



SOMALI PUBLIC AGENDA

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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Letter from the Executive Director



2021 was another productive year for Somali Public Agenda. Despite the electoral impasse, armed clashes in Mogadishu, and the various other humanitarian, security, and Covid-19 challenges that Somalia faced, SPA produced 12 publications in total, including six governance briefs, three research reports, and three commentaries. As always, these were all published in both English and Somali.

In 2021, SPA conducted various extensive studies. We researched fiscal federalism, reconciliations, and democratization in the country. SPA researchers traveled to all Federal Member States and interviewed 97 key informants in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Baidoa, Jowhar, Beledweyne, Abudwaq, Galkacyo, and Garowe.

Elections, federalism, and reconciliation were the focus of most of our publications. Of the 12 publications, four focused on democratization and elections. The election topics studied and analyzed included an analysis of the ‘Mogadishu Model’ (also known as the 17 September 2020 election agreement), the operationalization of indirect elections, lessons from Somalia’s Upper House elections, and democratization and local elections in Puntland.

SPA also produced a significant study and a governance brief on Galmudug reconciliation and the resurgence of Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a there. In 2021, SPA published a year-long study on fiscal federalism in Somalia. Our other publications focused on a comparative analysis of the Sexual Offences Bill, the federal budget, the importance of policy design centers, and the production and ownership of aid-related knowledge in the Somali territories.

The [SPA Centre for Public Policy and Service Design \(CPPSD\)](#), established in mid-2020, enlarged its network of experts in 2021 and brought on board three design fellows – Lisa Rudnick, Dr. Derek B. Miller & Abdishakur Hassan. The CPPSD has also established communication and partnership with similar organizations to share experiences and collaborate on policy and service design. As Somalia’s knowledge on policy and service design is limited, the SPA Centre for Public Policy and Service Design director wrote and published a design-related brief. It intended to introduce, sensitize, and expand citizens' and policymakers' understanding of the importance of design centers in delivering efficient and effective policies that yield intended tangible outcomes and impacts.

The [SPA Center for Learning and Development \(CLD\)](#) conducted a successful blog writing training in mid-2021 for 14 talented young bloggers. During the 4-week training, trainees wrote 43 blog posts and shared them with their social media networks. We were amazed by the quality of the writing and the inspiring stories that the trainees were able to share during the training period. Throughout the four weeks of the training, four locally

renowned bloggers mentored the trainees, shared their blogging journeys, and gave invaluable advice. The SPA Center for Learning and Development is committed to conducting similar blog training. It will introduce qualitative research training in 2022, in addition to its public sector training, under the Center's objectives, which include inculcating and advancing the culture of writing in Somalia.

Four interns (two male and two female) completed three-month internships in 2021. They contributed to the work of the different SPA departments and research productions. The program provides much-needed experience for recent university graduates. The three interns wrote reflections (published on the SPA website) about their internship experiences. The reflection of the fourth intern was published in January 2022

In mid-2021, our podcasts were rearranged. The previous 'SPA Podcast' name was changed, and the new [Maamul Wanaag podcast](#) was launched. This podcast delves deep into various governance matters in Somalia. Three episodes of the Maamul Wanaag podcast were released in 2021. Another podcast that focuses on social services in Somalia will be started in early 2022. Since its introduction in mid-2019, our podcasts have been downloaded over 2,880 times. A podcast studio was equipped in late 2021, and video recording of the podcasts is expected to be started in early 2022.

Our SPA library was refurbished in 2021. New library shelves were set up in our new office. The number of books in our library increased exponentially. Ninety new books, mainly Somali studies, joined the library in 2021. Currently, 145 books are in our library, and we will continue investing in this area. Some of these books were brought from the UK and Kenya. Some of our SPA friends have started to come to our office and often spend many hours reading books in our library.

Our [Public Agenda Forum](#) organized five in-person forums in 2021. Some of these forums were convened to disseminate and present some of our studies. We were able to organize a forum beyond Mogadishu in 2021; we convened forums in Dhusamareb and Garowe. We partnered with Creative Associates International and the UN in Somalia on a two-day joint forum on youth political participation. In total, 198 people participated in our forums.

Moreover, we convened 12 Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meet-ups. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, four of these Gaxwo & Gorfeyn meet-ups convened online (three in zoom and one on Twitter Spaces). The online discussions allowed us to engage people living in areas beyond Mogadishu. Two hundred thirty-seven(237) persons attended our Gaxwo & Gorfeyn discussion in 2021. Four hundred thirty-five (435) persons attended our discussions (forums and Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meet-ups) in 2021.

SPA maintained a collaborative relationship with our partners and donors and made new connections. We are currently working with the Rift Valley Institute's [Somali Dialogue](#)

[Platform](#) on research and engagement related to contentious political issues in Somalia. We continued working with [Interpeace](#) on peace and reconciliation-related studies. We also started formalizing our relationship with [International Media Support \(IMS\)](#).

We maintained a good relationship with the media. Many international and local media outlets regularly interviewed us. BBC Somali, CGTN, AlJazeera, Goobjoog TV, VoA Somali, Kalfadhi, and Dalsan TV were some of the local and international media organisations that interviewed or invited our team members to participate in debates. The Guardian and Washington Post quoted [our researchers and analysts](#) and were included in the UN Somalia [feature story](#).

Our audience and outreach increased significantly in 2021. Our work has been found through online search engines 9,204 times; Our mailing list subscribers reached 1,316. Our Twitter handle (@somalipubagenda) was verified in July 2021, and its followers have almost doubled to 5700. Our Facebook page followers increased from 18,000 in 2020 to close to 30,000 followers in 2021. The number of followers of our LinkedIn page increased from 150 in 2020 to 910 followers in 2021. Our website views reached over 33,905 in 2021.

Contributing to our significant achievements in 2021, four competent and committed core team members joined the organization over the last year. Each has contributed conscientiously to the work SPA performs.

Our work in 2022 will focus on elections, civil service reform, fiscal and service decentralization, local council formation, debt relief, reconciliation, climate change, and education. Studies and briefing papers, forums, and podcasts on these issues will be our priorities in 2022.

It has been an honor for me to lead our talented, youthful, and competent SPA team. Despite the limited financial resources, the electoral impasse, the pandemic, security concerns, and other challenges of 2021, SPA has consistently produced high-quality papers and created a space for meaningful online and in-person discussions.

Finally, we are grateful for the unwavering support of our distinguished Board members (who appointed a Deputy Executive Director this year) and our fellows. Special gratitude goes to Peter Chonka, who spends many hours reading and editing our work every year. Many thanks are also owed to our supporters and readers whose confidence and encouragement inspire us to do more work for the common good. As we enter our fifth year, we are looking forward to producing quality research outputs, creating space for discussion on critical national issues, offering training, and helping public institutions design human-centered public services.

Mahad Wasuge is the Executive Director of the Somali Public Agenda.

Key 2021 Highlights



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We convened 12 Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meet-ups. Two hundred thirty-seven (235) persons attended our Gaxwo & Gorfeyn discussion in 2021. Four hundred thirty-five (435) persons attended our discussions (forums and Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meet-ups) in 2021



BBC Somali, CGTN, AlJazeera, Goobjoog TV, VoA Somali, Kalfadhi, and Dalsan TV were some of the media houses that interviewed or invited our team members to participate in debates.



The Guardian and Washington Post quoted our researchers and analysts, and we featured in the UN Somalia feature story

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About SPA

Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization in Mogadishu. It aims to advance understanding and improvement of Somalia's public administration and public services through evidence-based research and analysis.

At Somali Public Agenda, we believe that all Somalis deserve better public services, including access to affordable education, healthcare, housing, security, and justice delivered via transparent and accountable authorities.

Our Methods

To advance the understanding and improvement of public services and governance in Somalia, we apply policy-oriented and evidence-based research. We intend to design public programmes and projects at service delivery and policy-making levels. We also expect to conduct practical and sustainable training on governance and service delivery.

Research: The Somali Public Agenda contributes to understanding and improving public administration in Somalia through research and analysis on various issues that affect public policies and public services. SPA regularly publishes research reports, governance briefs, and commentaries (always in both the Somali and English languages) on decentralization, public bureaucracy, and local administration; democratization and elections; financial governance; security, justice, and the rule of law; urban planning and land administration; employment; and, education system and health services. These publications often inform citizens, policymakers, practitioners, and international actors on governance and public service issues in Somalia.

Dialogue: Public Agenda Forum is a platform and space for discussions on governance and public service issues in Somalia. The Forum (including Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meet-ups) serves as an avenue for critical examinations of issues of public priorities. Different segments of society, including researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, are invited to meet and discuss issues on equal terms. The Public Agenda Forum convenes dialogue with policymakers and public figures and organizes workshops, policy design sessions, seminars, and book/report launches. Often the findings of the Forum discussions help inform Somali Public Agenda's governance briefs.

Public Service Design: Based on the findings and policy recommendations of our studies, we design public policies, programs, and projects with the relevant authorities through our [Center for Public Policy and Service Design](#). We design knowledge-based public services in collaboration with policymakers, public administrators, and the community. Before the government invests resources in the policies, programs, and projects designed, we envisage experimenting with the public service at a small-scale level to test the services' efficacy.

Training: Based on our research findings and our co-designing work, Somali Public Agenda, through its [Center for Learning and Development](#), offers short training courses to contribute to the building of administrative cadres that can deliver public policies and programs to the community. The Center for Learning and Development aims to connect the civil servants, policymakers, and non-profit sector workers with communities and provide administrations with the technical skills necessary to formulate and implement solutions for public service challenges. Moreover, the Center offers training to Somali professionals who have the desire and passion for joining the public sector and professionals engaged in the civil service and non-profit sectors.

Research Outputs and Publications

2021 was another productive year for Somali Public Agenda. Despite the electoral impasse, armed clashes in Mogadishu, and the various other humanitarian, security, and Covid-19 challenges that Somalia faced, SPA produced 12 publications in total, including six governance briefs, three research reports, and three commentaries. All were published in both English and Somali.

Reports



During the 2021-year, SPA produced three reports. The first report was undertaken with the support of Interpeace and published on 17 February 2021. It focused on [Galmudug Reconciliation: Processes, Challenges, and Opportunities Ahead](#). The study found that the relative success of the latest reconciliation efforts in Galmudug was due to a combination of factors. The state's current President, Ahmed Abdi Kariye "Qoorqoor", elected in February 2020, not only enjoyed support from the Federal Government of Somalia but also reached an agreement with opposition candidates even before his inauguration, despite them having boycotted the election itself. He has appointed a cabinet that local stakeholders see as politically diverse and inclusive, seeking to represent broader Galmudug society better. It is this inclusivity that gave the state presidency legitimacy. Before the election, a social reconciliation was organized by a technical committee established by the Somali Ministry of the Interior, Federal Affairs, and Reconciliation in mid-2019. This committee convened a meeting of over 700 representatives of all 11 clans in the region to build trust and confidence in the process. The defeat of Ahlu Sunna

Waljama'a (ASWJ) by government forces and the start of its former members returning to the mainstream Galmudug fold were also thought to have been key to the situation. Thus, Galmudug was seen as an emerging influencer on the national political stage with much promise for the future.

The second report was published on 29 July 2021. SPA conducted the study with the support of the National Endowment for Democracy. The study titled [Fiscal Federalism in Somalia: Constitutional Ambiguity, Political Economy and Options for a Workable Arrangement](#) found that both the federal and federal member state governments approved of having public finance and revenue laws with a legal mandate to collect revenue and execute the approved budget and also this being part of a conditional requirement for the debt relief process. The FGS and FMS are in the process of harmonizing financial legal frameworks. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and Puntland (and Somaliland) use an identical financial system designed to administer revenue and expenditure. The other FMSs use a separate system. The fiscal resources for the FGS and Puntland are relatively stronger compared to the other FMS. Three FMS – South West, Galmudug, HirShabelle – have no functioning ports and their revenue streams are limited, making them depend heavily on the FGS fiscal transfer and donor aid (although FGS itself is dependent on aid). FGS and its constituent units don't have strong tax bases to enable them to raise revenues that can fund the rudimentary responsibilities entrusted to them. Therefore, they rely on a few taxes, which are accessible and collectible.

The third report of 2021 was published in August 2021. The study was conducted with assistance from International Media Support (IMS). The study focused on [Puntland Democratization: Process, Challenges, and Ways Forward](#). There are opportunities and challenges associated with the Puntland democratization process and essential lessons that can be learned from this exercise. Some of the key lessons include the inclusion of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the registration drive, the positive role of traditional elders (even when transitioning to full democracy and direct elections), the importance of initiating registration of persons at the Federal Member States level, and the encouraging experience of bottom-up registration of voters in Somalia. This report proposed recommendations to different actors that, if implemented and considered by the stakeholders in the Puntland democratization process, could go a long way in enhancing and improving the transparency and quality of Puntland's local government elections and the democratization process a whole. The recommendations included: that the Puntland government maintains its political commitment, which is crucial for the accomplishment of universal suffrage; that TPEC should keep up the momentum and avoid any conflict of interest going forward; that political associations must include women and youth in their organizational structures, and that they should offer alternative leadership and constructive criticism in their campaigning and selling of their political agenda. Puntland civil society was encouraged to speed up and launch a coordinated awareness exercise to bridge the information gap. On the other hand, the study

recommended the other Federal Member States of Somalia take the democratization process of Puntland as a benchmark and learn best practices from each other. The international partners should continue the goodwill and technical and financial support they have offered to Puntland's democratization process.

Governance Briefs

In 2021, SPA published six important briefs that focused on different issues demanding the current attention of both think tanks and policymakers. These ranged from elections to data ownership in Somalia; from highlighting the importance of policy design centers to Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a resurgence in Galmudug.

The briefs published in 2021 were:

1. A comparative review of Somalia's controversial Sexual Offences Bills
2. Who owns data in Somalia? Ending the country's privatized knowledge economy
3. From Agreement to Implementation: The Operationalization of Somalia's Indirect Election Agreement
4. Bridging the Gap between Policies and People in Somalia: Introducing Policy Design Centers
5. Lessons from Somalia's 2021 Upper House Elections
6. Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a's resurgence: factors, missed opportunities and the way forward

 Governance Brief 11 A comparative review of Somalia's controversial Sexual Offences Bills	 Governance Brief 12
January 2021	June 2021
<p>Summary</p> <p>There has been controversy surrounding the development of new legislation in Somalia addressing sexual offences, at a time when incidences of rape and other sexual violence have become rampant and impunity is pervasive. Two different bills on sexual offences have been drafted by different sources. However, the content and implications of each bill have not been adequately explained in public, leading to tensions fed by confusion and misapprehension rather than informed discussion.</p> <p>The Ministry of Women and Human Rights on the one hand, and House of the People of Somali Federal Parliament on the other, have developed two separate bills focusing on sexual offences. The original bill, the Sexual Offences Bill 2018, was introduced by the Executive and approved by the Council of Ministers in 2018. The bill had been developed following five years of wide-ranging consultations with women, civil society, religious leaders, and the international community. It was rejected on 8 August 2020 by Parliament, on the tabling of a new parliamentary bill known as the Sexual Intercourse and Related Offences Bill 2020. The bills contain some significant differences, including how each defines rape; proposed sentencing, the level of detail on the rights of victims and defendants; the conduct of investigations; and the role of different investigating bodies.</p> <p>This brief outlines the content of each bill and draws out the key comparisons and differences. It recommends harmonizing the two bills, conducting wider public awareness activities on the proposed legislation, aligning the legislation to Somalia's Penal Code, and strengthening the judiciary, police, and prosecution institutions.</p> <p>About Somali Public Agenda</p> <p>Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization based in Mogadishu. Its aim is to advance understanding and improvement of public administration and public services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis.</p> <p>www.somalipublicagenda.org</p> <p>© 2021 Somali Public Agenda</p>	<p>Summary</p> <p>Over the past decades, donors, aid agencies, consultants and enumerators have conducted increasing amounts of aid-related research in the form of monitoring, assessments and surveys in Somalia. The rise of third-party monitoring (TPMs), new technologies and the arrival of global consultancy firms have not only led to an internationalised and professionalised market for aid information but also introduced new power dynamics in the production of aid knowledge. The way in which aid data in Somalia/Somaliland is produced reflects prevailing stereotypes about the supposedly superior value of 'Western' expertise over local knowledge. This brief raises important questions about the production and ownership of aid-related knowledge in the Somali territories where, due to weak state institutions, data collection is unregulated, and often <i>de facto</i> privatised. Moreover, the insufficient uptake of aid information by aid agencies, the governments and the public gives pause for thought. As Somali government institutions are strengthening, there is an urgent need to localise knowledge production in Somalia and to make aid information and data available to the public. There is also a need to strengthen data protection and research ethics and to rethink some of the extractive and negative impacts of the current aid information business.</p> <p>About Somali Public Agenda</p> <p>Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization based in Mogadishu. Its aim is to advance understanding and improvement of public administration and public services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis.</p> <p>www.somalipublicagenda.org</p> <p>© 2021 Somali Public Agenda</p>

A comparative review of Somalia's controversial Sexual Offences Bills

The first governance brief of the year was published on 18 January 2021 and focused on the controversial sexual offense bills at the federal lower house. There has been controversy surrounding the development of new legislation in Somalia addressing sexual offenses, at a time when incidences of rape and other sexual violence have become rampant and impunity is pervasive. Two different bills on sexual offenses have been drafted by different sources. However, the content and implications of each bill have not been adequately explained in public, leading to tensions fed by confusion and misapprehension rather than informed discussion. This brief outlines each bill's content and draws out the key comparisons and differences. It recommends harmonizing the two bills, conducting broader public awareness activities on the proposed legislation, aligning the legislation to Somalia's Penal Code, and strengthening the judiciary, police, and prosecution institutions.

Who owns data in Somalia? Ending the country's privatized knowledge economy

The second brief was published on 2 June 2021 and shed light on data ownership in Somalia. Over the past decades, donors, aid agencies, consultants, and enumerators have conducted increasing amounts of aid-related research in the form of monitoring, assessments, and surveys in Somalia. The rise of third-party monitoring (TPMs), new technologies, and the arrival of global consultancy firms have not only led to an internationalized and professionalized market for aid information but also introduced new power dynamics in the production of aid knowledge. How aid data in Somalia/Somaliland is produced reflects prevailing stereotypes about the supposedly superior value of 'Western' expertise over local knowledge. This brief raises essential questions about the production and ownership of aid-related knowledge in the Somali territories where, due to weak state institutions, data collection is unregulated, and often de facto privatized. Moreover, the insufficient uptake of aid information by aid agencies, the governments, and the public gives pause for thought. As Somali government institutions are strengthening, there is an urgent need to localize knowledge production in Somalia and to make aid information and data available to the public. There is also a need to strengthen data protection and research ethics and to rethink some of the extractive and negative impacts of the current aid information business.

 Governance Brief 13	 Governance Brief 14
June 2021	September 2021
Summary On May 27, members of the National Consultative Council (NCC) signed an election agreement in Mogadishu. The agreement, which consists of eight points and a roadmap for the post-election government, addresses the core outstanding issues of the indirect elections. The Prime Minister took the lead of the electoral process after the House of the People rescinded early last month a two-year extension it announced on 12 April and the President handed over the election management and security to him. The agreement includes a way forward for the election implementation teams, the election of Somaliland seats, the management of elections in Gedo, election security, women's quota, and an election timeline. This brief examines the agreed framework and its limitations. It also analyses the implementation challenges of the agreed indirect election such as budget, security, the composition of electoral delegates, and logistical challenges. It also puts forward a number of recommendations that, if implemented, could enhance the transparency and outcome of Somalia's approaching indirect elections. About Somali Public Agenda Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization based in Mogadishu. Its aim is to advance understanding and improvement of public administration and public services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis. www.somalipublicagenda.org © 2021 Somali Public Agenda	Summary Policies, programs, and projects that are designed and implemented to serve the needs of Somalia's citizens often fail to achieve their objectives. Regrettably, this observation is so widespread and noted so often that it is easy to gloss over it as an area for dedicated attention. After all, there are many forces at work that prevent sound policymaking. However, even well-functioning and democratic states (like Canada and Denmark) have noticed that policies designed in closer cooperation with the population can create more nuanced, local, legitimate, and ultimately effective solutions that "designing from above" cannot achieve. Policy design centers are innovation initiatives that are being built and utilized worldwide and – with some adaptation and creativity – could bring notable advances to Somalia and even to the region as a whole. This brief explains how policy design thinking has evolved globally, and the wider role of Policy Design Centers. It then focuses on particular needs that Somalia faces in this area, and the role that the Somali Public Agenda Center for Public Policy and Service Design is emerging to play. About Somali Public Agenda Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization based in Mogadishu. Its aim is to advance understanding and improvement of public administration and public services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis. www.somalipublicagenda.org © 2021 Somali Public Agenda
From Agreement to Implementation: The Operationalization of Somalia's Indirect Election Agreement Abdimalik Abdullahi & Mahad Wasuge Background In their third Dhusamareb meeting in August 2020, the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States (except Puntland and Jubaland) leaders agreed to explore an indirect electoral process for the 2020-21 election of the federal bicameral parliament and president. The agreement was later refined and a new model was agreed in Mogadishu by all National Consultative Council (NCC) members on 17 September 2020. This was overwhelmingly endorsed in a joint parliamentary session in late September. Initially, there were three main outstanding issues including the controversy over the civil servants and alleged members of the security forces who were appointed as members of the election management bodies, the management of the elections in the Gedo region of Jubaland, and the appointment of the electoral body that would manage the election of Somaliland representatives. Political differences over these issues meant it was not possible to finalize the agreement and begin election implementation. The last opportunity to address these matters was the fourth Dhusamareb meeting, which took place in early February 2021. President Farmajo left that meeting on 6 th February and addressed the House of the People of the Somali Federal Parliament about the 17 September agreement. He alleged that FMS presidents (especially the Puntland President) had single-handedly written that agreement. Two days after the failure of the fourth Dhusamareb meeting, the four-year term of President Farmajo – who was elected on 7 th February 2017 – expired without a final agreement on the next election. This was an unprecedented situation, and uncertainty about what could happen in such situations was high. The events that took place between 1 st February and 27 th May (three months and twenty days) were quite extraordinary. On 16 February, a technical committee meeting in Bardua agreed on a way out for the outstanding electoral issues. There was heavy gunfire on the night of 19 February near the hotel housing the two former presidents and other politicians. There was also subsequent firing upon demonstrators who were being led by politicians (including the former prime minister) near the airport. Efforts towards dialogue in March fell apart when the House of the People (one of the two chambers of the federal parliament) introduced and unilaterally (with the absence of the Upper House) endorsed a resolution that proposed at least a two-year extension on 12 th April 2021. The President signed the resolution instantly. On Sunday, 25 April, sections of the security forces entered Mogadishu to oppose the extension, and clashes between government forces who opposed the extension and other government forces loyal to the incumbent erupted in the capital. Thousands of people were displaced from some parts of Mogadishu. On May 1, after a request from President Farmajo and mounting local and international pressure, the House of the People met again and repealed its previous (extension) decision. This was a turning point for Somalia's political	Bridging the Gap between Policies and People in Somalia: Introducing Policy Design Centers Awais Ahmed Mohamed Introduction: Evolving approaches to policy design The design of policies and services intended for the public of a country is often dominated by the officials in the public administration. In contrast, the citizens who are the end-users of government services may rarely be involved or reflected in policy blueprints (Nesti, 2018). This has occurred since the establishment of the modern state system and the realm of public administration. However, tenacious developments of user-driven design innovation have acted as a catalyst for dynamic efficacy in market institutions. Recognition of this led to the emergence of 'New Public Management' in the late decades of the twentieth century. One of its hallmarks was the emphasis on user-centered policies and services in the public sector. This entails making government organizations more like the business sector to improve their competence in numerous aspects, mainly designing policies and services with respect to the citizens who are the ultimate recipients. It can be argued that the public sector has made improvements regarding its previous ineffectiveness for public problem solving compared to the business sector. However, the scale of these results was constrained as there were tremendous impediments to applying models and approaches borrowed from the private sector. These included: the marketization of the public sector; competition of service delivery between the public and private service providers; decentralization that causing organizational fragmentation; focus on singular 'Best Practice' in a complex world; and the current technological opportunities that enable new demands from citizens and private stakeholders. These factors provided some of the impetus that hastened the second paradigmatic shift in the public governance (Torfing, et al., 2020). Accordingly, 'New Public Management' shifted to 'New Public Governance'. This put forward new approaches to deal with the contemporary challenges confronting the public sector. New Public Governance postulated the concept of the co-creation of policy solutions in the public service delivery where government institutions collaborate, rather than compete, with a wide range of non-government actors, which include profit and non-profit organizations, civil society or citizens, for finding public problems, innovating, and designing more reliable solutions (Torfing, et al., 2016). It has boosted the focus of 'Next Practice', which transcends the traditional process of policy designing and emphasizes persistent, innovative ways that look for new policy solutions in the future. It has also firmly accentuated the active involvement of the end-users – who were previously seen as passive – in co-creating and co-designing innovative solutions for various policy areas. Moreover, the emergence of Policy Design Centers (PDC), also known as Public Sector Innovation Labs, Innovation Labs, Public Policy Labs, or Policy Labs, is considered to be one of the mechanisms, as a non-governmental policy actor with innovative and citizen-driven approaches, that the New Public Governance paradigm incorporates to enhance the capability of policy design in the public sector.

From Agreement to Implementation: The Operationalization of Somalia's Indirect Election Agreement

The third brief was published on 27 May 2021 and emphasized the operationalization of Somalia's indirect election agreement. On 27 May, members of the National Consultative Council (NCC) signed an election agreement in Mogadishu. The agreement, which consists of eight points and a roadmap for the post-election government, addresses the core outstanding issues of the indirect elections. The Prime Minister took the lead of the electoral process after the House of the People rescinded early last month a two-year extension it announced on 12 April and the President handed over the election management and security to him. The agreement includes a way forward for the election implementation teams, the election of Somaliland seats, the management of elections in Gedo, election security, women's quota, and an election timeline. This brief examines the agreed framework and its limitations. It also analyses the implementation challenges of the agreed indirect election such as budget, security, the composition of electoral delegates, and logistical challenges. It also puts forward several recommendations that, if implemented, could enhance the transparency and outcome of Somalia's approaching indirect elections.

Bridging the Gap between Policies and People in Somalia: Introducing Policy Design Centers

The fourth brief was published on 16 September 2021 and it stressed on the importance of policy design centers in bridging the gap between the policies and people in Somalia. Policies, programs, and projects that are designed and implemented to serve the needs of Somalia's citizens often fail to achieve their objectives. Regrettably, this observation is so widespread and noted so often that it is easy to gloss over as an area for dedicated attention. After all, many forces are at work that prevent sound policy-making. However, even well-functioning and democratic states (like Canada and Denmark) have noticed that policies designed in closer cooperation with the population can create more nuanced, local, legitimate, and ultimately effective solutions that "designing from above" cannot achieve. Policy design centers are innovation initiatives that are being built and utilized worldwide and — with some adaption and creativity — could bring notable advances to Somalia and even to the region as a whole. This brief explains how policy design thinking has evolved globally, and the wider role of Policy Design Centers. It then focuses on particular needs that Somalia faces in this area and the role that the Somali Public Agenda Center for Public Policy and Service Design is emerging to play.

 <h2>Governance Brief 15</h2>	 <h2>Governance Brief 16</h2>
November 2021	December 2021
<p>Summary</p> <p>After about three and half months, the election of the Upper House's 54 members has been completed. However, the electoral process has not been undertaken without flaws. It empowered the presidents of Federal Member States (FMS) to submit a list of candidates for each Senate seat elected in their respective constituencies to the state legislators (and electoral constituency of 46 in the case of Somaliland representatives). For the majority of seats, FMS presidents had complete control over the candidate list and election process, and many candidates were purposefully omitted from the list. Affiliation with a political camp also played a significant role in the outcome of the election. However, women received nearly 26% of votes in the Upper House elections, which was a positive result. This brief examines how the Upper House's 54 members were elected, as well as the critical lessons that can be learned from this and be applied to the upcoming election of the House of the People's 275 members.</p> <p>About Somali Public Agenda</p> <p>Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization based in Mogadishu. Its aim is to advance understanding and improvement of public administration and public services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis.</p> <p>www.somalipublicagenda.org</p> <p>© 2021 Somali Public Agenda</p>	<p>Summary</p> <p>Galmudug State of Somalia (GSS) became embroiled in a bloody conflict after Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a's (ASWJ) leadership returned to Galmudug in October 2021 under the pretext of attending an annual religious festival in Huurshe. ASWJ had previously been defeated in March 2020, and on their return became engaged in fierce fighting with joint Galmudug and Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) forces in Bohol on 30 September 2021 and in Guri-el on 23 October 2021. Following four days of ferocious armed conflict, which caused significant human and material damage, ASWJ withdrew from Guri-el to Bohol as a result of informal mediation. The group is still in Bohol and its leaders have snubbed efforts and calls by Sheikh Shakiir's sub-clan kinsmen to disband the militia and seek their goals through peaceful means. The group's return occurred at the same time as Galmudug was nearing the completion of the election of its 8-member Upper House representatives and the start of the House of the People elections. This brief examines the triggers of ASWJ's resurgence, missed opportunities to forestall conflict with the group, and the significance of Guri-el. It also puts forward policy considerations for the future including the establishment of inclusive Darawish forces, devolution of power, the formation of effective local government, and genuine reconciliation.</p> <p>About Somali Public Agenda</p> <p>Somali Public Agenda is a non-profit public policy and administration research organization based in Mogadishu. Its aim is to advance understanding and improvement of public administration and public services in Somalia through evidence-based research and analysis.</p> <p>www.somalipublicagenda.org</p> <p>© 2021 Somali Public Agenda</p>

Lessons from Somalia's 2021 Upper House Elections

The fifth brief was published on 14 November 2021 and focused on Lessons from Somalia's 2021 Upper House Elections. After about three and half months, the election of the Upper House's 54 members has been completed. However, the electoral process has not been undertaken without flaws. It empowered the presidents of Federal Member States (FMS) to submit a list of candidates for each Senate seat elected in their respective constituencies to the state legislators (and electoral constituency of 46 in the case of Somaliland representatives). For the majority of seats, FMS presidents had complete control over the candidate list and election process, and many candidates were purposefully omitted from the list. Affiliation with a political camp also played a significant role in the election outcome. However, women received nearly 26% of votes in the Upper House elections, which was positive. This brief examines how the Upper House's 54 members were elected and the critical lessons that can be learned from this and be applied to the upcoming election of the House of the People's 275 members.

Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a's resurgence: factors, missed opportunities and the way forward

The last and sixth brief in 2021 was published on 9 December 2021 and zeroed in on the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a's resurgence in the Galmudug state of Somalia. Galmudug State of Somalia (GSS) became embroiled in a bloody conflict after Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a's (ASWJ) leadership returned to Galmudug in October 2021 under the pretext of attending an annual religious festival in Huurshe. ASWJ had previously been defeated in March 2020, and on their return became engaged in fierce fighting with joint Galmudug and Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) forces in Bohol on 30 September 2021 and in Guri-el on 23 October 2021. Following four days of ferocious armed conflict, which caused significant human and material damage, ASWJ withdrew from Guri-el to Bohol as a result of informal mediation. The group is still in Bohol and its leaders have snubbed efforts and calls by Sheikh Shakir's sub-clan kinsmen to disband the militia and seek their goals through peaceful means. The group's return occurred at the same time as Galmudug was nearing the completion of the election of its 8-member Upper House representatives and the start of the House of the People elections. This brief examines the triggers of AWSJ's resurgence, missed opportunities to forestall conflict with the group, and the significance of Guri-el. It also puts forward policy considerations for the future, including establishing inclusive Darawish forces, devolution of power, the formation of effective local government, and genuine reconciliation.

Commentaries

SPA published three commentaries in 2021. We have published the following commentaries:

1. Review of 2021 federal government budget for security, economic growth, and public services
2. Somalia's Electoral Conundrum: An Alternative to the Mogadishu Model
3. Geospatial Data for Better Urban Planning in Somalia

Centers and Programmes

Centre for Public Policy and Service Design

The SPA Centre for Public Policy and Service Design (CPPSD) is a research and action center at Somali Public Agenda (SPA) with the mission to help public institutions design human-centered public policies and services. The CPPSD was established to design knowledge-based public services in collaboration with policymakers, public administrators, and the community in Somalia.

As the three-decade-long civil war in Somalia resulted in a shortage of qualified human capital who could design sound policies, there has been a critical gap between the government's policies and services and citizens. Besides, the wide-ranging policies that international organizations implement in Somalia are designed mainly by foreign professionals who have less knowledge about the local context. Therefore, the CPPSD, with its diverse staff of design researchers, strategists, and network of experts, stood to bridge this gap through innovative and collaborative design of public policies and services.

In 2021, the CPPSD has primarily emphasized swelling its pool of human capital and building a large network of experts for co-designing assignments to help innovative policy design to Somalia's public sector. It has hosted several eminent international and national experts in designing policies and services through evidence-based, creative means. CPPSD has also contacted organizations engaged in designing to collaborate with designing issues and share experiences. Some of the organizations, like *The Policy Lab®*, are expected to sign a memorandum of understanding with the CPPSD in early 2022. Aside from partnering with its like-minded organizations, CPPSD has also engaged several government institutions in Somalia with the intention of co-designing public policies and services with them and has already built valuable connections which are intended to develop into long-term partnerships.

As part of the CPPSD vision to expand knowledge and information on policy and service design to citizens, policymakers, and international actors, CPPSD has produced a design-related brief published under its parent organization Somali public Agenda. The brief explored how policy design centers can bridge the gap between policies and services intended for the public. It focused mainly on Somalia's needs in this area and the role that the Somali Public Agenda Center for Public Policy and Service Design is emerging to play.

Centre for Learning and Development

The Center for Learning and Development is a training and capacity development facility run by Somali Public Agenda (SPA). It aims to train civil servants, policymakers, youth, and non-profit sector workers by providing them the technical skills necessary to engage, formulate and implement solutions in the public service challenges. The Center was established in August 2020 to help breach the capacity-building gap in the public service. The Center for Learning and Development offers short training courses to help develop skilled and knowledgeable civil society, youth, and civil servants who can contribute to the discussions of key public policies and programmes.

Since its inception, the Center for Learning and Development has designed and delivered vital training for the Somali youth to enhance their skills. In July 2021, we conducted a month-long blog writing training for young men and women. This training yielded an unexpected positive impact for the participants.



The Center for Learning and Development plans to hold training around very important thematic areas for Somali civil servants, civil society, and youth.

Public Agenda Forum

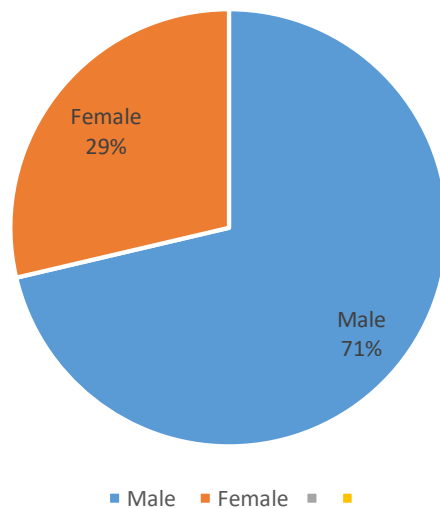
Public Agenda Forum is a platform and space for discussions on governance and public service issues in Somalia. Public Agenda Forum successfully convened five in-person forums and eleven episodes of Gaxwo & Gorfeyn monthly meet-ups in 2021. This has been a great achievement for the platform, which was created in 2020. For the first time, we organized forums outside Mogadishu, in cities such as Dhusamareeb and Garowe. Public Agenda Forum has also engaged with other institutions on collaborations for wider forums and discussions. We partnered with Creative Associates International and the UN in Somalia on a two-day joint forum on youth political participation. Some of the forums were also organized to launch some of our studies.

Our forums and informal meet-ups have received the highest annual public engagement of the four years SPA has been working. They attracted over four hundred participants who attended our in-person and online events and 198 people who participated in our physical forums. Two hundred fifty-two (252) persons attended our 12 Gaxwo & Gorfeyn sessions this year. Three of these sessions were convened online (two in Zoom and one on Twitter Spaces) due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the online discussions allowed us to engage people living in areas beyond Mogadishu. In total, 438 people participated in both our forums and Gaxwo & Gorfeyn's monthly meet-ups in 2021.





Number of participants attended our online and in-person forums and informal meet-ups in 2021



Various topics of governance and public service-related issues have also been discussed in those meetings, including the political impasse of Somali politics, elections, education, federalism, democratization, youth political participation, data production Covid-19 among others. Our work has also been featured on various platforms by high-profile

international institutions including the United Nations, USAID, the US Embassy in Somalia, and others.

Despite the successes and achievements, there have been challenges and hindrances, which in one way or another affected our plans and activities during the year. Among these were; Covid-19 resurgence, limited space, budget, and human capital. However, we have set goals and ways to overcome some of these challenges to maximize our activities in 2022.

Internships

In mid-2020, Somali Public Agenda started a 3-months internship programme aimed to give valuable experience in research and writing to recent university graduates and current students in the last year of their studies.

In 2021, four interns (two male and two female) completed three-month internships. The interns contributed to the different SPA departments and research productions. The internship provides much-needed experience for recent university graduates. The three interns wrote reflections (published on the SPA website) about their internship experiences. The reflection of the fourth intern was published in early January 2022.

Since we started the internship programme in July 2020, seven interns (four female and three male) graduated from the scheme. A separate SPA internship alumni WhatsApp group was created to strengthen the connection between the interns as well as the interns and SPA. An annual internship alumni dinner will be started in 2022.

Podcasts

In 2021, we were able to produce many podcasts. ‘SPA Podcasts’ were started in mid-2019. In August 2021, our podcasts were rearranged. The previous name was changed and the new Maamul Wanaag podcast was launched. This podcast delves deep into various governance matters in Somalia. Three episodes of the Maamul Wanaag podcast were released in 2021 on fiscal federalism (August), design centers (September) and ASWJ in Galmudug (December).

Before the renaming of the podcast, we published three podcasts on public budget (March), Galmudug reconciliation (April), Somalia elections (May). We also published forums podcasts: on fiscal federalism (August) and Puntland democratization (September).

Another podcast that focuses on social services in Somalia will be started in early 2022. Since its introduction in mid-2019, our podcasts have been downloaded over 2,880 times. In late 2021, SPA relocated its office to a bigger space and a podcast studio was equipped there. Video recording of the podcasts is expected to be started in early 2022.



SPA Library

Our SPA library was refurbished in 2021. New library shelves were set up in our new office. The number of books in our library increased exponentially. 90 new books, mainly Somali studies, joined the library in 2021. Currently, 145 books are in our library, and we will continue investing in these. Some of these books were brought from the UK and Kenya. Some of our SPA friends have started to come to our office and often spend many hours reading books in our library.



Outreach and Impact

SPA's online audience has increased in 2021. We maintained a good relationship with the media. We were regularly interviewed by many international and local media outlets. BBC Somali, CGTN, AlJazeera, Goobjoog TV, VoA Somali, Kalfadhi, and Dalsan TV were some of the media houses that interviewed or invited our team members to participate in debates. The Guardian and Washington Post quoted our researchers and analysts and were all featured in the UN Somalia feature story.

Our audience and outreach increased significantly in 2021. Our work has been found through online search engines 9,204 times; our mailing list subscribers reached 1,316. Our Twitter handle (@somalipubagenda) was verified in July 2021, and its followers have almost doubled to 5700. Our Facebook page followers increased from 18,000 in 2020 to close to 30,000 followers in 2021. The number of followers of our LinkedIn page increased from 150 in 2020 to 910 followers in 2021. Our website views reached over 33,905 in 2021.

The SPA podcasts also increased in 2021. 8 podcasts were produced. Our podcasts were downloaded over 1,018 times in 2021.



Our papers created a lot of discussions and debates among the donor community and policymakers. Our brief titled 'Who owns data in Somalia? Ending the country's privatized knowledge economy' generated a lot of discussions among the international organizations collecting data in Somalia as well as among Somalia government offices. The brief that came out of research conducted in Mogadishu, Nairobi, and Hargeisa raised important questions about the production and ownership of aid-related knowledge in the Somali territories where data collection is due to weak state institutions unregulated and is often de facto privatized.

In August 2021, SPA published a research report on fiscal federalism in Somalia. Unlike other available literature on fiscal federalism that relies more on literature review and consultation with a limited number of Somalis, the study was conducted across the Federal Member States and Mogadishu, and over 60 Somali experts and political actors were interviewed. The fiscal federalism report generated a lot of discussions among the government as well as the countries supporting fiscal federalism in Somalia. Our researchers were invited to speak at World Bank and Rift Valley Institute forums on fiscal federalism and service decentralization.

Our researchers were invited to speak at the Institute for Somali Studies (ISOS) Forum on the role of think tanks in informing policies; gave a briefing on the Electoral & Political Context and its Implications on Internal Displacement / Durable Solutions to the Durable Solutions Working Group; co-organized a forum on youth participation in politics with UN in Somalia and Creative Associates International; presented options for dialogue at Rift Valley Forum, among others.

In 2021, we published a success story on blog writing training for Somali youth. In addition, three interns Idiris (March), Abdirahman (July), Asiya (October) wrote and published reflection blog posts on their internship experiences with Somali Public Agenda. These blogs were published on the SPA website and were shared with the growing SPA social media followers. This blog aims to document the impact our internship programme is making on the interns and promote them.

Most of the feedback we received on our 2021 publications has been positive. We received favorable and encouraging feedback from different segments of society. Somali Public Agenda published papers on contested issues. The feedback we received was positive and highlighted the objectivity of our analysis. SPA is not affiliated with any political and religious association, and its employees are determined to produce high-quality, evidence-based, and balanced analyses on crucial governance and service delivery issues in Somalia.

Partnerships and Collaborations

We strengthened our collaborative partnerships and working relations with several institutions in 2021. We formalized our partnership with the Rift Valley Institute's Somali Dialogue Platform on research and engagement related to contentious political issues in Somalia. The Somali Dialogue Platform (Madasha Wadahadallada Somaaliyeed) is a programme implemented by the Rift Valley Institute to facilitate agreement amongst Somalis on contentious political issues. It is supported by the FCDO, DANIDA, USAID, and BUILD.

We have also maintained a working relationship with many international NGOs, including Interpeace, International Media Support (IMS), and Radio Ergo. SPA collaborated with Interpeace and Kalfadhi (a project by IMS) on a comparative analysis of the sexual offenses bill. A joint brief was published, and a joint launch forum was held in Mogadishu in January 2021.

In 2020, SPA collaborated with Interpeace, an international organization for peacebuilding that has been working in Somalia and Somaliland for over 25 years, supporting peacebuilding and democratization processes. Our joint study on understanding Galmudug reconciliation, which provides a deeper understanding of this complex and protracted process and the factors behind its apparent success, was published in February 2021. A forum was convened in Dhusamareb and the key findings were presented. Moreover, we have supported the Miisaan Programme consortium partners (Interpeace, Berghof Foundation & MediaInk) with a comprehensive baseline study on the transitional justice process as a mechanism for conflict resolution.

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) supported study was published in mid-2021. Another study supported by NED is expected to be started in early 2022.

SPA has also established a new relationship with BUILD (Building Unity, Integrity, and legitimacy to Democracy) run by Creative Associates International. BUILD supports SPA on domestic election observation in the Benadir region.

Financial Highlights

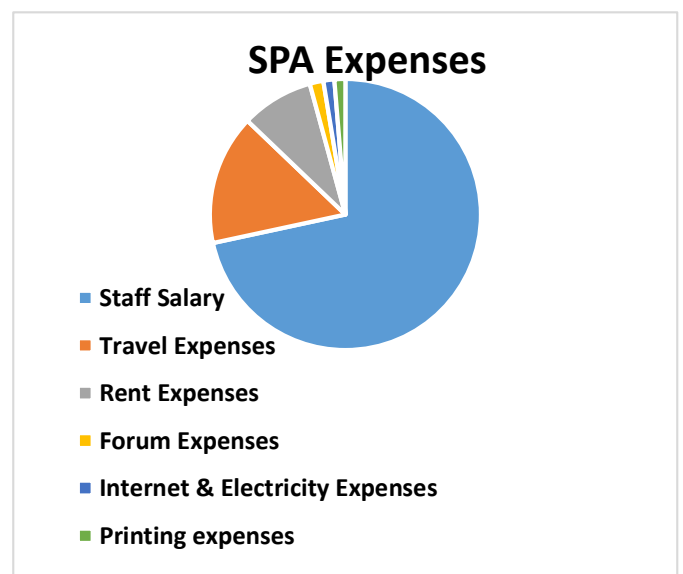
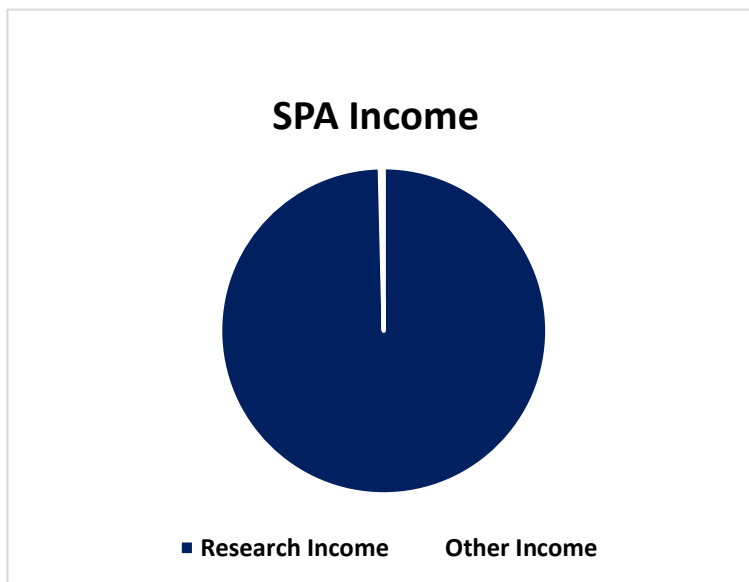
Somali Public Agenda's financial status has been in a growing stage throughout the past four years. In 2021, Somali Public Agenda earned an income mainly in research from several institutions. Somali Public Agenda secured project-based funding from the Rift Valley Institute's Somali Dialogue Platform, International Organization for Peacebuilding (Interpeace), International Media Support (IMS), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and Creative Associates International.

From the 2020 audit recommendations, SPA emphasized improving the cash management, procurement & logistics process, and the overall financial stability of the organization.

SPA strictly adheres to transparency and accountability standards in the organization's financial activities. As a result, we successfully passed a recently concluded external audit conducted by an international auditing company based in Nairobi, Kenya.

Our Board of Advisors has reviewed and approved the SPA 2021 financial audit report, and we are planning to continue annual financial auditing.

In 2022, we plan to develop a few new financial policies and procedures to enhance the smoothness and standard compliance in our finance system.



Institutional Capacity Development

Through the Human Resources department, in 2021, SPA hired eight employees and four interns. In general, SPA accommodates 15 full-time staff and an intern. To ensure operational effectiveness and transparency, SPA follows a set of HR policies and procedures that comply with the local and international laws of labor rights and workplace well-being.

Apart from the induction training that the department carries out, it has recently launched a capacity-building program along with the SPA Center of Learning and Development to equip the staff with the required skills to excel in their defined roles and interpersonal skills. After continuous discussion and close consultation with the staff about their skillset priorities and limitations mapping, we introduced in-person mentorships, the acquiring of online credentials, bi-monthly book review/discussion, local and external training, and team bonding activities. The capacity-building program will be an asset to the life-long learning journey of SPA staff and enable their persistent commitment to boosting their knowledge and skills.

The HR department had, in 2021, introduced an employee benefits policy, which included health insurance and marriage benefits. The latter has successfully been implemented to support the newly-wedded staff members with marriage leave.

2022 Projections and Priorities

As we enter our fourth year, we are looking forward to producing quality research output, creating space for discussion on national issues, offering training, and helping public institutions design human-centered public services.

Our work in 2021 will focus on the following thematic issues:

1. Access to justice
2. Peace and reconciliations
3. Democratization and elections
4. Urban planning and land governance
5. The debt relief process
6. Climate change
7. Local government council formation processes

The Public Agenda Forum will continue the Gaxwo iyo Gorfeyn series. We will also plan to convene 6 forums in 2022, one every two months. We are also planning to convene closed-door discussions with policy-makers. We will convene some forums on Twitter spaces.

The Center for Learning and Development will start a regular blog and research training. The Center will also prioritize developing training materials for public servants, convene annual SPA Internship Alumni gatherings, engage and train civil servants, and create a roster of trainers and mentors.

The SPA Center for Public Policy and Service Design plans to start undertaking research and developing two design tools, namely a localization lab aimed to localize projects designed and run by international organizations and a CPPSD design lab aimed to support the co-designing of government-led initiatives.

SPA will continue the podcasts programme and introduce a new podcast that focuses on social services. We will aim to produce a podcast from our publications and invite guests to our podcasts.

Appendices

Staff

Mahad Wasuge, Executive Director

Farhan Isak Yusuf, Deputy Executive Director

Fartun Sharif, Finance and Administration Officer

Farhia Mohamud, HR Officer and Researcher

Qamar Osman, Cash, and Logistics Officer

Mohamed Isack Ahmed, Public Agenda Forum Manager and Researcher

Aweis Ahmed, Director of SPA Center for Public Policy and Service Design

Hassan Guled, Director of SPA Center for Learning and Development and Researcher

Mohamed Irbad, Researcher

Fellows

Peter Chonka, a Lecturer in Global Digital Cultures at King's College London (UK)

Mohamud Garre, Director of Research and Head of Department for Social Work at City University of Mogadishu

Partha Moman, Team Leader, Platform for Political Dialogue, Somalia

Tobias Hagmann, associate professor of international development at Roskilde University in Denmark

Sahra Ahmed Koshin, the Founder and Director of the Somalia Gender Hub and the Puntland Women Writers Association

Ahmed Muse, a postdoctoral researcher at the *Diaspora Humanitarianism in Complex Crises* research project

Lisa Rudnick, a strategic design consultant and Principal and Head of Research at The Policy Lab.

Dr. Derek B. Miller, the Director of The Policy Lab®

Abdishakur Hassan, founder and lead consultant of Abyane, an Urban & Geospatial consulting firm based in Somalia

Board of Advisors

Zainab Mohamed Hassan, Founder & Chairwoman of Somali Gender Equity Movement (SGEM)

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