



# **Perspective on Somali Research and Education Network**

**By Dahir Hassan**

# History & Background

- In December 2006, the Vice Chancellors of NINE Universities met and resolved to create the Somali Research and Education Network (SomaliREN)
- Registered as a non-profit, non-governmental organization with Ministry of Higher Education and Culture.
- SomaliREN is the national research and education network(NREN) for Somalia

# Vision Statement

- To empower the Somali higher education institutions as agents for change and key players in improving the quality of life in the region through research and collaboration among themselves and with their international peers.

# Mission Statement

- We aim to develop the quality of higher education and research among the Somali higher education institutions by leveraging the use of ICTs, provision of affordable Internet services for non-commercial, purely academic purposes, and encouraging inter-university collaborations through the establishment of the necessary network infrastructures and related services that will allow SomaliREN to serve as a gateway to other NRENs and other international academic communities.

# Strategic Objectives and Goals

- Strengthening the NREN's technical and administrative capacities
- Raising the awareness of SomaliREN's work and activities
- Forging good relations with potential stakeholders in SomaliREN's initiatives that might lead to signing MoU's with the key players in the Telecom industry
- Building the ICT capacities of the member institutions to benefit from the services SomaliREN will offer in the near future

# Potential Member Institutions

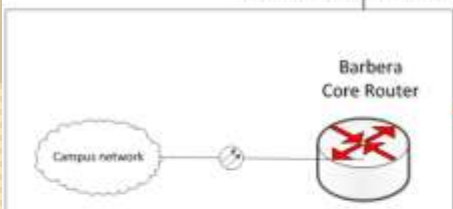
- SomaliREN membership is open to all the research and educational institutions in Somalia. The categories of institutions that can join the NREN include but not limited to universities, research institutes, libraries and archival institutions, and colleges. There are plans to include the secondary education schools in the list as the SomaliREN network takes shape.

# e-Infrastructure

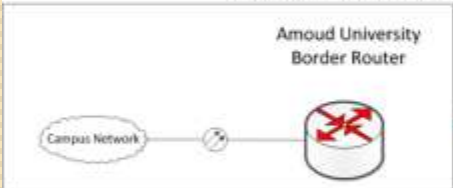
- Network design complete throughout the country
  - Initial phase:
    - Three Universities in northern part of the country will be connected to SomaliREN NOC using Fiber Ring – to be ready by March 2012
    - The others will be completed by the end of 2012



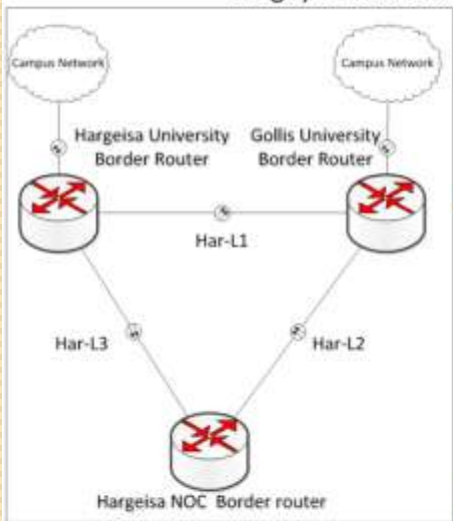
### Berber Network



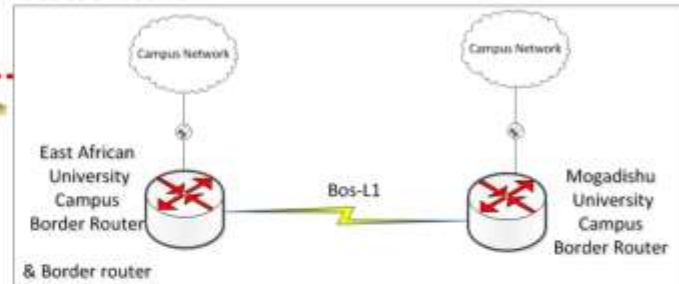
### Boorama Network



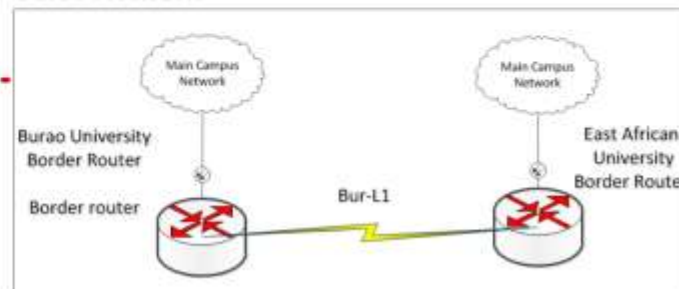
### Hargeysa Network



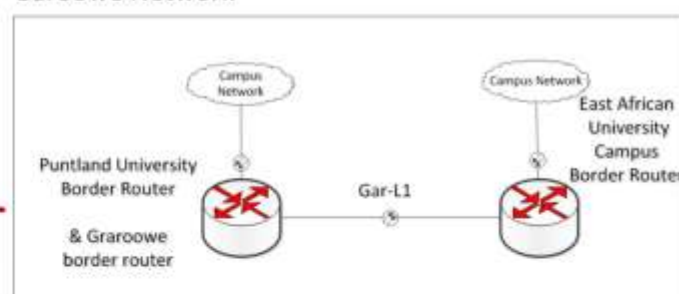
### Bosaso Network



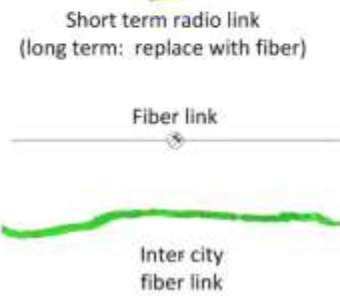
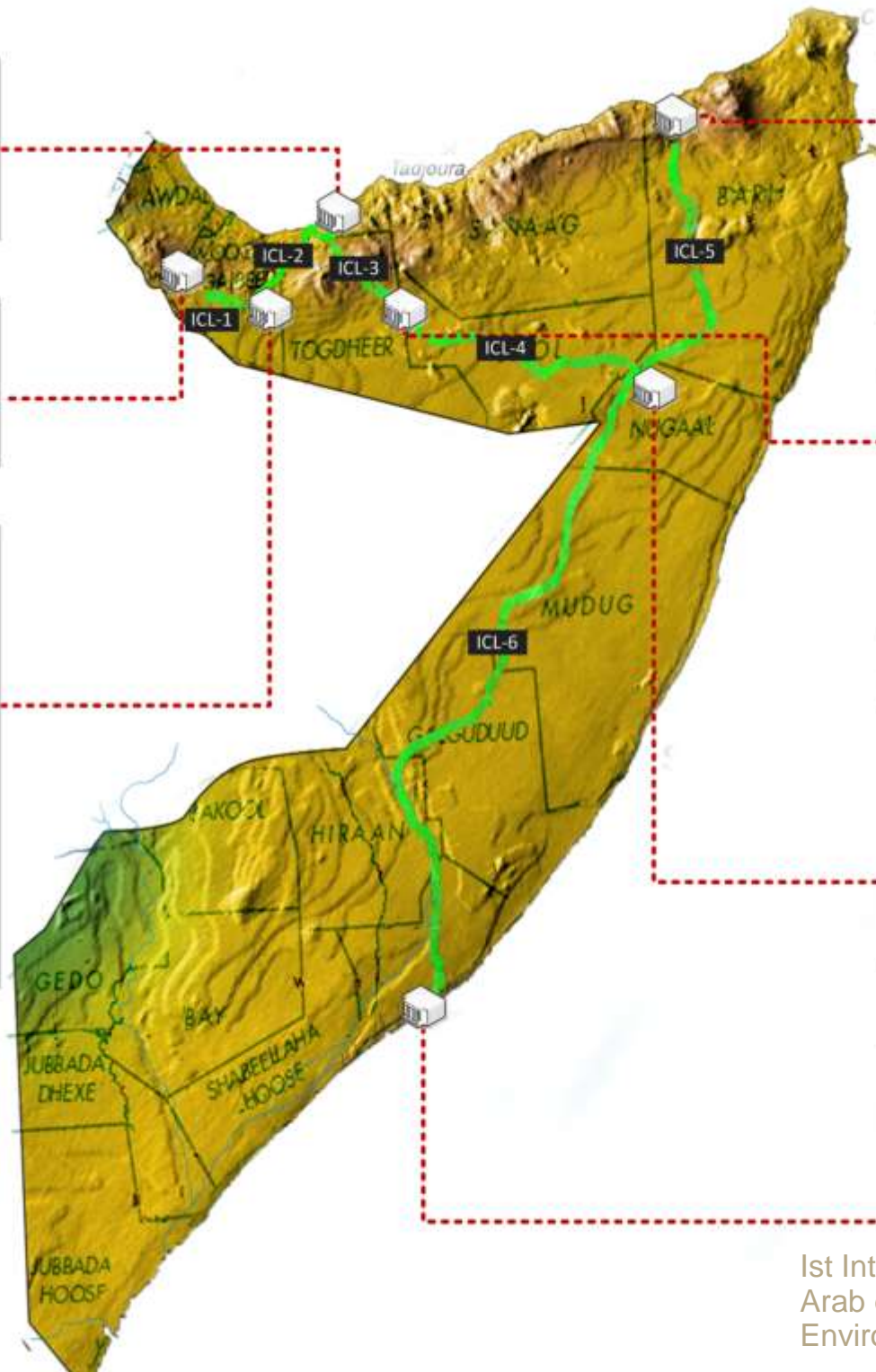
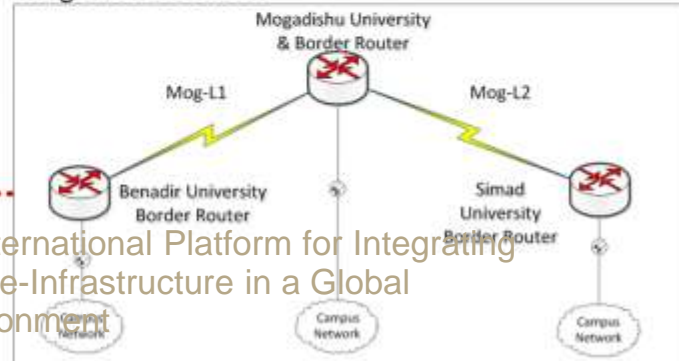
### Burao Network



### Garowe Network



### Mogadishu Network



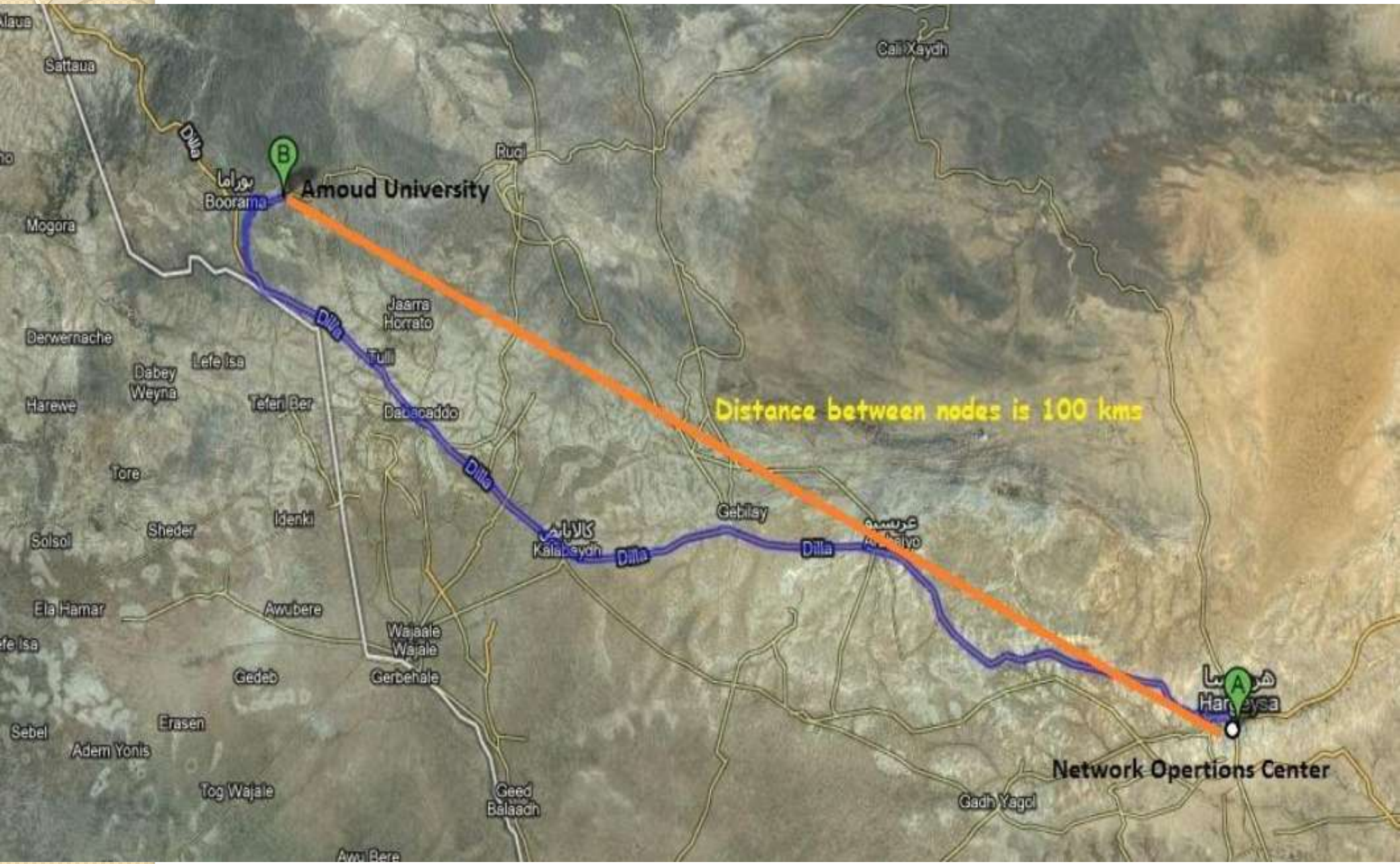
Ist International Platform for Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in a Global Environment



# The Mogadishu Network



# Planned Experimental Dark Fiber Proposal



# Finances

- Supported by the member institutions
  - As the NREN is basically a utility of and by the universities
- Somali Diaspora in Sweden
- Royal Institute of Technology
- Azhar Foundation
- European Union – Somalia Delegate

# Services

- The current focus is
  - Internet connectivity
  - Access to digital libraries and content off the Internet
  - Creation of academic content by organizing events and multidisciplinary symposiums
  - Provision of video-conferencing facilities to overcome the shortage of qualified academic staff

# Other key agendas of the NREN

- Spearheading dark fiber roll-outs in the country in partnership with the telecom operators
- Introducing co-ownership models (based on fiber core count)
  - eg. 24 core fiber cable to be shared by SomaliREN and two or more operators
  - The Hargeisa-Borame link is a strategic one considering the proximity of Borame to Djibouti (currently, our main source of Internet connectivity), and a potential gateway to ASREN

# Challenges

- Lack of adequate telecommunications infrastructure forcing the NREN to establish its own network infrastructure
- Lack of sufficient technical skills and expertise to manage the NREN infrastructure
- Piracy Threat to ships laying fiber optic cables in the Somali Territorial waters.



# Thank You

1st International Platform for Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in a Global Environment  
December 12-14, 2011 – Amman Jordan