

UNDP/UNSOM INTEGRATED ELECTORAL SUPPORT GROUP (IESG) TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA

UN Deputy Secretary General visits Mogadishu in solidarity with efforts to achieve 30% women's quota



UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed poses for a group photo with Somali women leaders after a meeting in Mogadishu, Somalia, on 12 September 2021

11 women elected to Upper House by end of September

By the end of September, elections for 46 of the 54 seats in the Upper House (UH) were completed including 11 seats for women. By the end of September 2021, Puntland, South West State and Somaliland completed their UH indirect elections while Hirshabelle, Galmudug and Jubaland are yet to complete their UH elections. Of the remaining 8 seats, 6 would need to be reserved for women in order to meet the 30% women's quota in the Upper House.

On 22 August, the National Consultative Council (NCC) issued a 7-point communique following its two-day meeting on 21 and 22 August. The communique clarified many issues related to the House of the People (HoP) election including "the Electoral Delegates composed of the 101 delegates electing the House of the People shall be selected by the traditional elders, peacemaking elders registered in the FMS and the civil society (who all belong to the clan or sub-clans sharing the seat) and shall be verified by the Electoral Committee at FMS level"; the list of delegates for each seat will be verified by FMSs security sub-committees, delegates will pay \$30 for verification and candidates will require similar security verification for a fee of \$750 each (50% reduction for women candidates); FMSs and State-level Election Implementation Teams (SEITs) will decide which seats are allocated to women only; the voting Quorum will be 2/3 of the delegates (67).

The Federal Elections Implementation Team (FEIT) issued an updated electoral timetable on 4 September which indicated 18 September as the date for the conclusion of the UH elections.



Mogadishu: Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, accompanied by the SRSG and other senior UN staff, met with the FEIT, EDRC and SEITs Chairpersons on 12 September 2021.

The timetable also called for the HoP elections to take place from 1 October to 20 November. It is likely there will be some slippage in the implementation of the electoral calendar, and it will be important to keep the momentum towards concluding these elections as quickly as possible according to the electoral timetable.

As of 30 September, \$2.3 million in expenditures, consisting of allowances and operational costs incurred between July and September by FEIT, EDRC and SEITs, have been financed through international partner contributions.

UN Deputy Secretary General supports call for increased women's political participation

On 12 September, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, accompanied by the SRSR and other senior UN staff, met with the FEIT, Election Dispute Resolution Committee (EDRC), and SEITs Chairpersons. The focus of the exchange was the implementation of the 30% women's quota. The DSG also met with Elders and Somali women leaders (Goodwill Ambassadors, Women Ministers, Civil Society leaders). She then visited the FGS authorities, including the President, the Prime Minister and NCC leaders "in solidarity with Somali women's calls for full and equal participation in political life, and to express the support of the international community for timely, inclusive, peaceful and credible elections".

Capacity building support for NIEC

IESG, in collaboration with UNSOS Training Unit, organized a four-day training session on Effective Communication Skills from 16 to 19 August for the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) staff. At the end of the training, the staff expressed their views that communication clearly is one of the most effective skills in an organisation to improve productivity and avoid unnecessary delays in implementing decisions.

IESG-NIEC Legal/Procedures mentoring sessions

During August and September, regular mentoring sessions between representatives of the IESG Legal/ Procedures team and the NIEC Legal Department took place to provide advice and support on legal and procedural matters. IESG Legal/Procedures Team advised on the drafting of an NIEC Voter Registration Regulation by exchanging information to prepare a joint document for further detailed discussions. In addition, the IESG advised on the content of a draft concept note on Election Dispute Resolution (EDR) processes as envisaged by the NIEC. Furthermore, the legal teams discussed the process of initiating, drafting, discussing and adopting NIEC secondary legislation, such as regulations and procedures and the need for drafting NIEC secondary legislation to facilitate this process.

Assistance to NIEC Office of Political Party Registrar

The **development** of the political party registration software is underway. During the reporting period, the following modules were developed following extensive discussions with the Office of the Political Party Registrar: political party general information, political party members, political party executives, functionality to upload in bulk lists of political party's, the system reporting module and the political parties merge functionality.

New political party general information capture screen

On 9 September, the IESG IT team provided a live presentation to the Political Party Registrar and staff on how the permanent registration will take place. Attendees were guided through a mock exercise of registration of a political party. It is expected that a first version of the software will be ready by the end of October. IESG plans to train the NIEC IT staff who will manage the software.

IESG support for Electoral Committees

Operations

IESG continued to support for the various indirect electoral committees including the FEIT, SEITs and EDRC. A series of meetings were held with the FEIT to finalize the operational plan and detailed operational timeline, as well as a set of



IESG support for Electoral Committees (cont'd)

checklists covering key HoP activities of the indirect process for the SEITs. IESG Logistics also provided technical support to the FEIT Logistics team in updating and synchronizing the various logistic tools such as the narrative for the logistics plan, polling kit contents list and deployment/retrieval plan. IESG field offices handed over essential polling materials to all the SEITs for the UH elections. IESG continued providing support to FEIT with the consolidation of the list of possible polling centres. SEITs reported several challenges to IESG including the lack of resources to launch the HoP elections.

Training of Electoral Committees on financial management and procurement

On 16 and 17 August, IESG held trainings for representatives of the OPM, FEIT, SEITs, and the EDRC on financing and procurement aspects related to the budget for the indirect elections.

The trainings aimed to enhance OPM and election committees understanding of the financial and procurement processes (requirements, rules and regulations, as well as supporting documents), and strengthen participants' capacities in



Training on LoA Management, procurement and Payment process on 30 August in Mogadishu

planning and managing activities in a transparent and effective manner and in accordance with the election work plan. In order to assist participants in initiating and planning procurement, managing the bidding process, evaluating bids, and administering contracts, IESG developed and shared a series of manuals, standard operating procedures, practical examples, and templates. Eleven participants, including three women, attended the sessions.

On 30 August, IESG, in partnership with OPM, held a practical training on financial management and public procurement for the FEIT, EDRC and SEIT Administrative and Finance Teams. The participants were given the opportunity to improve their logistical and financial planning skills to ensure they can provide support to the electoral process in a timely, accountable and cost-effective manner.

Election Dispute Resolution Committee (EDRC)

During August and September, IESG held a series of meetings with EDRC members to discuss the EDRC Procedures. On 28 September, EDRC approved its Procedures to supplement the existing NCC Procedures. EDRC noted that it has not received any complaints related to the UH elections so far.

FEIT training methodology

The first training simulation for FEIT staff on the HoP training methodology started on 29 September following discussion and agreement on the training methodology. The IESG conducted the training in preparation for the indirect elections on delegate registration, candidate registration, polling and counting processes.

FEIT will cascade the training to the SEITs to ensure staff are adequately prepared for the HoP elections. About 200 polling staff will be involved in the registration of 27,775 electoral delegates and will facilitate their right to cast their vote for a candidate of their choice. The delegates will receive a briefing on casting a ballot before the polling for the electoral seat begins.



FEIT Operations staff preparing training materials

Women's 30% quota for parliamentary seats

IESG continued to participate in the UN Gender and Elections Task Team (GETT) meetings, which focused on the support to various stakeholders active in the promotion of the 30% women's quota, and in particular the Goodwill Ambassadors (GwA).



Women's 30% quota for parliamentary seats (cont'd)

IESG mainstreamed gender in its data collection to track the progress of the indirect elections. Additionally, IESG assisted with the distribution of 3000 posters promoting the 30% women's quota to SEITs and other stakeholders in collaboration with UNSOM Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Group (SCPAG).

Election security preparedness

Women's Situation Desk

IESG assisted Sweden's Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) with the Women's Situation Desk (WSD) staff training held between 14-20 September in Mogadishu. Travel and accommodation arrangements were made by FBA. Responses were very positive with all FMSs participating in the training. Each WSD team included 50% women participants. A key aspect of the training was that each WSD team will develop plans to engage with their local communities and organizations to suit their particular environments.



WSD trainees display their training certificates

The Somali Police Force (SPF) communications engineers completed the installation of tactical radio equipment into the 12 Joint Operations Centres (JOC) by 22 August. An additional radio system for a JOC-to-JOC national network will later be installed when all the equipment has been received from the supplier. The 12 JOCs have now received all of the equipment procured with the support of Peacebuilding Funds (PBF). IESG engaged with the Federal and all FMS Police Commissioners urging them to assign 30% women to the JOC staff, while acknowledging that four JOCs have included 30% women. Most JOCs have between 20-25% women members. The UN-African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) Joint Elections Security Working Group (JESWG) meeting was reactivated in August to ensure the UN support is well coordinated directly with the FMSs/BRA ahead of the elections.

The first Training of Trainers (TOT) course started on 26 August in Mogadishu for Banadir, Puntland and Galmudug police trainers. IESG funded the trainees travel from Puntland and Galmudug to Mogadishu to attend this training - they will then train their respective police officers on election security courses. The UNDP funded courses (Train of Trainers; Public Order Management, Station Commanders) have progressed well with only two FMSs remaining to complete two courses. JOC training by AMISOM started in Kismayo on 31 August and commenced in Mogadishu (for both JOCs) on 5 September. JOC training continues in other elections centres.

On 24 August, UNSOS issued Field Defence Stores to Jubaland. These items will be used to supplement the security at Dawaad Polling Station in Kismayo for the upcoming HoP elections.

On 22 August, IESG Field Office facilitated a briefing session on the indirect election in Somalia to AMISOM Formed Police Units (FPU) Police Officers. 22 participants attended the session in Beletweyne. IESG funded the translation of AMISOM Police shared elections security training material for use by Somali Police trainers, which has been circulated. The second National Elections Security Committee (NESC) meeting is scheduled to be held on 2 October.



Joint AMISOM and Somali Police Force assessment team in Baraawe

In general, UN support to elections security remains on track, although there are some challenges. AMISOM Police has advised that officers will be deployed to Baraawe and Garbahaarey to strengthen AMISOM's Police and support with the Baraawe deployment due between 4 to 6 October.

IESG supports UN and non-UN electoral assistance coordination

During August and September, IESG hosted regular meetings for international electoral assistance partners, which was attended by Folke Bernadotte Academy, African Union, the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), Creative Associates, Rift Valley Institute, Media Support Organisation, Nordic International Support Foundation (NIS), UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, IOM, UNSOM Gender Unit, UNSOM Human Rights and Protection Group (HRPG) and UNSOM Political Affairs and Mediation Group (PAMG).

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