

Similarly to other post-independence scenarios across the continent, almost all urban transformations and interventions in Somalia – including the construction of significant buildings of architectural merit – were undertaken by the state. This was particularly evident in the decade following 1969, when the authoritarian government of Mohamed Siad Barre, initiated and implemented a number of public works programs across the country that included schools, universities, banks and other public institutions. In addition to those mentioned above, other notable examples of buildings of this period include the Banadir hospital in Mogadishu, completed by the Chinese in 1978, and Hargeisa branch of the Somali Central Bank (1980). A period of divestment, economic decline, and political instability began in the early 1980s, which eventually led to the state's withdrawal from playing a role in the production of the urban environment. This culminated in the collapse of the state in 1991 and a civil conflict that has now lasted for over twenty years. In terms of high-quality architecture built during the civil war, there is very little to speak of; the war has had a devastating impact on Somalia's architectural heritage. While in recent years there has been a construction boom of a sort in large cities such as Mogadishu and Hargeisa, very little of what has been built is informed by knowledge of the significant developments of the pre-civil war era.