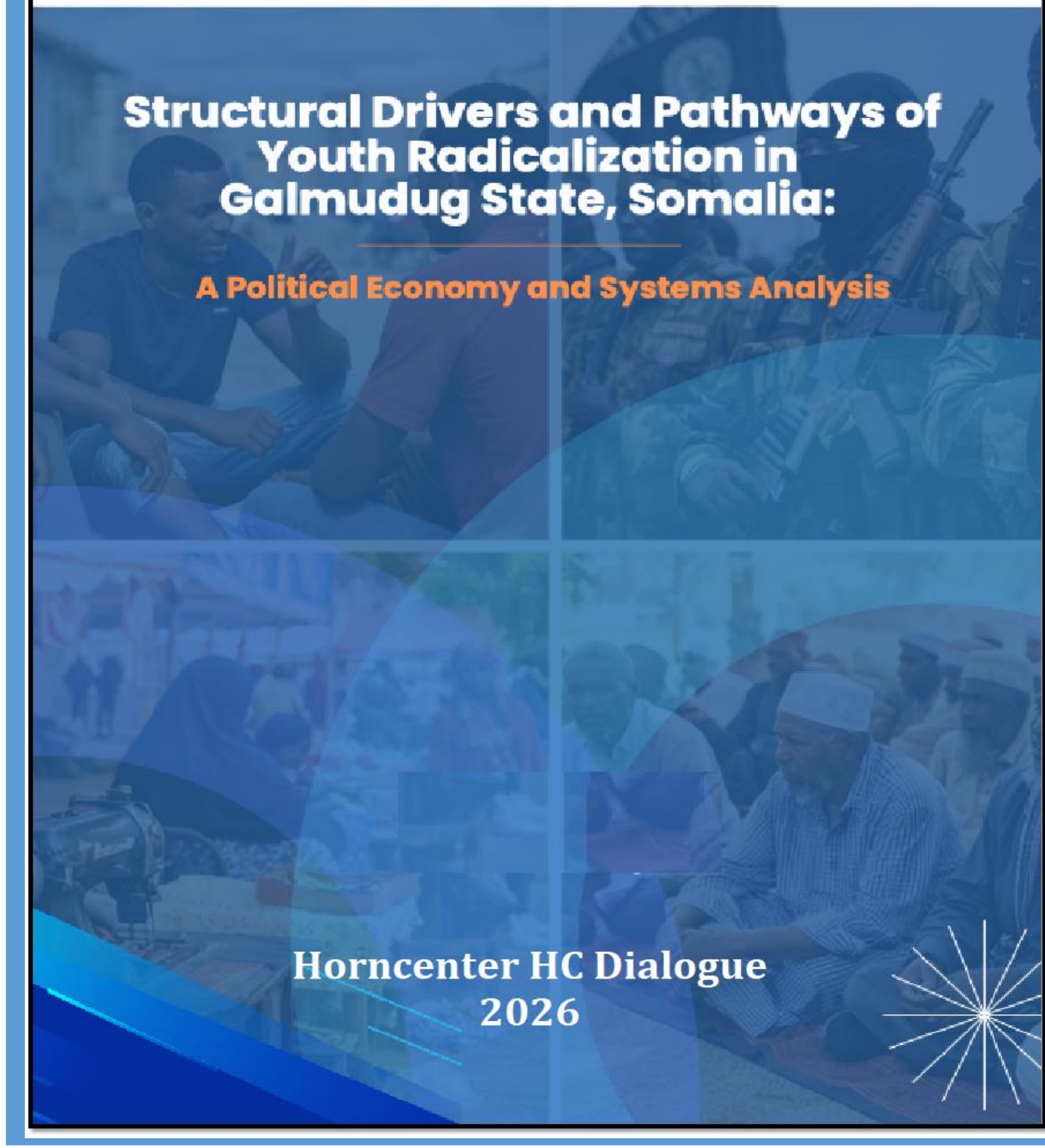
Structural Drivers and Pathways of Youth Radicalization in Galmudug State, Somalia:

A Political Economy and Systems Analysis



Horncenter HC Dialogue
2026

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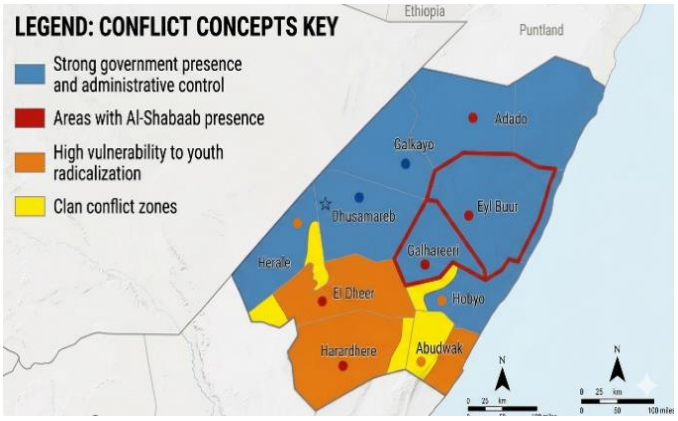
1. Executive Summary

68%	75%	85%	80+	395,000+
Unemployment as primary driver	State service failure cited	FGD governance-recruitment link	Sources reviewed (2023–2026)	Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Galmudug

Youth radicalization in Galmudug State, Somalia, is not an isolated or purely ideological issue. It is better understood as the result of interconnected structural, social, and governance challenges within a context of prolonged fragility. Rather than stemming from a single cause, radicalization reflects a broader systemic process shaped by political economy constraints, patterns of social organization, and localized security conditions.



This study applies a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach, combining a review of more than 80 recent studies from 2023 to 2026 with primary data collected through 15 Key Informant Interviews and 4 Focus Group Discussions conducted in Dhuusamareb, Galkayo, Harardhere, and Eyl Dheer. This approach provides both analytical depth and strong contextual grounding across different governance and security environments.

The findings point to three closely interconnected drivers of youth radicalization. First, social dynamics, including inter clan conflict, long standing historical grievances, identity fragmentation, and prolonged exposure to violence, shape how vulnerability is experienced at the community level. These factors often normalize violence and weaken traditional social protection systems. Second, political and economic conditions, particularly weak and uneven governance, limited access to justice, inadequate service delivery, and high youth unemployment, create both constraints and incentives. These challenges reduce trust in state institutions while increasing the appeal of non-state actors as alternative providers of security, livelihoods, and dispute resolution. Third, ideological narratives tend to reinforce and sustain engagement rather than initiate it. They frame existing grievances in ways that justify violence and strengthen continued involvement over time. Evidence from the study highlights the importance of structural conditions, with most respondents identifying unemployment and poor service delivery as key drivers of recruitment.

These drivers operate in combination, forming a dynamic system in which vulnerability, recruitment pathways, and continued participation reinforce one another. Radicalization is therefore nonlinear and context specific, with multiple entry points shaped by local governance performance, social networks, and exposure to conflict. While vulnerability is widespread, its

outcomes differ across locations. Urban areas tend to show relatively higher resilience compared to peripheral or recently contested areas.

The findings suggest that approaches focused solely on security responses are insufficient. More effective strategies require integrated and context sensitive interventions that strengthen governance, expand economic opportunities, improve access to justice and basic services, and support community-based systems that promote social cohesion.

Addressing youth radicalization in Galmudug ultimately requires rebuilding trust between the state and society. Without tackling the underlying structural and political economy factors that drive vulnerability, efforts are unlikely to achieve lasting impact. This study offers a practical analytical framework and evidence base to support more effective policies and interventions in fragile and conflict affected contexts.

2. Background and Context

Galmudug State, established in 2015 as part of Somalia's federalization process, occupies a strategically significant position in central Somalia, linking relatively stable northern regions with more contested southern areas. While this location offers potential for economic integration and political connectivity, it also exposes the state to overlapping security threats, complex clan dynamics, and persistent governance challenges.

The formation of Galmudug was largely driven by the Federal Government of Somalia with external support, but the process was characterized by limited local ownership and inclusivity. As a result, questions of legitimacy and state–society relations continue to shape its political trajectory, particularly in areas where governance is perceived as externally imposed rather than locally grounded. Local perspectives reinforce this perception, with one respondent noting that leadership selection processes have created distance between communities and governing institutions.[1]

Galmudug emerged from regions historically marked by protracted conflict, weak administrative systems, and persistent inter- and intra-clan rivalries.[2] These dynamics continue to drive localized insecurity, displacement, and competition over resources such as land, water, and political authority. In several districts—particularly conflict-affected and recently contested areas—governance remains fragmented and service delivery limited, contributing to persistent instability.

These challenges are embedded within Somalia's broader context of fragility. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, decades of conflict, institutional weakness, and recurring climatic shocks have produced widespread vulnerability, with an estimated 40 percent of the population requiring humanitarian assistance. Within this national context, Galmudug represents

1 Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. (2024). Galmudug: Governance, state formation, conflict dynamics, and reconciliation. https://heritageinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Galmudug-Governance-State-Formation-Conflict-Dynamics-and-Reconciliation.pdf

2 (Galmudug faces risks of renewed conflict due to elite rivalry and clan tensions) (International Crisis Group, 2023).

a particularly acute case of compounded fragility, where structural constraints intersect with intense local competition.

Displacement further intensifies these vulnerabilities. Galmudug hosts an estimated 395,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), reflecting the cumulative impact of conflict, drought, and livelihood disruption. Many IDPs reside in informal settlements with limited access to basic services, employment opportunities, and protection, increasing exposure to poverty, social exclusion, and insecurity. These conditions contribute to heightened vulnerability among displaced populations, particularly youth.[3]

Demographic pressures further compound these challenges. With over 80 percent of the population under the age of 35, demand for employment and services far exceeds available opportunities.[4] Youth unemployment remains high, and economic opportunities are limited, particularly in rural and peripheral areas. As reflected in field data, youth perceptions reinforce this reality: “No jobs, no future—most of us would take any work available.”

The political economy of Galmudug is characterized by limited domestic revenue generation, heavy reliance on federal transfers and external support, and a narrow economic base centered on pastoralism and informal trade. These livelihood systems are highly vulnerable to environmental shocks and market disruptions, constraining economic mobility and reducing the opportunity cost of participation in armed groups.[5]

Governance arrangements further reinforce patterns of exclusion. The 4.5 clan-based power-sharing system, while intended to ensure representation, often operates through elite bargaining mechanisms that limit access to political authority and resources for youth, women, and minority groups. Spatial inequalities compound these dynamics, with urban centers such as Galkayo and Dhuusamareb offering relatively greater access to services and opportunities, while rural and peripheral districts remain politically and economically marginalized.[6] Qualitative evidence from Key Informant Interviews (KII) supports this analysis. A women’s leader in Galkayo emphasized the generational dimension of exclusion, stating: Youth are excluded from 4.5 quotas—elders take all positions” (KII, women’s leader, Galkayo, March 21)

The security environment reflects the interaction of these structural and institutional constraints. Although government forces have made territorial gains, armed actors such as Al-Shabaab continue to operate areas including El Buur and Galhareri, where state presence remains limited

[3]Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development (MoPIED), Galmudug State of Somalia. (2024). Intentions survey of IDPs towards durable solutions in Galmudug State of Somalia. https://mop.gm.so/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Intentions-Survey-of-IDPs-towards-Durable-Solutions-in-Galmudug-state-of-Somalia-2024.pdf

4 Macrotrends. (2024). Somalia youth unemployment rate 1991–2024. https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/countries/som/somalia/youth-unemployment-rate

5 World Bank. (2024). Somalia: Recurrent Cost and Reform Financing Project III – Additional Financing (P181407).https://documents1.worldbank.org/crated/en/099022124084027361/txt/P1814071237865081906 01e4c53e2dde89.txt

6 Somali Dilaogue platform & Somali Public Agenda & Rift Valley Institute. (2023, May). The role of 4.5 in democratization and governance in Somalia: Implications and considerations for the way forward. https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/role-45-democratization-and-governance-somalia-implications-and-considerations-way-forward-may-2023

or absent, In such contexts, these actors often function as alternative governance providers, offering taxation systems and dispute resolution mechanisms that substitute for weak or absent state institutions. Local accounts indicate that such systems are sometimes perceived as more predictable than formal governance arrangements.[7]

In recently liberated areas, the absence of sustained governance and service delivery has further reinforced vulnerability. Evidence from field interviews suggests that where state presence fails to consolidate following military operations, youth may re-engage with armed actors as a means of securing income and protection. This highlights the fragility of post-conflict transitions and the risks associated with governance vacuums. Findings from Key Informant Interviews (KII) point to gaps in post-liberation recovery. A youth leader in Harardhere noted: "No services after liberation—youth re-join for income." (KII, youth leader, Harardhere, March 27, 2026).

Across Galmudug, these political, economic, and social dynamics interact to produce an uneven landscape of vulnerability shaped by governance performance, social organization, and local context. Youth in particular face constrained opportunities, exposure to insecurity, and limited access to formal institutions, positioning them at the intersection of these structural pressures.

Within this context, understanding youth radicalization requires moving beyond single-factor explanations and examining how broader structural conditions, governance dynamics, and social systems interact to shape pathways into and away from violence. This study builds on this premise by analyzing the drivers and dynamics of radicalization within Galmudug's specific political and socio-economic environment.

3. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

3.1 Conceptualizing Radicalization

Radicalization is understood in this study as a non-linear and context-dependent process through which individuals adopt beliefs and behaviors that legitimize the use of violence for political, social, or religious objectives. Rather than being driven by a single causal factor, radicalization emerges from the interaction of structural conditions, social processes, and individual experiences within fragile and conflict-affected environments.[8]

To enhance analytical clarity, this study distinguishes between determinants and drivers. Determinants refer to the underlying structural conditions that generate vulnerability—such as economic marginalization, political exclusion, weak governance, and insecurity. Drivers, by

7 European Union Agency for Asylum. (2025, May). Mapping of major clan conflicts/feuds. In Somalia: Country focus. https://www.euaa.europa.eu/coi/somalia/2025/country-focus/15-individuals-involved-blood-feudsclan-disputes-and-other-clan-issues/151-mapping-major-clan-conflictsfeuds

8 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2016). Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity: A development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/Discussion%20Paper%20-%20Preventing%20Violent%20Extremism%20by%20Promoting%20Inclusive%20%20Development.pdf

contrast, are the mechanisms through which these vulnerabilities are activated and translated into mobilization, including identity dynamics, opportunity structures, and ideological framing.

This conceptualization positions radicalization not as an automatic outcome of structural hardship, but as a mediated process, shaped by interactions between context, social structures, and individual agency.

3.2 Multi-Level Analytical Framework

Radicalization is analyzed through a multi-level framework encompassing macro, meso, and micro dynamics, which interact to shape both vulnerability and resilience.

At the macro level, fragility produces systemic conditions of insecurity through weak institutions, contested authority, and limited state presence.[9] Empirical evidence from field interviews indicates that in some districts, state reach remains highly constrained, creating governance vacuums in which non-state actors assume functional roles in security and service provision.

At the meso level, clan-based systems and local governance arrangement's structure access to resources, protection, and political participation. While these systems provide social order and identity, they also reproduce exclusion, particularly for youth lacking strong affiliation with dominant groups.[10] Field evidence consistently highlights that marginalized youth—especially from minority clans—face limited access to opportunities, increasing their susceptibility to recruitment.

At the **micro level,** individual trajectories are shaped by lived experiences, including exposure to violence, peer influence, and recruitment encounters.[11] Recruitment is often mediated through trusted social networks, particularly kinship and peer relationships, which reduce uncertainty and normalize participation.

The interaction across these levels produces self-reinforcing dynamics. Governance deficits generate economic exclusion and insecurity, which increase recruitment vulnerability while further weakening state authority. At the same time, social exclusion and conflict exposure normalize violence, lowering barriers to participation. Importantly, outcomes vary across contexts: areas with stronger governance presence and social cohesion exhibit greater resilience, while more fragile and marginalized areas remain highly vulnerable.

9 International Monetary Fund (IMF). (2026). List of IMF member countries with delays in completion of financial stability assessments. https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/087/2026/003/article-A001-en.xml

10 Hafez, M. M., & Mullins, C. (2015). The radicalization puzzle: A theoretical synthesis of empirical approaches to homegrown extremism. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 38(11), 958–975. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1057610X.2015.1051375

11 Menkhaus, K. (2014). State failure, state-building, and radicalization in Somalia. Enough Project. enoughproject.org

3.3 Theoretical Foundations

This study adopts an integrated theoretical framework combining grievance theory, rational choice (opportunity) models, social identity theory, and political economy approach to fragility. Together, these perspectives explain how structural inequalities, individual decision-making, and collective identities interact within Galmudug's fragile context.

Grievance theory highlights the role of perceived injustice in generating motivation for mobilization. In Galmudug, grievances are rooted in unequal access to political power, economic resources, and justice, often structured through clan-based governance systems. These grievances extend beyond material deprivation to include identity-based exclusion, particularly among youth marginalized from both formal institutions and traditional authority structures. Field evidence reinforces that prolonged exclusion—especially within the 4.5 political system—contributes to accumulated frustration and disengagement.[12]

However, grievance alone does not explain why individuals engage in violence. Rational choice and opportunity-based models explain how individuals respond strategically to these conditions. In contexts of high unemployment and limited livelihoods, participation in armed groups may represent a rational—though constrained—decision to secure income, protection, and social mobility.[13] Empirical data indicate that economic incentives often outweigh ideological considerations in initial recruitment decisions, with ideology becoming more relevant after engagement.

Social identity theory provides a mechanism through which structural conditions are translated into collective action. Clan affiliation plays a central role in shaping belonging and exclusion. Youth marginalized within these systems may seek alternative identities that provide recognition and purpose. Armed groups exploit these dynamics by embedding recruitment within existing social networks and offering alternative forms of identity and belonging. Conversely, cohesive clan structures and strong local leadership can act as protective factors, reducing recruitment vulnerability.[14]

Finally, political economy approaches to fragility situate these dynamics within broader patterns of weak state capacity and contested authority. Limited institutional reach creates governance vacuums in which non-state actors operate as alternative providers of security, justice, and economic regulation. In some areas, these actors are perceived as more predictable and accessible than formal institutions, reinforcing their legitimacy and recruitment capacity.[15]

Taken together, these theories demonstrate that radicalization emerges from the interaction of:

- grievances (motivation)

12 Botha, A., & Abdalla, M. (2020). Radicalisation and al-Shabaab recruitment in Somalia. Institute for Security Studies.
13 Abdalla, A. (2007). Africa and the growth of violent radicalization in the name of Islam: The need for a doctrine revision approach. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Africa-and-the-Growth-of-Violent-Radicalization-in-Abdalla/6ee3691332191972e46d9f285e16e3c49cdc0144
14 Mensah-Ankrah, C. (2022). The complexities of identity moratorium, radicalization and the terrorist personality. SSRN Electronic Journal. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4242832
15 Anten, L., Briscoe, I., & Mezzera, M. (2012). The political economy of state-building in situations of fragility and conflict: From analysis to strategy. Clingendael - Netherlands Institute of International Relations. https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20120100_cru_political_economy.pdf

- opportunities (feasibility)
- identity processes (mobilization)
- governance conditions (structural context)

rather than from any single factor in isolation.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative, systems-oriented research design grounded in political economy analysis to examine the drivers and pathways of youth radicalization in Galmudug State, Somalia. Radicalization is conceptualized as a multi-level and adaptive process, shaped by interactions across macro, meso, and micro levels, enabling analysis of both structural vulnerabilities and the mechanisms through which they translate into recruitment and sustained engagement.

4.2 Data Sources and Collection

Data collection was conducted in three sequential phases, integrating secondary and primary sources to ensure analytical depth and triangulation.

A desk-based analysis reviewed over 80 sources published between 2023 and 2026, including demographic surveys, labor market statistics, security datasets, and policy analyses. Sources were selected based on geographic relevance, institutional credibility, and recency, and were used to identify key drivers, structural dynamics, and preliminary analytical propositions.

Primary qualitative data were collected across four locations:

- Dhuusamareb
- Galkayo
- Harardhere
- Eyl Dheer

These locations were selected to capture variation in governance, security conditions, and socio-economic context.

The primary dataset consisted of:

15 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

4 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), each comprising 9 participants, Total sample size: n = 51

Participants included government officials, community leaders, youth representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. This structure ensured both depth (through KIIs) and breadth of perspectives (through FGDs). The data provide context-specific insights into governance deficits, economic conditions, social networks, and recruitment pathways.

A thematic synthesis was conducted to integrate findings across data sources. Emerging patterns were systematically validated against secondary evidence to ensure consistency and analytical rigor.

4.3 Analytical Approach

The study applies a mechanism-based and systems analytical approach, combining:

- Thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns
- Pathway analysis to trace non-linear routes into radicalization
- Systems analysis to examine feedback loops linking governance failure, social fragmentation, and ideological reinforcement

This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how structural conditions translate into sustained participation in armed groups.

4.4 Triangulation and Validity

The integration of data occurred at two levels:

- Design level: Secondary findings informed the development of primary data collection tools
- Analysis level: Primary insights were triangulated with secondary evidence to confirm patterns and explain divergences

This multi-layered triangulation strengthens the internal validity and robustness of the study. Cross-location comparisons further enhance reliability by capturing contextual variation.

4.5 Limitations

The study acknowledges several limitations:

- Restricted access to highly insecure or insurgent-controlled areas
- Potential response bias due to the sensitivity of the topic
- Context-specific findings that may limit generalizability
- Temporal scope limited to the March–April 2026 period

Despite these constraints, the combination of diverse data sources and analytical approaches provides a robust and contextually grounded analysis.

5. Findings: Drivers and Dynamics

5.1 Overview of Drivers

Youth radicalization in Galmudug is best understood as a systemic and adaptive process, emerging from the interaction of structural vulnerabilities, governance deficits, and socially mediated mechanisms of mobilization within a context of protracted fragility. Rather than being attributable to a single causal factor—such as ideology or economic deprivation—radicalization reflects the co-evolution of political economy conditions, identity dynamics, and recruitment strategies over time. Radicalization is a systemic outcome where economic exclusion, institutional weakness, and social marginalization converge. It is sustained through reinforcing feedback loops: governance failures drive economic exclusion, which in turn intensifies social fragmentation and increases susceptibility to recruitment. Armed actors such as Al-Shabaab strategically exploit these pre-existing vulnerabilities, embedding themselves within governance vacuums and economic gaps.

5.2 Social Drivers of Youth Radicalization in Galmudug

Social drivers of radicalization in Galmudug are best understood as part of a systemic and adaptive process, shaped by the interaction of structural vulnerabilities, governance deficits, and socially mediated mechanisms of mobilization within a context of protracted fragility. Radicalization is not attributable to a single causal factor such as ideology or economic deprivation; rather, it reflects the co-evolution of identity dynamics, local conflict systems, and recruitment strategies over time (Hussein Yusuf Ali, 2019).[16] Clan structures remain central in organizing access to resources, protection, and political representation, yet they also generate entrenched hierarchies of inclusion and exclusion. Marginalized groups particularly minority clans experience limited access to opportunities and protection, reinforcing grievances linked to competition over land, water, and territorial boundaries. Empirical findings indicate that approximately 68% of respondents associate heightened recruitment risk with clan-based marginalization, a pattern consistent with broader evidence that structural inequalities and exclusion significantly enhance the resilience of armed groups such as Al-Shabaab (Farah, Ouma, & Nyanhongo, 2025; Ingiriis, 2020).[17] In the Galmudug context, these dynamics are further intensified by intra-clan competition and contested authority structures, which reinforce exclusion and grievance formation (Mushtaq, 2019)[18]

The normalization of violence in Galmudug is closely linked to recurrent clan conflicts and entrenched cycles of retaliation, particularly in areas such as Abudwak, Hirale, and Galkayo. Prolonged exposure to conflict has embedded violence into social norms, where revenge killings are increasingly perceived as routine and legitimate. The June 2024 clashes between Abudwak and Hirale clans—resulting in over 55 fatalities—illustrate the intensity and persistence of these dynamics. A security actor in Dhuusamareb (KII, March 2026) observed that “revenge killings are routine—youth see armed life as a normal career path,” while focus group discussions in Galkayo (75% agreement) highlighted how militia recruitment accelerates during periods of clan conflict. The erosion of traditional mediation mechanisms, particularly following the decline of ASWJ-led interventions, combined with weak formal justice systems and widespread availability of small arms, has further entrenched violence as a primary means of dispute resolution. This aligns with broader research indicating that resource-based conflicts and clan militarization—especially under conditions of poverty and weak governance—sustain cycles of violence and instability (Bade, 2023).[19]

For youth, these dynamics produce profound social and developmental consequences, including trauma, disrupted education, and limited livelihood opportunities. In conflict-affected areas such

[16] Hussein Yusuf Ali. (2019). Youth radicalization: Causes, consequences and potential solutions. In M. Keating & M. Waldman (Eds.), War and peace in Somalia: National grievances, local conflict and Al-Shabaab (pp. 329–338). Oxford University Press.
[17] Okeyo, J., & Abdiwahab, A. (n.d.). Terrorist radicalization, recruitment, and indoctrination: A review of trends and patterns. Semantic Scholar. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/TERRORIST-RADICALIZATION%2C-RECRUITMENT%2C-AND-IN-A-Okeyo-Abdiwahab/88ecf9ae08c7be2d09dd32bf9042a8008dbf2b9a
[18] Najum Mushtaq. (2019). State-building amidst conflict: The urgency of local reconciliation. In Michael Keating & Matt Waldman (Eds.), War and peace in Somalia: National grievances, local conflict and Al-Shabaab (pp. 93–104). Oxford University Press. https://academic.oup.com/book/35091/chapter-abstract/299147002?redirectedFrom=fulltext
[19] Bade, Z. A. (2023). Understanding Somali conflict: Causes, consequences and strategies for peace-building. Journal of Culture, Society and Development. https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/DCS/article/view/55822

as Harardhere, El Dheer, El Buur, and Gatherer, the absence of consistent security and basic services constrains life choices and reinforces vulnerability. Engagement with armed actors is often driven by immediate survival needs rather than ideological commitment. A youth leader in Harardhere (KII, March 27, 2026) noted that "post-liberation, there are no services youth join for protection first, ideology later," a finding corroborated by FGD data from El Dheer, where approximately 75% of participants prioritized survival over ideology. These findings are consistent with research by the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (2025), which highlights how youth exclusion, lack of services, and limited economic opportunities contribute to increased susceptibility to recruitment. Moreover, exposure to violence and weak trust in institutions further amplify vulnerability, as demonstrated in studies linking trauma and social disconnection to support for political violence (Ellis et al., 2021).[20]

In parallel, youth are drawn into identity-based mobilization mediated through clan affiliation and social networks, where participation in armed groups provides belonging, protection, and social recognition. Recruitment processes are rarely individual or spontaneous; rather, they are facilitated through kinship ties, peer networks, and community relationships. Ethnographic research (Badurdeen, 2021) demonstrates that recruitment into Al-Shabaab is often mediated through trusted social connections,[21] while studies by Ellis et al. (2021) and Botha & Abdile (2014) emphasize the importance of collective identity and social attachment in mobilization processes. Local evidence reinforces this dynamic: focus group participants in Galkayo noted that "Hirale fighting recruits fastest youth join militias, then Al-Shabaab takes over." Armed groups strategically exploit these dynamics by embedding themselves within local conflicts, leveraging narratives of injustice and "defending the clan," and, in some cases, arming opposing factions while presenting themselves as neutral mediators. This reflects broader findings that Al-Shabaab systematically capitalizes on clan-based grievances and social fragmentation to sustain recruitment (Ingiriis, 2020).[22]

Internal displacement further intensifies vulnerability by disrupting social networks and weakening traditional protection systems. Displaced populations often experience loss of livelihoods, poor living conditions, and limited access to services, increasing socio-economic stress and insecurity. Evidence from KIIs and FGDs in Dhuusamareb indicates that displaced youth are particularly influenced by new peer networks formed during displacement, which can reshape identities and increase exposure to recruitment pathways. This aligns with findings from the Horncenter Dialogue for Peace, Governance and Development (2024), which highlight how fragile post-liberation governance, fragmented authority structures, and limited institutional capacity in areas

[20] Ellis, B. H., Sideridis, G., Miller, A. B., Abdi, S. M., & Winer, J. P. (2021). Trauma, trust in government, and social connection: How social context shapes attitudes related to the use of ideologically or politically motivated vio-lence. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 44(12), 1050–1067. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1616929

[21] Badurdeen, F. A. (2021). How do individuals join the Al-Shabaab? An ethnographic insight into recruitment models for the Al-Shabaab network in Kenya. African Security. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19392206.2021.1963926

[22] Ingiriis (2020) examines the socio-political and cultural dynamics influencing Al-Shabaab's recruitment. Ahmad, A., Bandula-Irwin, T., & Ibrahim, M. (2022). Who governs? State versus jihadist political order in Somalia. Journal of Eastern African Studies, 16(4), 1–24. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17531055.2022.2075817

such as Harardhere create environments in which armed actors can fill governance and security gaps.

The cumulative effect of these dynamics is a progressive erosion of social cohesion, reflected in declining trust between clans, fragmentation of communities, and weakening of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. While cohesive clan systems particularly in urban centers such as Galkayo and Dhuusamareb can provide informal governance and social control that mitigate recruitment risks, these mechanisms are increasingly strained in peripheral and conflict-affected areas. As social cohesion deteriorates, the capacity of communities to regulate behavior, mediate disputes, and prevent youth recruitment diminishes.[23]

These factors interact in a non-linear and context-dependent system, where not all youth exposed to similar structural conditions become radicalized. Variations in governance performance, clan cohesion, access to education, and the strength of community networks shape both vulnerability and resilience. Nevertheless, a consistent pathway can be identified: structural exclusion and inequality generate grievances; grievances escalate into clan conflict; repeated conflict normalizes violence; and normalized violence creates entry points for recruitment. Social networks then translate these conditions into mobilization, while armed groups exploit and reinforce the cycle. Empirical evidence where approximately 85% of participants identified a direct linkage between governance failure, social exclusion, and recruitment—underscores the systemic nature of radicalization in Galmudug.

Overall, radicalization in Galmudug reflects the dynamic interaction of social structures, lived experiences, and adaptive recruitment strategies, where exclusion, violence, and insecurity reinforce one another over time, producing context-specific pathways into extremism.

5.3 Political and Governance Drivers of Youth Radicalization in Galmudug

Political and governance drivers of radicalization in Galmudug are best understood as part of a systemic and adaptive process shaped by the interaction between political exclusion, institutional performance deficits, and contested legitimacy within a fragile governance environment. Radicalization emerges not simply from the absence of authority,[24] but from how authority is structured, accessed, and experienced at the local level. Evidence from KIIs and FGDs indicates that youth vulnerability increases where political systems restrict access to opportunity and governance systems fail to deliver services or establish credible authority.

Political exclusion constitutes a central driver, particularly through the concentration of power within clan-based and elite-mediated governance structures. In Dhusamareeb, KIIs with local officials highlight that political decision-making is largely dominated by elders and established elites, limiting meaningful youth participation. This exclusion extends beyond representation into

[23] Roland Marchal. (2019). Rivals in governance: Civil activities of Al-Shabaab. In M. Keating & M. Waldman (Eds.), War and peace in Somalia: National grievances, local conflict and Al-Shabaab (pp. 281–300). Oxford University Press. https://academic.oup.com/book/35091/chapter-abstract/299150223?redirectedFrom=fulltext

[24] Zamzam Foundation. (2020). Gendered context analysis template. https://zamzamsom.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Gender-context.pdf

access to economic opportunities, where employment and public positions are frequently mediated through informal networks. FGDs with youth in Galkayo reinforce this dynamic, with participants emphasizing that "opportunities depend on who you know, not what you know," indicating that merit-based pathways are often secondary to clan affiliation and personal connections.

This politicization of opportunity structures produces acute grievances, particularly among educated youth. In Galkayo, university graduates participating in FGDs reported that despite completing higher education, they remain excluded from employment unless they are connected to influential networks. Similarly, KIIs in Dhusamareeb confirm that recruitment into public sector roles and local administrative positions is frequently influenced by patronage rather than competence. These patterns align with broader findings that exclusionary governance systems and elite capture reinforce structural inequalities and limit inclusive participation.

In more peripheral areas such as Harardhere, political exclusion is experienced differently but with similar outcomes. KIIs with youth leaders indicate that limited state presence translates into minimal political engagement opportunities, leaving youth disconnected from both formal governance and decision-making processes. In Eyl Dheer, FGD participants emphasized that youth without strong clan backing or political connections are effectively excluded from both employment and local influence, reinforcing perceptions of systemic marginalization. In this context, recruitment becomes indirectly politicized, as youth seek alternative pathways to status, income, and recognition outside formal systems. Armed groups exploit these conditions by presenting themselves as structures where advancement is less constrained by existing patronage hierarchies, consistent with research highlighting the role of exclusion and inequality in recruitment dynamics (Botha & Abdile, 2014; Ingiriis, 2020).[25]

Governance drivers operate alongside these political dynamics, particularly through persistent service delivery deficits and widening legitimacy gaps, both of which shape how youth experience the state in everyday life. In peripheral and conflict-affected districts such as Harardhere, FGDs consistently indicate that access to basic services including healthcare, education, and infrastructure is severely limited, with participants describing government presence as minimal or irregular.[26] A KII with a local administrator in Harardhere noted that "services are almost absent, and communities rely on alternatives," reflecting weak institutional reach. Similar patterns emerge in Eyl Dheer, where KIIs confirm that the absence of consistent service delivery forces communities to depend on informal or non-state systems for dispute resolution and economic activity.

Service delivery deficits compound these legitimacy gaps, reflecting institutional incapacity to penetrate daily life in conflict-affected areas. The Galmudug Health and Demographic Survey (GMHDS) highlights the scale of these constraints, with 66% of women receiving no antenatal care, only 9% of children aged 11–23 months fully vaccinated, electricity access at 29%, and birth

[25] Botha, A., & Abdile, M. (2014). Radicalisation and al-Shabaab recruitment in Somalia. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/184703/Paper266.pdf

[26] International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA). (n.d.). From substate gov-ernance to constitution-building at the centre: A view from Somalia. https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/html/substate-governance-constitution-building-centre-view-somalia

registration at just 3.5%.[27] These deficits are not only about limited availability but also uneven distribution, as relatively better access in urban centers such as Dhusamareeb and Galkayo contrasts sharply with conditions in rural districts. FGDs across Harardhere and Eyl Dheer reinforce that such disparities deepen perceptions of neglect, particularly among youth who see limited state investment in their communities.

These conditions directly contribute to widening legitimacy gaps, as communities evaluate authority based on performance rather than formal status. KIIs across locations indicate that actors who provide predictable services—especially security and dispute resolution—are perceived as more legitimate. In this context, Al-Shabaab is able to exploit governance vacuums by offering forms of proto-governance, including taxation systems and dispute resolution mechanisms that are often perceived as more accessible and consistent than state institutions. As noted in KIIs from Eyl Dheer, communities frequently turn to such systems in the absence of functioning formal structures, reinforcing reliance on alternative authorities. This aligns with broader evidence that armed groups embed themselves within local governance systems by leveraging institutional weaknesses and legitimacy gaps (Ahmad et al., 2022; Marchal, 2019; Barrett, 2019).[28]

Additional governance challenges further reinforce these dynamics. Weak and inaccessible justice systems, limited territorial reach, and the failure to consolidate governance following military operations contribute to persistent insecurity. In Harardhere, KIIs indicate that post-liberation governance gaps have left communities without reliable services or administrative support, increasing frustration among youth. In Eyl Dheer, FGDs reveal that youth facing prolonged economic hardship and lack of institutional support are more likely to engage with armed groups as a survival strategy. These conditions create enabling environments in which Al-Shabaab is able to re-establish influence by exploiting governance vacuums, offering income, protection, and dispute resolution mechanisms where state institutions remain weak or absent. This reflects broader evidence that fragile post-conflict governance environments provide opportunities for armed groups to sustain recruitment and local control (Horncenter Dialogue, 2025).[29]

The interaction between these governance deficits and political exclusion produces a reinforcing system. Limited-service delivery weakens state legitimacy, while exclusion from political and economic opportunities deepens grievances. (UNDP, 2023; Hussein Yusuf Ali, 2019).[30] In Dhusamareeb, KIIs suggest that stronger clan cohesion can mitigate recruitment pressures, while in Harardhere and Eyl Dheer, weaker governance and limited social protection structures increase

[27] Somalia National Bureau of Statistics. (2021). *Somali Health and Demographic Survey – Galmudug report*. https://nbs.gov.so/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/SHDS-Galmudug-Report-2020-.pdf

[28] Barrett, R. (2019). Can Al-Shabaab deliver? Reality and rhetoric in the struggle for power. In M. Keating & M. Waldman (Eds.), War and peace in Somalia: National grievances, local conflict and Al-Shabaab (pp. 359–368). Oxford University Press.

[29] Horncenter Dialogue. (2025). Analyzing security dynamics, governance structures, and conflict resolution in Harardhere District, Somalia. https://horncenter.so/analyzing-security-dynamics-governance-structures-and-conflict-resolution-in-harardhere-district-somalia-2/

[30] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2016). Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity: A development response to addressing radicaliza-tion and violent extremism. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/Discussion%20Paper%20-%20Preventing%20Violent%20Extremism%20by%20Promoting%20Inclusive%20%20Development.pdf

vulnerability. FGDs across locations confirm that youth navigate a system where access to opportunity is politicized, services are limited, and legitimacy is contested, increasing the appeal of alternative actors who offer income, protection, and recognition.

Overall, political and governance drivers in Galmudug reflect a crisis of inclusion, performance, and legitimacy. The politicization of opportunity structures, combined with persistent service delivery deficits and legitimacy gaps, creates conditions in which youth disengage from formal systems and seek alternatives that provide immediate benefits and a sense of belonging. Radicalization therefore emerges as a pragmatic and context-driven response to systemic exclusion and institutional failure, reinforcing the need for integrated governance and political reforms that address both access to opportunity and the quality-of-service delivery.

5.4 Economic Drivers of Youth Radicalization in Galmudug

Economic marginalization constitutes a central pathway through which governance deficits translate into youth radicalization in Galmudug, particularly where formal institutions are unable to generate employment or sustain viable livelihoods. With over 80 percent of the population under the age of 35, youth unemployment estimated at 33.9 percent among those aged 15–24 and rising to nearly 70 percent among those under 35, and approximately 55 percent of the population living below the poverty line, structural pressure on the economy is severe. In this context,[31] limited livelihood opportunities significantly reduce the opportunity cost of joining armed groups, rendering participation a rational though constrained response to economic exclusion.[32]

Moreover, persistent unemployment contributes not only to economic hardship but also to social and behavioral vulnerabilities among youth. Prolonged idleness and lack of purpose increase the likelihood of engagement in harmful coping mechanisms, including drug addiction and the widespread consumption of khat (qaad). These behaviors can erode mental health, reduce productivity, and weaken social cohesion, further marginalizing already vulnerable individuals. In such conditions, affected youth may become more susceptible to manipulation, exploitation, and recruitment by armed groups, as substance dependency and social disconnection diminish their resilience and decision-making capacity.

Primary data strongly reinforces the centrality of these economic drivers. In Galkayo, KII respondents emphasized that “many youths join because they have no income or opportunities, they look for any way to survive,” while in Dhusamareeb, participants noted that unemployment leaves youth “idle and vulnerable to any group offering support.” These findings demonstrate that recruitment is often driven less by ideological commitment and more by immediate economic necessity, aligning with broader evidence that livelihood deprivation is a primary driver of engagement in violent groups.

31 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Somalia. (n.d.). Somali adolescents and youth: Boom or gloom? https://somalia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Youth%20Report.pdf

32 Okeyo, J., & Abdiwahab, A. (n.d.). Terrorist radicalization, recruitment, and indoctrination: A review of trends and patterns. Semantic Scholar. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/TERRORIST-RADICALIZATION%2C-RECRUITMENT%2C-AND-IN-A-Okeyo-Abdiwahab/88ecf9ae08c7be2d09dd32bf9042a8008dbf2b9a

These structural pressures are further intensified by limited economic diversification and uneven development across districts. Livelihood opportunities are largely confined to informal trade, pastoralism, or migration, all of which are highly vulnerable to insecurity, climate shocks, and market disruptions. In more peripheral areas such as Harardhere and Eyl Dheer, FGDs consistently highlight the absence of stable income sources, with participants noting that "there are no jobs here—youth depend on small activities or leave, and those who stay are easily influenced." This spatial inequality reinforces patterns of relative deprivation, where youth in marginalized areas face higher exposure to recruitment environments due to the combined effects of economic exclusion and weak institutional presence.

Within this context, Al-Shabaab operates not only as an armed actor but as an alternative economic system, offering income, protection, and predictable resource flows in areas where formal markets and state institutions fail.[33] By providing salaries, taxation systems, and economic opportunities linked to its governance structures, the group effectively lowers barriers to entry for economically marginalized youth. This reinforces the understanding that recruitment is often embedded within broader livelihood strategies rather than purely ideological alignment.

Diaspora engagement adds an essential transnational layer to Somalia's vulnerability—both easing economic hardship and reproducing it. In Somalia, remittances make up a substantial portion of household income. The Somali diaspora—numbering over 3 million people (about 14% of the population)—sends roughly $1.3 billion per year, equivalent to around 25–45% of the national economy, exceeding the combined scale of humanitarian aid, development assistance, and foreign direct investment. These transfers often operate as an informal form of social protection, especially in areas where public services and employment prospects are scarce.[34]

For many families, remittances lessen day-to-day financial pressures and can reduce the risk of recruitment into harmful or violent networks. Yet diaspora support is distributed unevenly, depending on family ties, migration pathways, and clan affiliation. Youth lacking these connections are more likely to experience relative deprivation because they do not benefit from alternative income sources. As a result, the uneven flow of resources strengthens local inequalities, fuels feelings of systemic exclusion, and thereby increases vulnerability to recruitment pathways.

Business actors play a critical role in shaping recruitment environments within fragile and contested settings.[35] In areas affected by insurgent presence, local businesses frequently provide financial support to Al Shabaab through taxation, zakat, or informal protection payments. Although often framed as religious or obligatory contributions, these payments are primarily driven by pragmatic considerations, including the need to ensure business continuity, secure supply chains,

33 Horncenter Dialogue. (2025). Analyzing security dynamics, governance structures, and conflict resolution in Harardhere District, Somalia. https://horncenter.so/analyzing-security-dynamics-governance-structures-and-conflict-resolution-in-harardhere-district-somalia-2/

34 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2009). Somalia's missing million.; UNDP. (2015). Cash and compassion. https://www.undp.org/somalia/publications/somalias-missing-million-somali-diaspora-and-its-role-development-2009

35 Botha, A., & Abdile, M. (2014). Radicalisation and al-Shabaab recruitment in Somalia. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/184703/Paper266.pdf

and avoid coercion.[36] As noted by a trader in Eyl Dheer, "businesses pay because they have no alternative without it, they cannot operate safely" (KII, Eyl Dheer). These financial flows contribute to sustaining the operational capacity of armed groups, enabling them to maintain governance functions, support logistical networks, and expand recruitment efforts. Beyond financial support, business networks may also play a more direct role by encouraging economically marginalized youth to engage with armed groups as an alternative livelihood, thereby reinforcing the importance of economic pull factors in recruitment processes.[37]

These dynamics demonstrate that radicalization in Galmudug is deeply embedded within a broader political economy characterized by structural marginalization, uneven resource distribution, and fragile market systems. Economic vulnerability does not operate in isolation but interacts with governance deficits and social exclusion to produce cumulative and reinforcing risks. In this environment, armed groups are able to position themselves as viable economic alternatives, competing with the state not only in security provision but also in livelihood opportunities. As a result, recruitment pathways remain adaptive and resilient, underscoring the need to address not only unemployment, but the wider economic systems and inequalities that sustain vulnerability to radicalization.

5.5 Ideological Drivers of Radicalization in Galmudug

Ideological drivers in Galmudug do not primarily initiate youth radicalization but function as adaptive and reinforcing mechanisms that sustain engagement by transforming structural grievances into morally justified violence. In contexts characterized by weak rule-of-law institutions, limited access to justice, and governance deficits, youth experience exclusion, injustice, and institutional distrust, often compounded by low legal and civic awareness. These conditions create fertile ground for ideological framing, where pre-existing grievances—linked to clan marginalization, economic hardship, and lack of accountability—are reinterpreted as legitimate grounds for violent action. As one youth participant in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD, Galkayo, 2026) noted, "When justice does not work, people look for other systems that give answers—even if they are harsh." Similarly, a Key Informant Interview (KII, Harardhere, 2026) emphasized that "most youth join for survival first, but later they are told it is a religious duty," reinforcing evidence that ideology emerges post-recruitment as a legitimizing force rather than a primary driver.

Salafi-jihadist narratives are strategically localized, portraying state institutions as corrupt or illegitimate while aligning with specific community-level injustices, thereby converting pragmatic recruitment into sustained ideological commitment. Historically, actors such as Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a (ASWJ) played a critical countervailing role in shaping religious legitimacy and social order. From the battles in Guriel (2008) through the campaigns in Dhusamareb (2009–2014),

36 CTC West Point. (2017). Understanding drivers of violent extremism: Al-Shabaab and Somali youth. https://ctc.westpoint.edu/understanding-drivers-of-violent-extremism-the-case-of-al-shabab-and-somali-youth/
37 SIDRA Institute. (2020). Youth radicalization in Somalia. https://sidrainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/YOUTH-RADICALIZATION-IN-SOMALIA.pdf

ASWJ's resistance was both territorial and ideological, aimed at preventing the institutionalization of extremist interpretations of Islam. By embedding its legitimacy within local belief systems and religious practices, ASWJ disrupted Al-Shabaab's ability to monopolize ideological narratives. However, following its decline after 2021, gaps in religious authority and governance re-emerged, enabling extremist actors to expand their influence. As a community elder (KII, Galkayo, 2026) observed, "after ASWJ weakened, there was no strong voice to counter extreme interpretations."

These narratives are further reinforced through narrative amplification, disseminated via mosques, informal networks, and digital platforms, particularly in peripheral areas where state presence and counter-narratives remain weak. Limited awareness increases susceptibility, as youth often lack the capacity to critically assess competing messages; as one FGD participant in El Dheer stated, "they explain our problems as part of a bigger injustice, and that makes people believe them." From a systems perspective, these dynamics operate through reinforcing feedback loops in which governance deficits and experiences of injustice generate grievances, ideological narratives legitimize and stabilize participation, and sustained engagement further weakens institutional legitimacy and social cohesion. Over time, youth who initially engage for pragmatic reasons internalize these narratives—"once someone stays, they start to believe it fully" (KII, elder, Galkayo, 2026)—reducing the likelihood of disengagement. Thus, ideology functions as a force multiplier that connects rule-of-law gaps, injustice, and limited awareness into durable and self-reinforcing pathways of youth radicalization in Galmudug.

6. Recommendations: Addressing Multi-Dimensional Drivers of Radicalization

Addressing youth radicalization in Galmudug requires integrated, system-oriented interventions targeting both immediate drivers and reinforcing structural feedback loops. The following priority actions are organized across four domains:

6.1 Social Drivers: Dialogue, Cohesion, and Community Protection Systems

- Institutionalize inclusive dialogue platforms at district level, facilitating sustained inter- and intra-clan engagement on grievances (land, resources, exclusion, revenge cycles), with participation of youth, women, minority clans, IDPs, religious leaders, and authorities.
- Conduct regular conflict and social cohesion assessments (conflict mapping, social network analysis, vulnerability profiling) to inform adaptive, evidence-based programming and early warning systems.
- Strengthen hybrid conflict resolution systems by integrating elders, religious leaders, and formal justice actors, supported through training in mediation, reconciliation, and restorative justice.
- Promote inclusive participation and reduce identity-based exclusion through structured engagement of marginalized groups in governance, peace processes, and resource decision-making.
- Implement youth-centered peacebuilding initiatives, including peer networks, community dialogue programs, and engagement of former associates to disrupt recruitment pathways.

- Integrate trauma-informed psychosocial support within community programming to address normalization of violence, social disconnection, and conflict-related trauma.

6.2 Political and Governance Drivers: Inclusion, Service Delivery, and Legitimacy

- Promote inclusive governance reforms ensuring transparent, merit-based access to political and administrative roles beyond elite-mediated clan systems.
- Strengthen equitable service delivery in peripheral areas (health, education, water, infrastructure) to address spatial inequalities and perceptions of neglect.
- Close post-liberation governance gaps through integrated stabilization packages combining security, service delivery, and local administration.
- Expand access to justice systems, including mobile courts, legal aid, and community-based mechanisms to reduce reliance on non-state actors.
- Rebuild state legitimacy through performance, emphasizing accountability, responsiveness, and consistent service provision.

6.3 Economic Drivers: Livelihoods, Resilience, and Risk Reduction

- Scale up targeted youth employment programs (vocational training, apprenticeships, cash-for-work, enterprise development) in high-risk districts.
- Promote economic diversification and local value chains (fisheries, agriculture, renewable energy, trade) to reduce vulnerability to shocks.
- Integrate behavioral risk prevention, including substance abuse (drug addiction and khat/qaad consumption), within livelihood and youth engagement programs.
- Leverage diaspora investment for inclusive economic development, reducing inequalities in access to financial support.
- Strengthen oversight of informal economic systems to reduce coercive payments and financial flows sustaining armed groups.

6.4 Ideological Drivers: Narrative Engagement and Preventive Awareness

- Develop locally grounded counter-narratives through credible religious actors addressing grievances and challenging extremist interpretations.
- Rebuild religious legitimacy, drawing on lessons from Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) to strengthen moderate alternatives.
- Enhance civic, media, and religious literacy among youth to improve critical engagement with ideological messaging.
- Disrupt narrative dissemination channels across mosques, informal education spaces, and digital platforms while promoting trusted alternatives.
- Integrate ideological responses within broader interventions, recognizing ideology as a reinforcing—not primary—driver.

7. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that youth radicalization in Galmudug is not the result of a single causal factor, but rather a systemic and adaptive process emerging from the interaction of social, political, economic, and ideological dynamics within a context of protracted fragility.

The findings show that structural conditions—particularly governance deficits, political exclusion, and economic marginalization—constitute the primary drivers of vulnerability, shaping the environment within which recruitment becomes possible. Social dynamics, including clan-based exclusion, identity fragmentation, and the normalization of violence, further mediate these vulnerabilities by creating pathways through which grievances are translated into mobilization.

Importantly, the study finds that ideology does not act as an initial trigger, but rather as a reinforcing mechanism that legitimizes and sustains engagement over time. Through adaptive and localized narratives, extremist actors reframe lived experiences of injustice, exclusion, and insecurity into morally justified participation, thereby transforming pragmatic decisions into enduring commitment.

The analysis further highlights that radicalization operates through non-linear and context-specific pathways, shaped by local governance performance, social cohesion, and exposure to conflict. Spatial variation is significant: relatively stable urban areas demonstrate greater resilience, while peripheral and contested districts—such as Harardhere and El Dheer—exhibit heightened vulnerability due to governance gaps, limited services, and weak social protection systems.

Crucially, the study advances a systems-based understanding of radicalization, emphasizing the role of reinforcing feedback loops. Governance failure contributes to economic exclusion; economic exclusion intensifies social fragmentation; social fragmentation increases susceptibility to recruitment; and ideological narratives reinforce and sustain participation. These interconnected dynamics produce a self-reinforcing cycle of vulnerability and mobilization.

The implications for policy and practice are clear. Security-centered approaches alone are insufficient to address radicalization in Galmudug. Effective responses must adopt integrated, multi-sectoral strategies that simultaneously:

- strengthen inclusive governance and service delivery,
- expand equitable economic opportunities,
- rebuild social cohesion and conflict resolution systems, and
- counter ideological narratives through credible, locally grounded alternatives.

Ultimately, reducing youth radicalization requires rebuilding trust between the state and society, addressing not only immediate drivers but also the broader political economy conditions that sustain fragility. Without such systemic and sustained interventions, recruitment pathways are likely to remain adaptive, resilient, and deeply embedded within local contexts.

This study contributes to both theory and practice by offering a contextually grounded, systems-oriented framework for understanding radicalization in fragile settings. It provides an evidence-based foundation for designing more effective, coordinated, and sustainable interventions in Galmudug and comparable environments.

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