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**Networks of Somali Pirate Capitalism in the Indian Ocean**  
Project Year 2012-2013

**Problem Statement:**

Somali Piracy is a strategic concern in the increasingly vital waterways of the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. However, the threat the world faces today is much greater than that faced less than a decade ago. In the past six years, the world has seen the methods of both capture and negotiation the pirates employ change. The pirates' operational range has increased several times over. These changes would not be possible without an increasingly complex infrastructure underpinning the pirates' activities. Current operational patterns point to connections with locations as diverse as Oman, Qatar, Yemen, and India. These locales serve as way-stations for information, and exert influence upon the networks of pirates. In addition, domestic communities of "pirate capitalists," those funding the expeditions, continue to grow and become more legitimate as these figures become patrons of local economies and politics within their regions of practice.

This project is designed to locate and trace these networks of capital that continue to fund piracy. While there is a significant amount of information in existence about individual attacks or even isolated connections amongst pirate groups, the creation of a comprehensive model identifying and explaining the international network of maritime crimes has not taken place. Where are the primary flows of capital and information that sustain the networks of piracy? What traditional and new power structures are guiding the practice of piracy in Somalia? What international figures or organizations are involved with the proliferation of piracy? These questions are central to the successful resolution of the issue of piracy in this critical region. This project proposes to create a large scale network model of one or more piracy capitalist networks in the Indian Ocean to analyze the structure and behavior of "piracy capitalism" to allow for the effective answering of the primary questions involved with stopping the illegal activities.