M	48	Oromo			
E17	M	52	Oromo			
E18	M	49	Oromo			
E19	M	66	Somali	Ugaz-comm elder	Sep.15,2015	Moyale (S)
E20	M	54	Somali			
E21	M	58	Somali			
E22	M	64	Somali	pastoralist		
E23	M	57	Somali			
E24	M	68	Somali			
FED1	M	62	-	Federal Official	Aug.7, 2015	A/Ababa
FED2	M	54	-			
FED3	M	49	-			
REG1	M	45	Oromo	Regional Official	Jan. 10, 2016	A/Ababa
REG2	M	53	Oromo			
REG3	M	46	Oromo			
REG4	M	44	Somali	Regional Official	Feb 20,2016	Jijjiga
REG5	M	46	Somali			

REG6	M	51	Somali			
PO1	M	55	-	Fed.police com	Aug.7, 2015	Addis Abab
PO2	M	52	Oromo	Regional pol.com	Nov.5,2016	Oro A.Ababa
PO3	M	53	Somali	Regional pol.com.	Feb.20,2016	Jijjiga
ZO1	M	43	Somali	Zonal Official		
ZO2	M	44	Oromo	Zonal Official	Feb,16,2016	Chiro
ZO3	M	41	Oromo	Zonal Official	Feb.14, 2015	Harar
ZO4	M	40	Oromo	Zonal Official	Sep.16,2015	Yabalo
WE1	M	39	Oromo	Wereda Official	Feb.17, 2016	Mi'esso
WE2	M	44	Oromo			
WE3	M	38	Oromo	Wereda Official	Sep.15,2015	Moyale
WE4	M	43	Oromo	Wereda Official		
WE5	M	41	Somali	Wereda Official	Sep.15,2015	Mi'esso (S)
WE6	M	39	Somali		Feb.17,2016	Mi'esso (S)
WE7	M	45	Somali		Sep.15, 2015	Moyale (S)
WE8	M	41	Somali		Sep.15, 2015	Moyale (S)
YO1	M	29	Oromo	Youth representative	Feb,16, 2016	Mi'esso (O)
YO2	M	32	Oromo		Sep. 17,2015	Moyale (O)
YO3	M	25	Oromo		Feb.20, 2016	Chinaksen (O)
YO4	M	31	Somali		Feb.17, 2016	Mi'esso (S)
YO5	M	33	Somali		Feb,21, 2016	Tuluguled (S)
YO6	M	28	Somali		Sep. 17,2015	Moyale (S)
WO1	F	43	Oromo	Women Rep.	Feb,14,2016	Mi'esso (O)
WO2	F	51	Oromo			
WO3	F	47	Oromo		Sep,17,2015	Moyale (O)
WO4	F	51	Somali		Feb. 17,2016	T/Guled (S)
WO5	F	44	Somali		Feb.15,2016	Mi'esso (S)
WO6	F	38	Somali		Sep.17. 2015	Moyale (S)
CSO		46	-	Peace building	Sep.20,2015	Moyale town
CEWARN/MoFA	M	64	-	Official	Aug.7, 2015	Addis Ababa
SE1	M	36	Oromo	Senior Expert	Feb,17.2016	Mi'esso
Po1	M	42	Oromo	Police officer	Feb.16, 2016	Mi'esso Town
Res1	M	59		Resident	Feb,16,2016	Mi'esso

NB: The names given are anonymous names and other detail of federal, regional and zonal officials is not given for informants' safety.

Field notes have been taken in time of interview without recording.

Source: Field noted 2015 and 2016.