

IESG Newsletter

SOMALIA ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT

UNDP/UNSOM (INTEGRATED ELECTORAL SUPPORT GROUP)

July-September
2023

FEDERAL ELECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS

In line with the National Consultative Council (NCC) communique issued on 27 May 2023, the Federal Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR) is preparing the draft electoral legal framework. The MoIFAR legal team is reviewing key pieces of electoral legislation including the federal electoral law, political party law, and NIEC establishment law. IESG has been

providing technical support to the MoIFAR legal team to harmonize these laws with the 27 May NCC communique. IESG had two introductory meetings with the MoIFAR legal team on 18 and 26 September 2023 to where it was agreed to hold bi-weekly meetings with the MoIFAR legal team for IESG's input and guidance.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Puntland Parliament Approves Constitutional Amendments
- Workshop for Somalia Women Parliamentarians on Temporary Special Measures
- Induction Workshop for GIEC Board of Commissioners

PUNTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

ON 25 JULY, the Puntland Parliament approved 12 amendment articles to the Puntland Constitution. Key amendments include mandating the Puntland Election Commission (PEC) to conduct direct elections for the President, Vice President, House of Representatives, and District Councils and increasing the number of official political parties to allow political associations that won seats in the first district elections to receive the status of political parties.

ON 31 JULY, following the approval of the constitutional amendments and signature of the President, the Transitional Puntland Election Commission (TPEC) certified eight Political Associations (PAs) to become official Political Parties in Puntland



Puntland parliament approving constitutional amendments. Source: Puntland Parliament / TPEC issuing the certificates to the Political Parties in Puntland. Source: TPEC

as follows: Kaah, Mideeye, Justice and Equality, Ifiye, Mustaqbal, Labor, Truth & Justice, and Horseed.

The Youth Political Association was not recognized as a political party as

it failed to win a seat in the district council elections, while Mideeye and Horseed political parties refused to collect their certificates from TPEC. The political parties, who received their official certificate from TPEC,



*TPEC handing over the list of winners of the District Council Elections to the Puntland Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization.
Photo Source: TPEC*

will be represented on the new Puntland Electoral Commission (PEC).

ON 6 AUGUST, the Puntland Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization, Abdi Farah Juha, announced the official formation of 30 district councils after receiving the list of the elected district council members from the Chairperson of the TPEC). The district councils will elect the mayors and deputy mayors. As of the end of September, 21 of the 30 district councils have elected their Mayors and Deputy Mayors.

ON 27 SEPTEMBER, the Transitional Puntland Electoral Commission (TPEC) handed over the management of the state's electoral activities to the Puntland Electoral Commission (PEC).

The handover concluded a process which started in July 2023 with the amendment of the Puntland Constitution that established the PEC with 14 commissioners: three appointed by the Puntland State Assembly, three by the Government, and one by each of the political parties. Twelve candidates were nominated to the PEC and approved by the parliament, while two members are still pending from the Mideeye and Horseed political parties. However, the Puntland Supreme Court suspended the membership of the Labor Party nominee, Fatima Said Ahmed, upholding a complaint by the Chair of that party stating that the Labor Party did not follow the nomination procedure because the Deputy Chair nominated Ms. Ahmed. In September the State Assembly gave a vote of confidence for eleven commissioners: three from the State Assembly, three from the Government (nominated by the President), and one each from the Kaah, Truth & Justice,



Puntland State Assembly approving the appointment of PEC Members. Source: Puntland State Assembly

Mustaqbal, Justice & Equality, and Ifiye political parties. The Mideeye and Horseed political parties have not yet submitted nominations because they do not support direct elections. Ubah Abshir, the former TPEC Secretary-General, is the Mustaqbal political party's PEC member and is the first woman to become a member of the PEC.

On 12 September, the PEC elected Fu'aad Abshir Ahmed as its Chair and Ahmed Mohamud Omar as Deputy Chair both nominated by the Speaker of the Parliament.

JUBALAND

ON 23 SEPTEMBER in Kismayo, UNSOM, including IESG and UNDP, attended the opening ceremony of a five-day workshop organized by the Jubaland Ministry of Interior, Federalism, and Reconciliation to build capacity in good governance, develop district stabilization plans and promote conflict resolution.

The primary audience for the workshop was regional governors, district commissioners, and other administrators, but also participating were traditional elders, and civil society representatives, including women's groups. Also in attendance, were Jubaland cabinet Ministers, former Gedo Governor, Ahmed Buulle Gareed, and former Jubaland Deputy Minister of Interior, Abdirahman Mohamed Hussein.



Opening ceremony of the workshop organized by the Jubaland Ministry of Interior. Source: IESG



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

ON 7 JULY the IESG Project team held a meeting with the TPEC Administration and Finance unit on the closure of the Letter of Agreement (LOA) which outlined the Joint Electoral Support Programme's deliverables.

Agenda items included pending payments, financial and expenditure reports, asset inventory lists, and the implementation of audit recommendations.

The TPEC provided an update on the progress of activities, accomplishments, challenges, and adjustments made to the implementation plan. The TPEC emphasized their appreciation for the effective communication and coordination provided by IESG to ensure the timely sharing

of information and address gaps/bottlenecks at the district, regional, and HQ levels.

Among the challenges identified were the change in the electoral timeline, political context, and the UNDP financial platform changing from Atlas to Quantum.

The IESG Project team recommended to TPEC the reviewing of the monitoring and evaluation framework which allows for timely tracking of progress, identification of issues, and future regular monitoring of the project's performance and ensure accountability for the closure of the LOA.

GENDER AND INCLUSION

ON 21-23 AUGUST, the IESG and UNSOM Integrated Gender Office (IGO), in coordination with the secretariat of the Somalia Women Members of Parliament/UN Leadership Forum, conducted a workshop for Somalia women parliamentarians on Temporary Special Measures (TSM) to increase women's representation in the Somali elected institutions. About 90 participants from both houses of parliament attended the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to share with the participants the technical elements of TSMs, contextualize them to Somali needs, as well as enhance the capacity of MPs to advocate for the inclusion of TSMs in future legislation, in particular in the electoral law.

At the opening of the workshop Hanifa Mohamed Ibrahim, Gender Advisor to the Speaker of the House of the People, outlined the agenda for the training. Abdullahi Omar Abshir, Second Deputy Speaker of the House of the People, who was co-chairing the workshop highlighted the importance of women playing an active role in the elections.

Anita Kiki Gbeho, UNSOM Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Political (DSRSG/P) underscored the role of the parliament in promoting good governance and in state building through its legislative powers. She stated that the UN is privileged to be collaborating with both houses of the federal parliament on women's political



Somali Parliamentarians attending the workshop on Temporary Special Measures. Source: HoP

participation, a key element for the development of Somalia as a country.

In her presentation, the director of the IESG clarified that the TSMs associated with a country's electoral system or candidate selection processes aim to ensure or enhance the representation of women or other underrepresented groups in an elected body.

INDUCTION WORKSHOP FOR GIEC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

ON 13, 15 AND 16 JULY, IESG conducted in Dhusamareb the second phase of the induction workshop for the new Galmudug Independent Electoral Commission (GIEC).

The goal of the workshop was to consolidate the GIEC's understanding of its role in the planning and delivery of transparent, efficient, and inclusive elections. The induction, conducted by IESG staff online and in-person was designed to be interactive, providing participants with sufficient time to explore ideas and concepts and how these could be tailored to the local context and needs.

The training provided an opportunity for civil society and Galmudug Ministry of Interior, Federalism and Reconciliation representatives to familiarize themselves with electoral processes and the role of GIEC. The civil society representative expressed his willingness to continue this newly established collaboration with GIEC for future elections.



GIEC Phase II Induction Training: IESG Advisor delivering a presentation. Source: IESG

LOGISTICS

IESG continued providing coordination and support with UNSOM Engineering for the completion of the new NIEC HQ compound in Mogadishu. Through UNSOS Engineering sections and contractors, IESG is overseeing the finalization of pending works and repairs, focusing on improving the compound's infrastructure, working conditions and upgrading security measures.

By finalizing the civil and electrical works at the new NIEC compound, IESG is creating a secure installation outside the Villa Somalia government complex that will enable the electoral administration to implement its mandate of conducting credible elections in Somalia. The move to a separate premise might improve the perception of the institution among the public as an independent body.

