

# The Role of Small Fisheries in Economic Growth: A Case Study Challenges and Opportunities of Mogadishu, Somalia

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**Abstract:** *This research examines the role of small fisheries in economic growth in Mogadishu, Somalia, pointing out their potential contribution within continuing challenges whereas the specified Somalia's extensive coastline and reliance on fisheries for food security and employment, understanding this sector is important for effective policy formulation and economic development. The study addresses the question on how do small fisheries in Mogadishu contribute to economic growth, and what challenges and opportunities do fisheries present for local communities? The main objective is to assess the economic impact of small fisheries, identifying main challenges and opportunities for growth and sustainability. Additionally, employing a methods approach, the research data from surveys of local fishers with qualitative interviews of stakeholders, providing a comprehensive understanding of the sector's dynamics. Findings indicate that small fisheries significantly contribute to local employment and food security, yet face challenges such as overfishing, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of market access. Opportunities for growth include sustainable fishing practices and improved supply chain management. The results emphasize the importance of supporting small fisheries as a means of enhancing economic growth in Mogadishu, suggesting that policymakers focus on developing infrastructure, promoting sustainability, and facilitating market access to maximize the sector's potential, on focusing these issues can lead to improved livelihoods and economic resilience in the region.*

**Keywords:** Small Fisheries, Economic Growth, Mogadishu, Seafood Industry, Sustainable Fishing, Employment Opportunities.

## 1. Introduction

The fisheries sector plays a vibrant role in the economic landscape of Somalia, particularly in coastal cities like Mogadishu along a coastline stretching over 3,300 kilometers, Somalia possesses one of the richest marine ecosystems in the world, whereas the small fisheries in this region are important not only for local food security but also for providing livelihoods to thousands of families, however, despite the significant potential of this sector, it faces numerous challenges that hinder its growth and sustainability. Furthermore, **the author** proposed that a number of problems, such as overfishing, poor infrastructure, and restricted market accessibility, affect Mogadishu's small fisheries of these problems are made worse by environmental factors and political unpredictability, which makes resource management and workable practices more difficult. The author goes on effective fisheries management is even more important as the population grows and the demand for fish as a main source of protein rises. This article aims to explore the contributions of small fisheries to the local economy, assess the challenges they face, and highlight potential strategies for enhancing their sustainability, through examining these factors, the study seeks to inform policymakers, stakeholders, and communities about the importance of supporting small fisheries as a means of fostering economic resilience and improving livelihoods in the region. It is hoped that to give emphasis to the need for integrated policies that consider both environmental and economic factors, many stakeholders will contribute to the broader discussion on workable development in Somalia. Eventually, in influencing the potential of small fisheries, Mogadishu will pave the way for a more viable and prosperous future.

## 1.1 Background

The small fisheries sector in Mogadishu, Somalia, is a critical component of the local economy, providing essential livelihoods and contributing significantly to food security. With a coastline of over 3,300 kilometers and an extensive Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), Somalia is endowed with rich marine resources that, if managed effectively, could foster substantial economic growth and development. Historically, prior to the civil conflict in the early 1990s, the fisheries sector contributed approximately 2% to Somalia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), underscoring its importance to the national economy (Yahye Ismail Mohamed and Fridah Simba, 2016). **Additionally, according to the author**, thousands of people in Mogadishu fish skilled craftspeople who use traditional ways to make fishing material, making fishing a significant source of income for many families. In addition to creating job opportunities, this industry helps people who might not have access to other sources of income whereas small fisheries have the potential to be important to flexibility and economic recovery in the face of persistent difficulties, according to recent studies. As source of number of stakeholder and local fisheries believes that even with these challenges, there are considerable opportunities for improving the role of small fisheries in Mogadishu's economic landscape. There are additional opinions that fish productivity and market accessibility be able greatly increased by using workable fishing methods and enhancing infrastructure. **The author goes on to say** that by encouraging community involvement and funding capacity - building programs, Mogadishu possibly empower local fishermen and advance equitable resource management, in tackling these issues and taking advantage of the opportunities that are available, Mogadishu certainly increase the contribution of small fisheries to its economic development. Nonetheless, **the**

source fisheries artisans and other interested parties noted that the small fisheries industry has a number of challenges, such as Ineffective governance and political unrest have made it extremely difficult to put in place the legal frameworks required for sustainable fishing methods. **The author came to the conclusion** that major obstacles to expansion are caused by problems like overfishing, illegal, unreported assume dumping contaminated materials that harm fishing, and inadequate infrastructure, and the inability of many fishermen to access modern fishing gear and markets further limits their capacity to effectively compete. In Mogadishu's corridor has modest fishing industry with lot of room to grow economically, but in order to take advantage of chances for workable development and overcome current obstacles, it needs focused interventions.

## 2. Literature Review

Small fisheries in Mogadishu, Somalia, play a crucial role in the local economy by providing employment and food security, historically contributing about 2% to the national GDP before the civil conflict. However, the sector faces significant challenges, including political instability, ineffective governance, overfishing, illegal fishing practices, and inadequate infrastructure. In the face of these issues, there are opportunities for growth through the implementation of sustainable fishing practices, improved infrastructure for better market access, and investment in capacity - building initiatives, on focusing these challenges effectively can enhance the contribution of small fisheries to the economy and improve livelihoods in the region. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO 2021)

### 2.1 Small Fisheries in Mogadishu

In Mogadishu, Somalia, small fisheries play a vital role in the local economy by generating income and ensuring food security is having vital source of income and survival for thousands of people, fishing is made possible by the city's long coastline and access to many marine resources. Prior to the civil war, the fishing industry made up around small percentage of the country's GDP, suggesting its historical significance. In addition to insufficient fishermen's livelihoods, this industry generates employment in associated sectors including distribution and processing. (Mungai et al., 2019; Msalilwa, 2021). Even with their importance, small fisheries in Mogadishu face numerous challenges that blocks their potential among other related Administrative instability, marked by continuing conflicts and weak governance, frustrates the development of effective regulatory frameworks necessary for sustainable fishing practices. Additionally, overfishing and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing threaten fish stocks, compromising their long - term viability. Furthermore, infrastructure deficits, including limited access to markets and inadequate modern fishing equipment, constrain growth and competitiveness within the sector (Hassan & Gichinga, 2018). Focusing these challenges is crucial for enhancing the sustainability and economic contribution of small fisheries in the county. There are significant opportunities to enhance the role of small fisheries in Mogadishu, which can play a vital part in addressing the challenges they face. Implementing sustainable fishing practices can increase production and ensure the longevity of

marine resources, fostering resilience within the sector. Additionally, improving infrastructure will facilitate better market access for local fishers, enabling them to compete more effectively and expand their reach. Furthermore, investing in training and capacity - building initiatives can empower communities, promoting equitable resource management and strengthening their ability to adapt to changing conditions. In summary, (Elena M. Finkbeiner, 2015; Crona et al., 2015). while small fisheries in Mogadishu encounter substantial challenges, targeted interventions in sustainable practices, infrastructure development, and community empowerment can solve their potential for economic growth and improved livelihoods.

### 2.2 Economic Growth in Small Fisheries of Mogadishu

Economic growth in the small fisheries sector of Mogadishu, Somalia, is vital for enhancing local livelihoods and contributing to overall national development (World Bank, 2023). . This sector not only provides direct employment to thousands of fishers but also supports ancillary industries such as processing, distribution, and retail (FAO, Year). Through influencing the rich marine resources available along the coastline, small fisheries can significantly impact food security and poverty alleviation in the region. Main drivers of economic growth include adopting sustainable fishing practices, which can lead to increased fish stocks and long - term viability, ensuring a steady supply for local markets and beyond (Somalia National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Additionally, upgrading landing sites, transportation networks, and market facilities can improve access to markets, reduce post - harvest losses, and enhance the profitability of fishers ((UNDP, 2023). . Expanding into new markets, both domestic and international, can provide fishers with better prices for their products and reduce dependency on local demand. Investing in training and capacity - building initiatives can empower communities to manage resources more effectively, fostering resilience against economic shocks and environmental changes (World Bank, 2023). In conclusion, the small fisheries sector in Mogadishu possesses significant potential for economic growth, driven by sustainable practices, infrastructure improvements, and community empowerment. Through focusing existing challenges and seizing these opportunities, the sector can play a transformative role in the local economy and provide a foundation for future resilience. **The author came to the assumption** that Mogadishu's small fisheries industry has a great deal of room to grow economically thanks to sustainable practices, better infrastructure, and community empowerment through concentrating on current issues and taking advantage of these chances, the industry can revolutionize the local economy and lay the groundwork for future resilience.

### 2.3 Mogadishu

Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, is a vibrant coastal city situated along the Indian Ocean this is known for its rich history and cultural heritage, it has been a significant trading center for centuries. The city claims a diverse population, brilliant various ethnicities and cultures, contributing to its dynamic social fabric. Mogadishu characteristics of mixture of modern architecture and historical sites, including ancient mosques and colonial - era buildings. The coastline is marked

by beautiful beaches, such as Lido Beach and Jazeera Beach, which are popular for both locals and visitors. The city's markets, like the Bakara Market, are bustling with activity, offering everything from fresh produce to handmade crafts.

Even though its beauty and potential, Mogadishu has faced challenges, including political instability and security issues. However, in recent years, efforts have been made to rebuild and develop the city, leading to improvements in infrastructure and economic opportunities. The small fisheries sector plays a crucial role in this growth, providing livelihoods and contributing to food security in the region. At the end Mogadishu is a city of resilience and hope, with a unique mixture of history, culture, and potential for future development. Additionally, upgrading landing sites, transportation networks, and market facilities can improve access to markets, reduce post-harvest losses, and enhance the profitability of fishers (UNDP, 2023). Expanding into new markets, both domestic and international, can provide fishers with better prices for their products and reduce dependency on local demand. Investing in training and capacity-building initiatives can empower communities to manage resources more effectively, fostering resilience against economic shocks and environmental changes (World Bank, 2023). I believe in conclusion; Mogadishu's small fisheries industry has a lot of room to grow economically along with the help of workable practices, better infrastructure, and community empowerment, the industry certainly focus on current issues and take advantage of these opportunities to transform the local economy and lay the groundwork for future resilience.

#### 2.4 Seafood Industry of Mogadishu.

The seafood industry in Mogadishu, Somalia, plays a important role in the local economy, influencing the city's strategic coastal location along the Indian Ocean whereas this industry primarily consists of artisanal fisheries, where small-scale fishermen use traditional methods to catch various species such as tuna, snapper, and sardines. Moreover, this traditional fisheries involving fishing households (as opposed to commercial companies), using relatively small amount of capital and energy, relatively small fishing vessels (if any), making short fishing trips, close to shore, mainly for local consumption. **According to the author's field assessment** and the source of traditional fishermen, some commercial fishing operations target high-value species for export, although there is room for expansion in coastal areas (Ali fisherman, 2024). Since fish is a major source of protein for the local population, **the author goes on to say that the industry provides thousands of jobs and greatly contributes to food security.** Nevertheless, the industry faces a number of difficulties, such as overfishing, which jeopardizes fish stocks, and infrastructure deficiencies that restrict access to markets and processing facilities. there are additional element that the author observed during his field evaluation on the basis of Environmental factors, such as pollution and climate change, further harm marine ecosystems, while continuous security worries disrupt fishing activity and prevent investment

**Moreover,** in the face of these challenges, opportunities exist for workable practices that could restore fish populations and promote long-term viability. Investment in infrastructure

would enhance profitability, while community engagement through training could improve fishing practices and business management (Kadagi et al., 2020). Furthermore, expanding local and international markets for seafood products can increase income opportunities for small-scale fishermen (IOTC, 2019). In order to increase the economic contribution of Mogadishu's seafood industry while maintaining workable and food security for the local population, the author concludes that it is imperative to address present issues and take advantage of these potential.

#### 2.5 Sustainable Fishing in Mogadishu

Sustainable fishing in Mogadishu, Somalia, is essential for balancing economic growth with the conservation of marine resources, given the city's reliance on fisheries for food security and livelihoods, whereas community-based management is crucial, as engaging local communities promotes stewardship and ensures that fishing practices are tailored to local conditions (Harris et al., 2013). Additionally, many local fishermen utilize traditional fishing methods that are less harmful to the environment, incorporating selective gear to minimize bycatch and habitat destruction (Kadagi et al., 2020). Despite, developing and enforcing regulations, such as fishing quotas and seasonal closures, helps prevent overfishing and allows fish populations to recover (IOTC, 2019). Education and training on sustainable fishing techniques empower fishermen to adopt better practices, while promoting aquaculture can alleviate pressure on wild stocks (Pepperell et al., 2017). Research and monitoring of fish stocks and marine ecosystems are essential for informed decision-making, yet challenges such as overfishing, lack of infrastructure, and environmental degradation complicate efforts for sustainability (Kadagi et al., 2020). Moreover, ongoing security concerns disrupt fishing activities and deter investment in sustainable practices (Harris et al., 2013). However, opportunities for improvement exist through partnerships with NGOs and government agencies, which can bring resources and expertise to bolster sustainable initiatives. Creating markets for sustainably sourced seafood can incentivize eco-friendly practices, while community engagement ensures that local needs and knowledge are integrated into fishing strategies (IOTC, 2019). Thus, addressing these challenges and leveraging opportunities is crucial for enhancing the sustainability of marine resources, promoting economic growth, and ensuring food security for the population in Mogadishu.

#### 2.6 Employment Opportunities in Mogadishu;

Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, has been experiencing gradual economic recovery and growth, leading to various employment opportunities across different sectors, In the face of the challenges posed by historical instability and ongoing security concerns, the city's strategic location and resource potential present avenues for job creation. The fishing sector remains a vital source of employment, providing jobs for thousands of fishermen, processors, and traders, with sustainable practices and aquaculture development enhancing job opportunities in this area (Harris et al., 2013). Agriculture is another significant sector, engaging many residents in farming and livestock rearing, with the cultivation of crops like sorghum and maize offering opportunities for farm

workers and agricultural technicians (Kadagi et al., 2020). Additionally, ongoing reconstruction efforts have spurred growth in the construction sector, generating jobs for laborers, craftsmen, and engineers, while the bustling markets provide employment in trade and retail (IOTC, 2019). The rapidly growing ICT sector, driven by increased internet access, offers opportunities for software developers and IT support staff (Pepperell et al., 2017). There is also a growing demand for educators and healthcare professionals as the population increases, leading to more available positions in schools and clinics (UNODC, 2023). Although the tourism sector is still in its infancy, it holds potential for growth as safety improves, creating jobs in hospitality and event planning. However, employment growth faces challenges, including ongoing security concerns that deter investment, lack of infrastructure that hampers business growth, and education and skill gaps that prevent individuals from acquiring necessary skills (Kadagi et al., 2020). A significant portion of employment exists in the informal sector, which often lacks job security and benefits (Harris et al., 2013). Opportunities for improvement include investing in infrastructure, establishing vocational training programs to equip individuals with relevant skills, promoting public - private partnerships to stimulate investment, and supporting small and medium - sized enterprises to foster job creation (IOTC, 2019). Thus, Mogadishu presents a range of employment opportunities, and by addressing existing challenges and leveraging growth areas, stakeholders can enhance job creation and contribute to the city's overall economic development.

### 2.7 A Case Study challenges and opportunities of Mogadishu,

A Case Study: Challenges and Opportunities in Mogadishu, Somalia

Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, is a city marked by both resilience and adversity whereas over the years, it has faced numerous challenges restricting from historical conflict, political instability, and socio - economic issues, yet recent developments indicate a potential for growth and recovery, making it a focal point for studying the interplay between challenges and opportunities in urban environments.

### 3. Challenges

- 1) **The author suggests** that security concerns, including political instability and militant threats, can hinder economic growth and discourage foreign investment, highlighting the unstable environment faced by businesses and residents.
- 2) **The author highlights** infrastructure shortages as a significant challenge in a city, affecting economic activity, standard of living, and access to clean water and power.
- 3) Economic informality states to the lack of job security and benefits in the informal sector, making it challenging for workers and governments to collect taxes and regulate businesses.
- 4) Limited access to quality education and vocational training leads to a skills gap in the workforce, exacerbating unemployment among young people who cannot acquire necessary skills.

### 4. Opportunities

- 1) Despite security challenges, Mogadishu is attracting local and international investors due to potential economic recovery in sectors like construction, telecommunications, and trade.
- 2) Mogadishu's coastal location's natural resource potential presents significant opportunities in fishing and maritime industries, with sustainable practices and aquaculture development enhancing food security and job creation.
- 3) Investing in education and vocational training can empower the youth, thereby promoting economic growth and contributing positively to the economy.
- 4) The ICT sector's rapid growth offers opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship, with increased internet access and mobile technology enabling new business models and enhanced service delivery.
- 5) Mogadishu's recovery relies on local communities' resilience, which can be enhanced through grassroots initiatives and community - driven development for social cohesion and economic growth.

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## Author Profile



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